A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF STUDENTS' LEARNING MOTIVATION ACCORDING TO THEIR GENDER AND GRADE AT LAIZA HIGH SCHOOL, KACHIN STATE, MYANMAR

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Abstract: Students' learning motivation were examined by gender and grade sample of 139 students on grade 10 and 11 in Laiza high school, Kachin state, Myanmar.

The questionnaire was used for this study which included 6 subscales. There were 3 subscales for each motivation; challenge, curiosity and independent mastery for intrinsic motivation and easy work, pleasing teacher and dependent on teacher for extrinsic motivativation. Using data analysis methods such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and independent t-test, the author found levels of students' learning motivation was only moderate but there was a significant difference of students' learning motivation by gender and grade. Levels of students' intrinsic motivation was a significant different by gender. However, the levels of students' extrinsic motivation were found not significantly different by gender. In the difference of students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation according to grade, there was a significant difference for both intrinsic, as well as extrinsic motivation.

Keywords: Students' Learning Motivation, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation, Gender, Grade, Kachin State, Myanmar

Introduction

Motivation is a pivotal in school because it arouses, directs and maintains behavior of learner Woolfolk and Hoy (2009). Ryan and Deci (2000) described that students who are motivated means to go forward to do something, and the students who feel no energy or inspiration to move forward that implies unmotivated. Students with extrinsic motivation participate in activity without self-determination according to Vallerand and Blssonnette (1991). In addition, Deci, Ryan and their colleagues stated that different types of extrinsic motivation, which are external, interjected, identified and integrated regulations. External regulation is controlled by material reward. Interjected regulation is a feeling of guilt if people don't study before a test. Identified regulation meant behavior is ascribed as important. Integrated regulation is that the students thought behavior is the same with other's goals and values. To be harmony with the self-concept of others, they integrate behavior in the learning activities.

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Intrinsic motivation is an inner state, and it is explained by Stipedk (1998) people are to seek opportunities for enriching competencies, to attempt for finding novelty (events or activities that are discrepant from expectation) and to obtain autonomy. Motivation is important for the students' development, as well as for academic achievement according to Lepper, Corpus and Iyengar (2005). Since intrinsic motivation declines, academic achievement may also be declined significantly. In addition, Hendrickson (1997 cited in Shih and Gamon, 2001) found that students' grade point average can be predicted by looking at the student's motivation and attitudes. The study conducted at Minnesota Middle School by Moos and Honkomp (2011) found that three basic needs of motivation such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness needed to motivate student in school. Similarly, Luftenegger, Schober, de Schoot, Wagner, Finsterwald and Spiel (2012) described that autonomy is important to build motivation at learner centered classroom because it promotes students' interest , learning goal orientation and student self-efficacy.

In Myanmar, however, most students do not have the opportunity to choose their learning because the traditional teaching style still dominates teachers and students according to Tin (2008). In addition, as Tin (2008) also pointed out that the current curriculum and instruction do not encourage students to develop analytical and creative thinking well or sharing their experiences and opinions. This indicated that students may be less motivated in the classroom intrinsically in their learning at schools.

As Department of Education in Myanmar (DEM, 2004) pointed out that the majority of teachers are still using a traditional teaching method in Myanmar. As a result, students may feel bored with teachers' lectures in the classroom and they were likely to be less motivated by the learning activities. Teachers do not have much time for preparing their lesson because they have to teach at least 5 periods per day. Therefore, the activities carried out by teacher do not enough motivate students' learning.

Even though Center on Education Policy (CEP, 2012a) suggested that teacher' behavior and attitude affect students' motivation through interacting with them but there is still weak in motivation to learn due to various educational incentives in Laiza high school. Therefore, the reason for conducting this research is to investigate levels of students' learning motivation according to their gender and grade, Kachin state, Myaanmar.

Objectives

There are three objectives:

1. To identify the students' demographic factors including gender and grade at Laiza high school.
2. To determine the level of students' learning motivation including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation at Laiza high school.
3. To compare the students' learning motivation according to their gender and grade at Laiza high school.

