

Factors Influencing Teachers' Use of Motivational Strategies in the Classroom

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KEY IMPLICATIONS

- Teachers who have higher need satisfaction would have higher motivation, and in turn, more likely to use motivational strategies in the classroom.
- When teachers use motivational strategies in teaching, it will fulfill students' psychological needs and lead to positive outcomes.
- School authority may have a negative impact on teachers' need satisfaction, and in turns affect teachers' provision of structure for help and support.
- School system is an important influence on teachers' self-determined motivation.

BACKGROUND

High motivation and engagement levels of students in a classroom has been linked to numerous positive learning effects. While many studies have delved into researching students' motivation, there is a dearth of studies looking at the motivation of teachers. Understanding the challenges faced in teachers' profession and the consequent application of motivational strategies is essential to foster a more conducive and effective learning environment for students.

FOCUS OF STUDY

This research sought to examine various antecedents in a social context which impacts a teacher's psychological need satisfaction and in turn, explore those effects on their use of motivational strategies in the classroom. The contextual and personal antecedents include the teachers' perceived job pressure, their autonomous causality orientation, and their perceptions of students' self-determined motivation.

KEY FINDINGS

- Teachers' psychological need satisfaction and their autonomous causality orientation positively impacted their self-determined motivation to teach.
- Teachers' perception of their students' self-determined motivation directly predicted teachers' use of three motivational strategies in the classroom, as well as indirectly through need satisfaction (60% to 65% variance explained).
- Perceived work pressure negatively predicted teachers' providing of instrumental support.

SIGNIFICANCE OF FINDINGS

Implications for practice

Teachers play a very important role in the classroom, as the climate they create can subsequently influence the self-determined motivation of their students. Therefore, emphasis in encouraging the teachers to initiate the use of motivational strategies is crucial. This study recommends several practices that could be used to increase the self-determined motivation of teachers.

1. Decreasing pressure from school authorities could allow more teachers more autonomy in their teaching to promote more self-determined behavior
2. Decreasing evaluation based on students' academic performance to focus on the teachers' teaching strategies
3. Increasing initiative in using motivational strategies for teachers to create a cyclical effect that promotes higher motivation levels in both students and teachers alike

PARTICIPANTS

This study involved 221 Math and Science teachers as well as 1549 students, recruited across 10 secondary schools in Singapore.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This research is a cross-sectional, questionnaire-based study. In order to test research questions, structural equation models using path analysis were tested.

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