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LIFE INFLUENCERS AS SIGNIFICANT
CONTRIBUTORS TO STUDENT MOTIVATION
AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AT THE
GRADUATE SCHOOL LEVEL

RIVERA MATTHEWS, HOPE L.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY & TECHNOLOGY DOCTORATE STUDENT
THE CHICAGO SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Ms. Hope L. Rivera Matthews, M.A.
Educational Psychology and Technology Doctorate Student
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology
Chicago, Illinois

Life Influencers as Significant Contributors to Student Motivation and Academic Achievement at the Graduate School Level

Synopsis:

Graduate non-traditional learners from various backgrounds attend universities all over the country, to achieve a piece or even a portion of what they are told is American success. For many of these students, they are met with financial challenges, emotional strain, stressors, trauma, triggers, learning disabilities, maladaptive behavior traits, interpersonal relationship trauma and a plethora of other issues.

Hope Rivera Matthews

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Abstract/Introduction

Graduate nontraditional learners from various backgrounds attend universities all over the country, to achieve a piece or even a portion of what they are told is American success. For many of these students, they are met with financial challenges, emotional strain, stressors, trauma, triggers, learning disabilities, maladaptive behavior traits, interpersonal relationship trauma and a plethora of other issues. In this final course essay, I aim to highlight and link these significant contributors, influencers and life altering events into the narrative /discussion of student motivation, academic achievement and steps that educators can take to facilitate learning.

Project Description, Goals & Objectives

In a graduate school setting that is inclusive of PBL, non PBL and motivational learning theory, a comprehensive/intervention plan that properly addresses motivation, emotional issues, student trauma as well as interpersonal relationships that relate to learning or academic performance should be inclusive of empowering students with conscious decision making, avoiding negative motivation, promoting collaboration among peers, the utilization of attribution theory and implicit theories of intelligence (Lin-Siegler, Dweck & Cohen, 2016).

According to additional research by Lin-Siegler, Dweck & Cohen (2016) on motivating students to learn, utilizing attribution theory as a tool for understanding students learning patterns by attributing them to motivating factors, should be included in the teaching style and or narrative for educators. Additionally, Lin-Siegler, Dweck & Cohen (2016) explained that implicit theory

of intelligence, which is found mostly in social and developmental psychology practices aims to explain a student's belief systems and this has an impact on their motivation to learn, as well as their ability to adapt to change (Struyven, Baeten & Dochy, 2013).

Moreover, Struyven, Baeten & Dochy (2013) stated that a comprehensive assessment plan that addresses motivational learning theory for students with emotional issues that also suffer from trauma should be inclusive of an assessment plan, that outlines students' standard expectations for project challenges, facilitating students' ability to develop relevant solutions to academic challenges, create an authentic classroom learning experience that emulates a community or collectivist concept, encourage intrinsic motivation and aim to encourage student academic problem solving, with the utilization of PBL (Struyven, Baeten & Dochy, 2013).

According to Jain, Lakhani & Chandel (2017) some technological tools that could be utilized to implement protocols to increase student motivation, emotional engagement, improve teaching efforts and learning performance for students in a PBL environment may be inclusive of learning management systems or (LMS), a flipped classroom learning method, video quizzes and or course gamification techniques.

Collaborative/ Consultation Components

In week two of this course, there was a critical friend support group activity. During that week, I identified the context setting of the problem or pressing situation and the context setting is graduate students and the problem or pressing situation is the increasing dropout rates, burnout

and lack of student motivation. Based upon consecutive research for weeks two and three, I found that personality traits, interpersonal relationship conflicts, traumas/triggers, emotional stability and academic achievement are correlated with graduate school dropout rates, burnout and a lack of academic /coursework motivation (Valiente, Swanson & Eisenberg, 2012). A literature review of additional peer reviewed research that is compiled of seven to twelve references will be utilized to further convey data collection and assessment processes within this final essay. Moreover, in week five a collaborative consultation that was inclusive of a situational analysis, as well as assessment and intervention possibilities, was thoroughly discussed with the inclusion of peer reviewed research data. During that live recorded collaborative consultation, I discussed problem-based learning or PBL, the importance of PBL in a graduate school setting as a facilitator for motivation, coursework competence, autonomy and relatedness (Winjen, Loyens, Wijnia, Smeets, Kroeze & Molen, 2018). Subsequently, extensive research findings that were inclusive of a situational analysis as well as assessment intervention possibilities, was inclusive of the four dimensions of motivation, student developmental stages of engagement, examining cross sectional as well as multi discipline graduate university studies and qualitative testing results.

