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## Exploring Classroom Motivation Using Alderfer's Theory

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### Abstract

Numerous research has explored that human motivations affect learning outcomes significantly. The main aim of the research was to explore the classroom motivations of undergraduate students from the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA through the lens of the Alderfer theory of motivation. In particular, the main objective of the study was to determine how the Alderfer theory, existence, relatedness, and growth influence students' classroom motivation. The research has adopted a correlational and cross-sectional study approach. A total of 424 undergraduate students from 5 academic programs the Administrative Science and Policy Studies participated in the online survey. The questionnaire consisted of 5 sections with 24 items on Alderfer's three components of Existence, Relatedness and Growth. The study's findings show that Existence, Affective and Growth dimensions scored from moderate to high mean scores ranging from 3.5 and above. The correlation analysis shows a strong significant relationship between existence and growth  $r = .711$ ,  $p = .000$ . While a weak positive relationship between existence and relatedness  $r = .307$ ,  $p = .000$  and growth and relatedness  $r = .150$ ,  $p = .002$ . The study's implication indicates that most undergraduate students a moderate high level of motivation. Hence, to sustain the classroom motivation of the students, continuous psychological, materials and academic support together with training in teaching pedagogy are vital to ensure their academic success.

**Keywords:** Classroom Motivation, Undergraduate Student, Alderfer Theory, Existence, Relatedness.

### Introduction

#### Background of Study

The definition of motivation varies and constitutes many dimensions. In Self-Determination Theory, its founder Deci & Ryan (1985) distinguishes between different types of motivation based on the different reasons or goals that give rise to an action. The most basic distinction

is between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The first refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable. While the latter refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In addition, Irvine (2018) explains that motivation is a meta-concept that subsumes several related concepts such as engagement, persistence, interest, self-efficacy, and self-concept. He further argues that motivation involves a wide array of theoretical constructs such as expectancy-value or intrinsic-extrinsic and many related theories, including self-efficacy, goal theory, theories of intelligence, choice theory, self-determination theory, and flow, among others. Therefore, learning motivation is the totality of motives that support energy activities and direct learning activities. For example, highly motivated students can lead to higher academic performance; however, unmotivated students would lose interest in classroom learning and score low academically.

Undoubtedly, motivation is essential for success in an educational setting. In the context of higher education, motivation is one of the determining factors when it comes to learning. Interestingly, a recent study by Berestova et al (2022) among 520 students in four universities in Russian and one university in Bulgaria revealed that academic motivation has a notable effect on critical thinking and can become a predictor of its development. Hence, this shows that higher persistence in acquiring higher knowledge would spur cognitive ability, especially in problem-solving tasks.

Understanding the motivation role is significant in an educational context. Ryan and Deci (2000) argued that the concern is how educators, teachers, parents, and socializers can lead students to internalize responsibility, interests and involvement. In Malaysia, many studies have explored and investigated the issues and challenges of motivation on student academic performance. The latest research is found mainly in the area of student learning styles and motivation among students (Hashim et al., 2012; Zainuddin et al., 2021; Grera et al., 2022). Hence, this shows the research on the motivational factors in academics is very relevant and is still being studied to predict its impacts on the academic successes of students at all levels of education. Hence, the main aim of the study is to examine the classroom motivation among undergraduate students from the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA through the lens of Alderfer's theory of motivation. The study provides good implications for addressing the issues and challenges of learning motivation among higher education students and helps to teach professionals to boost the student's academic success.

### **Statement of Problem**

Higher education students' lives have profoundly transformed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The whole education system changed since movement control, and the daily operation also had to stop. When most governments introduced movement control orders, students must adapt to the "new normal" of online learning (Aristovnik et al., 2020). Students were mainly bored, worried, and frustrated throughout the lockdown and expressed concerns mostly about their future professional careers and academic challenges. On top of that, students' inability to use computers effectively and their sense of a heavier effort stopped them from seeing themselves performing better in their studies.

Kinder and Harvey (2020) found that the COVID-19 pandemic also forced the cancellation of tens of thousands of clinical hours, suspended in-person instruction, and delayed many tests. It shows that education from a distance is not supportive, especially in assessing students'

performance and will affect students' learning motivation. The conventional method of study is preferred, and institutions must motivate the students on the former ways of learning which support active learning (Ismail et al., 2021). Studies have proven that traditional education is superior because it allows students to interact verbally with peers and teachers, which enhances their interpersonal skills. Additionally, students receive quick feedback from teachers, which boosts their incentive to study (Stacks, 2015; Tan 2020). For learners to be motivated, they need to be confident and able to set their goals clearly in terms of their value, expectancy and affection towards learning.

Hence, this study is done to investigate the factors that motivate learners to learn. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions.

- How does existence influence learning motivation?
- How does relatedness influence learning motivation?
- How does growth influence learning motivation?
- Are there any relationships between existence, relatedness, and growth?

## Literature Review

### *Demotivators for Learning*

A person's behaviour is influenced by a variety of things, including their level of motivation. They may also lack motivation and behave badly. For instance, demotivation to perform well in any activities might prevent students from reading, completing assignments, or performing well on exams resulting in preventing them from moving on to a higher stage of education. Demotivation is an external factor that lower or lessens an individual's level of motivation to carry out an undertaking (Dorneyi, 2020). However, this definition solely considers external variables. According to Kikuchi (2017), several of the elements that are frequently thought of as external demotivational elements are internal. He goes on to redefine demotivation as some internal and environmental factors that hurt motivation.

One of the three motivational characteristics described in the Self-Determination Theory was a lack of motivation or demotivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). They define motivation as a lack of motivation brought on by the conviction that the action would not produce satisfying results. This could be because of a lack of abilities, a conviction that the intended result would not be obtained, or the effort and complexity required to complete the task. Demotivation can occur among highly driven learners; therefore, it does not always indicate a low degree or absence of motivation. Whatever the amount of this decrease, it simply implies a drop in motivation from the prior level.

