



The Importance of Motivation in an Educational Environment

L'importanza della motivazione in un ambiente educativo

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ABSTRACT

In this article we will discuss how the concept of motivation in education, affects the learning process of students. Lack of motivation in education can undermine the process of their learning. Are students motivated to cumulating knowledge, without internal incentives (psychological, emotional) or external (social - education)? How to build a combination of internal factors and external motivational between lecturer and student, for learning function in the academic environment? All students, including teachers, are motivated in different ways and forms. For this reason, the educational environment is always very dynamic because each of the two components play certain roles. In the motivational aspect, the role of teachers in the educational process is the creation of a climate and a positive attitude that encourages learning and their long-term success. While the role of students is qualitative knowledge processing and being active in order to increase their academic. Increasing collaborative and communicative force between student and instructor are two basic factors of motivation for learning. The study will be based on a framework familiar with some of the main definitions of the term motivation and some socio - educational and psychological theories, theory of Maslow, Herzbergs, McClelland, etc., to take a point of view from some of the perspectives and cognitive educational skills that realizes the motivation of students in the academic environment.

In questo articolo andremo a discutere di come il concetto di motivazione in materia di istruzione influenzi il processo di apprendimento degli studenti. La mancanza di motivazione in materia di istruzione è in grado di minare il processo del loro apprendimento. Gli studenti sono motivati a accumulare conoscenza, senza incentivi interni (psicologici, emotivi) o esterni (sociali - educativi)? Come costruire una combinazione di fattori motivazionali interni ed esterni, tra docente e studente, per le funzioni di apprendimento in ambito accademico? Tutti gli studenti, compresi gli insegnanti, sono motivati in modi e forme diverse. Per questo motivo, l'ambiente educativo è sempre molto dinamico, poiché ciascuno dei due componenti svolge determinati ruoli. Sotto l'aspetto motivazionale, il ruolo degli insegnanti nel processo educativo consiste nella creazione di un clima e di un atteggiamento positivo che incoraggia l'apprendimento e il successo a lungo termine. Mentre il ruolo degli studenti consiste nella trasformazione qualitativa della conoscenza e nell'essere attivi per aumentare la qualità degli studi accademici. Aumentare la forza collaborativa e comunicativa tra allievo e formatore rappresenta due fattori fondamentali di motivazione per l'apprendimento. Lo studio si baserà su un quadro di familiarità con alcune delle definizioni principali del termine "motivazione all'apprendimento" e con alcune teorie socio-educative e psicologiche, la teoria di Maslow, Herzbergs, McClelland, etc., per cogliere il punto di vista di alcune delle prospettive e competenze educativo-cognitive che realizzano la motivazione degli studenti in ambito accademico.

KEYWORDS

Motivation, Education, Teaching, Learning, Communication.
Motivazione, Educazione, Insegnamento, Apprendimento, Comunicazione.

Introduction

The latest technological developments and economic, redesigned and resized the role of lecturers and students in educational environments. Today education in the 21st century is facing big changes based on concepts, theories, principles, and methods. Motivation is probably the most important factor that educators can target in order to improve learning. Many theories have been postulated to explain motivation. What is the best way to motivate students? According to Williams (2011), the five key ingredients impacting student motivation are: student, teacher, content, method/process, and environment.

The educational equivalent to “location, location, location” is likely to be “motivation, motivation, motivation,” for motivation is probably the most important factor that educators can target in order to improve learning (Olson, 1997). Motivation is defined as the act or process of motivating; the condition of being motivating; a motivating force, stimulus, or influence; incentive; drive; something (such as a need or desire) that causes a person or student to act (Merriam-Webster, 1997); and the expenditure of effort to accomplish results (DuBrin, 2008; Williams & Williams, 2011, p. 2).

Palmer (2007) review the “student motivation as an essential element that is necessary for quality education. How do we know when students are motivated? They pay attention, they begin working on tasks immediately, they ask questions and volunteer answers, and they appear to be happy and eager.”(Williams & Williams, 2011). In the late 1987s, according to Brophy motivation to learn is a competence acquired “through general experience but stimulated most directly through modeling, communication of expectations, and direct instruction or socialization by significant others (especially parents and teachers)” (Gregory, 2009, p. 2; Nukpe, 2012), offers some definition for motivation where, Cherry (2010) views motivation as “the process that initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviours”. Brennen, (2006, p.4) believes motivation to be “... the level of effort an individual is willing to expend toward the achievement of a certain goal” Guay et al. (2010, p. 712) describes it simply as “reasons underlying behaviour” (Nukpe, 2012, p. 11).

