ACADEMIC MOTIVATION OF STUDENTS FOR LEARNING

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Abstract: *In today's society an essential factor is given by the freedom to choose, so we can identify two general trends that have an impact on our students: on the one hand the freedom offered by the use of technology and the impact of the Internet in students' lives. We especially argue the multiple diversity of information sources to which students have access, the possibility to organize their entire training, information, learning activity standing in front of the computer or tablet. The second direction given by the globalism we all live in, so that everyone can change their career at any time or we can have access to resources and products from any corner of the world. From an educational perspective we are concerned with understanding the mechanisms underlying students' motivation when they are put in the situation of choice. There is a series of researches, which highlight the general aspects that motivate and those that demotivate students. At the same time, there is a list from which we start to arrive at the measures we put in place to increase motivation. Robinson and Fielding (2010) summarizing the research in the literature formulates: children are motivated by interest in the topic, success (they find satisfaction in the results of their work), challenge (and the feeling that they have the freedom to make mistakes), activities that they propose (to feel that they are useful, that they have a clear purpose to pursue and that they have the ability to complete them on time). On the other hand, children are demotivated and bored when the activity is routine (... is monotonous, does not present a challenge and has nothing new in it) and is perceived as a waste of time. (Pânişoară I.O., 2017, p. 118)The same author paraphrasing what Aguilar and Lafaix (2009) said that a school subject is like a jewelry box. If the box is beautiful, the jewelry looks more valuable. Do not rely on the intrinsic value of the subject you teach. You have the "jewel", but you also need the box. (Pânişoară I.O., 2017, p. 118) In this sense, we aim to analyze the particularities of students' motivation from the perspective of their involvement in a responsible and valuable learning process. Thus, the premises are the learning process as an individual activity in which the student is involved depending on the specific motivation of each one. Even if the students, colleagues of the same year, within the same training program, aim at obtaining the same qualification and acquiring its specific competencies, each has its own motivation and individual way of relating to the learning process.*

Keywords: *motivation; learning; efficiency; training strategies.*

I. Theoretical premises

From the perspective of an effective training strategy, this must allow the implementation of all means that can lead the student to achieve the goal in the learning process. But these pedagogical means, no matter how effective they are, do not absolutely guarantee the acquisition by the students of the totality of the targeted content. Didactics has not yet

reached this stage of effectiveness, but several common principles for improving training have been established, which are, at the same time, conditions of any effective teaching strategy (N. Lebrun, S. Berthelot, 1994): the organization structured and grading of contents; student motivation; active student participation; practical-applicative character and frequent feedback; observing the learning pace of learners.

Trif, L., Voiculescu, E., (2013) present according to the mentioned authors a description of the conditions of efficiency of learning strategies, as follows:

1. Organization and grading of contents. Numerous researches reveal that the acquisition of knowledge or a new behavior is favored only if it is done in small successive stages and in a progressive order; the assimilation of each stage can only be done if the previous ones are assimilated.

2. Student motivation. Motivation must be sustained and strengthened. There are conditions that favor or trigger the motivation of the learner, such as: clear and precise notification of students about the objectives and goals pursued; presenting learning in a realistic and practical way; challenging students and creating conditions for success; creating in students the belief that the goal is not only desirable but also achievable; informing students of the progress made and using encouragement or other forms of reward; adapting the level of difficulty to the individual and to his own evolution; organizing training conditions so as to ensure a fair balance between success and failure, by dosing the difficulty of learning tasks (if the task is very easy, the learner risks underestimating it, and if it is too difficult he risks being frustrated by it).

3. Participation. Learning is achieved through the physical and mental activity of the student. The higher the student's participation, the better his performance will be. On the one hand, student participation can be encouraged by asking judicious and appropriate questions; asking good questions at the right time allows the student to update what they have assimilated or what is being assimilated. On the other hand, the formation of a skill, a behavior or a method of work is largely facilitated if the student is allowed to "practice" the given task or to demonstrate the stages of the task being acquired. Obviously, the level of participation varies considerably depending on the activity in which the student is engaged. The student who participates in his instruction is more likely to succeed than the one who remains passive.

4. Feedback aims to improve the acquisition, informing the student on the requirements of the educator or on the learning objectives and providing the necessary recommendations in the acquisition of the targeted performance. On the other hand, it allows the teacher a permanent adjustment of the content and pace of communication.

