

A Study of Relationship between Instrumentality, Expectancy and Value for Learning Motivation among Undergraduates

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Abstract

Motivation is a crucial aspect in the teaching-learning context. However, it cannot be addressed lightly as there could be a connection between learning motivation and learners' achievement (Madziah and Isarji, 2009). As academic excellence can help learners to shape their life goals, it is important to improve learning motivation. This study reveals the influence of instrumental, expectancy, and valence towards learners' motivation. Besides that, this study also reveals the relationship across variables for motivation factors. Using survey as instrument to collect data for this quantitative study, the survey has four sections: (i) demographic profile, (ii) instrumentality, (iii) expectancy, and; (iv) valence. 103 respondents from social science and business faculty across five semesters took part in this survey. The findings show that motivation to learn can be influenced by a lot of factors. Although there is a strong relationship between instrumentality and expectancy, the relationship between instrumentality and valence is weak. All in all, this study contributes towards literature related to learning motivation.

Keywords: Learning Motivation, Instrumentality, Expectancy, Valence, Affective Component.

Introduction

Background of Study

Motivation is seen as a prerequisite of and a necessary element for student engagement in learning. Motivation in learning is an important factor for students. Students need to be motivated to learn to succeed. Curriculum implementation is relevant to motivating learners to learn. This is because motivation plays a significant role in teaching-learning contexts. The outcome of learning relies upon whether the students are propelled. Students are motivated to achieve learning objectives. Recognizing that teaching that inspires students to learn is of the utmost importance (Filgona, 2020).

Motivation is a complicated part of human psychology and behavior that affects how people spend their time, how much energy they put into a task, how they feel about it, and how long they stick with it (Bakar, 2014). Bakar (2014) went on to say that students' choices of learning tasks, the time and effort they put into them, their persistence on learning tasks, and how they deal with challenges during the learning process all reflect motivation.

However, the issue of students' low levels of motivation for learning cannot be easily addressed. Different examinations in the Malaysian setting have uncovered that this is a typical peculiarity among Malaysian grown-up students (Madziah and Isarji, 2009; Samsiah et al., 2009; Thang, 2009; 2007; Thang et al., 2001). According to their research, there may be a connection between achievement and motivation. Emotional shifts can occur as a learner, particularly in young adult learners. For instance, young students experience stress, anxiety, excitement, and sadness during their time in the classroom. Because academic excellence may lead students to achieve their goals in the future, students must intentionally increase their motivation to learn.

Statement of Problem

Motivation plays an important role to students' success in language learning. According to Aleidine and Theresa (2015), instrumental motivation is very important for those who learn languages, especially foreign languages, for external benefits such as obtaining proper jobs. According to Shinta (2012), another study conducted in countries such as the Philippines, Yemen, and China discovered instrumental motivation in English learning. Most students who study English in the Philippines want to get a good job and get good grades in school, while students in China and Yemen are motivated to learn English simply to obtain an English lesson certificate. Thus, it can be concluded that instrumental motivation is important for students learning English (Aspuri et al., 2019, Anggitaria et al., 2021).

Apart from that, the study of Jusoh and Ismail (2020) discovered that intrinsic and extrinsic orientations play a crucial role in training participants' motivation to learn. According to Mokhtar et al (2020); Ali et al (2022) studies on the level of learning motivation, extrinsic motivation for students has grown to be a significant factor in their level of motivation to pursue goals and keep learning. In contrast, Tan et al (2012) found that learners have a strong preference for intrinsic orientation in their previous study. The students learned the language for their own interest, amusement, and satisfaction.

Thus, language learning is highly dependent on motivation. Either or both internal and external factors will motivate students to learn languages. Even people with exceptional language abilities cannot reach great achievements if they are not motivated. The instructor's approach will also have an impact on the students' attitudes and motivation (Makhtar et al., 2021). Based on the foregoing explanations, the researcher decided to conduct a study on learning motivation specifically for undergraduate students, titled "A Study Of Relationship Between Instrumentality, Expectancy, And Value For Learning Motivation Among Undergraduates".

Objective of the Study and Research Questions

This study is done to explore the motivating factors for learning among undergraduates. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions.

- How does instrumentality influence learners' motivation?
- How does expectancy influence learners' motivation?
- How does valence influence learners' motivation?
- Is there a relationship across variables for motivating factors?