Extensive archived research from Aronson & Steele (2005) discussed the link between assessment protocols as well as mastery-based goals, that are correlated with the four dimensions of motivation and PBL protocols that aimed to highlight motivational goals for students. In

subsequent week six of the course, a detailed peer review of this final essay was provided by the course research partner. In the final week of this course, I aim to highlight and celebrate my learning accomplishments, as well as outline plans for future research, data collection as well as professional goals.

Project Setting & Assessment Components

Problem based learning or PBL has been sought to facilitate higher motivation to learn, better academic performance, heightened conceptual comprehension of coursework, improved self-esteem as it pertains to academia, social adjustment and improved school graduation rates (Ibrahim, Al-Shahrani, Abdalla, Abubaker & Mohammed, 2018). Additional empirical based evidence by Ibrahim et al. (2018) identified the problem as a lack of student motivation, and this is inclusive of maladaptive behavior traits, poor academic performance, a lack of student emotional as well as social development, school incompleteness rates, a lack of problem based learning models, as well as the lack of motivational learning techniques. Further evidence from the graduate school setting that identifies ways to combat the problem of a lack of student motivation that has the potential to manifest into maladaptive behavior traits, should be inclusive of rewarding specific actions or accomplishments, that students achieve as a facilitator to promote improved academic performance, eliminate maladaptive behavior traits and heighten students' conceptualization of academic coursework (Ibrahim et al. 2018).

According to Aronson & Steele (2005) graduate students that are learning online or in a

blended classroom setting, benefit from the PBL model to combat lack of motivation, because this model utilizes psychological elements to conduct student research via research questions, as well as develops or cultivates student interests by curating a transparent vision to achieve or master student learning goals. Developmentally, graduate students across various disciplines could benefit from the framework of Maslow's hierarchy of needs or motivation, because this outlines student needs, perception of motivation, self-actualization and physiological elements (Neher,1991). But unfortunately, many medical graduate students that are non-traditional learners from a blended learning format that lack adequate social and emotional development, suffer increased dropout rates, burnout, lack of motivation, emotional instability as well as other significant stressors or traumas. Therefore, predominant philosophical constructs of motivation and student independent developmental stages as an educational theory is also inclusive of critical thinking social constructs, as indicators for commonly identified learning outcomes and processing academic coursework (Seifert, Bowman, Wolniak, Rockenbach & Mayhew, 2017). Further research from Seifert et al. (2017) expanded on research data to explain that facilitating student objective reasoning, fostering evaluation of academic arguments and analyzing coursework assumptions or beliefs, while utilizing a technological format of academia leads the way and or new tech network further fosters motivational learning and illustrates the many benefits of PBL.

Additional Project Components & Methodology (Psychosocial/Cognitive Development)

A further and more extensive description of the problem or pressing issue as well as an insightful description of educational philosophies that pertain to lack of student motivation and burnout, is inclusive of a PBL format, philosophical constructs by Erikson and Piaget, as it pertains to cognitive development as well as human intelligence (Seifert et al. 2017). Although Piaget's stages highlight theoretical, hypothetical and abstract thinking/reasoning, Erik Erikson's stages aimed to highlight psychosocial crisis/tasks and stages, that further explain the dynamic and impact of student motivation as well as coursework competency. Interestingly, Erikson's stages of five through seven aimed to highlight emotional instability, interpersonal relationship turmoil, triggers, trauma and other issues that may curate maladaptive behavioral traits as well as impact student learning (Zhou & Brown, 2015). Furthermore, Zhou & Brown (2015) stated that in a blended graduate program of nontraditional medical student learners, specific technology such as learning management systems and online videos, along with educator consideration of Erikson stages of psychosocial development, the impact of psychosocial development on graduate school nontraditional learners, the impact of decision making based on Piaget's cognitive development framework and the correlation with motivation based on these theories/frameworks should be considered.