Rudnai (1996) found that learner-related factors, like low self-confidence brought on by unpleasant experiences and learning situation-related factors, such as being in a group with the wrong proficiency level, having no choice in the studies, changing factors in teaching and the environment, and insufficient teacher competence were the leading causes of participant demotivation. The findings showed that demotivation is brought on by both internal and external factors, not just the latter. In a two-year longitudinal case study, Kikuchi (2019) looked at changes in the motivation of four university students in Japan. The results revealed that the students saw their teachers' or peers' lack of desire as a demotivating influencer. An earlier study by Kikuchi (2017) shows that the social environment outside of education was revealed to be a significant component in determining the changes in motivation. The studies cited above suggest that demotivation is, in fact, situation- and time-specific. One could counter that distinct demotivational patterns are not caused by factors but rather by different

people's responses to diverse stimuli that affect a student's value, expectancy, and affection towards learning.

### *Motivators for Learning*

During the COVID 19 pandemic, a new way of learning forced onto students worldwide in the form of online learning posed a huge challenge to their motivation to learn. The challenging period to adapt to new learning norms can be explained by Alderfer's theory. Thus, understanding how students respond to the challenge and identifying the motivational factors that direct specific learners' behavioural response is important (Chiang & Jang, 2008).

According to the Alderfer theory, the motivating factors contributing to learning are the ERG, existence, growth and relatedness. Existence is represented by a value component where basic material requirements such as psychological and safety-related needs are required. Whereas growth is represented through the expectancy component where the importance of maintaining interpersonal relationships is highlighted. The final factor is relatedness which is achieved through the affective component. This emphasises the intrinsic desire for personal development such as self-esteem, self-confidence, achievement, and self-actualisation.

In the matter of values in basic material requirement to learning, a study on high secondary school students in Lampung province, Indonesia found that values, expectancy and affective component should be strongly considered in the learning strategies to encourage motivation for learning in which the value component is the best predictor (Hariri et al., 2021). This showed that the basic psychological needs and safety related needs are still the main concern of students in committing to their studies. This corresponds to the fact that values arise from a sense of what is important for students (Friedman et al., 2008). The study on alumni of undergraduate students with a business degree in the United States found that when someone values something, they are committed and motivated to that thing (Bozeman & Eadens, 2020). Learning using technology-based active learning during the pandemic has somehow motivated students whereby a wider range of resources are available (Campio-Ferrer & Miralles-Martinez, 2021). However, it has also restrained motivation to learn due to the digital divide where many lack access to the internet and technological resources (Agung et al., 2020). This resulting lack of the growth component of interpersonal relationships due to the human touch is lacking in online learning.

Although values components are found to be more important, growth and relatedness cannot be ignored. In terms of growth, which is identified through the expectancy component, students of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) have shown their appreciation towards the flexibility of learning from home which saved commuting time though experiencing the same stress of learning (Ahmad et al., 2021). During online learning, students experience relatedness which is the affective component where they receive ample attention from the lecturers (Ahmad et al., 2021). Having an interpersonal relationship with the lecturers gives the students a sense of relatedness in learning. Whereas medical students in India are predisposed to advancements, education and training opportunities (Shanmugapriya, 2021).

### *Past Studies on Demotivators*

A study was conducted to identify the attitudes and motivations of foreign students who study Malay as a third language at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). A total of 16 students



have been selected as study respondents to fulfil the objective of this study, which is to identify students' attitudes towards learning Malay and also to find out the extent of students' motivation towards language learning. Questionnaires were used as research material to obtain data and analysed based on basic descriptive by looking at percentages only. The study results show that respondents have a positive attitude and high motivation when learning Malay as their third language. The findings of the study also found that the role of teachers also motivates students to learn Malay. However, in this study, it was found that environmental factors do not help Malay language learning among foreign students. The local community is seen as less comfortable speaking in Malay with them. Overall, foreign students have a positive attitude and high motivation to learn Malay if they get encouragement and guidance from relevant individuals (Zaliza & Zaitul, 2014)

Others study the relationship between the motivation of the study and academic performance among students. This study is a preliminary exploration of the relationship between the level of learning motivation and the academic achievement of students in SJK (T) in Perak. A total of 100 students out of a total of 250, of which 50 students from SJK (T) Ladang Teluk Buloh and 50 students from SJK (T) Barathi respectively as in Table B below. The SJK (T) has students consisting of male and female students from Year 1 to Year 6; however, the researcher only selected students who were in Year 5 as a sample for this study to see the relationship between learning motivation and their academic achievement. The results indicate no relationship between the two variables, namely the level of learning motivation and achievement on student academic performance. This study confirms that learning motivation can be generated through the student himself, the family and also the role of the local community (Aroma et al., 2021)

The results of the past study found that most of the poor academic performance students at the Faculty of Human Resource Management and Development, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Skudai, Johor are Malay students from rural areas or small towns with low family socioeconomic levels. Most of them have an 'introverted' personality, lack self-belief in their abilities and face problems adapting to the learning techniques at Higher Education Institutions. The respondents in this study are Faculty of Human Resource Management and Development students whose CGPA is less than 2.5. Data were collected through questionnaires, and the responses were analysed descriptively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (Norhani et al., 2005). Therefore, this study showed that students' lack of self-belief in their abilities and face problems in adapting to the learning techniques at Higher Education Institutions lead to poor academic performance. Another past study proves that learning self-regulation and motivation have a significant relationship with student academic achievement. Therefore, students can maintain a level of motivation while mastering self-learning skills to maintain academic achievement at a high level. Students who have a high level of motivation can have a good effect on their academic achievement and successfully adapt to changes in learning. This study uses a quantitative approach based on a survey design. The random sampling method used a total of 240 undergraduate students from the Faculty of Education, UKM was selected as the study sample. The research instrument adapted the questionnaire from the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ). The Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) is used to measure the level of student academic achievement (Nuraisyah & Faridah, 2021).

### *Past Studies on Motivators*

A quantitative study by Lokman et al (2021) was conducted to identify the motivations for learning. A survey was used as the research instrument. 70 respondents participated in this study. A questionnaire consisting of eight sections on demographic profile, motivation scale; values, expectancy and affective component was posed. The study found that students are highly motivated by extrinsic rewards compared to intrinsic rewards in their learning. Good grades are still the main attraction in the motivation to learn. However, students are concerned by the thought and experience of going through learning sessions and sitting for assessments.