Literature Review

Demotivators for Learning

Demotivators are factors or situations that decrease motivation or enthusiasm. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013) defined demotivators as specific external forces that negatively affect one's motivational basis of a behavioural intention or an ongoing action. These external forces, such as lack of support from teachers and peers, negative feedback or harsh criticism and lack of resources, can make a person feel discouraged, disheartened, or unmotivated to pursue a goal or a task (Chong et al., 2019).

Additionally, the former authors emphasised that demotivation did not result from just (i) having better alternatives or more compelling diversions, (ii) a gradual decline in interest, or (iii) internal decision-making that was not influenced by any external factors. Rather, it was the realisation that a very negative influence had significantly reduced the motivational force while keeping in mind that other positive factors might also be at work. To illustrate, Oye et al. (2011) elaborated that the lack of support within the learning environment may be a demotivator that discourages individuals, even though maintaining excellent academic performance was still acknowledged.

Contrary to the definition by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013), some other scholars hold a different view from the notion that external factors solely cause the lack of motivation. For instance, Salehuddin et al. (2019) state that internal factors that can cause demotivation include decreased self-confidence and negative attitudes towards the learning process. These demotivators can significantly impact learning; hence, it is essential to identify and address them to ensure that students remain motivated and engaged throughout the learning process.

Motivation for Learning

Harmer (2007) states that motivation is widely acknowledged in most fields of learning as being crucial to success; that to achieve something, an individual must have the desire or willingness to pursue it. When determining the success or the failure of any learning process, Zolkapli and Salehuddin (2019) posited that the learner's motivation is one of the variables that must be considered. Meanwhile, Norris-Holt (2001) argued that although it is confirmed that motivation plays a specific role in learning, it is still important to realise that it is one variable which, combined with other factors, influences learners' success. Such a claim is valid as there are a lot of internal factors (i.e., age, personality, experiences, cognition) and external factors (i.e., rewards, culture, status, punishments) involved in influencing learners' achievement (Harmer, 2007; Rahmat, 2018).

Pintrich and De Groot (1990), for example, presented three factors that would influence a learner's motivation: intrinsic factors, extrinsic factors and affection. Brown (2007) asserts that intrinsic motivation, which comes from within, is more effective than extrinsic

motivation, which comes from rewards or punishments. However, other scholars have placed greater emphasis on extrinsic motivation. For instance, Vroom (1964) proposed that the degree of a person's motivation is influenced by their perception of the worth of the reward of an action (i.e., valence), their confidence in their ability to produce favourable outcomes (i.e., expectancy), and the trust that positive results will then lead to a reward (i.e., instrumentality). Despite that, both types of motivation can impact an individual's performance; therefore, identifying and fostering them would ensure the success of the learning process.

Past Studies on Learning Motivation

There are several past studies highlighting different orientations of motivation in learning a language. A study conducted in Taiwan by Lai (2013) found that varsity students undertaking English courses at the university were highly motivated due to the English language being an international language. A total of 267 participants, consisting of undergraduate students from New Taipei City, a science and technology university in Taiwan were a part of the study. The total number of participants were then divided by day and night English classes. It can be deduced that the main motivation for these students to learn English were for integrative and instrumental orientations, ideal L2 self as well as deep intrinsic motivation from within. However, the participants mutually agreed that ought-to L2 self and external pressure were not on top of their list of motivation to learn the English language. In addition, both groups were similarly oriented and motivated regardless of classes they belong to. This study clearly highlights that the integrative and instrumental orientation still holds merit like many other studies in the past due to English's status as one of the languages with the largest speakers in the world.

In a study by Sun et al (2022) that explored motivations of ten matured English learners in China, it was identified that motivations were found to be different for English and non-English majors. Although both groups were in similar classroom settings and received similar stimuli, non-English majors tended to be means-oriented whereas English majors were more inclined towards being goal-oriented. Integrative motivations to learn the language were identified more in the English majors learning process. They also showcased equally high external and internal factors to learn the English language while their non-English major counterparts were highly motivated by external factors. This is evident that language learning is heavily affected by attitudinal factors (Gardner, 1985). From the past study, effective teaching that is parallel with students' orientation, motivation, individual characteristics, and practical needs is needed as language learning is becoming more accessible to larger groups of people.