Literature Review

Motivation

Motivation is crucial in learning because motivation and learning are inseparable psychologically and biologically (Zull, 2002 cited in Wlodkowski 2008). Besides, Wlodkowski (2008) indicated that it is not only to improve learning but also to mediate learning. For example, when learners are motivated during the learning process, things go more smoothly, well-communicated, less anxiety, and creativity and learning are more obvious. If students are to benefit maximally from the educational curriculum, teachers must provide a learning context that motivates students to engage in learning activities.

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is a natural tendency that appears when doing interesting things and the attempt to have competence and reachable to optimal challenges (Deci and Ryan, 1985 cited in Reeve, 1996). It relies on internal personal factors such as needs, interests, curiosity and enjoyment. This type of motivation comes from student's need and personal curiosities to produce effort for their improvement. Therefore, when students are intrinsically motivated, they can develop their skills and capabilities without environmental factors such as rewards and pressures. The example of intrinsic motivation were challenge, curiosity and independent mastery. *Challenge*; students with challenge like to do learning tasks which are moderately difficult to accomplish. This type of students engage with their capacities and elicits intrinsic involvement (Wlodkowski, 1993). Barron and Harackiewicz (2001) stated that their individual goals are to enrich competence by acquiring new knowledge and skills. *Curiosity*; people have characteristic of seeking experience, learning new things, solving problems, acquiring skills and developing competence. Regarding learning, the student has to nurture curiosity and use it as motivation because it is an emotional reaction that boosts student to learn a various level of information, stimulation and challenge (Reeve, 1996). The curiosity occurs when the student encounters unexpected things and unpredictable objects. The closest example for this that teacher raises questions without letting student know to ask. *Independent mastery*; students with intrinsic orientation like academic challenge and have curiosity and interest in their work and try for independent mastery according to Harter's (1981 cited in Newman, 1990). Their motivation to participate in work primarily for its own seek, because they feel the work itself is interesting or satisfying Amabile, Hill, Hennessey and Tighe (1994).

Extrinsic Motivation

People are not really interested in the activity for its own sake whereas, they only expect to be recognized with external forces such as rewards, social pressure, punishment and incentive. Therefore, students who like environmental factors, tend to avoid criticism from parents and to please teachers. For example, students who act for gaining a high grade, wining a trophy and complying a deadline. This type of students' behavior is extrinsically motivated (Reeve, 1996). Consequently, to motivate students extrinsically means of incentives, rewards and punishments

(Woolfolk and Hoy, 2009). The example of extrinsic motivation were easy work, plasing teacher and dependence on teacher. *Easy work* ; students prefer easy work that focuses on obtaining good test scores and grades or they will concentrate more on winning and beating other students (Woolfolk and Hoy, 2009). If the goal of students is outperforming other students, it looks smart for selecting easy materials to read. They try to accomplish homework assignments and activities as quickly as possible without producing much effort Pintrich and Shunk (2002 cited in Woolfolk and Hoy, 2009). This type of students also abandons task easily when they encounter with challenges Hijizen, Boekaerts and Vedder (2007). *Pleasing Teacher*; student performs school-related activities for external reasons such as to avoid from getting bad grades and to protect criticism from teachers without their desirable outcome and less their own determination Boggiano (1998). This type of students involve in academic task in order to please their teachers and to obtain a good grade Lepper, Corpus, and Iyengar (2005). *Dependence on teacher*; Elementary-school children want to ask questions because they believe that asking questions helps them learn according to Newman (1990). If help-seeking students accept that help is necessary, they are aware of their difficulty and needs. The students connect this awareness to an action to remedy the difficulty. In this case, the seeking of assistance is called volitional strategy for keeping task involvement and preventing possible failure. However, the research conducted by Newman (1990) found that the children with extrinsic motivation seek help for task completion and teacher's approval.

Woolfolk and Hoy (2013) also stated students are supported by self-determination and autonomy possess the character like greater students interest, sense of competence, creativity, conceptual learning, and prefer more challenge work. As a result of giving students to make choices, they understand more and believe that the work is important therefore they tend to internalize educational goals and take responsibility as their own.

