

INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION TO PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

Olga D. MOLDOVAN, PhD,
“Aurel Vlaicu” University of Arad
Faculty of Science of Education, Psychology and Social Work
od_moldovan@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The motivation is one of the most important element in the self-adjustment of the individual. Ones of the motivation forms ar innate but others, more complex and numerous are formed during the human life depeding on the external environment particularities and on the specificity of the necessity states. In the learning process, the motivation is primarily extrinsic and than it becomes intrinsic. The author presents her results on two samples of primary school children, regarding the transformation of extrinsic learning motivation into intrinsic learning motivation. The results show that using adequate methods we can contribute to a faster transformation of the extrinsic motivation into an intrinsic one, which is more significant for a real learning and understanding.*

Key words: *extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, learning process, primary school children.*

The motivation is an important leverage in the self-adjustment individual process, a driving force behind the entire psychic and human development. This means that the selection and the assimilation, as well as the sedimentation of the external influences will be produced depending on the motivational structure of personality. The motivation sentizes in different ways the person to the external influences, making it more or less permeable to it. In this way we can understand why one and the same influence produces different effects to different persons, or to the same person in different moments of its life. The motivation by its propellants and tensional character restructures and replaces, sediments and increases the psychic construction material of the individual (Butler, McManus, 2002).

Some of the motivation forms, relatively simple and few in number, were formed during the phylogenesis and are given to the human being by birth. Others, more complex and numerous, are formed during the life, being dependent both on the external environment particularities and of the internal needs state specificity already existing, of their manner of assimilation and sedimentation. Basically they are not anything else but the external stimulations which repeatedly act on the individual and by satisfying some adjustemt requirements, were taken, internalized and transformed into internal conditions. The independence degree from the current situation, however, is variable and never absolute (Cosmovici, 1996).

In the real existence of the human being are made in fonction different motivation forms, which are usually classified, two by two, in opposite and contrary pairs. Thus we have: positive and negative motivation; intrinsic and extrinsic motivation; cognitive and affective motivation and so on.

The classification in extrinsic and intrinsic motivation takes into account its producing source. If the generating source is inside the subject, in his personal needs, if it is solidar with the activity unfold by the subject, than we speak about a direct or intrinsic motivation. The specificity of this kind of motivation consists in its satisfaction by the achievement of the activity itself. If the generating source is outside the subject, being suggested or imposed by another person, than we speak about indirect or extrinsic motivation

The achievement motivation is based on a trend that seems to have a series of native premises which are represented by the attempt to creatively influence the environment by the tendence to affirmation and by the desire of affirmation. It is manifested in the attempt to achieve skills and the desire to achieve successful performance in a valued social action. In both its forms, these aspirations fosters the child's progress.

The achievement motivation takes a maximum intensity when the individual knows that his actions will be judged by a standard. The desire to achieve success depends, of course, on the performance attractiveness. As much the performance is more attractive, the greater will be the effort of the individual. The second factor that influences a person's efforts is the difficulty of the task to solve. The strangeness consists in the fact that the performance is more attractive when it is very difficult, unless it is easy to achieve (Costin, 2014, p.61).

The desire to gain success, however, is counteracted by the fear of failure, so that the behavior of a person in a competition will be influenced by the dialectical positive trends in their struggle with the inhibition of fear created (Lieury, 2002).

The reasons that make the child to come to school, to listen the teachers and to learn might be divided into two main groups (G. Kelemen, 2014):

- extrinsic motivation – when the student falls into school discipline without a direct interest in what is taught, but to receive, directly or indirectly, certain rewards, especially moral ones;

- intrinsic motivation – where the learning and the acquiring knowledge interests directly the student.

In the case of extrinsic motivation there are:

The desire for affiliation, the child goes to school and learn conscientiously especially to please the family which is interested in what is made at school, praises him and sometimes rewards him. To this is added, sometimes the desire to meet the expectations of the teacher and of the professor. Also in this category is included the wish to be as the other kids in the neighborhood, the concern to do what generally people of his age do – so it is manifest a tendency towards conformism.

Normative trends are represented by the habit to obey the rules or obligations, and the conformism stems from them. The parents, the teachers and the society are asking him to submit to a social indoctrination and the child learned to listen, to comply. (Cosmovici, Iacob,1999).

The fear of the consequences of disobedience may accompany the comply to duty. The fear, the dominant sentiment in schools 100 years ago, disappeared completely during the communist dictatorship, when, if the student does not learn, the teacher was punished in various ways. In the civilized countries (Sweden for example), without in any way bully a child, everyone knows that if you do not promote on merit 8 or 9 classes mandatory, you can not get any job. And then there is an imminent danger for the lazy. This minimal concern is needed to be able to fight the indifference of some school children, fueled by the indifference of their families.