### **Conceptual Framework**

This study is rooted in Alderfer's ERG theory. According to Alderfer (1969), there are three groups of core needs in learners, and they are (a) existence (E), (b) relatedness (R), and (c) growth (G)—hence the acronym ERG. Learners' needs can sometimes be seen as influenced by their confidence in the task. Confidence in learning gives a sense of satisfaction to the learners (Rahmat, 2021). Confidence can lead to them aligning their learning goals well. According to Zainuddin et al (2021), intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation help learners set their priorities to make sure that they can better understand the requirements in task requirements at universities. In the context of this research, Alderfer's needs are used to scaffold the motivational components by Pintrich & De Groot (1990) to reveal the conceptual framework as presented in figure 1 below. The three components are (i) value, (ii) affective and (iii) affective.

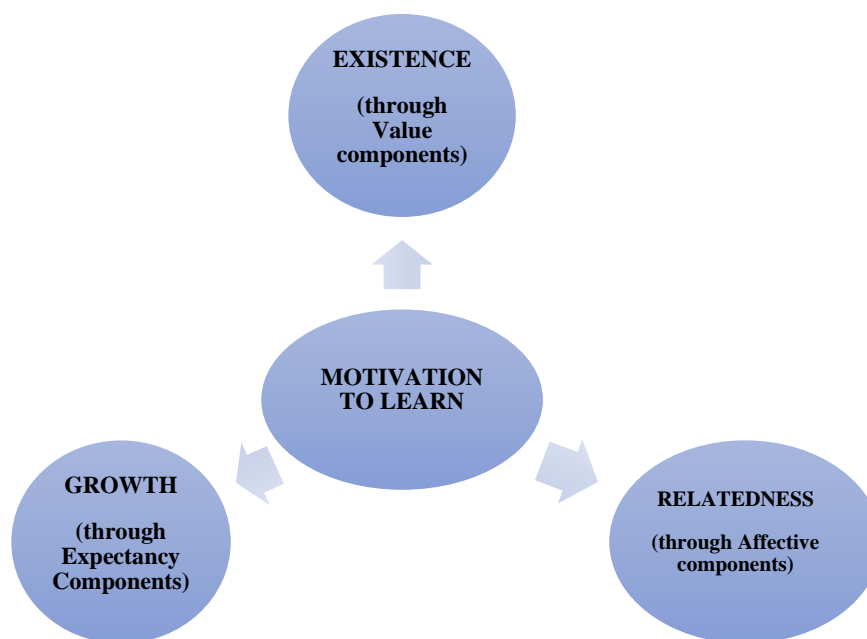


Figure 1- Conceptual Framework of the Study- Motivation to learn through Alderfer's Theory

### *Existence*

Existence demands related to the value components encompass a range of physiologic, physiological, and material requirements. Safety requirements mainly concern the absence of fear, stress, threat, or danger. Physiological requirements are a person's pursuit of vitality-level fulfilment through recreation, sleep, and exercise. Resources are needed for material

needs necessary for a person to live. All these demands are also crucial in motivating students to learn and can be pictured in terms of course content, pedagogical approaches, interactivity, and assessment and evaluation (Darkwa & Antwi, 2021). In addition, the value relates to the satisfaction of information needs and materials provided by the lecturers or institutions in completing the task given. The task's aims and the students' perceptions of its value and interest make up the value component of student motivation. Although this component has been conceptualized in several ways (such as learning goals versus performance goals, intrinsic versus extrinsic orientation, task value, and intrinsic interest), this motivational component primarily focuses on students' motivations for carrying out a task. In this research students with a motivational orientation that includes mastery, learning, and challenging goals and beliefs that the task is exciting and vital will exhibit higher levels of metacognition, greater use of cognitive strategies, and more efficient effort management (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990).

### *Relatedness*

Relatedness is another component of Alderfer's theory. It is the second group of needs which concentrates on the desire people have for keeping up significant interpersonal relationships. These social and status desires are dependent on human interaction for these needs to be satisfied, and they are in line with Maslow's social needs and the external component of Maslow's esteem classification. Hence in this study, relatedness is measured by affective components.

### *Growth*

The ERG theory was proposed by Clayton Alderfer, a psychologist from the United States, and this theory is a simplification and further development of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Growth is a need that encourages a person to have a creative and productive influence on himself or the environment. Maslow's realization of the need for self-esteem and self-realization. In this study Students' Perception of Self- Efficacy and Control Beliefs for learning were tested to know the growth values as motivation to learn.

## **Methodology**

This quantitative study is done to investigate learners' motivation towards learning. 424 respondents participated in this study. The 5-Likert scale instrument used a survey adapted from (Aldefer, 1969; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). Table 1 shows the distribution of items in the survey. Section A is the demographic profile. Section B has 12 items on Existence, section C has 5 components on Relatedness and section D has 7 items on Growth.



Table 1

*Distribution of items in the Survey*

SECT	ALDEFER'S ERG COMPONENT (Alderfer, 1969)	MOTIVATIONAL COMPONENT (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990)		VARIABLE	No Of Items	Total Items
B	EXISTENCE	VALUE COMPONENTS	(a)	Intrinsic Goal Orientation	4	12
			(b)	Extrinsic Goal Orientation	3	
			(c)	Task Value Beliefs	5	
C	RELATEDNESS	AFFECTIVE COMPONENTS				5
D	GROWTH	EXPECTANCY COMPONENTS	(a)	Students' Perception of Self- Efficacy	5	7
			(b)	Control Beliefs for Learning	2	
		TOTAL NO OF ITEMS				24

Table 2

*Reliability Statistics*

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.913	24

Table 2 shows the reliability statistics for the survey. SPSS analysis revealed a Cronbach alpha of .913 thus revealing a high reliability of the instrument used. Data is then analysed to reveal mean scores to answer all the research questions for this study.