Controlling environments contrast with autonomy-supporting classrooms, because controlling environment is defined rote recall tasks performance. In this environment students are forced to perform the academic activities but the students often prefer and seek the quickest and easiest solution. In these two environments, autonomy-supporting classrooms enhance intrinsic motivation and students are active. On the other hand, controlling environment provide extrinsic motivation and students are passive according to (Reeve, 2009 cited in Woolfolk and Hoy, 2013).

Conceptual Framework

This study had two types of variables including independent variable (students' demographics, gender and grade) and dependent variable (students' learning motivation, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation). The details of conceptual framework for this study were shown in Figure 1.

(See Figure 1 on the next page)

Method/Procedure

The purposes of this study were to investigate the levels of students' learning motivation; and to compare the students' learning motivation according to their gender and grade at Laiza high school, Kachin state, Myanmar.

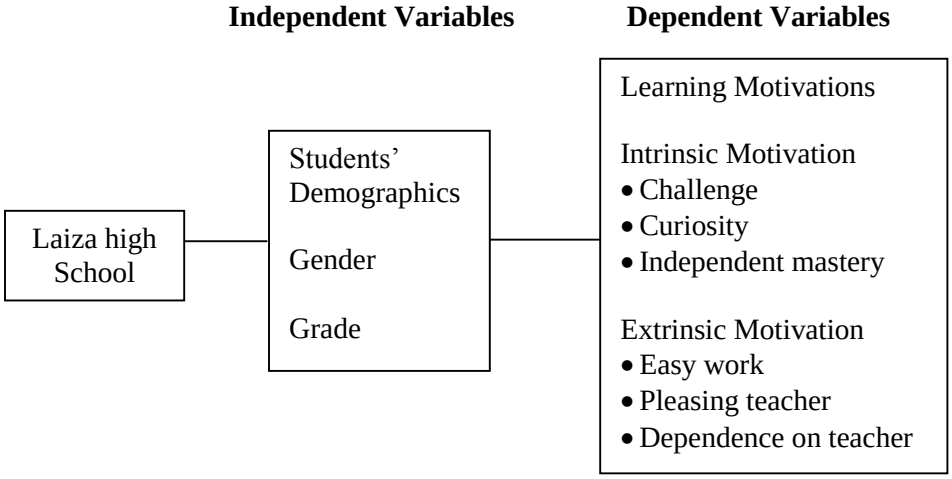

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

The researcher reviewed intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theories as the major support of this study. A total of 139 grade 10 and 11 students from Laiza high school were used as the target group for this study. The questionnaire was used as the research instrument for this study which included six subscales; three subscales for each motivation including demographic profile. For example, item 1 to 17 (challenge, curiosity and independent mastery) for intrinsic motivation and 3 subscales from item 18 to 33 (easy work, pleasing teacher and dependence on teacher) for extrinsic motivation are included. The questionnaire was directly taken from Lepper, Corpus and Iyengar (2005). Therefore, the questionnaire for this study was validated by Lepper, Corpus and Iyengar.

Besides, the reliability of their Cronbach's Alpha score were .90 for intrinsic motivation and .78 for extrinsic motivation. The collected data were analyzed by using Frequency, Percentage, Mean, Standard deviation and independent Samples t-test.

Results

In terms of demographics, the participants from both grades, 51 of them (36.4%) were male; 88 of them (62.9%) were female. Meanwhile, 68 (48.6%) participants were from grade 10 and 71 (50.7%) participants were from grade 11.

Main findings

1. The levels of students' learning motivation was "moderate" (4.3852) at Laiza high school.

Table 1 showed the mean score 5.3144 the levels of students intrinsic motivation was at "High" in the range of 4.61-5.80 meanwhile the mean score 3.4559 the levels of students' extrinsic motivation was at "Moderate" in the range of 3.41-4.60.

Table 1:Levels of Students' Learning Motivation at Laiza High School

Motivations	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Intrinsic	5.3144	.87587	High
Extrinsic	3.4559	.96139	Moderate
Learning motivation	4.3852	.66336	Moderate

2. There was a significant difference of students' learning motivation according to gender.

As Table 2 showed, since the probability significance was .019, which was smaller than .05, the research hypothesis was accepted and thus meant "There was a significant difference of students' learning motivation according to gender."

