

MOTIVE AND MOTIVATION IN PSYCHOLOGY THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS
AND EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

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Abstract

Motivation is one of the central psychological mechanisms that determines human behavior and learning activity. This paper analyzes the concept of motive and motivation, their structure, classification, theoretical models, and their importance in the educational process. Special attention is given to classical and modern motivation theories and the role of teachers, family, and social environment in shaping students' motivation.

Keywords: motivation, motive, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, educational psychology

Introduction

Motivation is one of the most important concepts in psychology because it explains why individuals act in certain ways and how they achieve their goals. Human behavior is never random. Every action is directed by internal psychological forces called motives. These motives determine the direction, intensity, and persistence of behavior.

In educational psychology, motivation plays a central role in determining students' academic success. Even highly intelligent learners may fail without motivation, while motivated learners often achieve high academic results through persistence and effort. Therefore, understanding motivation helps psychologists and educators organize effective teaching strategies and improve learning outcomes. Modern psychological research considers motivation a complex system influenced by biological, cognitive, emotional, and social factors. Motivation supports personality development, creativity, independence, and responsibility. For this reason, studying motivation is essential for future psychologists and teachers.

Concept of Motive in Psychology A motive is an internal psychological factor that stimulates and directs behavior toward achieving a specific goal. Motives arise from needs, interests, desires, values, and aspirations. They serve as internal regulators of activity and explain why individuals choose certain actions instead of others.

Motives may be conscious or unconscious. Conscious motives include clearly understood goals such as career success or academic achievement. Unconscious motives influence behavior indirectly through emotions and hidden expectations. Psychologists emphasize that motives are closely connected with personality structure. They reflect personal values, social experience, and cultural background. Therefore, studying motives allows researchers to better understand human behavior and individual differences between people.

Concept of Motivation

Motivation is a dynamic psychological process that activates, directs, and maintains behavior over time. It includes both internal and external influences that determine how individuals start activities, continue them, and complete them successfully. Motivation performs several important psychological functions. It activates behavior, directs activity toward meaningful goals, regulates persistence during difficulties, supports emotional involvement, and increases cognitive engagement. Motivation is not a stable characteristic but a changing process influenced by environmental conditions, social interaction, emotional experiences, and personal expectations. As a result, motivation can be strengthened or weakened depending on educational and social circumstances.



Types of Motivation Psychologists usually distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation appears when individuals perform activities because they enjoy the activity itself. It is based on curiosity, interest, creativity, and self-development. Extrinsic motivation appears when individuals perform activities to receive rewards or avoid punishment. Examples include grades, praise, competition, and social recognition.

Research shows that intrinsic motivation produces deeper learning results and long-term academic success because it supports independent thinking and creativity. However, extrinsic motivation can also be useful in structured learning environments when combined with supportive teaching strategies.

Educational Motivation

Educational motivation determines students' attitudes toward learning and their level of participation in classroom activities. Motivated students show responsibility, curiosity, persistence, and independence. Educational motivation influences memory processes, attention concentration, problem-solving abilities, and emotional stability. Students with strong motivation usually demonstrate better academic performance and higher self-confidence. Teachers can strengthen educational motivation by using interactive teaching methods, encouraging cooperation between students, providing constructive feedback, and supporting creativity in the classroom environment.

Major Theories of Motivation

Several classical psychological theories explain motivation from different perspectives. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory explains motivation through five levels of human needs, beginning with physiological needs and ending with self-actualization.

David McClelland's theory identifies three major needs that influence behavior: need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power. These needs determine professional development and leadership behavior. Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory explains motivation through hygiene factors and motivational factors. Hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction, while motivational factors increase satisfaction and productivity.

Self-determination theory developed by Deci and Ryan emphasizes autonomy, competence, and relatedness as the main psychological needs supporting intrinsic motivation.

Role of Teachers in Motivation Development

Teachers play an essential role in shaping students' motivation. Their teaching style, communication skills, personality, and expectations influence students' attitudes toward learning. Effective teachers create psychologically safe classroom environments where students feel respected and supported. They encourage independent thinking, recognize students' achievements, and support creativity. Teachers also help students develop self-confidence and responsibility. Positive teacher-student relationships increase learning motivation and reduce academic anxiety.

Motivation and Personality Development

Motivation plays a central role in personality development. It supports intellectual growth, emotional stability, social adaptation, and professional orientation. Motivated individuals demonstrate persistence, responsibility, creativity, and independence. Motivation also supports self-regulation skills and decision-making abilities. Individuals with strong motivation can overcome difficulties more effectively and achieve long-term goals.

Therefore, motivation is considered one of the key psychological factors determining personal success in academic and professional life.

Methods of Increasing Students' Motivation

Psychologists recommend several effective strategies for increasing students' motivation. These strategies include setting clear goals, encouraging cooperation, providing positive



reinforcement, supporting autonomy in learning activities, and creating emotionally safe educational environments. Interactive teaching methods such as discussions, group work, project-based learning, and digital learning technologies also increase motivation. These approaches make learning more meaningful and engaging for students.

Family support and peer relationships also play important roles in strengthening motivation during the educational process.

Conclusion Motivation is one of the most important psychological mechanisms that explains human behavior and learning activity. Motives determine the direction and persistence of behavior, while motivation regulates the intensity of activity. Educational motivation plays a decisive role in academic success and personality development. Teachers, parents, and psychologists must work together to create supportive environments that strengthen motivation and encourage independent learning. Understanding motivation helps specialists design effective educational strategies and support the development of confident, creative, and responsible individuals.

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