Other studies done to investigate the motivations of learning English can be seen from Em et al (2022) where 60 students from a school in Phnom Penh were found to showcase higher extrinsic motivations compared to intrinsic ones. This is due to external factors faced by the students; in the form of securing the highest marks in class, examination-oriented settings, external rewards by instructors as well as parents' encouragement. The study managed to deduce that students' motivation to learn English will become moderate as both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation do play their significant roles in student's orientation in English language learning. It can be determined that this might have become burdensome to learn English for the students as self-desire and external factors are in a constant flux within the learners.

Conceptual Framework

This study is rooted for Vroom's (Vroom, 1964) theory of motivation. The theory states that there are three motivating factors, and they are instrumentality, expectancy, and valence. In addition to that, according to Pintrich & De Groot (1990), learners' motivation can be improved by motivational components such as value components, expectancy component, affective components. Hence, in the context of this study, the factors in Vroom's (Vroom, 1964) are scaffolded with the motivational constructs to reveal the conceptual framework as shown in figure 1 below. In the context of this study, Vroom's (1964) motivating factors are used to explain what motivates undergraduates to learn.

Firstly, instrumentality factors are represented by Pintrich & De Groot's (1990) value components. Learners are often driven to learn by several factors (Rahmat, 2018). These factors can be external or internal drive. According to Pintrich & De Groot's (1990), learners' drive to succeed are determined by factors such as (i) intrinsic goal orientation, (ii) extrinsic goal orientation, and also (iii) task value beliefs. Secondly, expectancy factors are represented by Pintrich & De Groot's (1990) expectancy components such as (i) students' perception of self-efficacy, and (ii) control beliefs for learning. Finally, valence factors are represented by Pintrich & De Groot's (1990) affective components.

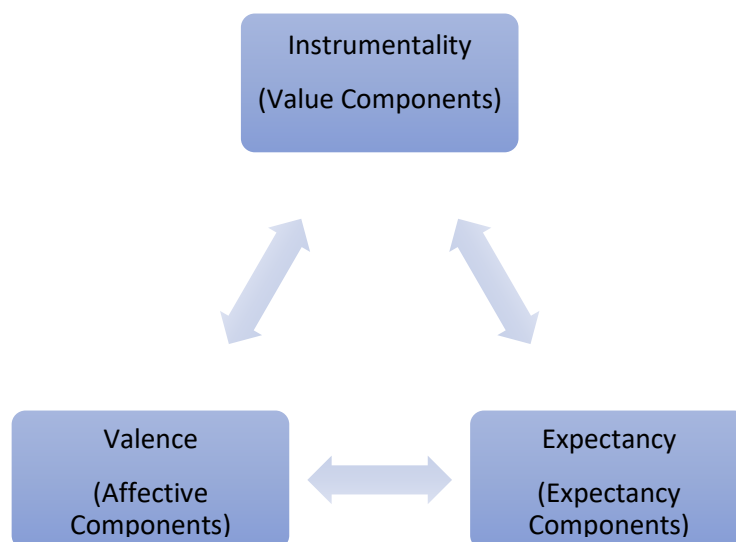


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of the Study- How do the Variables Correlate?

Methodology

This quantitative study is done to explore motivation factors for learning among undergraduates. A purposive sample of 103 participants responded to the survey. The instrument used is a 5 Likert-scale survey and is rooted from Vroom's theory (Vroom, 1964) to merge with Pintrich & De Groot's (1990) motivational construct to reveal the variable in table 1 below. The survey has 4 sections. Section A has items on demographic profile. Section B has 12 items on instrumentality. Section C has 7 items on expectancy. Section D has 5 items on valence.

Table 1

Distribution of Items in the Survey

SECT	VROOM'S THEORY Vroom (1964)	CONSTRUCT Pintrich & De Groot (1990)		VARIABLE	No Of Items	Total Items
B	INSTRUMENTALITY	VALUE COMPONENTS	(i)	Intrinsic Goal Orientation	4	12
			(ii)	Extrinsic Goal Orientation	3	
			(ii)	Task Value Beliefs	5	
C	EXPECTANCY	EXPECTANCY COMPONENT	(i)	Students' Perception of Self- Efficacy	5	7
			(ii)	Control Beliefs for Learning	2	
D	VALENCE	AFFECTIVE COMPONENTS				5
		TOTAL NO OF ITEMS				24

Table 2

*Reliability of Survey***Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.917	24

Table 2 shows the reliability of the survey. The analysis shows a Cronbach alpha of .917, thus, revealing a good reliability of the instrument used. Further analysis using SPSS is done to present findings to answer the research questions for this study.