Table 2: t-test for Students' Learning Motivation According to Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	DF	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	51	4.2120	.68461	137	2.382	.019
Female	88	4.4855	.63316			

3. There was a significant difference of students' learning motivation according to grade.

As Table 3 showed, since the probability significance was .000, which was smaller than .05; the research hypothesis was accepted and thus meant "There was a significant difference of students' learning motivation according to grade."

Table 3: t-test for Students' Learning Motivation According to Grade

Grade	N	Mean	SD	Df	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Grade10	68	4.1048	.68781	137	-5.342	.000
Grade 11	71	4.6538	.51494			

Additional findings

1. There was no significant difference of students' extrinsic motivation according to gender.

Table 4 below showed that since the probability significance was .008, which was smaller than .05. Therefore, there was a significant difference of students' intrinsic motivation according to gender. However, since the probability significance was .405, which was bigger than .05 therefore, this meant there was no significant difference of students' extrinsic motivation according to gender.

Table 4: t-test for Students' Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation According to Gender

Motivation	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Intrinsic	Male	51	5.0577	.90462	2.690	.008
	Female	88	5.4632	.82795		
Extrinsic	Male	51	3.3664	.98584	.835	.405
	Female	88	3.5078	.94875		

2. There was a significant difference of students' extrinsic motivation according to grade.

Table 5 showed that since the probability significance was .001, which was smaller than .05. Therefore, this mean there was a significant difference of students' intrinsic motivation according to grade. Similarly, since the probability significance was .000, which was smaller than .05. This meant therefore, there was a significant difference of students' extrinsic motivation according to grade.

Table 5: t-test for Students' Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation According to Grade

Motivations	Grade	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
intrinsic	10	68	5.0744	.98339	-3.271	.001
	11	71	5.5443	.69079		
Extrinsic	10	68	3.1351	1.02968	-4.061	.000
	11	71	3.7632	.78205		

Discussion

In this section the research findings, literature suggestions and research related are discussed through depending on the priority of improvement for Laiza high school.

As this study found, there were more female students than male; and there were more grade 11 students than grade 10 at Laiza high school. Most group-out students were male and they were also from interpersonally displaces person (IDP) family. As Headmistress mentioned many IDP students enrolled in Laiz high school and mostly they were grade 11.

The finding showed levels of students' learning motivation was moderate. This meant that the students from Laiza high school students were neither motivated as the highest nor as the lowest. The finding proved that the students from Laiza high school were unmotivated highly because teachers have some difficulties and weaknesses at motivation to learn at Laiza high school according to the school Headmistress mentioned.

The research also found students' intrinsic motivation was high at Laiza high school. This finding was consistent with Fenner, Mansour and Sydor (2010) suggestion. They suggested new strategies that enhance and maintain motivation into the instructional process. For example because of using problem-based learning students assume they have responsibility to define and solve the problem in the classroom and throughout their learning as well.

The finding indicated levels of students' extrinsic motivation was moderate at Laiza high school. This result suggested that the teacher needs to evaluate motivation to learn in school because the right way of motivation to student is important key in school. The school need to develop more autonomy- supporting classroom than controlling classroom environment because autonomy-supporting classroom promote intrinsic motivation.

According to the research findings, there was a significant difference of the students' learning motivation according to their gender. There was a significant difference of intrinsic motivation by gender but there was no difference of extrinsic motivation by gender. The previous research found teachers have different belief in

gender-based differences and abilities. They also have different preferences according to (Gurian, 2001 cited in Cushman, 2010). Due to these differences, students from Laiza high school students are different in learning motivation according to gender.

The research also found the difference of students' learning motivation according to grade. Grade 10 and 11 has age different. In this study, the result showed there were significant difference in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation by grade. In 2005, Lepper, Corpus and Iyengar investigated age differences in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. They found that there were age differences in extrinsic motivation. The middle school years to be higher older children's extrinsic motivation but adolescents value the peer group increasingly.

There are some suggestions for further research. As this is the first research paper, the future researcher can adjust or use the instrument for this study for the future study. This instrument can also be useful to measure elementary and middle schools students' motivation according to (Lepper et al, 2005).

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