Additionally, a PBL centered comprehensive assessment plan that is inclusive of qualitative, quantitative data, student goals, needs, motivation, emotional dynamics, instructional

methods, environmental factors and adult learning characteristics should also examine mastery based goals, developmental stages of engagement and research methodology based on qualitative concept maps, that include informative elements as well as three dimensional images (Suswono et al. 2018). Suswono, Sugi & Wachidul (2018) highlighted and emphasized that mixed method statistical data that analyzes students' goals, needs, motivation and emotional dynamics should also be inclusive of a quasi-experimental method that utilizes student activity observational sheets and pretest as well as post test data, through a covariance analysis or ANCOVA. Based on this peer reviewed data collection process, minimum standard scores or MSCs are evaluated and these MSCs appropriately assessed individualized learning methods for students and foster a prediction for future student learning outcomes (Siswono et al. 2018).

According to Yew & Goh (2016) instructional methodology or framework for graduate students utilizing PBL should be inclusive of a pedagogical approach to learning that enables critical thinking, self-directed learning, the creation of mental models, collaborative systems/settings and development of understanding or comprehension of coursework. Moreover, PBL protocols and learning procedures are also inclusive of environmental factors outside of graduate school, as well as technological tools that facilitate assessment strategies or tools and PBL protocols (Yew & Goh, 2016). Additional research by Yew & Goh (2016) stated that some of the technological tools that foster and facilitate learning through PBL are inclusive of learning management systems with SCORM online data handling systems, video,

flipped classroom learning with a student-centered approach and course gamification to foster motivational learning, by giving students rewards for coursework completed successfully. Yew & Goh (2016) also highlighted that whiteboard animation videos are utilized to facilitate student learning, motivation and to foster an understanding of technological software, pedagogies and theories or frameworks for PBL.

Further peer reviewed research also implied that learner analytics and data visualization is a technological tool that advocates communication and online learning feedback and support. (Yew & Goh, 2016). Consequently, a thorough situational analysis as it pertains to course group discussions, empirical based research, student engagement, motivation and student burnout/traumas, would be inclusive of necessary assessment tools that aim to identify the pressing issued as discussed in this essay, as well as intervention/testing methodology that has been discussed in this essay. Furthermore, some additional characteristics of the pressing issue that is associated with individual students that are nontraditional graduate learners should be inclusive of maladaptive behavioral traits, lack of motivation, burnout and school dropout.

Situation Analysis, Student Characteristics & Intervention Strategy

Based on peer reviewed data by Yew & Goh (2016) as it pertains to the pressing issue with a non- traditional graduate setting, as well as weeks one through two research, some characteristics of the non -traditional graduate learner may be inclusive of financial, emotional stress/traumas and interpersonal relationship stressors. Additionally, Yew & Goh (2016)

highlighted that lower test scores, lack of interest in coursework, maladaptive behavior traits, lack of prioritizing academic goals, burnout from coursework and dropout rates have severely impacted non-traditional graduate student learners, that are attending medical programs.

However, a more extensive and in-depth examination of the situational analysis and intervention strategy should be inclusive of comprehensive, proactive assessment plans, that are wholistic, developmental and linked to motivational-emotional dimensions. Zhou & Brown (2015) also stated that a viable, relatable and successful intervention strategy for non-traditional graduate students utilizing a PBL format should be inclusive of acceptability, availability, as well as motivation testing methods, that are based on a motivational/reward analysis or premise, a wholistic learning environment that fosters consistency and predictability of coursework expectations. Therefore, Zhou & Brown (2015) highlighted that verbal and environmental cues facilitate student focus, agility and promote motivational -emotional responses to coursework. Subsequently, students' motivation for coursework completion will improve and research also showed that utilizing integrated force field analysis, as it pertains motivating graduate students to learn is successful, by identifying the driving force that a student has to learn and that may be to advance their career goals and evaluating the restraining force that may be hindering their learning. Consequently, this process promotes and fosters creative thinking, improved academic coursework, motivation and facilitates the desired learning outcome, that the educator would like for their students (Zhou & Brown, 2015).