The ambition, the desire to be among the first is also a stimulant in some cases. It is frequently meet in small classes where many students shake, raising their hand to answer a question. Some families exaggerate pretending that their boy or girl must be necessarily among winners. Exaggeration of this kind can lead to a negative attitude of competition and hostility towards rivals. It is more accurate to stimulate race with itself, the desire to achieve better results increasingly, without looking with envy at the performance of others (Roman, Balaş, 2014).

In the center of intrinsic motivation is curiosity, that means the desire to know much more. The curiosity is based on a native impulse and is present mainly in the first years of school. Keeping it awake depends on the skill of the teacher and is an important factor of the assimilated knowledge durability. Curiosity becomes permanent when it is combined with beliefs about the value of culture, which facilitates the communication with others and provides a great wealth of experiences, sources of satisfaction and equanimity. In the same motivational framework appears the aspiration for competence, the desire to become a good professional. In this case, the effort is channeled into subjects related to the future job of the subject (Moldovan, Ignat, Bălaş-Timar, 2011).

The teacher and the professor use all these reasons that appear with a variable weight from one student to another, but he must cultivate by all means the intrinsic motivation.

Research hypotheses:

In our research we started, based on the theoretical documentation that we had consulted, from the following hypotheses:

- if there is any intrinsic motivation to young school children, then it can be highlighted and probably varies by age of the child;

- if there is intrinsic motivation in small school child there must be ways that it can be developed at an optimal level for learning.

Consistent with these hypotheses, we have established the following **objectives** to support the research plan:

- to find a way to be able to highlight the intrinsic motivation at little schoolchildren;

- to appreciate the differences existent on intrinsic motivation among children in the first grade and fourth grade;

- to build a method that can develop the intrinsic motivation;

- to appreciate the usefulness of the practical application of this method.

Groups studied

For practical verification of the proposed hypotheses, we studied two groups of children in primary education, more precisely two classes, with an equally effective school:

- the first group consists of children from the first class - number of pupils was equal to 20 of which were 13 boys and 7 girls.
- the second group was composed of students from grade IV, all numbered 20, of which 14 boys and 6 girls.

Methodology

We initially applied a questionnaire to the children to see to which of them can be highlighted the intrinsic motivation.

In the second phase we worked closely with the class I, under the form of games to stimulate the curiosity, for 2 months. The class IV had to follow the normal program without any intervention.

At the end of the experiment we used a questionnaire applied to both classes again to ascertain whether the method we used had any results in the development of intrinsic motivation in subjects in the experimental group.

Results and discussions

The questionnaire in the initial phase, shows that at the children in the first class, the learning intrinsic motivation is present only in two subjects, which states that they want to learn to know more, to read more about certain animals or phenomena which interest them (see figure 1).

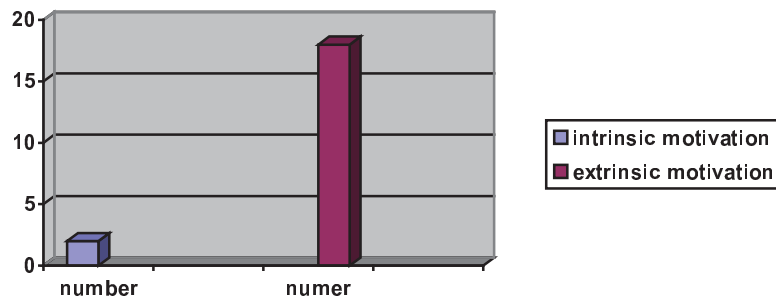


Fig.1. The presence of the intrinsic motivation to the children from the first class

Somehow we expect this result, because all references in the literature reveals that intrinsic motivation occurs in children later in terms of chronological age. In this context, the situation shown in Figure 1 is normal.

The other 18 children in the experimental group meet extrinsic motivation and their situation is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

The causes of extrinsic motivation to the children from the first class

The causes of extrinsic motivation	Number
- not upset her mother	8
- not upset the teacher	6

- to obtain material rewards - sweets, toys	2
- to go on the weekend trip	1
- to obtain approval for playing on the computer	1
Total children	18

We can easily notice that the majority of children (a total of 8 students) learn not to upset her mother. At this age the attachment to the mother person is still very strong. Do not forget that the first assessment was made in the first semester and the children did not have the time to become too attached to the teacher. At this age, the beginning of the road to the school, the mother still remains the main figure in the affection order.

A number almost as large (6 students) learn to not upset the school teacher. For these the importance of the maternal figure begins to be gradually replaced by the importance of the figure of the teacher. According to most studies in the psychological literature in this period of the school life, the teacher becomes the central figure, the most important person, who knows everything, who also teaches him to read and write.