## Findings

### Findings for Demographic Profile

#### Q1. Gender

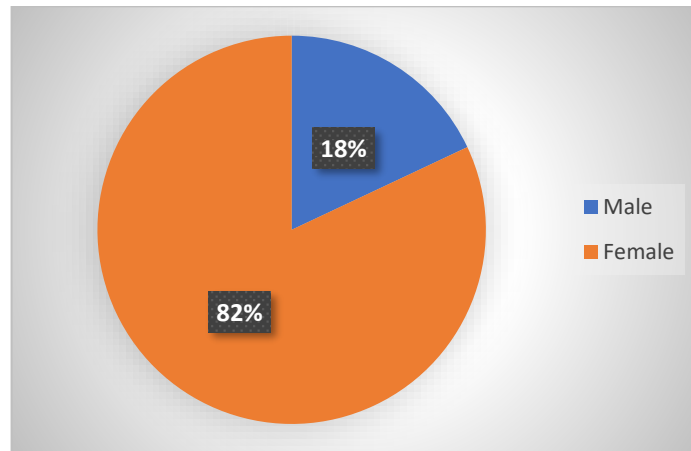


Figure 2- Percentage for Gender

This study distributed questionnaires targeting 100 respondents however the response reached 424. All students are from the March to July 2022 semester. Referring to figure 2 above, 18% of the respondents are males whereas 82% are females.

#### Q2 Program

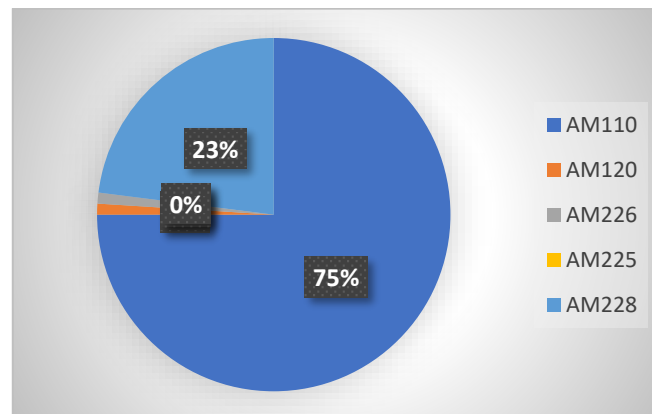


Figure 3- Percentage for Program

The questionnaire (refer to figure 3) has been answered by respondents of different programs from the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies. Five programs are represented were two from the Diploma program and three from the Degree program. The first Diploma program, AM110 is represented by 75% whereas AM120 is represented by 1%. The Degree program represented AM226 by 1%, with no representation from AM225 and 23% represented by AM228.

### Q3 Part

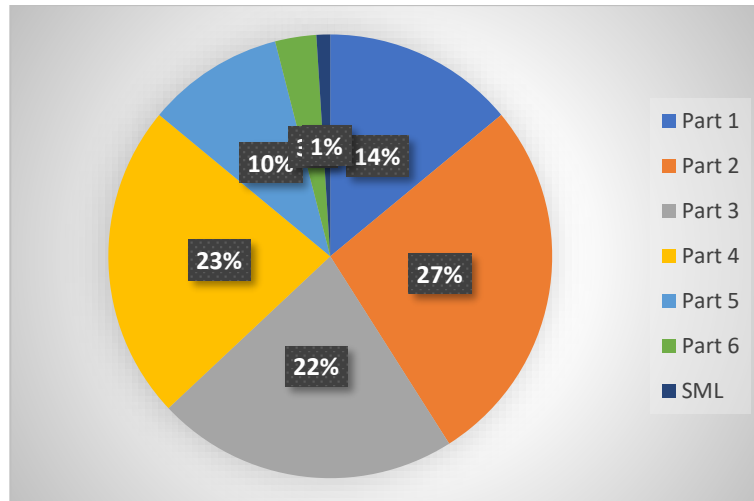


Figure 4-Percentage for Part

Figure 4 shows out of the 424 respondents, Part 2, Part 3 and Part 4 students made the most of the respondents with 27 %, 22% and 23% respectively. This is followed by Part 1 students (14%). Part 5 students (10%) and 3 % Part 6 Students. The SML or the extended student was the least number of respondents.

### Q4 Family Income

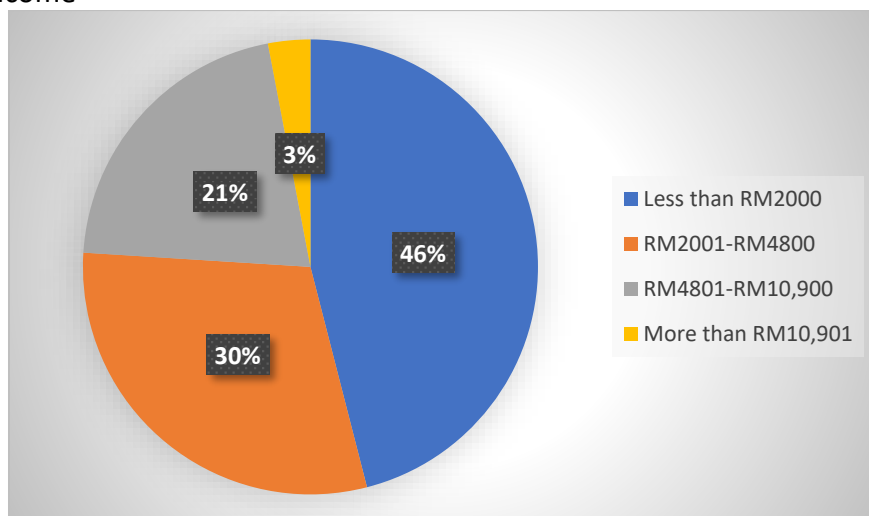


Figure 5- percentage of Family Income

Figure 5 shows the percentage of the family income of the respondents. Almost most of the students come from a B40 category family, which consists of 46% with household income below RM2000 and 30% below RM4800. Only three per cent of the respondents are categorised in the Malaysian T20 family income bracket.