Moreover, Zhou & Brown (2015) stated that applying an integrated force field analysis technology and or protocol facilitates intervention and continued monitoring of necessary academic assessment procedures. Additional positive driving forces as it pertains to force field analysis would be inclusive of students' professional goals, desired outcome for lifestyle changes and or family achievement recognition, as seen in collectivist family structures (Zhou & Brown, 2015). However, there are potential barriers or restraining forces as it pertains to force field analysis and these forces may include interpersonal relationship trauma, emotional instability, burnout, lack of motivation and financial burdens (Zhou & Brown, 2015). Additional strategies to improve and enhance learning as discussed previously in this essay, include but are not limited to: testing methods, through assessment strategies, identifying student goals, needs, motivations, emotional instabilities and overall desired academic outcome (Yew & Goh, 2016). Subsequent strategies to minimize and or circumvent restraining forces are included but not limited to: creating a positive intrinsic learning environment, consistency in coursework and a predictable learning environment, that fosters academic excitement and enthusiasm (Yew & Goh, 2016).

Technology Integration continued, Monitoring, Adjustment & Evaluation Plan

Additional technological components for monitoring, adjusting and evaluating coursework should be inclusive of protocols that foster and facilitate motivational learning techniques for graduate non- traditional learners (Winjen, Loyens, Wijnia, Smeets, Kroeze &

Molen, 2018). According to Jun & Bridges (2019) technology as an integrated as well as reflective tool for learning, optimizes coursework capabilities, maximizes digital literacy and fosters engagement of motivational learning. Jun & Bridges (2019) stated that google classroom, self-CAD and adobe spark classroom have the potential to motivate graduate students, that are nontraditional learners, to regain excitement over coursework, engage in research with peers, as well as facilitate intrinsic learning and aid in eliminating academic burnout/fatigue. Interestingly, Jun & Bridges (2019) stated that an effective plan for educators to appropriately evaluate an academic plan, educational teaching philosophy, should be inclusive of Maslow's hierarchy of needs that are specific to student's feelings of belonging, physiological needs, self-actualization and student esteem, as it pertains to academic success, coursework and overall course achievements. Subsequent research by Jun & Bridges (2019) suggested that framework and models for teaching philosophic perspectives should be inclusive of instructional models, that are direct, indirect and independent. Specific examples of instructional methodology, framework and philosophic perspectives are inclusive of inductive and deductive approaches, observations, study design methods, interpretative design of coursework for students, apply to practice methodology and derivation generalization of academic coursework. According to Jun & Bridges (2019) and Winjen, et al. (2018) these specific and detailed frameworks, key teaching methodology, teaching philosophic perspectives and monitoring/evaluation plans facilitate along with foster student motivational learning, in a PBL as well as non PBL format and improve

overall student comprehension of coursework.

Brief Review of Literature

Lin -Siegler & Cohen (2016) aimed to highlight the significance of motivation in the classroom with an emphasis on student intellectual pursuits, goals, interests, academic motivation and performance. Lin- Siegler & Cohen (2016) also emphasized the inclusion of instructional intervention, self- attribution, classroom learning and the environment as well as educator protocols along with shaping students' belief systems, as it pertains to academia. Struyven, Baeten & Dochy (2013) aimed to investigate the dynamics and approaches to learning within different learning environments, as well as examining assessment techniques that facilitate student centered learning environment. Struyven (2013) also highlighted the importance of the implementation of framework that shapes learning as well as case based learning. Jain, Lakhani & Chandel (2017) highlighted the importance of fostering student motivation through appropriate adjustment techniques. This peer reviewed source also outlined the implications on student emotional stability, academic achievement, mental health and overall academic performance expectations, as it pertains to student adjustment in a PBL and non PBL format. Valiente, Swanson & Eisenberg (2012) aimed to highlight the importance of recognizing and identifying the link between student emotion and academic achievement, by utilizing mix method assessment techniques to examine academic competence and emotionality. Additionally, this peer reviewed source outlined that educators must gain awareness of students emotional

dynamics, because it has the potential to negatively or positively impact the learning process, as well as overall academic function/achievement. Winjen, Loyens, Wijnia, Smeets, Kroeze & Molen (2018) aimed to highlight and discussed student academic achievement in a PBL vs non PBL environment and utilized quantitative along with qualitative studies/research data to facilitate a better understanding of a student-centered approach to learning. This peer reviewed source also discussed the importance of self-determination theory, autonomous motivation, competence, MANOVA assessments and relatedness, in an educational environment.