The other five children learn to obtain different types of material rewards (candy, toys, weekend trips, permission to play on the computer). We must support, firmly, that this attitude of the parents (to conditionate the learning and its results of various material rewards) is completely erroneous.

Due to this compliance, children will be dominated over the life by the exaggerated importance of the material values at the expense of the intellectual and spiritual ones. At the age when the children should develop the curiosity, the desire to know as much about the world and nature surrounding, this category of parents inhibits the child by making mercantile impulses learning.

For children in fourth grade, the presence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is shown in Figure 2.

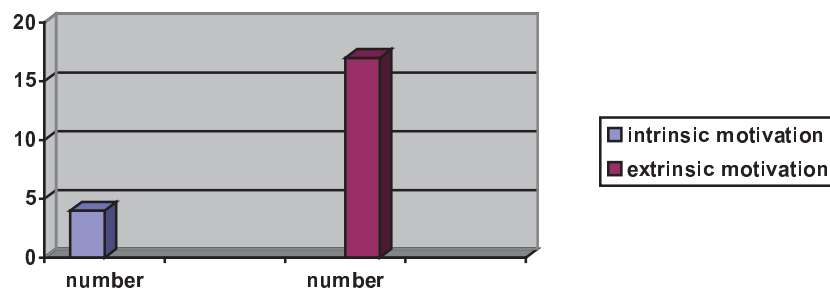


Fig. 2. The presence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation at the fourth class children.

The situation is roughly similar. Most of the children from the fourth class (16 students) learn extrinsic motivated versus only four students who are intrinsically motivated. Of extrinsically motivated students, the explaining reasons given by them is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

The causes of extrinsic motivation to the children from the fourth class

The causes of extrinsic motivation	Number
- not upset her mother	4
- not upset the teacher	8
- to obtain material rewards - sweets, toys	1
- to go on the weekend trip	1
- to obtain approval for playing on the computer	2
Total children	18

In class IV the teacher is already the central figure in the school-children life, so most students presenting extrinsic motivation explains this by not upset the teacher (8 students). The ones for whom the mother still remains of primary importance is declining (4 students). The number of children that motivate the learning by the material rewards is about the same. In the fourth grade, the students have come to know better the teacher, to attach to her and to understand that her account matters to the position that they will get in the team of students. Therefore, we consider, the number of students who are learning to not upset the teacher is greater than those who do not want to upset their mother. Gradually, the importance of the maternal figure and of the family, lose ground in the favor of the teacher, at this age, and later (in the preadolescent period) in the favor of friends.

The number of children who have intrinsic motivation is more than twice in the class IV than to class I. This can be explained, on the one hand by the development and the maturation of children in natural way to the grade IV and on the other by the tact and skills of the teacher to develop the children's intrinsic motivation, the curiosity to know, in which the only reward is the satisfaction that you know more, that you learn something new, that you understand a thing that until then you could not understand.

For two months, we worked closely with the experimental group (consisting of children from the Class I) to stimulate intrinsic motivation. We used the method of didactic games. These games were built after the model of the computer games where to go from one level to another is necessary to solve a problem, or to find a specific explanation or information which is the key to access the further level. Thus we considered that it will be stimulated the desire to know, to solve problems, to gain information, allowing access to further action.

Games have been used daily for about an hour and was found from the beginning, the children's interest in this type of activity. Often, children show increased impatience forward from one day to another, if the game continues for a period of time.

We have encountered cases where the children went home and tried to read for themselves about the things they encountered in the game, and they asked their parents to get as much information about the objects, beings or phenomena to which they were confronted in the situations created the teacher. Some even have called to the school library, asking the librarian books related to the situations encountered.

Activities undertaken enjoyed much attention from the children who were involved body and soul in finding any information or correct answers to pass to the next level.

The class IV continued school work normally without working with them to develop intrinsic motivation.

At the end of the two months that we have given the experiment were applied to the children the same questionnaires as in the beginning, in order to make an assessment of the effects of the methods used. The results of the experimental class are shown in Figure 3.

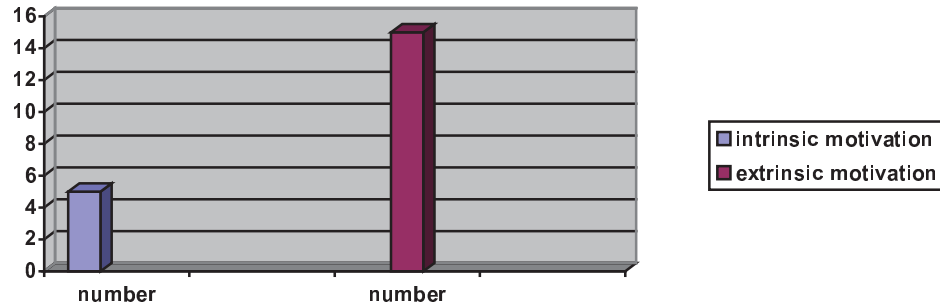


Figure 3. The learning motivation after the experiment to the first class.

