Students’ Motivation Factors: Albania Case

Zamira Hodo

English Language and Literature Department, Beder University, Albania

Abstract: Student motivation is a vital component of success in education and later life. It is also one of the greatest challenges instructors face during the teaching process. This study investigates the most crucial parts to provide instructors with a general understanding of student motivation from a psychological perception and to recommend specific strategies to help motivate students in the classroom. Furthermore, it focuses on the comparison of the two main branches of motivation, extrinsic and intrinsic. This comparison is based on different arguments between researchers and scholars, each of them considering and supporting their viewpoint based on their work. This study is also going to give an overview of the student’s motivation in Albania mentioning several factors influencing Albanian students' desire to study. The analysis of the motivation factors in Albanian students gives a clear image of how motivation is affected by school programs, teacher lesson’s plans and student’s desire on studying.

Keywords: Student motivation, extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, Albanian schools.

I. Introduction

The hypothesis that motivation and learning are directly connected to each other has been sustained by teachers, researchers, scholars, and psychologists for a long period of time. The motivation can be discerned as the key determinant factor in language learning process, thus student motivation must be preserved, elaborated and even heightened.

“Motivation is a way of explaining how people are aroused by an event, how they direct their behavior towards the event and how they sustain that behavior for given lengths of time.” [1]

The derivation of the word tells us that motivation refers to getting someone moving. Motivation or more specifically human motivation can be defined as ‘an inner state or desire that activates an individual to do something that will satisfy that will or desire’. It refers to a need or desire internal to the individual, thus it is not possible for others to actual motivate an individual, so the teacher must manipulate environmental variables that may result in an increase or decrease of motivation.

Motivation is divided into two main types: Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. The focus of this thesis will be on intrinsic motivation and the shapes which make it up will consider this kind of motivation from different points of view.

Education is perceived as a key determinant in our personal development and intrinsic growth. In a world of capitalism, education is considered an important indicator of economic and professional success not only for the individuals but for their families as well [2].

This study mentions the factors influencing intrinsic motivation, and the crucial role they play in the teaching and learning processes, namely the teacher, who plays the main role of the motivator in the classroom, the physical environment where learning takes place, success, the method used, challenge and curiosity, control and fantasy, competition and recognition. “Motivation is one of the most important elements of our mental life, playing a significant role in learning and achievement” [3].

Psychologists and other scientists have proposed a number of different ways of thinking about motivation, including the one that involves looking at whether motivation arises from outside (extrinsic) or inside (intrinsic) the individual. People can be motivated by various things and in different ways, but the most well-known types of motivation are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

According to a psychologist (Kendra Cherry), extrinsic motivation occurs when we are motivated to perform a behavior or engage in an activity in order to earn a reward or avoid a punishment. Examples of behaviors that are the result of extrinsic motivation include: Studying because you want to get a good grade; cleaning your room to avoid being reprimanded by your parents; Participating in a sport in order to win awards; Competing in a contest in order to win a scholarship. In each of these examples, the behavior is motivated by a desire to gain a reward or avoid a negative outcome. On the other side, intrinsic motivation involves engaging in a behavior because it is personally rewarding; essentially, performing an activity for its own sake rather than the desire for some external reward. Some example behaviors of intrinsic motivation include: Participating in a sport because you find the activity enjoyable; solving a word puzzle because you find the challenge fun and interesting; playing a game because you find it exciting. In each of these instances, the person’s behavior is motivated by an internal desire to participate in an activity for its own sake.
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Finally, the last part of this paper deals with student’s motivation in Albania and what are the main factors that have a strong impact on Albanian students’ desire to study.

1.1 Motivational Students Factors

A large number of students need motivation in every aspect of life. They need motivation from the start point to get up in the morning and get on the bus, to pay attention in class, and to do their homework. Teachers and parents try numerous things to motivate young people from giving positive feedback to rewarding students with money. But all adults preferred different method of motivation. While many students are naturally excited about learning, most others need (even expect) to be inspired, challenged and rewarded for in the teaching and learning process. Students learn when they can make sense of their environment, also when they are engaged. Building student motivation requires commitment on the part of the teacher to implement highly structured, multi-modal lessons. There are two important factors demonstrate how to motivate students: Catch Factors: grab the student’s attention (e.g., catchy graphics in a computer game, Jeopardy format for quiz review) and Hold Factors. It encourages the student to invest time and effort in a learning activity over a prolonged period of time (e.g., cooperative learning activity, ‘high-interest’ activity) [4].

