

Chapter 1

What Is Motivation?

ABSTRACT

Motivation is an area that educators continually evaluate because of the importance of retention and working toward educating students to become successful in society. The need for motivation continues to challenge instructors, so instructors continue to look for different ways to motivate students. Also, instructional designers are tasked with applying various techniques to benefit students and help students work through materials that will help them in their careers and personal endeavors. The instructional designer can develop engaging media, resources, and information that will motivate students to achieve their goals and work towards completing what they set out to do with their education. So, for students to be motivated, they must understand what motivates and stimulates their curiosity and why they want to attend school.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Many different factors impact how a student reacts to school and education. Afzal and Crawford (2022) suggested that “Student engagement is considered an essential element of student’s learning experience and performance” (p. 1). When students engage in their studies, they are motivated by information, increasing their performance because of an intrinsic desire to succeed. Students are motivated to continue if challenged and feel that their learning is beneficial. Afzal and Crawford (2022) also noted that engagement was the key to peer, content, and teacher engagement. Suppose students respond to peers when working through content; this will give them a different perspective than the instructor, and additional learning occurs. They will also benefit by utilizing informed responses to assignments and discussions from the instructor based on specific feedback from the instructor. Feedback is critical and will enhance the learning process for students. Each factor, peer review, content analysis, and teacher feedback, is crucial in motivating and helping students engage

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in their studies and work towards a positive result, which means career advancement and continued success in their educational pursuits (Afzal & Crawford, 2022).

The key to a student's self-reliance on their success is “Self-determination theory (SDT), which explains people's inherent motivational tendencies for learning, growing, and connection with others” (Afzal & Crawford, 2022, p. 2). If students come to class with self-determination to excel in their coursework, this helps in motivational achievement and will help them move forward, conquering more complex areas. If self-determination begins at the beginning of the learning process, students get a positive start in acquiring and maintaining information. This feeling comes from intrinsic motivation, the internal desire to succeed in personal and career endeavors. This inner desire helps drive the self-determination theory for students to grow and increases student motivation. The change in education from face-to-face to online studies changes the motivational internal focus for the student, which is why engagement goes hand in hand with motivation.

When the pandemic occurred, instructors had to find a way to help students overcome the hurdle of moving from a face-to-face environment to an online one. The change to the new environment meant that instructional designers needed to work with instructors to develop different teaching and motivational techniques to keep students engaged in the learning process. So, it is essential to understand what motivates students and how to provide the stimulus to continue motivation in the online environment so that students can be successful in their educational pursuits. In the article by Andre, Tessier, and Girard (2023), the authors noted that teachers have a perception of class engagement and how this can be a positive approach to motivating different teaching practices, as well as a perception of autonomous motivation that students exhibit when working towards external regulation and motivation.

Autonomy support and the relationship between teachers and students can be helpful when developing solid mediation between teachers and students. Autonomy and motivation can help to promote an understanding of students' many different needs when it comes to motivation and how each student processes information differently. When teachers know the inequalities between students, they can use this information to develop a course of action that will benefit each student (Andree et al., 2023). Motivation can be an exciting process to understand when evaluating student needs. Chang and Yeh (2021) suggested that game-based learning using mobile devices can help motivate students and encourage knowledge sharing and critical thinking. They learned that blending different techniques in their research, such as bingo gaming and the Socratic process, helped improve critical thinking and decision-making, which are vital areas to help students process information. Using game-based learning, students can utilize different devices they are comfortable with, increasing their engagement with other students and instructors. Also, by

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