For example, authors supports that, the student must have *access, ability, interest, and value education*. The teacher must be well trained, must focus and monitor the educational process, *be dedicated and responsive to his or her students, and be inspirational*. The content must *be accurate, timely, stimulating, and pertinent to the student’s current and future needs*. The method or process must *be inventive, encouraging, interesting, beneficial, and provide tools that can be applied to the student’s real life*. The environment needs to *be accessible, safe, positive, personalized as much as possible, and empowering*. According to Palmer, 2007; Debnath, 2005; D’Souza and Maheshwari, 2010 “Motivation is optimized when students are exposed to a large number of these motivating experiences and variables on a regular basis. That is, students ideally should have many sources of motivation in their learning experience in each class” (Williams, 2011, p. 2)

Two elements are very important in teaching environment and student motivation. The authors suggest some tips for improving student contributions to motivation as listed below. That is, student motivation is enhanced when these factors pertinent to students are present:

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: Individuals who are motivated intrinsically tend to develop high regard for learning course information without the use of external rewards or reinforcement. On the other hand, individuals who are motivated extrinsically rely solely on rewards and desirable results for their

motivation, e.g., tests and GPA. (Lei, 2010). Students who are motivated externally are at a greater risk of performing lower academically than intrinsically motivated students. It is interesting to note that nontraditional students report higher levels of intrinsic motivation than traditional students (Dean and Dagostino, 2007; Daniels, 2010; Bye, Pushkar, and Conway, 2007; Afzal, et al., 2010). Various individual and social factors: Overall academic motivation is affected by various individual and social factors. For example, intrinsic motivation is affected by the reason for preferring the school, the probability of finding a job after graduation, the order of preference, the future expectation, the distinctiveness of testing and measuring activities at the school, and desire to complete a Masters' degree. In the simplest terms, it is necessary to be motivated and to make an effort. Extrinsic motivation is significantly affected by the probability of finding a job, the attitude towards the teacher, the peer group, the level of income, the appropriateness of the classrooms, the adequacy of teaching materials, and the number of siblings. The most effective extrinsic motivation is the probability of finding a job. (Celikoz, 2010). Hierarchy of needs: Regarding lower level needs, if a student is hungry or thirsty, it is more difficult to focus on learning. Also, if the environment is physically, mentally, or emotionally unsafe, then it will be hard for the student to put all of his or her attention on learning. If the teacher always is critical of the student, then the student Research in probably will not feel accepted or that he or she belongs. Low self-esteem and ego will make the student feel unappreciated and unrecognized. As such, the educator must do what is necessary to support the student to a higher level of need satisfaction so that the student can focus his or her attention on learning. Even at the level of self-actualization, the educator may need to provide encouragement or opportunities (Maslow, 1943; Williams & Williams, 2011, pp. 3-4).

The following suggestions are offered regarding or teacher contributions to student motivation:

Teacher skills: One important extrinsic factor in the educational environment is the Instructor. Teacher skills include staying calm, eliminating negative thoughts or feelings, disengaging stress, remembering that students have their own realities and are doing their best, not taking students' actions personally, remembering that students are not bad rather just in the process of development, and maintaining a sense of humor. (Whistler, 1992). In particular, Shulman (1987, p. 8) calls the knowledge needed for effectively teaching a specific subject "pedagogical content knowledge" (PCK) which "represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction" (Williams & Williams, p. 6-8).

Are some criterias that affect the performance of teachers in the process of teaching and learning in academic environment, which are:

1. Promotion;
2. The financial reward;
3. Institutional policies - clear, fair and unequivocal;
4. Performance evaluation - should provide feedback for improvement; lead to administrative decisions related to the reward / punishment; public assessment in the sense that an event should be organized with the staff + student, which expressed gratitude and appreciation for the best and bring change their status at the university, evaluation of staff, that is very important to improve the climate at the university;

5. Gratitude and high academic levels;
6. Creation of interests (training, purchase literature, access to databases, collaborations with other universities, etc.);
7. Academic Advancement, sense of achievement and status with;
8. Liability;
9. Contribution;
10. Autonomy - the highest level;
11. The quality of students;
12. Teaching load, but not only;
13. Climate / organizational culture - relationships between colleagues. (Mapo, 2016).

