



Motivation For Learning Enhancement: Role Of Teachers

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Abstract:

It has been traditionally emphasized that teachers are the main source of motivation. However with changes in the socio-economic structures, value systems and methods of information dissemination it is pertinent to study the impact of teachers on the motivation of high school students in modern day and age. The impact of teachers on the motivation of high school students was analyzed along with its various component factors. The findings of the study have serious implications and will help schools to analyze, confront and manage the situational realities that are prevalent today.

Key words: Motivation, Educational achievement, learning enhancement

Introduction

Motivation is typically defined as the forces that account for the arousal, selection, direction, and continuation of behavior (Psychology Applied to Teaching: Biehler and Snowman). There are three basic approaches or views to motivation. The first one is the behavioral approach to motivation which is based on the works and theories of Burrhus Frederic Skinner (1904-1990). The basis of this approach lies in the philosophy of reinforce desired behavior. The second approach to motivation is that of the cognitive view which emphasizes intrinsic motivation (motivation from within one's self). This view is related to Jean Piaget's principles of equilibration, assimilation and accommodation. This theory proposes that children possess a sense an inherent desire to maintain a sense of organization and balance in their concept of the world. When a child experiences something new he assimilates the new experiences by fitting it into his existing schema (schemata). If a new experience does not fit into the existing schema the child then accommodates the new schema by forming a new one. According to this theory, in order to motivate a child one has to arouse disequilibrium so that new schemata are formed. The Humanistic view of motivation says that people are motivated to satisfy deficiency needs only when those needs are unmet.

In a school situation a students' learning is broadly affected by the following factors:-

1. **Infrastructure of the school**
2. **Teachers and faculty**
3. **Schoolmates and classmates**
4. **School management**
5. **The society and family**

Motivation ,an inner drive for learning is controlled by all the above factors , the learning process and students' behaviour in the classroom. Thus the efficacy of the teaching-learning process itself is dependent greatly on the motivation of the students. Motivation of a child also points to the causes of students' behavior. The question is 'why is a child behaving in particular manner? ". Motivation in the teaching –learning process deals with the energizing and direction given to behaviour. In a classroom situation, high levels of motivation are observed when students show interest and enthusiasm to learning tasks. Conversely, low levels of motivation are observed in student apathy and disinterest.

The traditional motivating role of teachers included efforts at creating conditions within the classroom and outside in order to energize, direct and sustain students' performance. The new world has brought new dimensions to motivation.

This study attempted **to study in detail the role of the teacher as a motivator for enhancing learning of high school scenario..**

The experience of the children with their teachers was assumed to be dependent on ten factors.

These ten factors were:-

1. Friendliness
2. Helpfulness
3. Knowledge about their subject
4. Fair and just
5. Available for students even outside the classrooms
6. Confidence
7. Motivator
8. Makes classes interesting
9. Role model to students
10. Strict about discipline and rules

Methodology of the Study

The study followed descriptive survey methods using tools of self made questionnaire .

A sample of students (N = 148) from a residential/day school in Kurseong was chosen. The students were from classes 9 and 10, which comprised of the high school in the particular school. A questionnaire survey was conducted among them. This was done in two parts.

Part 1

- The responses were rated on a five point scale from 1 to 5. The scale is described as:-
 1. Terrible
 2. Not satisfactory
 3. Satisfactory
 4. Good
 5. Excellent
- The first question was to rate their efforts to give things their best and do well in school. This question was used to determine the motivational level of the child.
- In the 5 subsequent questions the child was asked to rate the following parameters following in the same scale as above;-
 - Question 2: School Infrastructure
 - Question 3: School's teaching faculties
 - Question 4: School's management, rules and regulations
 - Question 5: Schoolmates and classmates
 - Question 6: Family and society's influence on their happiness in school
- A correlation was drawn between the response to the first question and each of the subsequent questions. It was assumed that the factor having the highest correlation with the response of the first question had the highest influence on the motivation of the children and thus the factor that had the lowest correlation had the least influence.
- It was assumed that all the factors were mutually exclusive and did not influence the other factors.