Findings

Findings for Demographic Profile

Q1. Gender

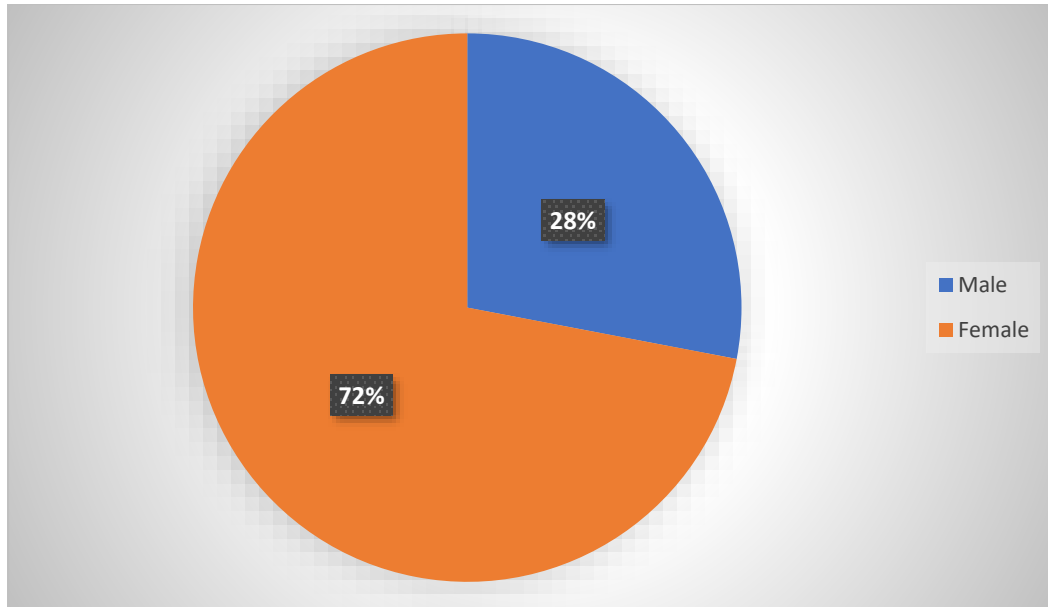


Figure 2-Percentage for Gender

Figure 2 shows the percentage for gender. 28% of the respondents are male while 72% of them are female.

