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ISSUES REGARDING THE MOTIVATION OF STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Olim Boymurodov
National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek
Military Training Center
Instructor, Combat Support Cycle
boymuradovolim69@gmail.com
Tel: 90-966-92-52
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Abstract. This article is dedicated to the problems of motivating students in higher education institutions. It analyzes the concepts of "motivation" and "motivation." The results of an empirical study of university students' motivation and recommendations for increasing the learning motivation of students and teachers are also presented.

Keywords: motivation, learning motivation, motive.

Modern students enter higher education institutions driven by a variety of motives [4]. For millennia, the issue of motivation has been a subject of study across fields such as philosophy, cultural studies, political science, psychology, and sociology. Motivation is considered one of the fundamental problems in both domestic and international psychology. Its significance for the development of modern psychology lies in the analysis of the sources of human activity—the forces that drive a person's actions and behavior.

The complexity and multifaceted nature of motivation necessitate a wide range of approaches to understanding its essence, nature, and structure, as well as the methods used to study it (V.G. Aseev, L.I. Bozhovich, E.P. Ilyin, A.N. Leontiev, A.K. Markova, L.A. Regush, S.L. Rubinstein, E.A. Sorokoumova, H. Heckhausen, S. Freud, and others).

The term "motivation" was first used by A. Schopenhauer in his 1910 work, *The Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*. Subsequently, the term came to be used to describe the behavior of both humans and animals. In the context of A. N. Leontiev's activity theory, the term "motive" is used to denote the clarification of needs, conditions, and the direction of an activity. L. I. Bozhovich, who continued this scholarly tradition, posited that a motive serves as a powerful driving force for the execution of an activity; she noted that "objects from the external world, mental representations, ideas, emotions, and inner experiences can all function as motives—in short, anything in which a need finds its expression" [1, p. 53]. The concept of a "motive" is encompassed within the broader concept of "motivation," which manifests as a complex mechanism—employed by an individual—that interlinks external and internal behavioral factors. It determines the emergence and direction of specific forms of activity, as well as the methods by which they are carried out. In psychology, the term "motivation" serves as an umbrella concept for a wide range of processes and phenomena; at its core, it relates to how a living being selects its own behavior based on anticipated consequences, and how it regulates that behavior in terms of both direction and the expenditure of energy [5, pp. 40–41]. A dynamic approach to motivation implies a process of continuous movement.

The learning activities of students are characterized by a combination of various motivations and depend on several factors: the educational system within which the learning takes place; the organization of the educational process; the subjective characteristics of the learner (such as age, gender, intellectual development, abilities, level of aspiration, self-assessment, etc.); the subjective characteristics of the teacher—most notably their attitude toward the student and their own professional practice; and the nature of the academic subject itself. ...specific characteristics, student motivation, and so on. By analyzing the psychological aspects of the development of students' educational and cognitive activity, the entire period of study at a higher education institution can be divided into three stages.

The first stage—the first year of study—is characterized by a high level of both professional and academic motivation.

During the second stage—the second and third years—the intensity of all motivational components related to the students' education decreases.

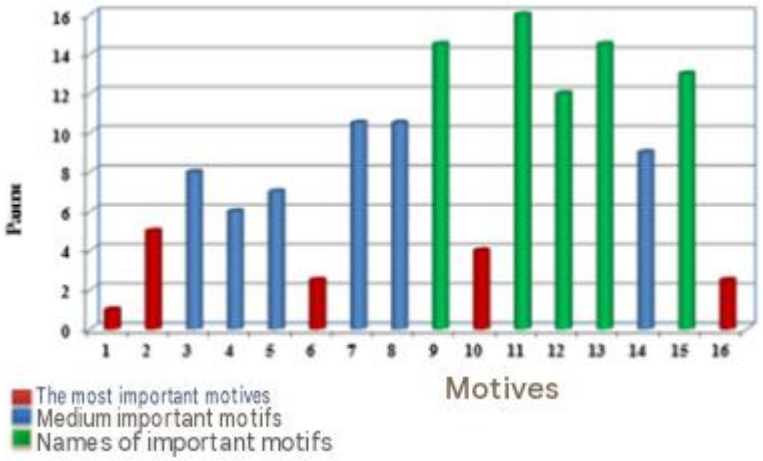
The third stage (fourth and fifth years) involves an increase in the awareness and integration of various forms of academic motivation.