We recall philosopher John Dewey who said that schools should not be a place of taking personal knowledge, where the teacher explains all the while a host of knowledge and the student remains at all times an individual liability, that is, without participating directly but it should be an active student. According to Taylor (2012), the root word of the term *motivation* is *movere* (to move). In regards to learning, motivation generally involves inner forces, enduring traits, behavioral responses to stimuli, and sets of beliefs and affects. She said that the study of motivation can be broken down into two main categories: behavioral and cognitive theories. Behavioral theories “view motivation as a change in the rate, frequency of occurrence, or form of behavior as a function of environmental events and stimuli”. Teachers can shape student responses by conditioning the external environment. In contrast, cognitive theories stress the internal structures and processing of information and beliefs. Cognitive theories stress the importance of perceptions of competence, values, affects, goals, and social comparisons when measuring motivation (Taylor, 2012, p. 1-2). Every educator needs to be concerned about motivation. It is a quality that students, teachers, parents, school administrators, and other members of the community must have if our educational system is to prepare young people adequately for the challenges and demands of the coming century. Of course, the way these various groups of individuals generate and use motivation differs greatly. Students need motivation to learn, parents need it to track the educational progress of their sons and daughters, teachers need it to become better teachers, and school administrators need it to ensure that every facet of the schools they manage continues to improve.

1. Psycho – Social – Contextual Influences on students

In the late 1982s, Grolnic and Ryan argue that, a great deal of research in the last two decades has explored how various aspects of the social environment affect people’s intrinsic motivation and autonomous self-regulation and, in turn, the quality of their performance. A central hypothesis of self-determination theory is that social contexts that support people’s being competent, related, and autonomous will promote intentional (i.e., motivated) action, and furthermore, that support for autonomy in particular will facilitate that motivated action’s being selfdetermined (rather than controlled). Thus, for example, supports for competence (e.g., positive feedback) will enhance motivation in general but will enhance ind.rinsic motivation and integrated internalization only if it is administered in a way that is autonomy supportive. Similarly, supports for relatedness (e.g., the interpersonal involvement of parents and teachers) will enhance moti-

vation in general but will enhance intrinsic motivation and integrated internalization only if the involved others are autonomy supportive (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, Ryan, 1991). In the other hand in social context are include school culture and organization. The studie of Taylor (2012) tell us that “scholars define a school’s culture as the norms, values, and shared beliefs of the preponderance of members at that institution. Moreover, these norms, values, and shared beliefs can be both consciously and implicit. Generally speaking, a school’s culture is comprised of the following elements”. According to her, first, it entails a belief about the character of human nature. She ask: Are students basically good? Or are they motivated to learn without incentives? Or are student basically bad, not motivated to learn and in need of negative reinforcement? At West Point, much of the faculty believes the latter. The second aspect of beliefs concerns the malleability of student learning and ability. Do students have the capacity to grow their learning and ability, or do students have a limited capacity? A third component of a school’s culture are norms over classroom behavior. At West Point, cadets expect to do many group assignments and work at the boards. Finally, a school’s culture is informed by the shared goals or purposes of the school. At West Point, the mission statement is quite clear. However, the dual nature of the Academy as both an institution of military and academic instruction often hurts student motivation. Military training during the academic semester sends a message to cadets, staff, & faculty alike that the true priority of West Point is military, not academic training (Taylor, 2012, p. 3).

Traditionally, educators consider intrinsic motivation to be more desirable and to result in better learning outcomes than extrinsic motivation. Maehr (1992) in his book “*The Motivation Factor: A Theory of Personal Investment*, Maehr and Braskamp (1986)”, has turned his attention to the relationship between motivation and the organizational culture of schools. Maehr concluded that “goal stresses associated with the school environment seem to relate systematically to student motivation and achievement”, and he reported that “the psychological environment of the school is a measurable variable, a variable of some importance in predicting motivation and achievement of students” (Renchler, 1992, pp. 6-7). The dimensions Maehr includes in his model of the psychological environment of the school include:

Accomplishment—Emphasis on excellence and pursuit of academic challenges.

