

STUDENT' MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATION

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Abstract

Students' level of participation in an academic activity is influenced by whether they are driven by intrinsic motivation or by extrinsic motivation. The present study was carried out on a sample of 136 students from a total population of 250 students to understand their level of motivation. The Motivational Scale of Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) developed by Pintrich, Paul R.; and others (1991) was employed. Responses to the questionnaire 31 items were scored on a 7 point Likert scale. The result of the study indicates that students can be both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated when engaged in learning or academic task.

Keywords: *Extrinsic Motivation; Intrinsic Motivation; Self-efficacy; Task value; Test anxiety*

Introduction

Motivation is the factor that contributes to initiate an action or activity in order to achieve one's goal. To be motivated one should experience a felt need. However all felt need does not necessarily drive an individual to action, individuals may not be willing to exert effort in spite of felt need in the absence of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 69). Various factors come into play to drive an individual towards achieving its goal. Students' level of participation in an academic activity is influenced by whether they are driven by intrinsic motivation or by extrinsic motivation. Intrinsically

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motivated behavior refers to performing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself without expectation of external reward as opposed to extrinsically motivated behavior (Ryan & Deci, 2000:71; Lepper, 1988:292). Motivation is a volitional component (Green, 2015:47) as it cannot be forced upon entirely from the outside but individual has to be willing from within to participate in the learning activity. Thus a person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act refers to the condition of being amotivated (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 72) or work avoidance (Nolen. 1988: 271). Intrinsically motivated students differs from those who are extrinsically motivated in that they consider the engaged task as their goal rather than as a means to their goal (Lepper, 1988: 293; Ogradnik, 2018:222-223; Garst & Ried, 1999:302; Senko, Hulleman & Harackiewicz, 2011: 27; Lepper, 1988:292; Pintrich, 2000:100; Nicholls, 1984:340). Extrinsically motivated behaviors refers to participating in the learning activity with the goal of attaining a separable outcome external to the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 71; Lepper, 1988: 292) which includes grades, feedback, rewards, compliance, and punishments. Inculcating intrinsic motivation is necessary as intrinsic motivated students are shown to persevere; to engage in a deeper level in their task thereby naturally contributing to enhanced and meaningful learning which serve to retain the learned material in their long term memory.

Significance of the study

Rise of indifferent attitude towards education among students is a serious concern. Various literatures in the past advocate the inculcation of intrinsic motivation to succeed in academics. Therefore, Knowledge of what promote motivation and what hinders motivation will enable learners and teaching staffs to manipulate and adopt effective ways in the teaching learning process. It is also significant to understand the role of extrinsic motivation since it is widely practiced in the present academic scene.

Objective

The objective of the present study was:

1. To find the overall level of students' Motivation.
2. To find the relation of extrinsic and intrinsic Motivation

Hypothesis

The hypotheses of the present study are:

1. Overall level of Motivation is high among the students.
2. Intrinsically motivated students are not extrinsically motivated.

Research Methodology

The research method employed was normative survey type of research. 250 class XII Commerce students of MOUNT EVEREST HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL was taken as the population for the study. 136 students were selected from the total 250 students as the sample for the study. Simple random sampling method was employed to select the participants. MSLQ- Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire, developed by **Pintrich, Paul R.; and others (1991)** was used. The researcher used the Motivational scale which consists of 6 sub-scales with 31 items. The participants' response was scored on a 7 point Likert scale. The overall mean of each sub-scales was measured into 3 class intervals as low, medium, and high.

Data Analysis

Hypothesis 1- Level of motivation is high among the students.

Table 1: Motivational Level of All The Students

Motivational Component	Sub-scales	Mean	SD	Level	Cumulative Level
Value Component	Intrinsic Goal orientation	22.22059	4.843768	H	H
	Extrinsic Goal Orientation	24.56618	3.956621	H	
	Task Value	35.80147	4.897195	H	
Expectancy Component	Control of learning Beliefs	25.58088	3.65261	H	
	Self-efficacy for learning and performance	38.29412	9.215219	M	
Affective Component	Test Anxiety	19.73529	8.386263	M	

Results from Table 1 shows that students possesses high level of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, task value, and control of learning beliefs while students posses medium level of self-efficacy for learning and performance, and test anxiety. The overall level of Motivation in students is high.