### *Findings for Existence*

This section presents data to answer research question 1: How does existence influence learning motivation? In the context of this study, Existence needs are measured by three value components, and they are (i) four items in intrinsic goal orientation, (ii) three items in extrinsic goal orientation, and (iii) five items in task value beliefs

(i) Intrinsic Goal Orientation (4 items)

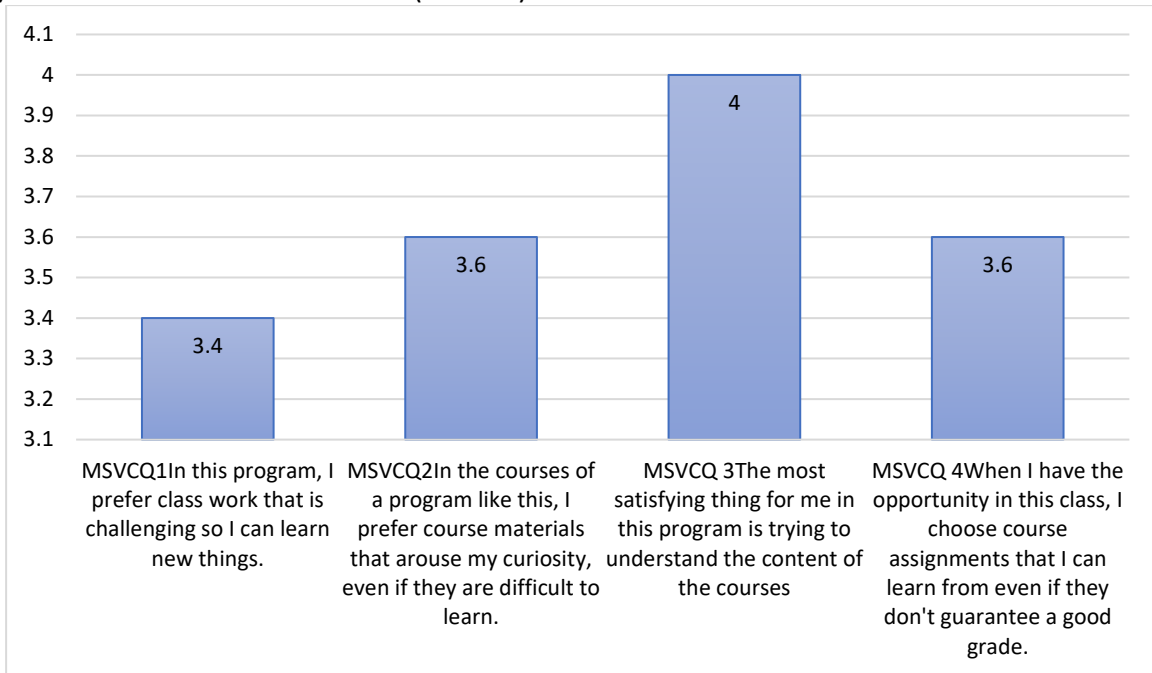


Figure 6- Mean for Intrinsic Goal orientation

The findings (refer to figure 6) show that what motivates students to learn is the aids provided, especially the syllabus content (4.0) as their reference for the study. In addition, the course materials (3.6) and the assignment topics (3.6) are essential to motivate students to learn when they have the materials, making it easy for them to study and complete their assignments. It is because they have proper guidelines on the topics to be covered and can help them prepare early. In addition, passion for studying is also necessary because the students need a challenging task that can make them explore what they learn (3.4).

(ii) Extrinsic Goal Orientation (3 items)

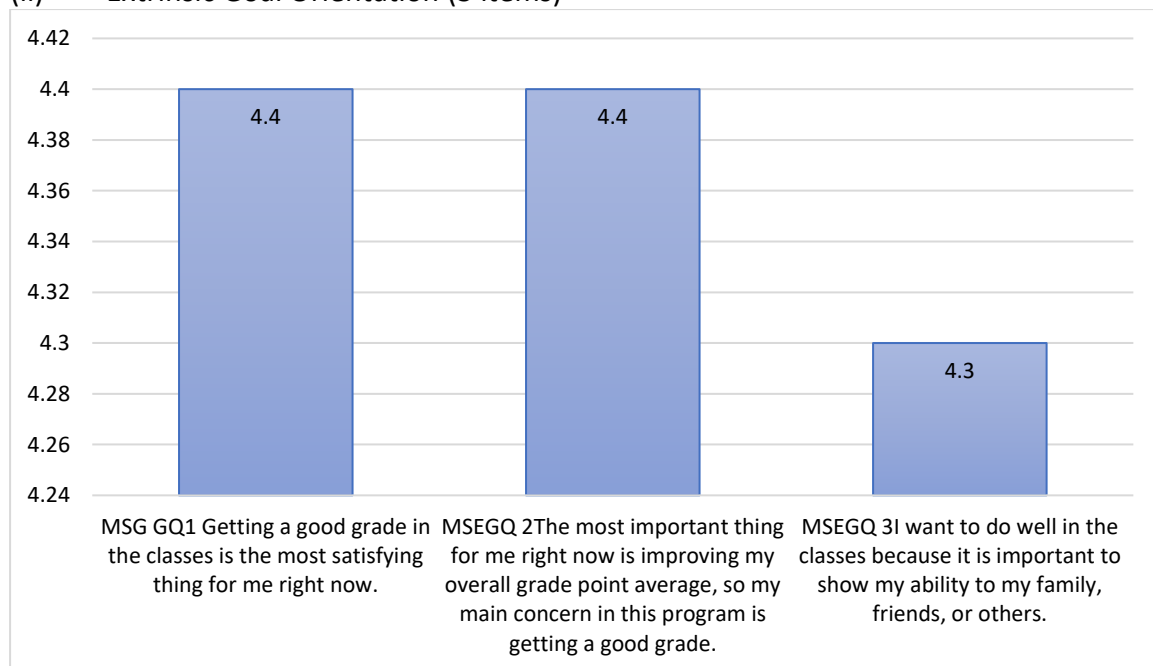


Figure 7- Mean for Extrinsic Goal Orientation

As shown in Figure 7, the findings show the highest mean score for the extrinsic goal orientation is getting a good grade in the classes and improving the overall grade point average with a 4.4 mean score. The lowest mean is to show the ability to family, friends, or others at a 4.3 mean score.