Part 2

In the second part of the questionnaire the ten factors that affect the experience of students with their teachers were given to the respondents for rating on a 5 point scale. The scale here was altered to describe the following;-

1. Never
2. Not common
3. Sometimes
4. Mostly
5. Always

These factors were then correlated with the response to Question 3 which asked the respondent to rate the teaching faculties of the school. Based on the value of the correlation coefficient it was assumed that the factor with the highest correlation had the highest influence on the teacher's effectiveness to create a better experience for the child. This experience led to greater motivation for the child to give things his or her best and do well in school. It was assumed here again that all the factors were mutually exclusive and did not influence other factors. Thus the overall relative influence of the teacher on the motivation of a child was mapped. The relative influence of the various parameters that define the influence of the teacher was also mapped in the study.

Findings of the Study:

PART 1

The overall findings are given in table T1

Factor	r	r ²	Rank
School Infrastructure	.795	.632	2
Teachers	.710	.504	5
School Management	.762	.580	3
Schoolmates & classmates	.751	.564	4
Home and Family	.806	.649	1

Table T1; Correlation Coefficients of the different variables with Question 1 (student's efforts to give his best and do well in school)

The ranking system that has been followed here can be explained as thus;-

Home and family influences on Student motivation has the highest coefficient of correlation (.806) so it is ranked as 1.

School infrastructure's influence on student motivation has the second highest coefficient of correlation (.795) so it is ranked as 2.

School management's influence on student motivation has the third highest coefficient of correlation (.762) so it is ranked as 3.

Schoolmates and classmates' influence on student motivation has the fourth highest coefficient of correlation (.751) so it is ranked as 4.

School teachers' influence on student motivation has the lowest coefficient of correlation (.710) so it is ranked as 5.

PART 2

Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)	Coefficient of determination (r ²)	Score
Friendliness	.774	.599076	10
Helpfulness	.681	.463761	6
Knowledge about subject	.366	.133956	3
Fairness and justness of teachers	.636	.404496	4
Availability for students outside classrooms	.403	.162409	3
Confidence	.752	.565504	9
Motivating qualities	.667	.444889	5
Makes classes interesting	.737	.543169	7
Role models	.747	.558009	8
Strictness about discipline and rules	.331	.109561	1

Analysis & Interpretation

This study revealed very significant results. The primary interpretation of the study is that all the five factors that were assumed to have impact on the motivation of high school students yielded high correlation coefficients. This shows that all the included factors have very significant impact on the motivation of students in high school. Among the factors the teachers had the lowest correlation coefficient as compared to the other factors but even then a correlation coefficient of .710 is considered significant. So the teachers are seen by this study to have a lower influence on the motivation of high school students than other factors that influence such motivation.

In the second part of the study we chose to include those factors with a correlation coefficient of .7 or higher as significantly high influences on the capacity of teachers to create a better learning experience for students and motivate them. These factors were

- Friendliness,
- Confidence,
- Role models
- Making classes more interesting.

Those factors with a correlation coefficient between .5 and .7 were taken as moderate influences. These factors were:-

- Helpfulness
- Fairness and justness of teachers
- Motivating Qualities

Those factors with a correlation coefficient less than .5 were taken as low influences. These factors were:-

- Knowledge about the subject
- Strictness about Discipline and rules
- Availability for students outside classrooms

Thus this can be interpreted to surmise that friendly, confident teachers who make classes more interesting and are role models to students create more positive experiences for students than teachers who are only knowledgeable or only strict or even fair and just. Teachers who are overt motivators or those who are by themselves helpful and available for students outside classroom environments might be less effective in creating satisfying classroom experiences for students without being confident role models.