II. Theories of Motivation

For many decades, scholars have been interested in motivation. Researchers have been made, always leading to long lasting debates because of scholars’ different points of view. As a consequence, different theories and approaches have emerged, each of them treating motivation from different aspect, but all coming to the conclusion that motivation is a very important factor influencing learning processes.

2.1 Behavioral Approach

Each of the major theoretical approaches in behavioral learning theory posits is a primary factor in motivation Classical conditioning states that biological responses to associated stimuli energize and direct behavior. Operant learning states the primary factor is consequences: reinforces are incentives to increase behavior and punishments are disincentives that result in a decrease in behavior.

The behavioral approach of motivation focuses on the extrinsic motivation of students. Behavioral learning emphasizes concepts such as reinforcement, conditioning and alternatives to punishment. Using reinforcement to increase behavior and removing reinforcement to extinguish behavior can also be applied to motivation. Behaviorists suggest that motivation can be increased, decreased, maintained, and even extinguished by its external consequences.

Behavioral approaches, or theories of motivation, contend that students are motivated because they can earn reinforces, which include even love of learning. The behaviorist approach is often identified with extrinsic motivation, which depends on external rewards such as grades or privileges. Generally, educators oppose the use of such rewards because they fear that these rewards will reduce the level of intrinsic motivation.

The following two approaches, the cognitive and the humanistic ones focus on intrinsic or internal motivation. A student is intrinsically motivated when he/she attempts to perform well because of interest, the satisfaction of doing well, a sense of achievement, factors related to the task itself, or other factors within the student.

2.2 Cognitive Approach

Cognitive approaches to motivation are based on the assumption that people’s perceptions and thoughts about activities and events, or intrinsic sources, influence the way in which they respond. The work of Albert Bandura, one of the most important supporters of cognitive approaches, emphasizes the importance of factors such as perceptions, feelings and attempts to bridge the gap between behavioral, cognitive and humanistic views of motivation. He suggests several sources of motivation, including a student’s self-efficacy, goals and prediction about the outcome of an activity. Motivation is affected by such thoughts as “Can I succeed?” or “What will happen if I fail?” These predictions about the outcome are, in part, due to student’s beliefs about their own ability.

Cognitive approaches suggest that students can be motivated to perform well, not only because of rewards such as grades or praise, but because of factors such for example curiosity, the need to obtain information or solve problem, can help them to understand. Teacher’s abilities to motivate students require sense of efficacy to understand what their students feel about themselves, what they care about, and this will allow them enough success to feel capable [5].

2.2.1 Attribution Theory

The basic principle of attribution theory as it applies to motivation is that a person’s own perception or attributions for success or failure determine the amount of effort the person will expend on that activity in the future.
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“The mainspring for motivation is the search for understanding, or attempting to comprehend, why events happen” [6]. Weiner developed this theory which he called attribution theory, to explain how students answer questions about the causality of their success and failures. The theory states that every individual tries to express success or failure of self and others by offering certain “attributions”. These attributions are either external or internal and either under control or not under control. That is, if an individual doesn’t believe he or she can be successful at a task or the individual does not see a connection between his or her activity and success or the individual does not value the results of success, then the probability is lowered that the individual will engage in the required learning theory.

Weiner argues that if teachers know how students answer questions such as “Why did I flunk this test?” or “Why did I get a good grade in this term paper?” They can influence students’ future performances. Understanding what students attribute their successes or failures to can provide teachers a place to begin working with students’ perceptions.

2.2.2 Achievement Motivation Theory

The cognitive theory of motivation that we will deal with in this section is the achievement motivation theory. This theory consists of a tendency to approach an achievement goal minus the tendency to avoid failure. Achievement motivation is defined as actions and feelings which are related to achieving some internalized standard of excellence. Students with strong achievement motivation tend to be self-reliant, take responsibility for their actions and calculated risks, plan prudently, and conserve time. Thus, achievement motivation is a good predictor of academic success and of life success.