5. Respecting the learning rhythm. A pedagogical strategy is integrated in a set of pedagogical interventions, all the greater as they are situated in a collective or an individualized learning. Din această perspectiva evidențiem un model de motivație academică (MUSIC), care poate fi folosit de către profesori în proiectarea cursurilor, astfel încât studenții să fie implicați în activitatea de învățare.

Jones (2018, pp. 195-196), showed that the five components of the MUSIC model come from different theories, as follows: the concept of empowerment is associated with the theory of autonomy developed by Deci and Ryan, the concept of utility is related to "utility value" promoted by Wigfield and Eccles, the concept of success also comes from another term used by Wigfield and Eccles (expectation of success), the concept of interest is associated with the construct of "situational interest" discussed by Hidi and Renninger and the last, the concept of care has similarities to the construct of the same name promoted by Noddings. In conclusion, the five main components of the MUSIC motivation model are: empowerment, utility, success, interest and care. The results of several studies from 2016-2019 in which the author of the questionnaire participated showed that the questionnaire is valid, MUSIC

structures being associated with several aspects such as: motivation, commitment, identification with a field, career objectives, course qualifications and instructor qualifications.

II.   Purpose of the Study

Study objectives:
- Identifying students' abilities to control the learning process by taking responsibility and awareness of the following aspects: making a personal / individual decision on how to achieve the objectives of the course; the freedom to solve and complete the tasks of the course in one's own way; having control over how students learn the content of the course;
- Identifying students' abilities to understand the usefulness of the contents, of the proposed knowledge for the future activity and their application in practice, in real or professional life
- Identifying students' abilities to appreciate the importance of learning success, confidence in success, ability to solve academic tasks - analysis of students 'perception of the teacher's care and interest in issues related to: students' ability to solve academic tasks or the need for help from the teacher, the emotional state of students, the friendly attitude of the teacher.
- Analysis of the correlations between students' learning ability, confidence in success in the learning process and the teacher's attitude of empathy, support and care.

Research Methods

Sample

It consisted of 214 people, with an average age of 34.22 years (SD = 9,659); the group included 203 females and 11 males, students in the Master's Programs: Educational Management - first and second year and Psychopedagogy of Early Education - first and second year and small schooling, in the field of science of education. These individuals were invited to complete the questionnaire of this research. The questionnaire was electronically distributed.

Table 1. Sample distribution (sex, specializations and years)

	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Sex * Specializarea	214	100,0%	0	0,0%	214	100,0%

Sex * Specializarea Crosstabulation

Instruments

The MUSIC inventory proposes a motivation model with five main components: empowerment, utility, success, interest and care. The MUSIC motivation model (Jones, 2009, 2018) can be used in any field at any class level
   (a) to design instructions that motivate students,
   (b) to diagnose motivational strengths and weaknesses in training; and
   (c) investigate the relationships between critical factors for student motivation.

The five key principles of the model are as follows. "The instructor must ensure that students:

      1. to feel empowered to be able to make decisions about some aspects of their learning,

      2. understand why what they learn is useful for their short- or long-term goals,

      3. I believe that they can succeed if they make the necessary effort,

      4. They are interested in content and training activities and

      5. I believe that others in the learning environment, such as the instructor and other students, care about their own learning and that of them as a person "(Jones, 2020).

Statistical processing

      It aimed to obtain more data to explore objectivesof the study by using analyzes of averages, frequencies and correlations.

III.   Findings

The obtained results are grouped around the 5 directions of academic analysis with the formulated objectives and the issue of the present research:
- Identifying students' abilities to control the learning process by taking responsibility and awareness: making a personal / individual decision on how to achieve the objectives of the course; the freedom to solve and complete the tasks of the course in one's own way; having control over how students learn the content of the course.The statistical data show that in the vast majority of cases the answers denote a significant control of the students, according to Table 2:

Table2. Ability, responsibility to control the learning process (items: 2, 8, 17)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
TM_ [2. I have the opportunity to decide for myself how to meet the objectives of the course]	2	5	4	27	101	75
TM_ [8.I have the freedom to complete the course assignments in my own way]	2	5	3	8	89	107
TM_ [17. I have the control over how I learn the course content]	2	5	1	6	95	105

- Identifying the students' abilities to understand the usefulness of the contents, of the proposed knowledge for the future activity and their application in practice, in real or

*professional life.*Statistical data show a significant agreement from students for all three variables, according to Table 3