(iii) Task Value Beliefs (5 items)

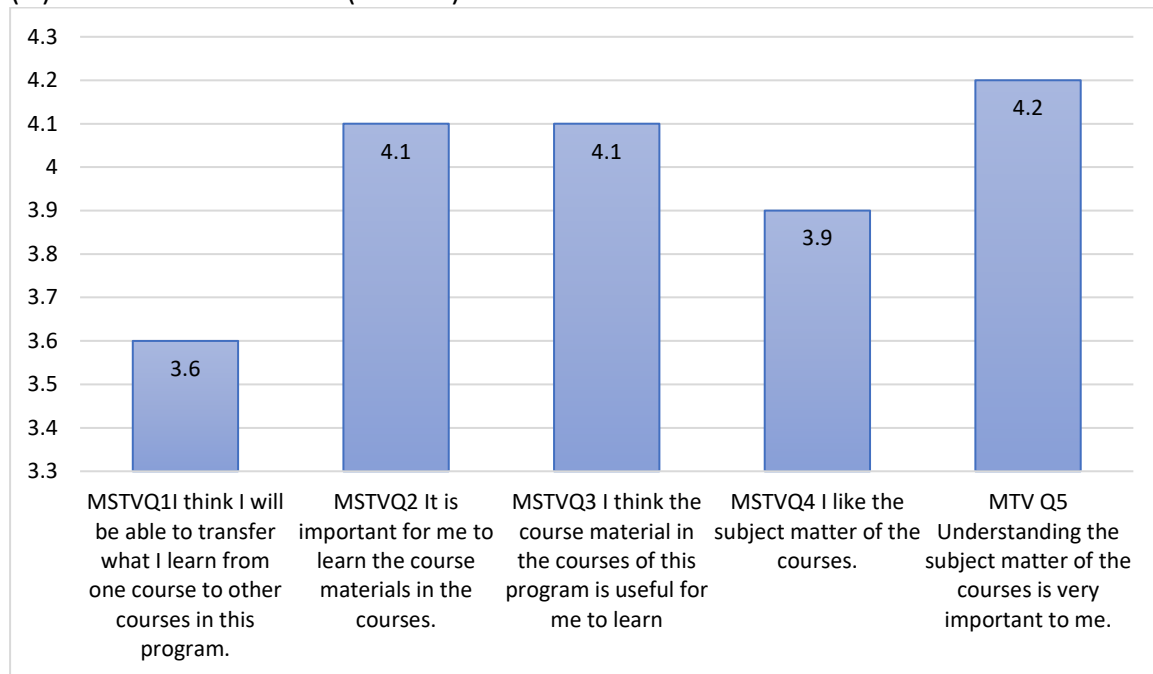


Figure 8- mean for task value beliefs

Figure 8 shows the respondents mostly understand the subject matter of the courses is very important (4.2), followed by respondents wanting to learn the course materials in the courses of this program is useful for learning (4.1). The lowest mean (3.6) showed that respondents could transfer what they learn from one course to other courses in this program. This mean result indicates the respondent's value beliefs significantly motivate them in the learning process.

*Findings for Relatedness*

This section presents data to answer research question 2: How does relatedness influence learning motivation? In the context of this study, relatedness is measured by five items in the (i) affective components.



(i) Affective Component (5 items)

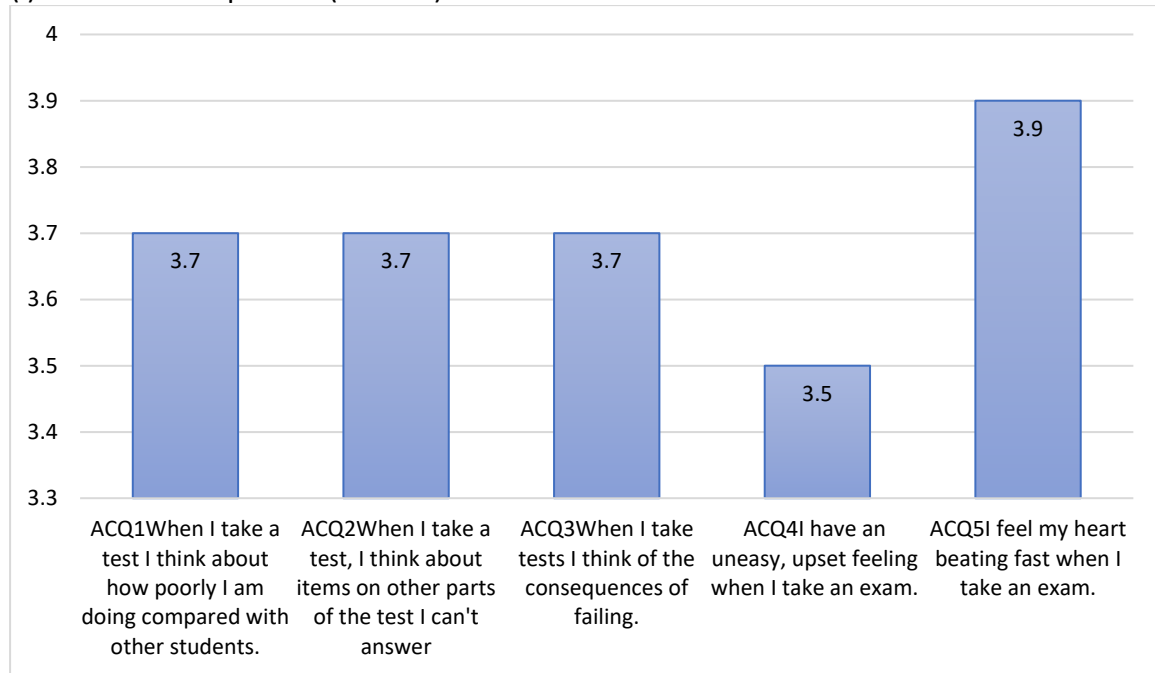


Figure 9- Mean for Affective Component

The affective components (refer to figure 9) are divided into five questions which asked the respondents about their opinions and belief on the assessment they took during their study. The findings showed that respondents compared themselves to their peers every time they sat for a test with a mean score of 3.7. Respondents also often questioned their ability to answer questions in parts of the test while attempting the test reflected by the mean score of 3.7. The worry of failing is at the back of the respondents' minds when taking the test reflected by the mean score of 3.7. The lowest mean score of 3.5 showed that respondents are uneasy and upset every time they take an examination. Finally, respondents found that taking an examination is daunting where their heart beats fast every time, they went through the event which is reflected by the mean score of 3.9.