Aronson & Steele (2005) discussed specific influences on academic achievement, educational learning environments, student engagement, self-concept and competence. This peer reviewed source expressed the impact of student self-concept, emotional instabilities and motivation on academic coursework. Ibrahim, Al-Shahrani, Abdalla, Abubaker & Mohammed (2018) emphasized the importance of problem-based learning for graduate students that are medical students and or international students. This peer reviewed source, aimed to express the many benefits and academic achievements of students learning in a PBL environment, juxtapose students that are not. This source also went on to identify testing methodology that would facilitate PBL learning for graduate students that were displaying maladaptive behavioral traits, burnout and fatigue. Archived research data from Neher (1991) aimed to critique and explain the importance of Maslow's theory of needs hierarchy, as it pertains to the components of student

motivation. This peer reviewed source successfully highlighted a detailed outline of student needs, motivation, learning abilities and competency, through the viewpoint of Maslow's theory of needs hierarchy. Seifert, Bowman, Wolniak, Rockenbach & Mayhew (2017) aimed to highlight the effects of research on student academic achievement, motivation and overall learning environment. This peer reviewed source discussed assessments techniques, mixed method data and student motivations to appropriately analyze research data. Wood, Fairlie, Fernandez, Borsari, Capone, Laforge & Barros (2010) highlighted the overall importance of student support systems, in an educational setting to combat maladaptive behavioral traits, fatigue, burnout, evaluate learning patterns and monitor/ evaluate academic performance. Suswono, Sugi & Wachidul (2018) explained the importance of mixed method data, in the analysis of student academic achievement, performance, motivation, goals, needs and the overall emotional dynamics of learning, with the inclusion of a covariance analysis.

Monitoring & Assessment (Formative), Evaluation Plan (Summative)

Wood, Fairlie, Fernandez, Borsari, Capone, Laforge & Barros (2010) stated that monitoring and formative assessment is specific to evaluating student learning patterns, with the utilization of performance-based feedback for educators and students, as well as a program tool for monitoring improvement rates pertaining to student academic progress. Additionally, Wood et al. (2010) explained that a summative evaluation plan should be inclusive of an evaluation process that examines student learning patterns at the end of a course or unit, with the inclusion

of coursework data to compare end goals as well as progress for students. Lastly, Wood et al. (2010) highlighted that ongoing, timely formative assessments strategies, should be inclusive of questionnaires, online learning tools such as google classroom, to facilitate and foster a better understanding for educators to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of intervention strategies, implementation of ways to track student progress, end goals, monitor the adjustment of motivation, emotion, engagement, learning and overall academic achievements. Finally, Wood et al. (2010) stated that a viable and useful summative evaluation plan for educators should be inclusive of a comprehensive plan to evaluate the overall effectiveness of intervention methodology to foster motivation and student engagement by appropriately evaluating students patterns of learning.

Personal Reflections and Conclusion

Conclusionary personal reflections for this essay, are inclusive of a critical reflection on the assessment data analyzed that's peer reviewed, linking motivational factors, emotional instability, previous traumas and implementation of protocols to motivate graduate student non-traditional learners, as well as effective instructional frameworks, that curate student academic success. Additional peer reviewed data in this research, was inclusive of several personal highlights of this research process. During this research process, learning about how strong advocacy for education, empirical based research as well as motivational learning theories and Maslow's framework, has really shaped perception and future plans for my career,

as an educator. Moreover, a personal action plan for ways that I can improve my professional effectiveness would be to continue to utilize peer reviewed data, throughout the process of developing lesson plans/coursework and to utilize assessment techniques discussed in this essay, to properly evaluate student learning, motivation, long term goals and emotional stability. Finally, I would utilize questionnaires during the assessment process to further stimulate effectiveness of learning, coursework and overall academic achievement.

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