Power—Emphasis on interpersonal competition, social comparison, achievement.

Recognition—Emphasis on social recognition for achievement and the importance of school for attaining future goals and rewards.

Affiliation—Perceived sense of community, good interpersonal relations among teachers and students.

Strength/Saliency—The perception that the school knows what it is about and that students know what is expected (Renchler, 1992, p. 6).

Raffini proposes a four-fold approach that would remove motivational barriers and help students redirect their behaviors away from failure-avoiding activities toward academic applications. He describes how these four strategies can aid in promoting the rediscovery of an interest in learning:

1. Individual goal-setting structures allow students to define their own criteria for success.

2. Outcome-based instruction and evaluation make it possible for slower students to experience success without having to compete with faster students.
3. Attribution retraining can help apathetic students view failure as a lack of effort rather than a lack of ability.
4. Cooperative learning activities help student realize that personal effort can contribute group as well as individual goals (Renchler, 1992, p. 10).

Stipek describes some techniques that promote intrinsic motivation but suggests that they are rarely found in today's classrooms or schools:

Students are intrinsically motivated to work when the threat of negative external evaluation is not salient and when their attention is not focused on extrinsic reasons for completing tasks. They will also feel more competent and proud, and thus more intrinsically interested in tasks, when they can take responsibility for their success. Allowing some student choice enhances intrinsic interest in school tasks, and it teaches self-management skills that are essential for success in higher grades and the workplace. It is impossible for children to develop autonomy and a sense of responsibility if they are always told what to do, and how, and when to do it (Renchler, 1992, p.10).

She identifies four perspectives from which intrinsic motivation can be viewed: competency motivation, curiosity, autonomy, and internalized motivation. Competency motivation assumes *“that individuals engage in tasks, in part, for the purpose of developing competence and experiencing the positive feeling of efficacy associated with successful mastery attempts”*. The second perspective, curiosity, assumes *“that individuals are innately curious about novel events and activities that are somewhat discrepant with their expectations”*. Autonomy involves the idea that humans have *“a natural need to feel self-determining. They want to believe that they are engaging in activities by their own volition—because they want to—rather than to achieve some external reward or to avoid punishment”*. Internalized motivation *“assumes that some children engage in tasks in the absence of external reinforcement because they learn to value academic work”* (Renchler, 1992 p. 10).

2. Motivation Theories

There are many theories of motivation, but a study of Rily, tell us which are some of the more famous theoris like *“Maslows’ Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1954), McClelland’s Needs Theory (1961), and “Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory”* (Rily, 2005, p. 3). Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory is one of the most wellknown motivational theories. Abraham Maslow’s theory identifies five levels of hierarchical needs that every individual attempts to accomplish or conquer throughout one’s life. The needs start with the physiological (hunger, thirst, shelter) and then move upward in a pyramid shape through safety, social, and esteem needs, to the ultimate need for self-actualization. His final need for self-actualization is defined as one’s desire and striving towards maximum personal potential. The pyramid shape to the theory is intended to show that some needs are more important than others and must be satisfied before the other needs can serve as motivators. In the other hands is the theory of McClelland’s Needs, where the autors tell us that *McClelland’s Need Theory* explores the idea that there are three major “needs” that one will acquire over their lifetime as a result of the experiences in their careers or in their own personal lives. David I. McClelland believed that in order to understand human behavior and how an individual can be motivated, you must first understand their

needs and inclinations. The Need for Achievement encompasses the desire to do better, to solve problems, and to master complex tasks. The Need for Affiliation is the desire for friendly and warm relations with others. These are often those passive individuals that try to avoid conflict at all times, even when it might be necessary to fulfill a task. Finally, the Need for Power is the desire to control others and influence their behavior (Riley, 2005, pp. 4-5).

According to Riley, *Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory* divides motivation and job satisfaction into two groups of factors known as the motivation factors and hygiene factors. According to Frederick Herzberg, the motivating factors are the six 'job content' factors that include *achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and possibility of growth*. Hygiene factors are the 'job context' factors, which include *company policy, supervision, relationship with supervision, work conditions, relationship with peers, salary, personal life, relationship with subordinates, status, and jobsecurity*" (Riley, 2005, pp. 5-6).