Therefore, hypothesis 1 which states "level of motivation is high among the students" is accepted.

Hypothesis 2- *Intrinsically motivated students are not extrinsically motivated.*

Results of Table 1. indicates that students level of both intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation is high. Therefore as per the results of table 1, students can be both intrinsically motivated and extrinsically motivated at the same time.

Hence, hypothesis 2 that states intrinsically motivated students are not extrinsically motivated stands rejected.

Discussion

Results from the current study indicate that students can be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated at the same time. Promote of intrinsic motivation requires conditions that support autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000:76). Incorporating strategies that promotes intrinsic motivation is considered to be the ultimate goal in the learning environment due to its associated effective learning outcome. Deep-processing strategies that leads to meaningful learning and long term retention are associated with intrinsically motivated individuals in contrary to extrinsically motivated individual that use surface-level learning strategies (Nolen, 1988:284). Students in the study show high extrinsic motivation which may be due to emphasis on outperforming their peers, achieving better grades to prove their competence or to avoid getting punished. Fear of falling behind in grades leads students to narrow their focus on studies to what they believe would be tested versus attending to the personal meaning of what they were studying (Covington & Müeller. 2001:167). Focus on extrinsic goals or performance goals are shown to contribute positively in academic achievement but contribute negatively by diminishing self-worth in the event of failure. Emphasizing on grades encourage negative comparison and has been found to increase the amount of time students spend attending to others work thereby compromising their own work (Ames, 1992: 265). Classroom environments that are focused on demonstrating ability and grades increase self-efficacy beliefs and academic performance of some students at the expense of other students (Meece, et al., 2006: 499). Interestingly, ways of evaluation adopted by teachers is shown to have an effect on the student motivational orientation (Ames, 1992:264). Hornstra, L. et al., (2015: 363) in their study mentioned that teachers adopt controlling strategies in spite of their belief in autonomy supportive learning environment due to factors from above (e.g. national standards or high-stakes testing, school regulations) and factors from below (e.g. negative perception of students abilities, behavior, background characteristics or motivation). Learning activities that support

autonomy requires adequate structure, planning, and patience whereas using extrinsic motivation is less time-consuming than using autonomy supporting learning activities. However not all extrinsic incentives have detrimental effect on intrinsic motivation (Lepper, 1988: 299). When the students perceive their teacher as focusing on mastery goals, they tend to adopt strategies that promote in-depth learning (Meece, et al., 2006:499). Students' own perception of the meaning of the evaluation (Mac Iver, 1987 as cited in Ames, 1992:264; Meece, et al., 2006:495) or learning environment impacts the goals they adopt. Role of extrinsic motivation cannot be undermined in the learning scenario as it is not possible for the entire learning task to be of intrinsic interest to the learners. Compliance and punishment maybe beneficial to learners when the learning task is considered too challenging or uninteresting as the positive feeling of having accomplished the learning task will encourage learners to participate in future learning activities. Punishment meted out to learners if not with negative motives but purely to benefit the learners can be positively perceived by the learners as a sign of caring and concern by the teachers. This perceived care and concern will serve to encourage the learners to strive harder to achieve learning goals. However teachers should proceed with caution in the use of punishment as teachers pure motive may not work for all the students. The present and past literature is testament to the fact that the achievers had at many occasions sacrificed their immediate source of enjoyment for the sake of achieving a future higher goal. The process leading to the goal is not always easy and pleasurable. Extrinsic rewards can support intrinsically oriented endeavors and sustain personal interest even after one's initial curiosity has faded (Covington & Müeller, 2001:164).

The present study shows that students value their course. They accept the course material as useful for their learning. The results correspond to previous studies that list relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 68) as an important factor required to promote students' intrinsic motivation. Task value is one of the important components required to induce motivation in

learning. The importance placed on the learning task is directly related to its contribution to the attainment of goal which in turn is influenced by the relevancy of the task. High task value may indicate students' belief in the positive outcome such as better prospect in continuing education, getting a job, respect from peers, teachers, family etc., as result of successful completion of course.

According to the present study, students show high level of belief in their control of learning. This indicates that they take responsibility for their own learning. Their belief in their control can be instilled positively or negatively. Taking responsibility of their learning can be positive if they are able to use effective strategies to perform well but can negatively impact their feeling of competence if they are not able to use effective strategies and invest their time in studies. However, negatively instilled control of learning beliefs i.e. blaming learners for their failures may result in learned helplessness.