Q2. Semester

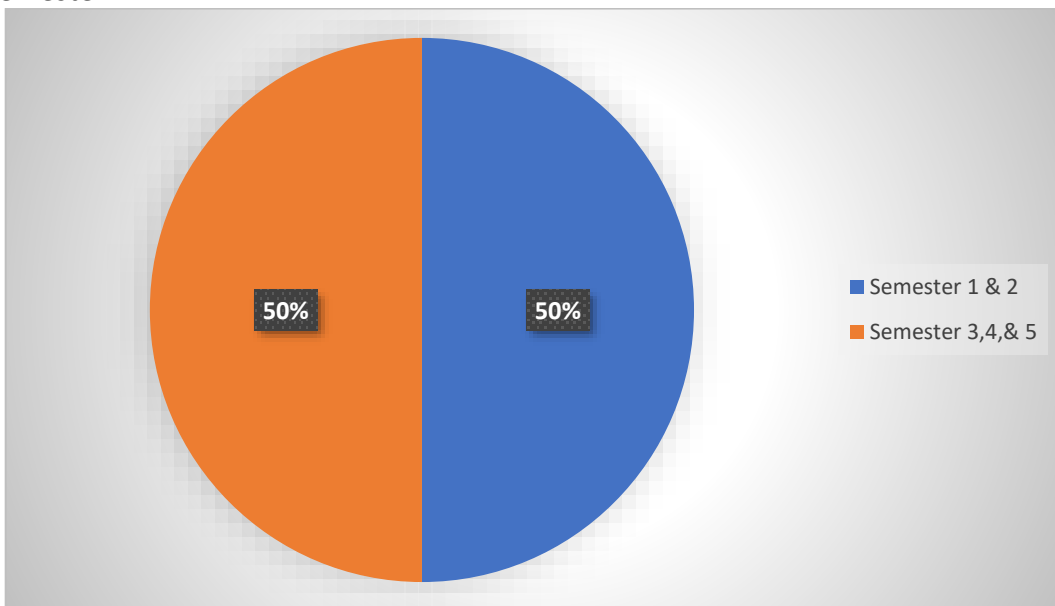


Figure 3-Percentage for semester

Figure 3 shows the percentage for semester. 50% of the respondents are from semester 1 & 2 while 50% are from semester 3,4 &5.

Q3 Faculty

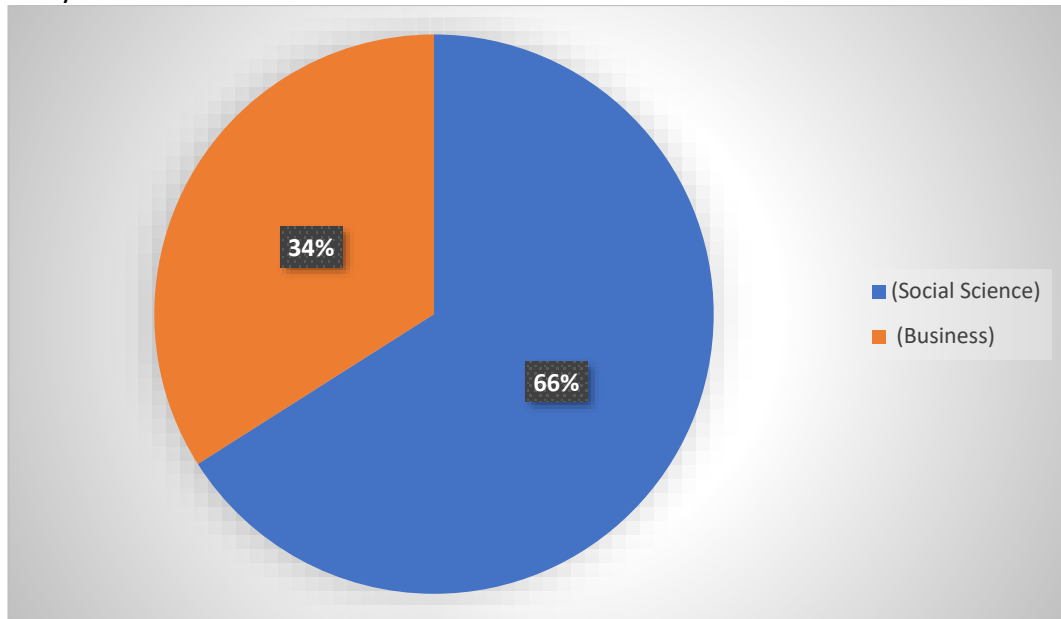


Figure 4-Percentage for faculty

Figure 4 shows the percentage for faculty. 66% of the respondents are from the social science cluster. Next, 34% are from the business cluster.

Findings for Instrumentality

This section presents data to answer research question 1: How does instrumentality influence learners' motivation? In the context of this study, instrumentality is measured by value components such as (i) intrinsic goal orientation, (ii) extrinsic goal orientation and (iii) task value beliefs.

Value Component

(i) Intrinsic Goal Orientation (4 items)