The author continues to say that, basically the theory differentiates the factors between intrinsic motivators and extrinsic motivators. The intrinsic motivators, known as the job content factors, define things that the people actually do in their work; their responsibility and achievements. These factors are the ones that can contribute a great deal to the level of job satisfaction an employee feels at work. The job context factors, on the other hand, are the extrinsic factors that someone as an employee does not have much control over; they relate more to the environment in which people work than to the nature of the work itself (Schermerhorn, 2003). Herzberg identifies these factors as the sources for job dissatisfaction. "Herzberg reasoned that because the factors causing satisfaction are different from those causing dissatisfaction, the two feelings cannot simply be treated as opposites of one another. The opposite of satisfaction is not dissatisfaction, but rather, no satisfaction. Similarly, the opposite of dissatisfaction is no dissatisfaction. While at first glance this distinction between the two opposites may sound like a play on words, Herzberg argued that there are two distinct human needs portrayed" ("Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory," 2) (Riley, 2005, p. 6).

Self-determination theory when applied to the realm of education, is concerned primarily with promoting in students an interest in learning, a valuing of education, and a confidence in their own capacities and attributes. These outcomes are manifestations of being intrinsically motivated and internalizing values and regulatory processes. Research suggests that these processes result in high-quality learning and conceptual understanding, as well as enhanced personal growth and adjustment. In several studies, are some contextual conditions that will facilitate motivation, performance, and development. Simply stated, motivation, performance, and development will be maximized within social contexts that provide people the opportunity to satisfy their basic psychological needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy. This three needs are very important for teachers and students. These three needs for the authors, contribute to peoples being motivated (as opposed to amotivated); however, opportunities to satisfy the need for autonomy are necessary for people to be self-determined rather than controlled (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991).

To make sense of the range of possible self-determining experiences students might have in the classroom, Deci and Ryan, describe a continuum in which heteronomy (subordination, subjection, or coercion) lies at one end, and autonomy (independence, self-sufficiency, self-rule) lies at the other. For them the more students are determined to pursue self-selected goals, the more likely it is that those goals will be accompanied by expectations of success in areas that matter most to them. Fig. 1 is an adaptation of their continuum (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012, p. 10).

Student's Experience		Heteronomy ← ----- → Autonomy				
Type of Self-determination	Amotivation	External Regulation	Introjection	Identification	Integration	Intrinsic Motivation
Characteristics	Lack of intention; low perceived competence; low perceived relevance	Compliance; emerging salience of rewards or punishments	Ego involvement; focus largely on approval from others	Conscious valuing of activity; self endorsement of goals	Congruence of goals; some continued prioritizing of self-set goals	Interest, enjoyment, and inherent satisfaction; synthesis of goals
Perceived Locus of Causality	Impersonal	External	Somewhat External	Somewhat Internal	Internal	Internal

Fig. 1 - Adaptation of continuum

3. Self-regulation theory

It provides an especially student-centered perspective on the various dimensions of engagement. Whereas self-determination theory addresses students' perceptions of their level of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in a given activity, self-regulation theory is concerned with what students do to generate and sustain their engagement. It begins with the recognition that students are active participants in their own learning, which echoes constructivists' observations that we build rather than absorb knowledge. To be self-regulated is to be goal-directed and demonstrate control over and responsibility for one's focus and effort when engaged in learning activity (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012, p. 18).

Cognitively, "self-regulated learners plan, set goals, organize, self-monitor, and self-evaluate at various points during the process [of building new knowledge or skills]. These processes enable [students] to be self-aware, knowledgeable, and decisive in their approach to learning" (Zimmerman 1990). From the teacher's perspective, self-regulated learners tend to be self-starters who show effort and persistence during learning, who "seek out advice, information, and places where they are most likely to learn" (Zimmerman 1990). Self-regulated learners also are capable of monitoring the effectiveness of their learning strategies and reacting to what they notice by changing their behavior. For example, a student who is reading a short story in preparation for a class discussion on authors' uses of symbols notices that she has read the last several paragraphs only cursorily. In a moment of self-feedback, she asks herself what those paragraphs were about and, coming up with nothing, reminds herself to go back and reread the portions she glossed. In this case, she regulated her own learning to better promote her understanding of the content, and she did so outside any interventions from the teacher (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012, p. 18).