Consequence and implications

The results of this study reflect the changed scenario in India today as regards to the relationship of teachers and students at the high school level. Teachers were considered the foundations of student motivation but the scenario has changed. The parents, home and the society provide the primary drivers in motivation. This shift is also due to the fact the parents who send their wards to English medium high schools are mostly educated and enlightened people themselves. The society that these students belong to, also have educated people who serve as motivators to the youngsters. Information is readily available to students with the help of internet connections or from the numerous television channels. So a student comes to class well informed and is not too concerned about the knowledge base of the teacher but rather focuses on whether he or she finds in the teacher a confident friend who will make the class periods interesting and who will be the role model that all adolescents search for. The teacher-student ratio in most schools are high and it gives the teachers less time to interact and bond with the students. The relationship of a student and a teacher has started shifting in real terms from being a mentor to being a mere disseminator of information. There seems to be a trust barrier too because students are not positively influenced by overt motivators or the helpful nature of teachers. It might be due to the fact that they do not feel that teachers who are being too helpful or being very overt motivators are doing it with sincerity. This is a learned response and has developed over time after having such experiences. Consequently students are not influenced by the fact whether teachers are available for them outside the classroom. The influences of teachers who are confident and are able to create role models out of themselves are also significant. Confidence brings a sense of relief and trust to students because they feel the teacher is in control and can be trusted with what he or she says. This is important in a world where diverse opinions and options coexist and youngsters have to make informed choices in order to succeed. Thus in order to become an effective motivator to high school students the teacher has to hone his or her skills in a strategic manner. School management should help them to enhance these skills in a phased manner. Parents and society should also impart to the students the values of respecting and interacting with the teachers. If this is not done the teacher student relationship in India might diminish to a level where it is relegated to a mere syllabi based classroom interaction.