Accordingly, a student’s tendency to approach an achievement goal is based on three aspects: the need for achievement, the probability of success on a task, and the value that the success has for student. A student’s tendency to avoid failure is also based on three characteristics: the need to avoid failure on the task, and the value that failure has for the student. For students who have high achievement motivation, failure on a task will increase their motivation, because they will want to improve. However, if students are low in achievement motivation, failure on a task will lower their motivation, because they are afraid of failure. For students who are high in achievement motivation, success will increase their motivation because their success has proven their ability. Significantly, for students who are low in achievement motivation, success also will increase their motivation because these students want to continue to succeed.

Atkinson is one of the most distinguished scholars who dealt with achievement motivation theory. He argues a necessity for altering classroom tasks for students on their level of achievement motivation. Varying assignments is essential for achieving a positive match between each student’s level of achievement motivation and classroom tasks. Students who have a high level of achievement motivation and little fear of failure are more likely to choose harder tasks [7].

2.3 Humanistic Approach

Humanistic approaches to motivation, like cognitive approaches, focus on the intrinsic motivation of students. These approaches were developed as a reaction to behaviorism. They take into account important affective characteristics of people-how they feel about themselves, and others, as well internal rewards such as “pride in their own accomplishment”.

In the classroom, humanism (which makes no reference for or against religion) emphasizes the human side of learning and the teacher’s need to consider students’ personal choices, needs and growth. One of the most influential theories reflecting the humanistic approach to motivation is Maslow’s need theory.

2.3.1 Maslow’s Need Theory

Maslow’s work led to additional attempts to develop a grand theory of motivation, a theory that would put all the factors influencing motivation into one model. He proposes five factors as the sources of motivation:

1) Instrumental Motivation (rewards and punishers)
2) Intrinsic Process Motivation (enjoyment, fun)
3) Goal Internalization (self-determined values and goals)
4) Internal Self Concept-based Motivation (matching behavior with internally-developed ideal self)
5) External Self Concept-based Motivation (matching behavior with externally-developed ideal self).

Individuals are influenced by all five factors, though in very degrees, that can change in specific situations. Factors two, three, and four are more internally-oriented. In the case of intrinsic process, the specific task is interesting and provides immediate internal reinforcement (e.g. cognitive or humanistic theory).

According to Maslow’s needs theory, if people experience unsatisfied needs, tension is created. This tension causes people to attempt to achieve goals to reduce or remove tension. Maslow believed “the most important single principle underlying all development” is gratification of needs. He developed a hierarchy of seven basic human needs: physiological needs – (nourishment), safety needs – (safety from danger, anxiety and

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Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Motivation can be defined as an inner state of need or desire that activates an individual to do something that will satisfy that need or desire. It refers to a desire or need internal to the individual, which is not possible for others to actually motivate an individual but others “must manipulate environmental variables that may result in an increase or decrease of motivation”. Basically every individual is motivated to do at least something. When it comes to learning processes, one has to differentiate between various kinds of motivation that lead to a positive learning effect. As mentioned above, motivation has to come from the learner or student himself in the first place. If he is not able to motivate himself, the teacher has to manipulate the student in that way, that he is motivated to learn. The difference and importance of these and other types of motivation for learning and second language acquisition will be explained in this chapter.

Intrinsic and extrinsic types of motivation have been widely studied, and the distinction between them has shed important light on both developmental and educational practices. Some definitions of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation will be given, followed by examining both of them in detail and also considering their role in the learning process. “Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation to engage in an activity for its own sake. People who are intrinsically motivated work on tasks because they find them enjoyable” [9]. Also “Intrinsic motivation is the innate propensity to engage one’s interest and exercise one’s capacities, and in doing so, to seek out and master optimal challenges” [10].

Extrinsic motivation to engage is an activity as a means to an end. Individuals who are extrinsically motivated work on tasks because they believe that participation will result in desirable outcomes.