Like motivation and engagement, student voice is a broad term describing a range of activities

that can occur in and out of school. It can be understood as expression, performance, and creativity and as co-constructing the teaching/learning dynamic. It can also be understood as self-determined goal-setting or simply as agency. Paraphrasing Dana Mitra, we use the term student voice activities to refer to those pedagogies in which youth have the opportunity to influence decisions that will shape their lives and those of their peers either in or outside of school settings (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012, p. 23).

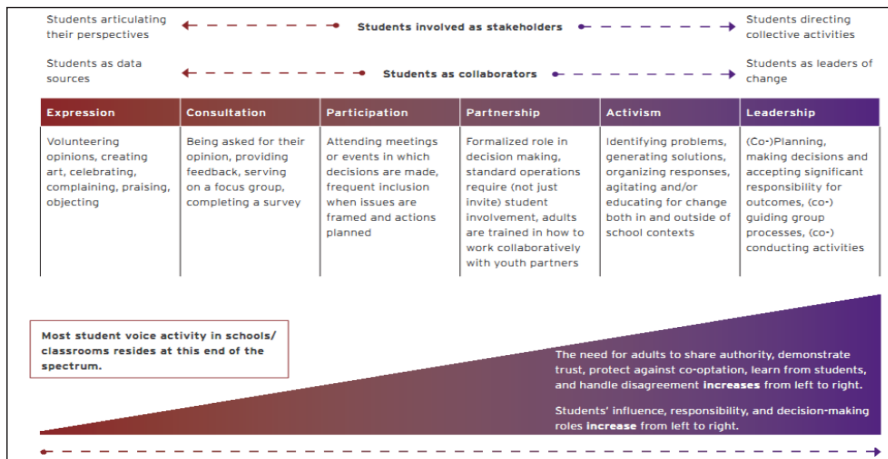


Fig. 2 - The spectru of student voice oriented activity

Broussard and Garrison (2004) broadly define motivation as “the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something” Intrinsic motivation is motivation that is animated by personal enjoyment, interest, or pleasure. As Deci et al. (1999) observe, “intrinsic motivation energizes and sustains activities through the spontaneous satisfactions inherent in effective volitional action. It is manifest in behaviors such as play, exploration, and challenge seeking that people often do for external rewards”. (Lai, 2011, p. 4). “Extrinsic motivators primarily have been understood within a behaviorist framework. Specific stimuli external to the self (e.g., social expectations, rewards, praise, punishments, threats, risks) are believed to produce specific predictable outcomes” (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012, p. 8).

Conclusions

In this article, we clarifies the complex construct of motivation as it relates to learning and offers revamped curriculum that applies motivation theory and research to practice. Are given, recommends instruction in how motivation, constructs relate to each other, to individual and culturally related differences, developmental changes, and to the classroom context. In this article we examined how the concept of motivation in education, affects the learning process of students. Lack of motivation in education could damage the learning process of students. The primery research question was: Are the student motivated to learn without incentives? The study was based on several theories like, socio - educational and psychological, to see what are some of the prospects and educational cognitive abilities that enable the realization of motivation students in academic environments based on learning function. This article originally intended to provide some key definitions of the term motivation, based by some researchers who have been studying his primary in relation to certain areas of life but mainly socio - educational. Educational environment is often considered more dynamic. Usually all students who are part of this process are motivated in different ways and forms. Therefore students are different from each other - just based on psychological differences to everyone and those socio - educational. Some students may be more focused on the treatise of lectures, other students can be

very active, participate in discussions, others can be pretty focused on social aspects of university (clubs curricular, extracurricular activities), others can have much desire to study and get knowledge but educational environment fails to provide it, etc. Educators can do much to create a classroom environment that motivates students to learn and behave in ways that promote their long-term success.

Thus, the teacher must first be guided by goals that assign primary importance to developing students a motivation to learn. Second, we need a framework for identifying those aspects or structures of the classroom that are manipulable. These structures must represent the classroom organization and must relate to instructional planning. Then we need to identify strategies that will serve to enhance the motivation of all students. These strategies or applications must be grounded in theory and research and evaluated in relation to developmental factors and in relation to other motivation constructs, as well as individual differences (Ames, 1990, p. 419).

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