*Findings for Growth*

This section presents data to answer research question 3: How does growth influence learning motivation? In this study, seven expectancy components are measured by (i) five items on students' perception of self-efficacy and (ii) two items in control beliefs for learning.

(i) Students' Perception of Self-Efficacy (5 items)

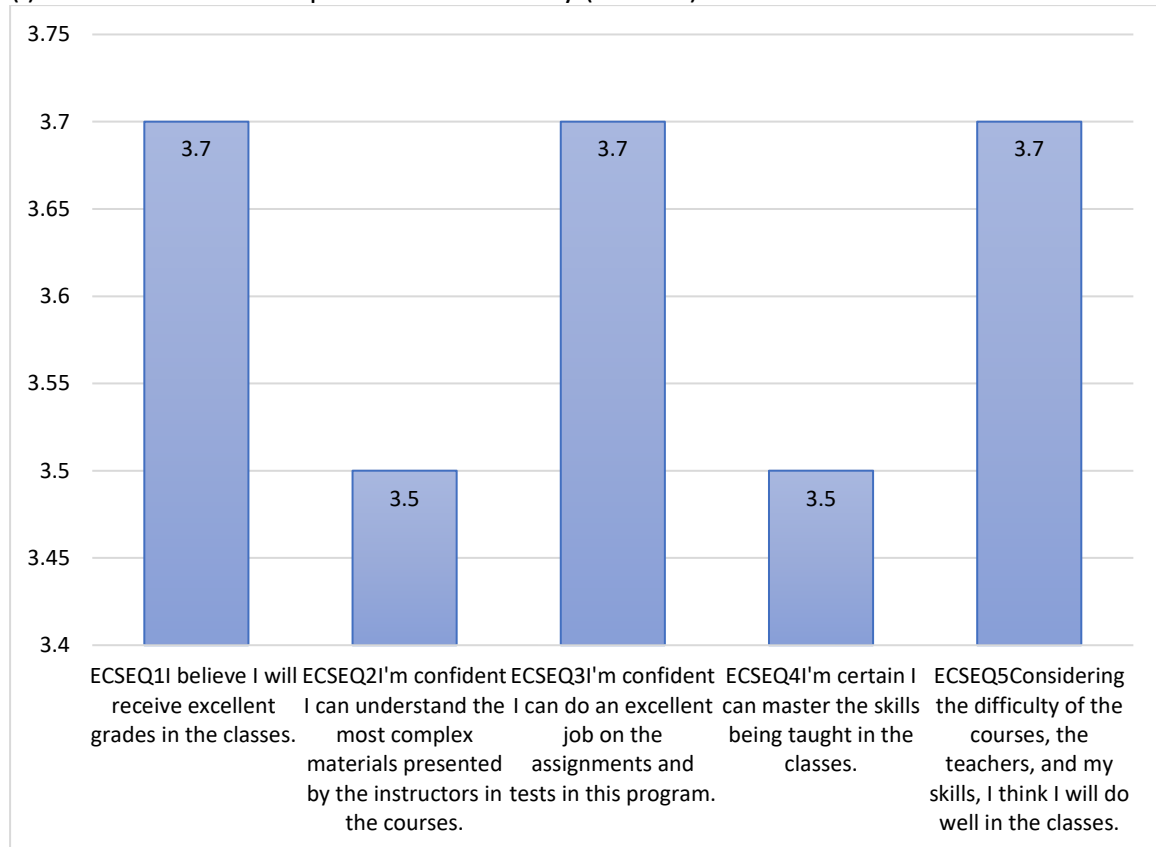


Figure 10 Mean for Students' Perception of Self-Efficacy

In figure 10, The self-efficacy components are divided into five questions asking respondents about their opinions on the expectancy component which influences the student's confidence in completing a task. The findings showed that respondents believe they will get a good grade, with a mean score of 3.7. The same mean score of 3.7 was also shown in two items which look at the confidence level of doing an excellent job on the assignments and tests in the programs and their confidence level of performing well in class, despite the difficulty of the course, coupled with the teachers and their skill level items. Two items score a mean test of 3.5, which are "I'm confident I can understand the most complex materials presented by the instructors in the courses, and "I'm certain I can master the skills taught in the classes.

(ii) Control Beliefs for Learning (2 items)

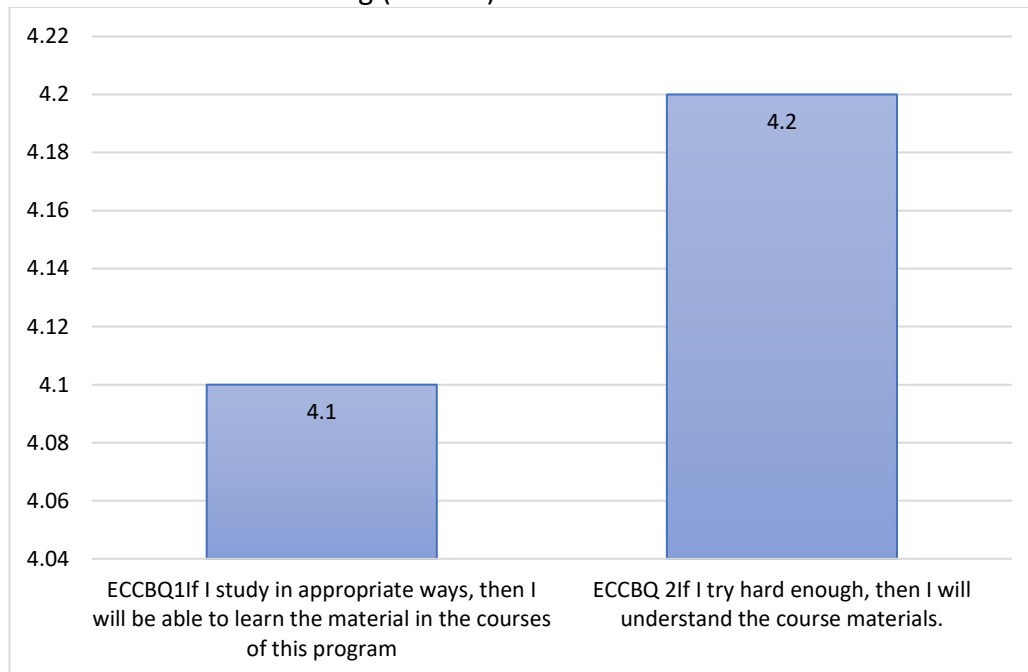


Figure 11- Mean for Control Beliefs for Learning

The findings (refer to figure 11) show that if they put in extra effort, they can understand what they learn effectively (4.2). The students will focus on their studies and learn well if provided with appropriate ways (4.1). The student must prepare the study plan and provide the notes or scheme of work, and they will have proper guidance for the study.