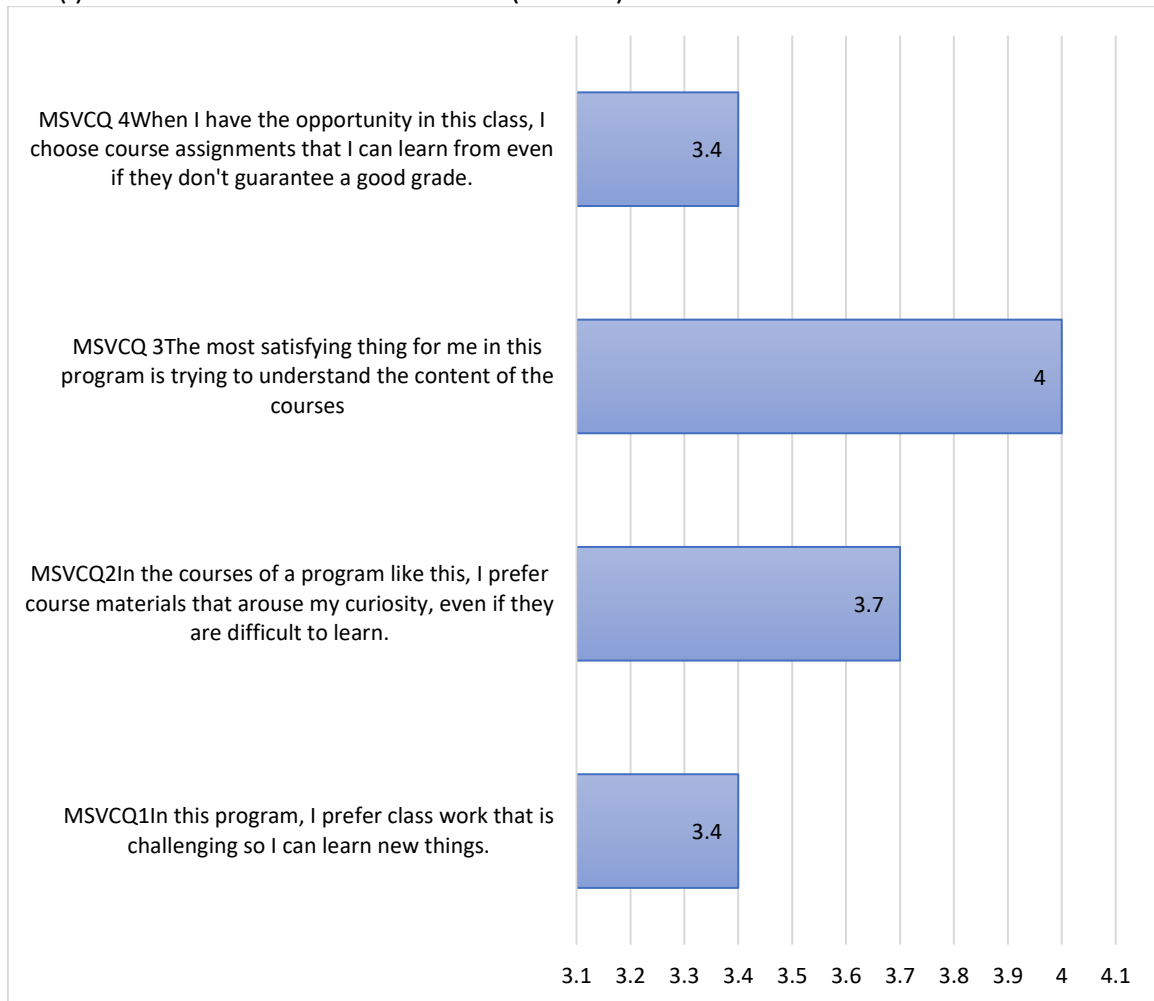


Figure 5-Mean for Intrinsic goal orientation.

Figure 5 presents the mean for intrinsic goal orientation. The highest mean is 4 for the item “most satisfying thing for me in this program is trying to understand the content of the courses”. Next, the item “the courses of a program like this, I prefer course materials that arouse my curiosity, even if they are difficult to learn” has a mean of 3.7.

(ii) Extrinsic Goal Orientation (3 items)

