MOTIVATION

Self-Determination Theory

Description

The two basic types of motivation are intrinsic, or doing an activity for its inherent satisfaction, and extrinsic, or doing an activity for a separate, external outcome. Extrinsic motivation can range in quality. The more a student can internalize external values and integrate them into their behaviors, the higher quality their extrinsic motivation becomes. There are three key needs that must be met in order to facilitate this internalization and integration:

Autonomy: in control of goals and behaviors

Competence: feeling effective and challenged in learning

Relatedness: experiencing connectedness, interaction, and care for others

Internalization and integration of values and behaviors through these means can lead to greater persistence, self-perception, and engagement.

Why is this important?

Self-determined motivation is positively correlated with greater performance and academic achievement, higher perceived competence and self-worth, retention, higher quality learning, and well-being among students. This becomes particularly important in online learning, as research in Covid-era digital classrooms showed that digital support strategies can better satisfy needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness--and satisfying these three needs are likely to foster important dimensions of engagement.

Implementation Examples

Goal setting activities	✔	
Student-facing learning objectives*	✔	
Corrective feedback	✔	
Group work and discussion		▷
Multiple options for performance activities	✔	

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Sources: Chiu (2022), Guay (2022), Handbook of Self-determination Research (2004), Hensley et al. (2021), Lavigne & Vallerand (2007), Niemic & Ryan (2009), Reeve (2006), Ryan & Deci (2000), Taylor et al. (2014)

Practical Applications

✔ Autonomy support
  - Goal setting, student perspective
  - Allow for choice and reduce unnecessary demands
  - Rationale, avoid controlling language

✔ Structure
  - Communicate clear expectations
  - Competence related feedback
  - Strong guidance during discussion and lessons

✔ Involvement
  - Collaborative and small group learning
  - Acceptance, warm and caring interactions

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