

Social-Contextual Factors of Academic Motivation in University Environment¹

Mayiana Mitevka, DSc, Professor, Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56293/IJMSSSR.2024.5319>

IJMSSSR 2024

VOLUME 6

ISSUE 6 NOVEMBER – DECEMBER

ISSN: 2582 - 0265

Abstract: This publication explores academic motivation within the modern educational environment, examining personality and situational factors that influence the motivation of students and pupils. Combining theoretical and empirical approaches, the publication presents models for measuring and analyzing academic motivation, along with applications of the results to support educational strategies and policies.

Keywords: Academic Motivation, University, Bulgarian

Introduction

Academic motivation is a key factor in educational achievements and individual career fulfillment. In today's world, dominated by knowledge and innovation, students' motivation plays a central role in achieving high results and sustainable career development. Examining motivation at different levels – personal and situational – provides valuable insights for its development and maintenance in the context of globalization and competitive environments.

Research Aim

The aim of this study is to analyze and clarify the main factors influencing academic motivation among students and pupils, and to propose strategies for improving motivation in the learning environment.

Objectives

- To explore and define key theories of academic motivation.
- To identify personality and contextual factors impacting motivation.
- To develop a model for measuring academic motivation and apply relevant methods.
- To analyze the results and propose recommendations to enhance motivation in the learning environment.

Hypotheses

Personality factors have a substantial impact on the level of academic motivation. External factors, such as social environment and educational institution, determine the degree of motivation for academic achievement. Combining personal and contextual approaches leads to better outcomes in sustaining academic motivation.

Methods

The study employs a combination of methods for diagnosing motivational factors and personality traits, including:

- Academic motivation assessment using A. Velichkov and M. Radoslavova's instrument.
- Personality trait diagnostics with the Big Five methodology.
- Examination of life satisfaction and subjective perception of happiness using questionnaires adapted in Bulgaria.

¹ The publication is part of the project funded by the National Science Fund SP23-PF-009 "Integration of Innovative Behavioral Models for Psychosocial Support and Quality of Life," led by Prof. Dr. Mayiana Mitevka.

Theoretical Framework of Academic Motivation

The theoretical framework for academic motivation examines key concepts, models, and factors affecting students' engagement in the learning process. This framework includes both personality and contextual aspects, highlighting the importance of intrinsic motivation and personal development for achieving academic success.

Concept of Academic Motivation

Academic motivation can be seen as a purposeful pursuit of knowledge and achievement in the educational process, associated with students' and pupils' desires, needs, and expectations. Researchers define academic motivation as “an inner drive of the individual, directing them towards acquiring new knowledge and developing skills” (Mitevaska-Encheva, 2017). In this context, motivation is a central factor determining the effectiveness and success of the educational process, connecting it with personal qualities and social-contextual factors.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are central concepts in the study of human behavior. “Intrinsic motivation reflects an authentic desire of an individual to develop, learn, and achieve success,” notes Leontiev (2002), emphasizing that this type of motivation is particularly crucial for academic achievements. Intrinsically motivated students show greater resilience, ambition, and commitment to learning activities.

In contrast, extrinsic motivation is associated with expectations of rewards or the avoidance of punishment. According to the self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan, extrinsic motivation can be integrated with intrinsic drives when individual autonomy is supported (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In the educational context, “a combination of intrinsic motivation and well-structured external incentives increases students' engagement and efficiency” (Mitevaska-Encheva, 2017).

Contextual Factors in the University Environment

Contextual factors also play a significant role in academic motivation. “The social environment in the university and the support of teachers play an important role in the motivational process,” notes Karabelova (2017). This includes the teaching approach, learning conditions, and peer support, which can foster intrinsic motivation. Research shows that “a teaching approach that promotes autonomy and recognition of individual efforts leads to increased engagement” (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Self-Determination Theory

The self-determination theory explains that individual motivation increases when three basic needs are met: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. “When the learning environment provides opportunities for developing competence, students and pupils show higher levels of academic motivation” (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to the theory, self-regulation and self-motivation result from social conditions that allow freedom of choice and autonomy in the educational process.

Modern theories of academic motivation clarify that a combination of personality and contextual factors plays a decisive role in achieving high academic results. Research indicates that “students and pupils who experience satisfaction from the learning environment and support from teachers are more likely to be academically motivated” (Mitevaska-Encheva, 2017).

Results

In this section, we present data from the study on academic motivation, collected through surveys and standardized questionnaires. The results are grouped according to personality and contextual factors and analyzed for their role in the academic motivation of students and pupils.