Another important factor required to promote and sustain intrinsic motivation is competence. From the present study, level of Self-efficacy which refers to future-oriented belief about the level of competence that a person expects he or she will display in a given situation (Bandura 1997 as cited in Thoonen, et al. 2011: 348) is medium among the students. In spite of their overall medium level of self efficacy the results show high intrinsic motivation, which may be interpreted as the students' believe in themselves to achieve future success if they put in adequate effort. Therefore it may be interpreted that in spite of students not possessing high level of self-efficacy, they can be willing to learn and even enjoy participating in the learning activity. Competency building environment such as reward, praise, positive feedback and teachers that focus on students mastering the learning materials (Pintrich, 2000:102; Ames, 1990:410; Nolen, 1988:271) contribute in promoting intrinsic motivation. General interest theory explains that reward, task content and context either increase but does not decrease intrinsic motivation if the emphasis is on task relevance and is consistent with the satisfaction of needs, wants, or desires (Eisenberger, et al., 1999: 687). Teachers own self-efficacy is also shown to affect students self-

efficacy as a result of teachers adopting more creative ways and intensifying their work to enhance performance (Thoonen, et al., 2011: 348).

Students in the study measures medium anxiety level. The reason could be due to high extrinsic motivation and fear of the consequence of failure. Anxiety is a natural human reaction experienced in a situation perceived as stressful, dangerous, and embarrassing. Low anxiety level is believed to manage events better while high anxiety may negatively impact the individual with regards to their social and personal relationship, physical and emotional problems (Herrero, Sandi, & Venero, 2006 as cited in Hashempur & Mehrad, 2014). Emphasis on extrinsic end in learning is believed to be a contributing factor in inducing anxiety. Facilitating ways for students to attain realistic goals, providing clear feedback (intended to help improve performance and not merely for the purpose of certification), emphasizing mastery goals, making students experience competence may contribute to counter the negative effect of anxiety.

Findings

The following implications may be drawn from the present study:

1. To promote intrinsic motivation, certain level of autonomy needs to be given to the students by adopting strategies such as emphasizing students initiative through internalization rather than through consequences and allowing time for independent (Reeve, et al., 1999: 547) and collaborative work.
2. Set challenging and achievable short-term goals to promote self-efficacy.
3. Provide rationales for task undertaken to promote valuing of task.
4. Make the learning activities relevant to the daily lives of the students.
5. Avoid negative evaluation that diminishes the self-worth of students. Evaluation are beneficial if it assesses in-depth learning rather than surface level learning.

6. Encourage meaningful learning goals through focus on mastery goal rather than performance goal.
7. Extrinsic rewards may be beneficial to some but not to everyone owing to students diverse individual differences.

Conclusion

The present study shows that students can be both intrinsically motivated and extrinsically motivated at the same time. It is not an easy task to draw a clear distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is not a standalone motivation but exist along with extrinsic motivation. Not all extrinsic motivators are detrimental. Grades system is beneficial for the achievers to reinforce they are doing the right thing. Well structured external reward will contribute positively if it is introduced in such a way that would promote meaningful learning rather than be used as a means for judging and controlling students. External reward serves to intensify intrinsically oriented endeavors (Covington & Müeller, 2001:164). In spite of the presence of extrinsic goals when students believe their teacher is emphasizing a mastery goal they are more likely to use effective learning strategies, prefer task that offer challenge, like their class more, and believe in their effort to yield results (Ames & Archer, 1988:264). Extrinsic motivators such as performance comparison will uplift one individual at the expense of another and intentionally or unintentionally encourage jealousy and negative competition. Without negative comparison students can appreciate and be happy of their peers' achievement and use that to boost their own efforts. Controlling learning strategies will promote subservient individual while autonomy supporting learning environment will promote individual capable of independent thinking.

Limitations

The following are some of the limitations the researchers faced in this study:

1. The research study was entirely based on student response to the questionnaire. Therefore, there was no room to see if their performance is consistent with their beliefs.
2. The sample of the study was limited. Study was confined to students of one college only.

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208 Student' Motivational Orientation....L.L. Grace & Dr. Rajkumar Suresh Singh

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