We can observe that there is an increased number of children who presents intrinsic motivation, after the two month of the experimental methods.

The comparative situation between the beginning and end of the experiment, for the group of children of the class I is shown in Figure 4.

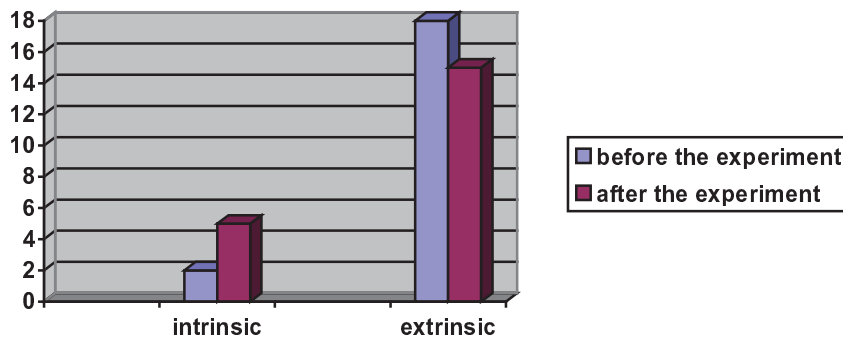


Figure 4. Comparative presentation of learning motivation before and after the experiment for the children in class I.

It is found that the number of children who are intrinsically motivated for learning increases by 4 and thus decreases with four the number of children who exhibited extrinsic motivation in learning. We believe that the results obtained were satisfactory, since the duration (two months) of the experiment. If we extrapolate, and

such activities would be made permanent, the number of children that would be determined to learn by intrinsic motivation would increase significantly.

During the experiment, we even found some cases very encouraging for the development of children. Those who had found information and solutions, tried to explain to those who had failed to obtain such information or who had blocked the work of solving the task. We believe therefore that the proposed activities not only increased the number of children with intrinsic motivation, but sometimes strengthened and initiated actions to help those left behind, to share information and collaboration.

For the control group, to which was held normal educational process without introducing activities to stimulate intrinsic motivation (kids class IV) we notice a much smaller increase in the number of children with intrinsic motivation (increase only by 1 unit) in the time interval in which the experimental group is provided by the experiment worked. We consider that this increase is only the effect of maturation and normal development of children, without any other influences on the transformation of extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation.

In order to have an overview of the progress of the two classes, and in particular of the effectiveness of the method used, we tried putting them in a single graph (see Table 3 and Figure 5).

Table 3
Synthetic presentation of learning motivation before and after the experiment in the two classes

	Class I		Class IV	
	before	after	before	after
Intrinsic motivation	2	6	4	5
Extrinsic motivation	18	14	16	15

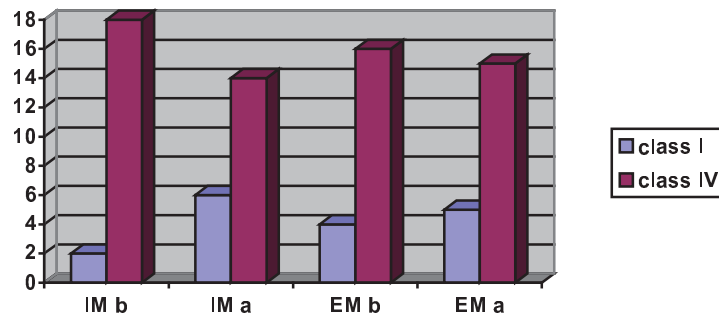


Figure 5. Synthetic presentation of learning motivation before and after the experiment in the two classes

where: IM b = intrinsic motivation before
IM a = intrinsic motivation after

EM b = extrinsic motivation before

EM a = extrinsic motivation after

This image is an argument for the utility of the new experimental method introduced in the first class. If at the control group, by developing simple, natural and psycho-biological maturation has been registered a progress by only one unit in the experimental group (which still was lower in age and maturity level of bio-psychic) is an increase of 4 units. This growth allow us to ascribe the method used by us and we state that intrinsic motivation to the young school-children can be improved significantly, resulting in internalization of the reasons for which they want to learn and thus to an improved knowledge process.

Conclusions

Our research showed that there is intrinsic motivation to the children from the primary school and that this motivation can be highlighted in an experimental manner. The use of the didactic games is a method which could lead to better results regarding the improvement of the intrinsic motivation.

In addition, stimulating children's curiosity was achieved net enrichment of their vocabulary, have developed strategies of thought and action that can help them to solve the experimental tasks proposed.

In this way, the hypotheses made by us at the beginning of the research found check in practice and the targets which arose after formulating hypotheses, were fully met.

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