Table 1: Influence of Personality Factors on Academic Motivation

Personality Traits	Average Academic Motivation (AM)	Correlation with AM (r)
Desire for Success	4.5	0.76
Resilience	4.3	0.68
Internal Control	4.6	0.81
Social Support	4.1	0.60
Emotional Stability	3.9	0.57

Interpretation: The results show that personality traits such as internal control and desire for success have a strong positive correlation with academic motivation ($r = 0.81$ and $r = 0.76$, respectively). These results confirm the hypothesis that personality factors significantly influence motivation, as individuals with higher values in these traits exhibit stronger academic engagement. Social support and emotional stability also show positive correlations, although with lower values, suggesting that they indirectly influence motivation by maintaining a stable learning environment.

Table 2: Contextual Factors and Their Effect on Academic Motivation

Contextual Factors	Average Academic Motivation (AM)	Correlation with AM (r)
Teaching Approach	4.2	0.71
Peer Support	4.0	0.65
Learning Environment	4.3	0.69
Educational Resources	3.8	0.54
Family Support	4.5	0.74

Interpretation: Contextual factors also play a significant role in building and maintaining academic motivation. The data show that teaching approach and family support have strong correlations with academic motivation ($r = 0.71$ and $r = 0.74$, respectively). This suggests that students and pupils who experience positive communication with teachers and stable family support are more motivated to achieve academic success. Additionally, factors such as the learning environment and availability of educational resources have a moderate impact, further supporting the hypothesis about the importance of the environment in influencing motivation.

Analysis of the Combined Effects of Personality and Contextual Factors

To examine the combined effect of personality and contextual factors on academic motivation, we conducted a multivariate regression analysis. The results indicated that the model, which includes all these factors, explains 68% of the variance in academic motivation, demonstrating a high predictive value of these variables.

Table 3: Results of Regression Analysis on Academic Motivation

Variable	Beta (β) Coefficient	Standard Error	p-Value
Desire for Success	0.31	0.05	0.001
Teaching Approach	0.28	0.06	0.003
Family Support	0.26	0.05	0.004
Internal Control	0.29	0.04	0.002

Interpretation: The results from the regression analysis show that all included factors have a statistically significant influence on academic motivation ($p < 0.005$). Personality traits such as “desire for success” and “internal control” have the strongest impact on motivation, with each increase in these factors leading to a significant rise in levels of academic motivation. Contextual factors, such as family support and teaching approach,

also show high significance, confirming the importance of a supportive educational environment. The analysis of results shows that intrinsic motivation is influenced by personality traits, such as the desire for self-improvement, while external factors like learning environment and social support play a role in sustaining student engagement. The combination of personality and contextual factors creates conditions for sustainable motivation and encourages students' achievements.

This section presents data from the study on academic motivation, gathered through surveys and standardized questionnaires. Results are grouped according to personality and contextual factors and analyzed for their role in the academic motivation of students and pupils.

Application of Results

The results can be used to develop new educational policies aimed at individual and group student motivation. They also provide guidelines for educational institutions to integrate motivational strategies that align personal needs with educational goals.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The analysis confirms the importance of personality and contextual factors for maintaining sustainable academic motivation. Based on the results, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Support for Personal Development** – Include programs to enhance students' internal control and resilience.
2. **Improving the Learning Environment** – Strengthen teacher support and encourage a positive social atmosphere within the educational institution.
3. **Family Involvement** – Develop programs for raising family awareness and engagement in supporting their children's academic motivation.

This study emphasizes the importance of academic motivation as a multifactorial process that depends on both personality and situational determinants. Achieving sustainable motivation requires an integrated approach that fosters not only academic achievements but also the personal development of students.

References

1. Velichkov, A., & Radoslavova, M. (2017). *Methodology for Studying Academic Motivation*. Sofia: Za bukвите - O pismeneh.
2. Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: Classic Definitions and New Directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54–67. doi:10.1006/ceps.1999.1020
3. Karabelova, S. (2017). *Diagnostic Tools for Personality Assessment and Life Satisfaction*. Sofia: Za bukвите - O pismeneh.
4. Leontiev, V. G. (2002). *Dynamic Equilibrium and Bipolar Conditions in Educational Activities*. Moscow: Pedagogy.
5. Mitevska-Encheva, M., & Petkov, G. (2017). *Academic Motivation: Contemporary Dimensions*. Sofia: Za bukвите - O pismeneh.
6. Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68–78. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68