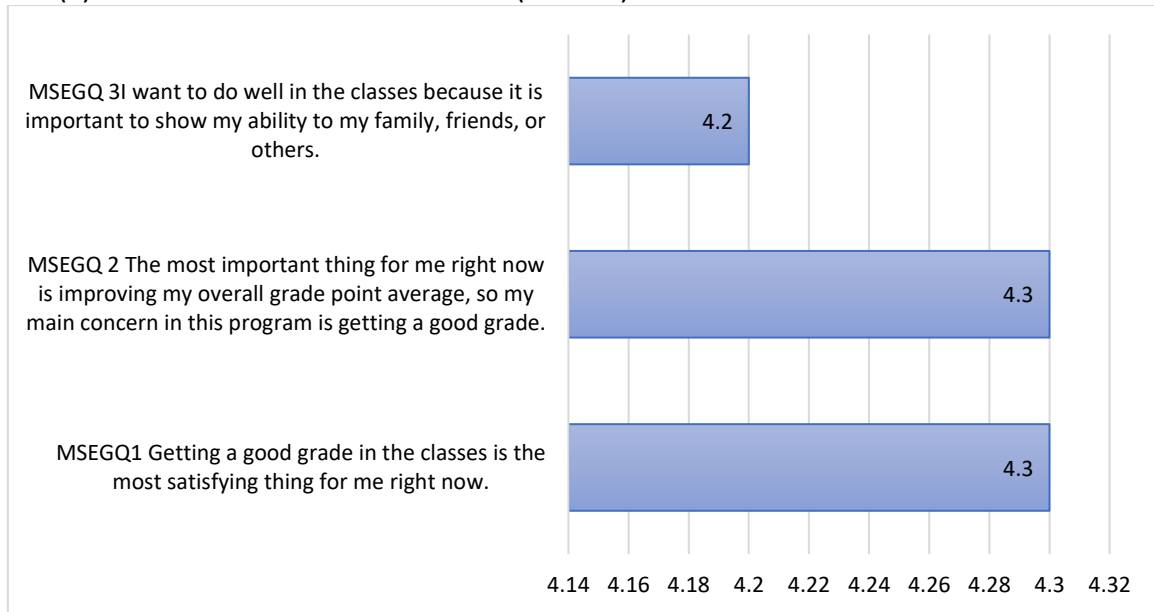


Figure 6-Mean for Extrinsic goal orientation.

Figure 6 shows the mean for extrinsic goal orientation. Two items share the highest mean of 4.3 and they are “Getting a good grade in the classes is the most satisfying thing for me right now” and “The most important thing for me right now is improving my overall grade point average, so my main concern in this program is getting a good grade”.

Task Value Beliefs (5 items)

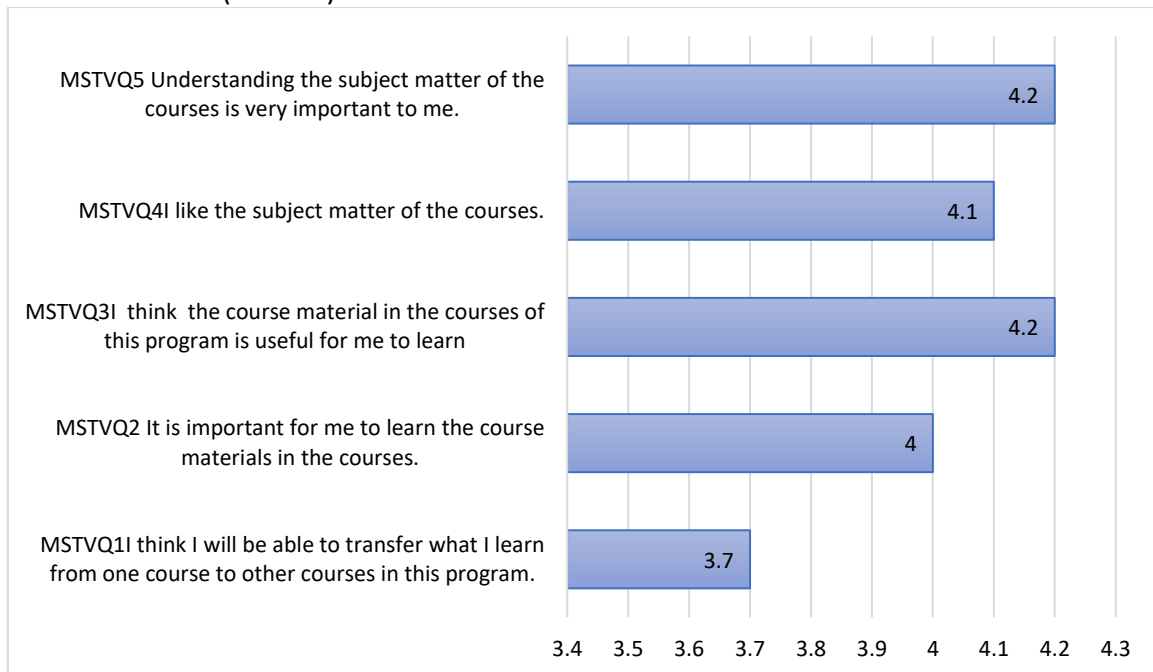


Figure 7-Mean for Task Value Beliefs

Figure 7 shows the mean for task value beliefs. Two items share the highest mean of 4.2 and they are “the course material in the courses of this program is useful for me to learn” and “Understanding the subject matter of the courses is very important to me”. This is followed by the mean of 4.1 for the item “like the subject matter of the courses”.

