

EDG-6310 Behavior & Classroom Management
Dr. Livengood

REFLECTION ON MOTIVATIONAL THEORY

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Reflection on Classroom Management and Motivation Strategies

Over the past few weeks, I have implemented various classroom management strategies aimed at motivating students and fostering a positive learning environment. Some of these strategies include using a treasure box, a PBIS Points system, and verbal praise. While the treasure box did not work as intended due to students stealing from it, the PBIS Points system and verbal praise were far more effective in encouraging positive behavior and engagement.

Integration of Motivational Theories

Several motivational theories have informed my approach to classroom management.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

- **Autonomy:** I have given students more independence in their learning by incorporating a vocab section in their OneNote Class Notebook, allowing them to find answers on their own (Deci & Ryan, 2000).
- **Competence:** Students have shown significant improvement in their work, indicating that they feel more capable and successful in achieving their goals.
- **Relatedness:** While some students have built strong connections with their peers and with me, others still struggle with engagement. I plan to work on fostering more inclusive interactions.

Behaviorism and Operant Conditioning

- **Positive Reinforcement:** The PBIS Points system and verbal praise have been effective in reinforcing desirable behaviors (Skinner, 1953).
- **Negative Reinforcement:** Implementing seating charts and demerits in PBIS has helped manage disruptive behavior.

Expectancy Theory

- My expectation for students is to show effort and progress rather than focusing solely on skill level. As they realize this, they tend to engage more actively in learning (Vroom, 1964).

Goal-Setting Theory

- I set clear, specific goals for each lesson and display them in the classroom. This provides students with a structured path to follow, helping them stay motivated (Locke & Latham, 1990).

Growth Mindset

- Using Quill.org has helped students recognize their ability to improve in writing, reinforcing the belief that intelligence and skills can develop with effort (Dweck, 2006).

Effectiveness of Strategies

Overall, these strategies have led to increased student motivation, improved behavior, and greater engagement. Verbal praise has been particularly impactful, while PBIS Points and private conversations have been effective for students who prefer less public recognition. A clear indication of progress is that recent exam results show a notable increase in passing rates, from nearly none to about 10%—a significant improvement for an AP-level course.

However, some challenges remain. A few students still believe school is pointless, and balancing intrinsic and extrinsic motivation remains difficult, particularly given that test scores do not always reflect the same expectations as in other classes. Additionally, with a student base that is over 90% Hispanic, cultural factors may play a role in how different strategies are received.

Revised Action Plan

To address these challenges, I plan to refine my approach:

- **Redefining Success Metrics:** Instead of emphasizing raw test scores, I will highlight individual student growth over time, making progress more visible and encouraging.
- **Increasing Student Choice:** I will provide more opportunities for students to choose project topics and types of assessments, fostering autonomy.
- **Goal-Tracking:** Students will set personal goals, and I will track their progress more explicitly to give them a clearer sense of achievement.
- **Constructive Feedback:** I will focus more on feedback that emphasizes effort, persistence, and improvement rather than just final outcomes.

Conclusion

Motivational strategies play a crucial role in effective classroom management and student success. By integrating motivational theories into my practice, I have seen positive changes in student engagement and behavior. Moving forward, I remain committed to continuously assessing and refining my strategies to create a more motivating and supportive learning environment for all students.

References

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