Extrinsic motivation comes from within. It’s the sort of motivation that you get when you are doing something you enjoy. Think of something you love—perhaps computer games, playing the guitar, cooking, painting and any activity you enjoy.

Extrinsic motivation comes from outside. It is the motivation which gets to plough on with something you don’t like at all that much … because you know there’ll be a reward at the end. Like in college, you studied...
hard not because you loved studying, but because you wanted to get your degree. Or perhaps you worked in a job that bored you because you needed the paycheck. Many people think that extrinsic motivation is false [11].

IV. Methods
It is vital that both teacher and students have some confidence in the way teaching and learning take place. When either loses this confidence, motivation can be disastrously affected, but when both are comfortable with the method being used, success is much more likely.

4.1 Challenge
Motivation is closely bound up with a person’s desire to achieve a goal. As cited above, there are several effective ways to motivate students to learn. These approaches must be tailored to the development stages and needs of the particular students' involved. In motivating students, it is vital to create an academic environment that is highly challenging but within the intellectual reach of the students. Teachers should attempt to foster challenge seeking and persistent behavior in their students. In addition to giving them many activities in which they experience success, they must help students set goals because intrinsic motivation itself is closely goal-related. Students who learn in such an environment are stimulated by it and become more confident as they find themselves doing things they thought they never could.

People are best motivated when they are working toward personally meaningful goals in such a way that attainment requires activity at a continuously optimal level of difficulty. To use challenge as a factor influencing intrinsic motivation teachers must attend other things: help students set goals of uncertain attainment, give feedback regarding current status of accomplishments and help students’ short term and long term goals at intermediate levels of difficulty. They also should help students set multiple levels of goals, so that students can move on to new goals as they attain earlier ones.

4.2 Curiosity
Another factor that affects intrinsic motivation of students is curiosity. Curiosity is something in the in the physical environment that attracts students’ attention. So students’ curiosity will be raised if there is an optimal level of discrepancy between present knowledge or skills and what these could be if students engage in some activity. It is very important that teachers provoke students’ curiosity. They can highlight areas of inconsistency and incompleteness and focus on paradoxes or possible simplifications that will provoke the interest of students. A second thing teachers can do is to focus on activities, domains of knowledge, persons and problems that are already of interest of students.

4.3 Control
People in general have a basic tendency to want to control what happens to them. As regards learning, there are three elements influence the contribution of control to intrinsic motivation of the students. Learners perceive themselves to be in control when they see clear cause-effect relationship between their own actions and obtaining desired benefits. This means that a good way to enable students to feel in control (even when they are studying something “because they have to”) it let to them see the cause-effect relationship between something they really care about (and would freely choose) and the topic they are studying in class.

Free choice: If students perceive themselves as doing something because they want instead of because they are being forced to do it against their will, they feel in control of their learning.

The feeling of loss of control is one of the most powerful anti-motivating factors in education. When students feel that their teachers are using controlling techniques (rather than those that promote autonomous choice) they are likely to show reduced intrinsic motivation, and this has been shown to result in lower academic performance as well as substantial deterioration in other important characteristics. This is a major factor behind the need for natural rather than artificial reinforcement whenever possible. In the ideal learning situation, students will be most strongly motivated when they freely choose what they want to learn.

4.3 Fantasy
Fantasy as well can be another factor that influences intrinsic motivation. But how does it affect students’ motivation? When students put their fantasy to work in the learning process, they use mental images of things and situations that are not actually present to stimulate their learning process. Some things that teachers can do to foster students’ fantasy are: make a game out of students’ learning, help students imagine them-selves using the learning information in real life settings or make their fantasies intrinsic rather than extrinsic.

4.4 Competition
Competition can be another factor influencing intrinsic motivation. But how does it stimulate this kind of motivation? By using competition, students enhance their own self-esteem while being able to make comparisons of their own performance to the others. While all learners appear to be motivated to some extent by
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competition, the importance of competition is greater for some learners than for others. But competition doesn’t have to be a formal one. All that is required is that a person compares his/her performance to that of others. But we should be careful because not all competitions are examples of intrinsic motivation.