*Findings for Relationships between Variables (existence, relatedness, and growth)*

This section presents data to answer research question 4: Is there any relationship between existence, relatedness and growth? To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between existence, relatedness and growth, data is analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in Tables 3, 4 and 5 below.

Table 3

*Correlation between Existence with Relatedness*

		TOTALexistence	TOTALrelatedness
TOTALexistence	Pearson Correlation	1	.307**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	423	423
TOTALrelatedness	Pearson Correlation	.307**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	423	423

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows there is an association between existence and relatedness. Correlation analysis shows that there is a low significant association between existence and relatedness ( $r=.307^{**}$ ) and ( $p=.000$ ). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive

correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a weak positive relationship between existence and relatedness.

Table 4  
*Correlations between Existence with Growth*

		TOTALexistence	TOTALgrowth
TOTALexistence	Pearson Correlation	1	.711**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	423	423
TOTALgrowth	Pearson Correlation	.711**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	423	423

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Next, table 4 shows there is a high positive significant association between existence and growth ( $r=.711^{***}$ ) and ( $p=.000$ ). Since the coefficient is significant at 0.5 level,  $p=.000$  is therefore significant. Since weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0, this means there is a strong significant relationship between existence and growth.

Table 5  
*Correlations between Growth and Relatedness*

		TOTALgrowth	TOTALrelatedness
TOTALgrowth	Pearson Correlation	1	.150**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	423	423
TOTALrelatedness	Pearson Correlation	.150**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	423	423

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 above shows the correlations between growth and relatedness. Correlations analysis shows a low positive significant association between growth and relatedness ( $r=.150^*$ ) and ( $p=.002$ ). The coefficient is significant at the .05 level, and  $p$  value is .002 is therefore significant. According to Jackson (2015), a positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. A weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, a moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and a strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is a weak positive relationship between growth and relatedness.

## Conclusion

### Summary of Findings and Discussion

The main findings of the study have shown that all components of Alderfer's theory of motivation; existence, relatedness and growth influenced learning among the undergraduate students of the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies. The mean scores for all three dimensions ranged from 3.5 – 4.4 mean score. On the existence component, the study revealed that they have clear goals that direct their learning behaviours. Despite the academic challenges, the students were highly motivated to improve their learning and understand the task's requirements. The findings are consistent with Zainuddin et al (2021); Lokman et al (2021) show that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation contributes to student learning.

On the relatedness component, the study shows the results of the affective components were moderate. Emotionally, the students were more worried about taking and failing an examination. They felt uneasy, having low confidence and fear of failing the test. The findings were similar to Lokman et al. (2021) that show fear of sitting in exams, worry about low grades and making mistakes on the test paper haunting the students. These can be attributed to a lack of interpersonal relationships with lecturers. This is supported by a study by Ahmad et al. (2021) that found during online learning, students were found to experience ample attention from the lecturers. Hence, it is suggested that students build good interpersonal relationships with the lecturers gives the students a sense of relatedness that motivates their learning. On the growth components, the study shows the students' perception of self-efficacy is moderately high. This shows the students are confident in achieving excellent results in their grades, assignments and tests. This finding is supported by Rahmat (2021), who said that students' confidence level motivates learners to achieve their learning goals.

In determining the relationship between existence and growth, existence and relatedness, and growth and relatedness, the correlation analysis shows a strong significant relationship between existence and growth. Thus, having high motivation goals that direct the student's learning behaviour does not influence the fear of failing or sitting an examination. This shows existence (intrinsic, extrinsic and task value belief) were strongly related to growth (i.e., the student's self-efficacy and control belief for learning). These findings were supported by the works of (Bandura, 1997). He argued that how people behave can often be better predicted by the beliefs they hold about their capabilities, what he called self-efficacy beliefs. They are capable of accomplishing, for these self-perceptions help determine what individuals do with the knowledge and skills they have. Self-efficacy boosts learners' competence, and confidence and even facilitates learners to set challenging goals to achieve higher academic success. This is supported by (Ryan and Deci, 2000). They found that most intrinsic and extrinsic stimuli factors could motivate students to direct their behaviours towards achieving academic success. Hence, it is important for attaining students' physiologic, physiological, and material needs is vital to ensure their motivation. Hence, to boost students' learning motivation, they need to be trained in building up their confidence level, and good self-management, and are equipped with enough resources to ensure their commitment towards their studies.

Similarly, a weak positive relationship was found between growth and relatedness and existence and relatedness. This shows that the desire to keep an interpersonal relationship and human interaction, coupled with the student's motivational orientation which includes mastery, learning and challenging goals does increase the student's self-efficacy and control



belief for learning. This means highly confident students who believed in their ability and themselves to succeed would not feel fearful of failing or sitting in the examination. This is supported by Schunk (1991) who argued that self-efficacy is a person's belief in his ability to complete a task successfully. This results in people developing an enduring interest in activities at which they feel efficacious that derive self-satisfaction.

Finally, it is suggested that lecturers and educators need to be regularly trained in effective teaching pedagogy, teaching professionalism and basic educational psychology to enhance their teaching effectiveness in the classroom. An effective teaching approach helps improve the mastery of knowledge and skills among the students. Universities must continuously engage in lecturers' training to ensure effective student learning that would finally result in highly motivated students.

### Suggestions for Future Research

Future research is suggested to be carried out on the programmes in the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA including the postgraduate students. This is significant as the faculty needs to investigate the motivational level among the students to help students to overcome the challenges for achieving academic success. In conclusion, undoubtedly, classroom motivation impacts students' learning outcomes. Therefore, the university's psychological, physiological and academic support, would motivate and inspire the university students to acquire higher knowledge and develop higher critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

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