Table3. The usefulness of the contents, of the knowledge and their application in practice (items: 19, 21, 23)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
TM_ [19.Consider course tasks relevant to my future]	4	4	2	6	70	128
TM_ [21.I will be able to use the knowledge gained in this course]	2	3	4	5	80	120
TM_ [23.The knowledge I acquire in this course is important for my future]	2	5	0	8	62	137

- *Identifying students' abilities to appreciate the importance of success in learning, confidence in success, ability to solve academic tasks.*

Table4. The usefulness of the contents, of the knowledge and their application in practice (items: 7, 10)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
TM_ [7. I am confident that I can successfully complete the course assignments]	1	4	4	2	77	126
TM_ [10. I feel that I can succeed in the face of the academic challenges encountered in this course]	2	6	2	5	100	99

- Statistical data show a direct and statistically significant correlation for all five variables, according to Table 5

Table.5. Success, confidence in successfully solving academic tasks (items: 7, 10) in correlation with control over academic tasks (items: 2, 8, 17)

Correlations

		TM_ [7. I am confident that I can successfully complete the course assignments]	TM_ [10. I feel that I can succeed in the face of the academic challenges encountered in this course]	TM_ [2. I have the opportunity to decide for myself how to meet the objectives of the course]	TM_ [8. I have the freedom to complete the course assignments in my own way]	TM_ [17. I have the control over how I learn the course content]
TM_ [7. I am confident that I can successfully complete the course assignments]	Pearson Correlation	1	,808**	,665**	,799**	,821**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000	,000
	N	214	214	214	214	214
TM_ [10. I feel that I can succeed in the face of the academic challenges encountered in this course]	Pearson Correlation	,808**	1	,757**	,745**	,799**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,000	,000
	N	214	214	214	214	214
TM_ [2. I have the opportunity to decide for myself how to meet the objectives of the course]	Pearson Correlation	,665**	,757**	1	,734**	,730**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,000	,000
	N	214	214	214	214	214
TM_ [8. I have the freedom to complete the course assignments in my own way]	Pearson Correlation	,799**	,745**	,734**	1	,840**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000		,000
	N	214	214	214	214	214
TM_ [17. I have the control over how I learn the course content]	Pearson Correlation	,821**	,799**	,730**	,840**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	,000	
	N	214	214	214	214	214

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

- Analysis of the correlations between students' learning ability, confidence in success in the learning process and the teacher's attitude of empathy, support and care. The statistical data show a direct and significant correlation for all involved variables, according to Table 6.

Table 6. Correlations between learning ability, confidence that he could succeed in the course and teacher care (items: 2, 7, 22, 24, 25)

		TM_ [2. I have the opportunity to decide for myself how to meet the objectives of the course]	TM_ [7. I am confident that I can successfully complete the course assignments]	TM_ [22. The teacher is respectful of me]	TM_ [24. The teacher has a friendly attitude]	TM_ [25. The teacher cares about my emotions]
TM_ [2. I have the opportunity to decide for myself how to meet the objectives of the course]	Pearson Correlation	1	,665**	,676**	,629**	,659**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000	,000
	N	214	214	214	214	214
TM_ [7. I am confident that I can successfully complete the course assignments]	Pearson Correlation	,665**	1	,796**	,737**	,698**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,000	,000
	N	214	214	214	214	214
TM_ [22. The teacher is respectful of me]	Pearson Correlation	,676**	,796**	1	,843**	,808**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,000	,000
	N	214	214	214	214	214
TM_ [24.The teacher has a friendly attitude]	Pearson Correlation	,629**	,737**	,843**	1	,877**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000		,000
	N	214	214	214	214	214
TM_ [25. The teacher cares about my emotions]	Pearson Correlation	,659**	,698**	,808**	,877**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	,000	
	N	214	214	214	214	214

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Conclusions

What is important is that the training models are, as far as possible, in harmony with characteristics of students' motivation. Depending on the age and experience of the students, a training system can be located according to a continuum, going from a first level (where the teacher is responsible for the course content, learning tasks and evaluation of the training; where the student himself is responsible for to assimilate what was proposed to him as learning tasks, in an indicated time) at a second level (where the role of the student is emphasized in choosing, defining his objectives and learning activities; where the teacher remains available to guide the student throughout his career). The use of the Music questionnaire brought results that confirm the possibilities for students to decide and their good relationship with teachers.

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