4.5 Recognition
Most people enjoy having their efforts and accomplishments recognized and appreciated by others. In order to obtain this, the activity of the students must be visible to others, so that they will be able to appreciate these efforts and accomplishments. Both competition and recognition are internal factors that influence intrinsic motivation, but however some differences between them should be stressed: recognition does not require a comparison to someone else’s performance and competition does not require the approval of an outsider.

V. Students’ Motivation In Albania
Educational quality has slipped relatively to 1989 standards and is becoming increasingly problematic as Albanian’s economy modernizes. After the basic education grades, enrollment rates are significantly lower in rural than for urban areas. There are several factors with a strong impact on Albanian students’ desire to study.

5.1 Family Impact
“When parents become involved, children do better in school, and they go to better schools.” [12]. Family involvement has a significant positive impact on student outcomes throughout the elementary, middle school, and secondary years. The family and society changing values and cultures have a great impact on the students’ motivation and their academic integration and performance. Now days, most of the Albanian families care about their children education at all levels and they do interfere in the children education. The father impact on the students’ desire to study and on their GPA was very clear. This impact was partially, attributed to the fact that some of the fathers of Albania students have high levels of education relatively and some others aim for better future for their children.

5.2 The Family Financial Status Impact
When the students’ family financial status is high, the students do not experience any pressure to help their families financially and usually they study carefully in order to be like their parents. Therefore, they dedicate more time for studying but some other students with sufficient financial aren’t interesting in studying because they think that they can live on their parents’ aid or can work in their parents’ company. Usually, the students with low economic level think to be someone in the future and dedicate more time to studying.

5.3 The Family Expectations Impact
The family high expectations exercise a desirable level of stress, which pressures (motivates) students to study and to pay more attention to their education and future. This result is supported by other empirical studies, which have found, as indicated in the review of literature, positive linear relationships between expectancy and subsequent academic achievement.

5.4 The Emotional Stability Impact
It is the most important factor which motivates students to study. The common observed emotional disturbances among the students, which related to depression because of love failure, loss of a parent, a relative, a friend and failure to meet parents’ high expectations.

5.5 The Teaching Methods Impact
This was another factor, which was unrelated to family but it influences students’ motivation. Teaching methods influence students’ attention, comprehension and achievement. Therefore, it had a strong impact on students’ desire to study.

VI. Structuring The Course To Motivate Students
There are several ways to structure the course to motivate students. Work from students’ interests: Focus more on teaching what the students might find interesting and not on what they are required to teach. The teachers have to find what the students find intrinsically motivating. And what their wants or needs are.

When possible, let students have some say in choosing what will be studied: Award students options on term papers or other assignments (but not on tests) and let them to decide which topics to explore in greater depth. Most probable, include optional or alternative units in the course.

Get to know your students: Whenever possible, be friendly with the students and share something about yourself with your students. Look for opportunities to let them know who you are and what you stand for.

Vary your teaching methods: The teaching methods must change according to classes’ size changes. The instructors have to break the routine and find a variety of teaching activities to encourage the students to

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engage with the subject material, to facilitate interaction among the students and between the students and the professor, and to revitalize the course by providing a change of pace. Different activities that instructors can use in their courses are role playing, debates, brainstorming, discussion, demonstrations, case studies, audiovisual presentations, guest speakers, or small group work. Instructors who teach in a variety of ways are able to meet the diverse learning of all of their students. Variety reawakens students’ involvement in the course and their motivation.

6.1 Ideas for Motivation

Motivation is not a quality that resides solely in the student. Instead, motivation is a result of the interaction between the student and his or her learning environment. A student’s level of motivation is greatly influenced by his or her learning history. A history of bad school experiences can make students very resistant to encouragement and incentives. As students become older, their desire to protect and to promote their self-image becomes significantly more important in determining their motivation level. Teachers can increase the attractiveness of an academic activity or assignment through changes in the:

- **Learning environment**: The situation in which we work can encourage us to give our best effort or discourage us from even trying to perform. Let students choose their seat location and study partners. Enroll students to come up with rules and guidelines for effective classroom learning. Another important point is to create a memory-friendly classroom. Post assignments and due dates, written steps for multi-step tasks, etc.
- **Social community**: We define ourselves in relation to others by our social relationships. These connections are a central motivator for most people. Ask students to complete a learning-preferences questionnaire. Also hold weekly 5-minute ‘micro-meetings’ with the group or class. Is necessary to use ‘2 X 10’ rule: Hold 2-minute friendly conversations across 10 days with students who are not attached to learning and in the end to provide 3 positive interactions with students for every ‘negative’ interactions (e.g., reprimand).
- **Academic activity**: Motivated students in schools are engaged in interesting activities that guarantee a high success rate and relate to real-world issues. During the lesson select fun, imaginative activities for reviewing academic material. The professors have to give prior to assignments, have students set work or learning goals. Also, have students rate their own progress toward their goals. The students learn by mistake so celebrate mistakes as opportunities for learning.
- **Learning challenge**: Every learner presents a unique profile of strengths and weaknesses. We unlock motivation when we acknowledge and address unique learning profiles. Avoid ‘stigmatizing’ as low performers those students who require remedial academic support. Use a ‘think-aloud’ approach when introducing a skill or strategy. When students are tired or frustrated, allow them to take a brief break. Also allow frequent opportunities for ‘choice’ in structuring instructional setting and activities.
- **Outcome or payoff**: Learning is a motivating activity when the learner can count on short- or long-term payoffs for mastering the material being taught. It is essential to reward student effort along with quality of completed work and build in short-term rewards (e.g., increased free time, pencils, positive note home) for student effort, work completion. At the end, give students frequent positive attention (at least 3 positives for each negative interaction).

6.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered for Albanian students:

1. Students should be able to understand that education is firstly for their own benefit before than being important for any other person.
2. The school should employ trained instructors who are interested in students’ improvement.
3. Schools must work a lot on giving awards to students who perform well as far as this will increase the students’ motivation.
4. There should be organizations from the local government education for the schools that performed well during a specific period, in order to motivate students and teachers in other academic competitions.
5. Several debates, projects, assignments and competitions among different classes or different schools.
6. Teachers should be hard working and careful on what method they choose during the teaching process.
7. Parents have a key role on supporting their children and offer them an appropriate environment for an easy studying.
8. Parents should show patience, love and rewards to their children for their home works or their high results at school.
VII. Conclusion

Motivation is an important subject in management, organizational behavior and psychology in general. It is the key to student learning, students’ educational experience and in later life. It consists of different factors that are keeping us interested in some specific subject, job, role and goal achieving. Those factors could be either extrinsic or intrinsic, and sometimes both.

This paper showed that there are a positive and/or a negative impact on students’ motivation (desire to study). However, the students tend to attribute their success, firstly, to their self-desire (internal factors) then to their family support and encouragement. Parents and every family member should be involved in motivation of students. The family financial support, encouragement and following up have positive impact on students’ performance as measured by their GPA. Nowadays, the efforts must find ways to increase the motivation needed in the learning process such as to raise academic standards, improve the effectiveness of teachers, and identify and assist low-performing schools. Teachers and principals have a big responsibility in motivating students. In their approach to teaching-learning environment, teachers should use skills and methods of teaching that will help to motivate students. They should understand that students vary in their rate of assimilation, hence, the need to adopt different techniques in teaching-learning situation. Instructors must understand that they are dealing with human beings, not machines, and that motivation involves getting people to do something because they want to do it.

The extrinsic motivation is the external reward for matching the expectations. Therefore, the intrinsic motivation is the best side of motivation, but it is very hard to control and improve it. It is easier to establish intrinsic motivation in classes with fewer students, where you can perform an individual approach. The role of teacher-student relationships is fundamental in the development of intrinsic motivation, and controlling the side effects of extrinsic. By creating trusting, supporting relationship the students tend to copy the patterns of the respected teacher, which instantly motivates them to learn the selected subject.

It will be better if the teachers try to develop trusting, mutually affected, respectful relationship with their students, which is surely to lead to motivation that comes from student’s hearts. Most students respond positively to a well-organized course taught by an enthusiastic instructor who has a genuine interest in students and what they learn. Motivation of students will play great role in minimizing examination malpractices and go a long way in seeing to the apprehension of educational goal.

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