**Motivating unmotivated students**

Nowadays we are facing a major problem in the field of education, that affects the future of the students, and that also have a direct effect on their daily lives. The problem is that students with time are beginning to get less motivated to study and bored of the long times they spend at school. Some feel that the school is, simply, not the right place for them. However many attempts are being done in order to motivate and encourage students to continue their education. In this research paper I am going to look at some ideas given by different people to motivate students to study and build a bright future, and I am going to compare these methods with each other.

By definition motivation, which is also referred to as “hot contextual context”, “involves the processes that energize, direct and sustain behavior” (Santrock, 460).These are the main keywords teachers work with in order to motivate their students for better learning. And in order to know what to start with teachers must have a general idea on the achievement motivation level each student stands in, this can be done using two methods: “nAchievement and the Test Anxiety Questionnaire (TAQ)”. Where the first one is used to determine the “motive to succeed in students” and the second one determines the “fear of failure” level. Where knowing these two things helps us a lot in choosing our methods to motivate students, by helping us determine the interest in students, and establish relevance, and know the choice of courses that students seek. Afterall the most important thing to motivate someone is to encourage him do something he likes. Not to mention that students’ ideology changes with time they become more dependent on technology and deviate away from books, that most teachers especially in Lebanon want their students to simply “eat” books, which is the main reason behind student motivation. So teachers must watch out for the way they teach students, they must teach them in a way to increase their interest in the subject. Also students dislike just memorizing theories and stuff, they prefer if the teacher could actually show them the application of the theory, in this way learning will be more attention-grabbing, and students will be curious to know what will happen next. And also making students realize that what is being taught could be “relevant to a future career”, by the aid of the teacher. Also findings from the “CROP School Experience” shows that when students are involved in the learning process they become more motivated to learn especially in science courses, where being part of experiments and performing experiments by hand will give students a great boost towards learning more and exploring more. The findings from CROP, however, suggest that capstone projects can motivate students’ learning of a large amount of complex technical material in didactic formats (J Sci Educ Technol, 12). Teachers should also interfere in the Epistemological beliefs of students which are general assumptions students put on learning; i.e. they might think that they are not able to perform a certain task, or how they feel that methods given to them are effective in helping them progress. So by helping them develop strategy skills they will be able to perform some tasks easier and this could help them in various things. Also knowing about “Motivational beliefs, which are “students’ intentions for performing tasks”, and it also includes “self-efficacy beliefs (judgments of one’s capabilities to perform a task), task value beliefs (beliefs about the importance of, interest in and value of a task), and goal orientations (beliefs about whether the general purpose of a task is to learn or master knowledge and skills, getting good grades, or demonstrating ability to others)”, give teacher a clear understanding of the intrinsic motivation in a student and this makes motivating him easier by making him do tasks that are compatible with his goals. This could be hard because usually schools’ and universities’ curriculums focus on limited things and you might not be able to satisfy every student’s needs depending on his/her own orientation. Usually teachers prefer students with extrinsic motivation, who do something to get something else in return. In that way teachers will have a clearer view on how to motivate their students. They could, for example, give extra points if someone participates in class or gets an answer correct.

Exams, being a horror movie for most students, are another factor that demotivate students. Some students have exam-phobia which is a critical issue that many students face, other students study a lot but not effectively for an exam and therefore they don’t get a good grade and the might get depressed and give up studying feeling that there is no hope anymore in studying a lot and get a low grade in return. Teachers should help students to overcome such things from happening by many ways. They must specify precisely what students should prepare for an exam for example if I am a teacher and I want to give my students a test in chapter 1,2,3 I don’t tell my students you have chapters 1,2,3,4,5, and only give questions on the first 3, this is unfair and will develop a sense of hate towards studying, since they would have put effort on something that wasn’t required. Next “as long as students have latitude to be successful with routine strategies, they won’t experiment with new types of strategies and engage in strategy adaptation only in very limited ways. Third, we suggest that teachers vary the types of study task they give to their students. For instance, tasks that require memorization of information could be alternated with tasks that require deep comprehension. Likewise, tasks that specify most learning goals for students (e.g., understanding certain passages of a text) could be alternated with tasks in which students largely have to specify learning goals themselves (e.g., explaining one’s opinion on an issue).”

One of the most motivational acts for students is feeling the sense of belonging among classmates, so a student will want to show his abilities in front of his classmates and his creates a sense of competition among students o they will want to learn more to become more effective and more popular for ex. Statistics show that learning in a group context is more effective and more motivating than studying alone. But the most important thing in a group study is that, the group shouldn’t be so big and you should have intimate relationships with your group members in order to be effective learner. Also how close a teacher is related to his/her students, greatly determines the level of interest students show in a certain subject that directly affects motivation. Teachers must be close to their students and be like a friend to them not just a lecturer, they can help them in other things like some problems in their lives they might be facing, and usually this will make the student love the teacher and will have a positive attitude towards her and thus will want to listen to her and return the favor back by showing improvement in her subject. Also students like it when they are part of the lesson, for example when a teacher explains something she starts using students’ names in the examples she gives and let students participate in explaining the lesson, in this way the student will be more encouraged to learn more, an on the psychological level they will remember these lessons without having to perform a great deal of effort to recall them when studying. And believe me that is a big problem when students study but at some point they find themselves helpless in front of recalling the learned information. The teacher’s role is to help them develop a good lesson plan that directs students toward effective studying, and when you study effectively that mean you could get a good grade and a good grade makes the student happy and will want to keep the good job up and thus will be more motivated to maintain his average. Other thing teachers can do to motivate their students, is to make learning competitions between classes, so students from each class will want to prove to his colleagues that he is better than the students in the other class, and this spirit will make the students more motivated to learn more and study more. And teachers should always relate what they teach students to their daily lives and give it meaning that is of interest to the student.

All in all we can see the important role of teachers in motivating students to learn, and how the methods followed by the teacher have a direct effect on the students, positive or negative, that might not be directly visible but might appear in the long term level.

References:

Hein Broekkamp & Bernadette H. A. M. Van Hout-Wolters, Students’ Adaptation of Study Strategies When Preparing for Classroom Tests, 20 September 2006

Duane F. Shell • Gregory R. Snow •Daniel R. Claes, the Cosmic Ray Observatory Project: Results of a Summer High-School Student, Teacher, University Scientist Partnership

Using a Capstone Research Experience, 13 August 2010

Andrew C. H. Szeto • Richard M. Sorrentino •Satoru Yasunaga • Sadafusa Kouhara •

Lily Lin, Motivation and performance: Uncertainty regulation in Canada and Japan