

Motivating Students to Learn

Motivation is one of the most important ingredients of effective instruction and a critical component of learning. In fact, for Borah (2021), the success or failure of learning depends on the learners' motivation. Motivation in general is defined as the driving force in any situation that leads to action, or the internal process that activates, guides, and maintains behavior over time. To use Slavin's (2018) words, "motivation is what gets you going, keeps you going, and determines where you're trying to go" (p. 248).

Types of Motivation

Intrinsic Motivation

The stimulus in this type of motivation is internal to the person; be it biological, emotional, social, etc. with no expectation of external rewards. "Intrinsic motivation is driven by an interest or enjoyment which a person feels in a task" and activities are undertaken for "self-pleasure and individual satisfaction" (Borah, 2021, p. 550). When it comes to education, intrinsic motivation is the inner force that drives students to engage in academic activities, because they are interested in and enjoy the learning process. In the same line of thought, Slavin (2018, p. 260) explains:

Sometimes a course of study is so fascinating and useful to students that they are willing to do the work required to learn the material with no incentive other than the interest level of the material itself. For example, many students would gladly take auto mechanics or photography courses and work hard in them, even if the courses offered no credit or grades. For these students the favorite subject itself has enough **intrinsic incentive** value to motivate them to learn.

Extrinsic motivation

The stimulus in extrinsic motivation comes from outside factors like some kind of reward, social approval, or appreciation (Borah, 2021). Richards and Schmidt (2010) explain that extrinsic motivation is “driven by external factors such as parental pressure, societal expectations, academic requirements, or other sources of rewards and punishments (p. 738). Since much of what students receive in schools is not inherently interesting and as intrinsic motivation generally declines year after year (Slavin, 2018), students will need to be extrinsically motivated to keep working day in and day out.

Enhancing Intrinsic Motivation and Providing Extrinsic Incentives

In order to have motivated students and sustain their motivation, teachers must work on enhancing or at least maintaining their intrinsic motivation and at the same time providing appropriate extrinsic stimuli. Slavin (2012) provides a set of recommendations regarding the two types of motivation as follows:

- Enhancing intrinsic motivation through
 - Creating a supportive climate
 - Arousing interest
 - Maintaining curiosity
 - Setting challenging tasks and ambitious goals
 - Using a variety of interesting presentation modes
 - Helping students make choices and set their own goals

- Providing extrinsic incentives through
 - Expressing clear expectation
 - Providing clear, immediate and frequent feedback
 - Increasing the value and availability of extrinsic motivators

References

Borah, M. (2021). Motivation in Learning. *Journal of Critical Review*, 8(2), 550-52.

Richards, J. C. & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 4th ed. Edinburgh Gate: Pearson Education Limited.

Slavin, R. E. (2018). *Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice*, 12th ed. NY: Pearson.