With the emergence of cognitive motivation (the drive to learn/know), mental processes—such as perception, memory, and thinking—along with other capabilities, are reshaped to facilitate engagement in the activity that has sparked the individual's interest.

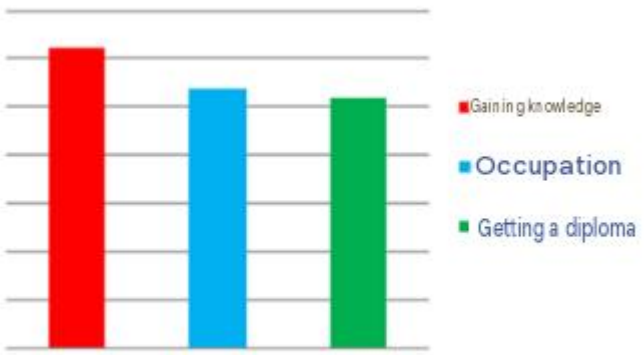
The purpose of this study is to examine the academic motivation of university students. The hypothesis is that the motive to "acquire knowledge" is predominant among university students. Specific empirical objectives of the study include: identifying the distinct characteristics of academic motivation in students; determining the primary motives of students through mathematical analysis of the data; and providing recommendations tailored to students with different motivational profiles. The sample consisted of 50 university students. To test the hypothesis, the "Methodology for Studying the Motives of Students' Academic Activity"—modified by A.A. Rean and V.A. Yakunin—was utilized. The "Methodology for Studying Study Motives in Higher Education Institutions," as modified by Ilina, was employed.

An analysis of the data revealed that the most significant academic motives for this sample of students are as follows: motive 1, "to become a highly qualified specialist" ($t=1.74$, $p\leq0.05$); motive 2, "to obtain a diploma" ($t=0.63$, $p\leq0.05$); motive 6, "to acquire deep and solid knowledge"; motive 10, "to ensure success in future professional activity"; and motive 16, "to derive intellectual satisfaction." The least significant motives for this sample are: motive 9, "not to fall behind classmates"; motive 11, "to fulfill pedagogical requirements"; motive 12, "to earn the respect of instructors"; motive 13, "to serve as an example for classmates"; and motive 15, "to avoid condemnation and punishment for poor academic performance." Histogram 1 illustrates the 16 motives, ranked by their level of significance [2, pp. 28–31].

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1-Histogram



2-Histogram

Average values for these motives were calculated using Excel. Histogram 2 shows that the motives "Acquiring knowledge" (6.2) and "Mastering a profession" (5.4) have higher average values, while "Obtaining a diploma" (5.2) has a lower average value.

Thus, the hypothesis that there may be significant differences between the motives—and that "acquiring knowledge" might be the primary motive for students in higher education institutions—was confirmed.

Recommendations for students and teachers to enhance learning motivation.

Recognizing the theoretical and practical significance of the knowledge being acquired.

It is important to understand that the knowledge gained in each course can contribute to a successful professional career.

Ranking systems are a modern method for motivating students. Achieving a top position in student performance rankings can significantly improve a graduate's prospects for future employment.

Expanding the scope of students' personal responsibility serves as an opportunity for them to demonstrate their capabilities within their chosen field.

A sense of duty can also stimulate motivation. Students should keep in mind their responsibility regarding the kind of professional they will become. However, it is crucial to note

that this sense of duty should not be imposed from the outside; rather, it should emerge as the student comes to realize the importance of their chosen profession.

Developing goal-setting skills. It is important to set achievable, short-term goals, visualize both immediate and future outcomes, document these goals in as much detail as possible—using action-oriented language—and strive to attain them in the near term.

Independent inquiry. Students can analyze their own knowledge, create opportunities for self-assessment, and explain challenging tasks to peers who may be less prepared.

The research identified key measures that, according to the students, would help increase their motivation to study [3, pp. 28–31].

These measures include: broader application of innovations in teaching; increasing scholarships and strengthening financial incentives for students; creating conditions to incentivize both instructors and students; providing the option to select subjects of study; implementing a modular (block-based) educational system, where examinations are taken upon the completion of a specific subject rather than at the end of the semester; increasing the proportion of classroom-based instruction while reducing hours allocated for independent study; fostering a healthy competitive environment among students through economic and non-economic incentives—such as the "automatic" passing of tests and exams based on academic performance—and encouraging a creative approach among instructors; and addressing students' needs for rest and recuperation (e.g., by providing vouchers for resorts, sanatoriums, and health centers).

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