

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND THEIR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN UZBEKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Motivation plays a crucial role in determining learners' success in acquiring a foreign language. This study investigates the relationship between students' motivation and their English language achievement among university students in Uzbekistan. A quantitative correlational design was employed using a motivation questionnaire and students' academic results. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between motivation and English achievement, indicating that students with higher motivation levels performed better in their English courses. The study also found that intrinsic motivation had a stronger influence on achievement compared to extrinsic motivation. The results highlight the importance of motivational strategies in English language teaching and suggest practical implications for educators.

Keywords: Motivation, English Language Achievement, EFL Learners, Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation

1. Introduction

In the field of English language education, motivation has been widely recognized as one of the most influential factors affecting learners' performance. While teaching methodology and materials contribute to language learning, a student's internal drive to learn is often the decisive element in achieving success. According to Gardner (1985), motivation determines the extent to which a learner is willing to invest effort, time, and persistence in learning a language.

In Uzbekistan, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) at almost all educational levels. However, despite the widespread instruction, learners' outcomes often vary significantly. Some students achieve high proficiency, while others struggle despite similar learning conditions. This study seeks to explore one possible explanation for such differences — the role of motivation. The main purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between students' motivation and their

achievement in English language learning and to determine which type of motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic) has a greater impact on performance.

2. Literature Review

Motivation in language learning has been studied extensively by scholars such as Gardner and Lambert (1972), Dörnyei (2001), and Deci and Ryan (1985). According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), motivation can be categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic types. Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in learning for personal satisfaction and interest, while extrinsic motivation relates to external rewards, such as grades or career prospects.

Studies conducted by Alizadeh (2016) and Mahmoud (2020) indicate that students with high intrinsic motivation tend to show better language performance because they learn for enjoyment and self-development. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation, though effective in the short term, may not lead to long-term mastery. However, limited research has been carried out in the Uzbek context, where sociocultural factors and exam-oriented education may affect motivational patterns. This study fills that gap by focusing on Uzbek university students' motivation toward English learning and their academic success.

3. Methodology

A quantitative correlational research design was employed to identify the relationship between motivation and English language achievement.

Participants: The participants included 80 undergraduate students from different faculties of Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Agricultural Mechanization Engineers institute . The students' English proficiency levels ranged from intermediate to upper-intermediate.

Instruments: Two main instruments were used: (1) a Motivation Questionnaire adapted from Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), consisting of 20 items on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation; and (2) students' English Achievement Scores based on their final semester grades.

Data Analysis: Data were analyzed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were used to measure motivation levels, and the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was applied to determine the relationship between motivation and achievement.

4. Results and Discussion

The results indicated a positive and significant correlation ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$) between students' motivation and their English achievement. This means that students with higher motivation levels tended to obtain higher grades. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that intrinsic motivation ($r = 0.74$) had a stronger influence on

English achievement than extrinsic motivation ($r = 0.59$). This finding aligns with Dörnyei's (2001) claim that learners who study for enjoyment and personal growth are more successful in the long run.

The study also observed that students motivated by internal goals (such as improving communication skills and exploring cultures) were more active in class participation and self-study, compared to those motivated primarily by grades or parental pressure.

The findings of this study indicate that there is a strong and positive relationship between students' motivation and their English language achievement.

Students with higher levels of intrinsic motivation—those who learn English out of personal interest, enjoyment, or desire for self-improvement—tend to perform better than those driven solely by extrinsic factors such as grades or rewards.

This suggests that cultivating internal motivation is essential for long-term success in language learning.

From an educational standpoint, teachers play a significant role in influencing students' motivation. The way instructors design classroom activities, provide feedback, and create an engaging atmosphere can either enhance or diminish learners' interest.

Motivational strategies such as using authentic materials, incorporating technology, and providing autonomy can significantly improve students' participation and confidence.

Furthermore, regular encouragement, recognition of progress, and establishing a supportive environment can foster a positive attitude toward learning English.

At the institutional level, universities should emphasize professional development programs for teachers that include training in motivational psychology and learner-centered teaching methodologies.

In addition, curriculum designers should integrate motivational elements into English courses—such as project-based learning, cooperative activities, and reflective assignments—to keep students actively involved in their learning process.

This study also contributes to the growing body of research emphasizing the psychological dimensions of language education in Uzbekistan.

As the demand for English proficiency increases globally, understanding motivational dynamics becomes even more critical for educators and policymakers.

The results highlight the need for further exploration into how social, cultural, and technological factors influence students' language learning motivation in different educational settings.

Future research could focus on comparing motivation levels among students of different academic majors or exploring how gender, socio-economic background, and digital learning tools affect motivational patterns.

Moreover, longitudinal studies could help identify changes in motivation over time and the long-term effects of specific teaching interventions on language achievement.

In conclusion, fostering motivation among university students is not only a pedagogical challenge but also a strategic necessity for improving English language proficiency in Uzbekistan.

Teachers, institutions, and policymakers must work collaboratively to design learning environments that inspire curiosity, confidence, and commitment to language learning.

Such an approach will ultimately contribute to the formation of a more competent, globally minded generation of English language learners.

5. Conclusion

This research confirms that motivation is a key determinant of English language success among EFL learners. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation positively influence achievement; however, intrinsic motivation shows a stronger and more sustainable impact. English teachers are encouraged to design classroom activities that foster learners' internal motivation — such as goal-setting, self-reflection, and meaningful communication tasks. Educational policymakers should also consider integrating motivational support into English curricula to enhance students' long-term engagement and performance.

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