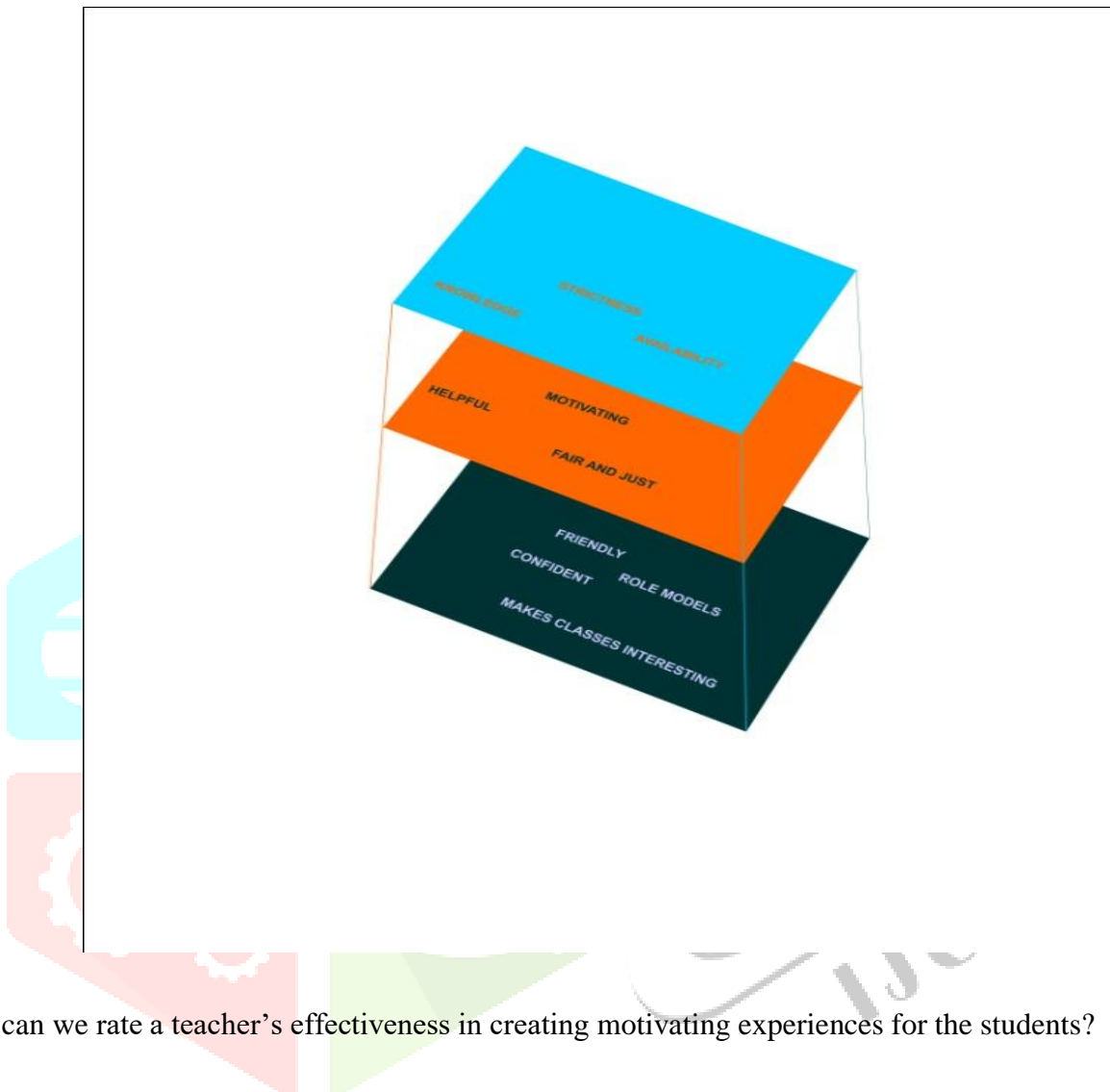
Resultant model design

Two questions emerge out of the study:-

1. How do teachers turn into effective motivators?

If we analyze the impact of the factors that influence a student's experience with his or her teacher we will realize that they can be strategically divided into three types. At the base are the most important and significant factors which influence the students experience with their teachers, we call it the grass zone (being at the base) , in the middle we have the Sunshine zone where factors which moderately affect student experience are present, and the

highest end we have the sky zone which is the zone which contains the least influencing factors . In order to be an effective motivator a teacher has to work on the factors which are of the highest significance at the grass zone and then climb upwards towards the sky.



2. How can we rate a teacher's effectiveness in creating motivating experiences for the students?

This question is far more complicated than the first one. We can see the factors which affect motivation can be divided into three group's .In the real world it very difficult to find one person who has all the qualities of an effective motivating teacher. Thus every teacher has a combination of the factors that influence his motivating quality.

We mapped these factors give them scores from 10 to 1. 10 was the score given for the most influential factor and 1 for the least influential factor. Now since the factors can be categorized into 3 types i.e. very significant, moderately significant and least significant: the factors falling into these three types have been given weights from 3 to 1. 3 for the most significant factor group or grass factors, 2 for the sunshine factors which are moderately significant and 1 for the sky factors which are least significant.



In the figure the green zone is given a weight of 3, orange zone is given a weight of 2 and the blue zone is given a weight of 1. The boxes represent the variable score from 10 to 1. Now a person with several motivational qualities is given a composite score which is:-

$$M1 = \sum \text{factor score} \times \text{factor weight}$$

So suppose a person is friendly, confident, helpful and has thorough knowledge of his subject his score will be :
 $10 \times 3 + 9 \times 3 + 7 \times 2 + 2 \times 1 = 73$

We call it the motivating index score. The highest possible score is 138 so a percentage score can be worked out as :
 Motivating index = $.724 \times M1$

So a person scoring 73 has a motivating index of $.724 \times 73 = 52.85$ as against the best of 100.

This analysis brings us to the next problem. What is the optimal score according to this scale? We would like to say the more the better but realistic benchmarks should be set by the evaluating school management authorities to denote different levels of competence.

Conclusion

It is thus seen by the study that among the major factors that motivate students in a high school, teachers provide a significant impact. That having said it is also pertinent to note that teachers, according to this study provide the least impact on the motivation of high school student among all the factors that were taken into consideration. This is a new shift in the relationship dynamics of high school students vis a vis their teachers. The causes are numerous: not the least being the tumultuous change that Indian society has seen in the past few decades. Students have more information now than they ever had, parents are well informed and educated, the student is powerful in terms of the law of the land and there is growing acceptability to irreverent attitude. The teachers are also stretched for time so the personal interaction is missing. The trust that builds over the years and results in the teacher turning into a significant source of motivation for the student is declining and there may be a shift in the mission statement that guided teachers and the profession. Is this shift good or bad? The answer on any one side

would turn this study into a judgemental discourse. We would like to analyze objectively the situation as it exists and suggest measures for increasing the effectiveness of teacher centered motivation to students of the high school : as they say for motivators the more the better.

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