Findings for Expectancy

This section presents data to answer research question 2: How does expectancy influence learners’ motivation? In the context of this study, expectancy is measured by (i) students’ perception of self-efficacy and (ii) control beliefs for learning.

Expectancy Components- 7 items

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

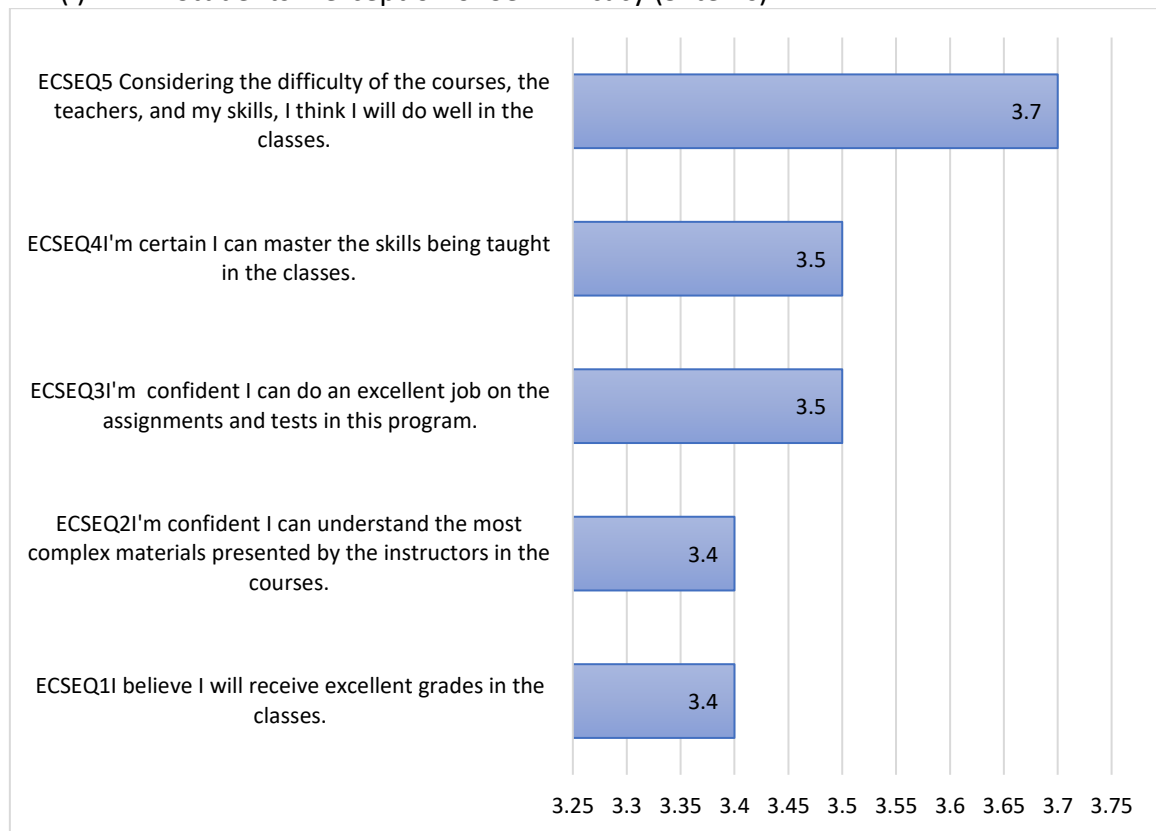


Figure 8-Mean for Students' Perception of Self-Efficacy

Figure 8 shows the mean for students' perception of self-efficacy. The highest mean is 3.7 for the item "Considering the difficulty of the courses, the teachers, and my skills, I think I will do well in the classes". Next, two items share the same mean of 3.5 and they are "confident I can do an excellent job on the assignments and tests in this program", and "certain I can master the skills being taught in the classes".

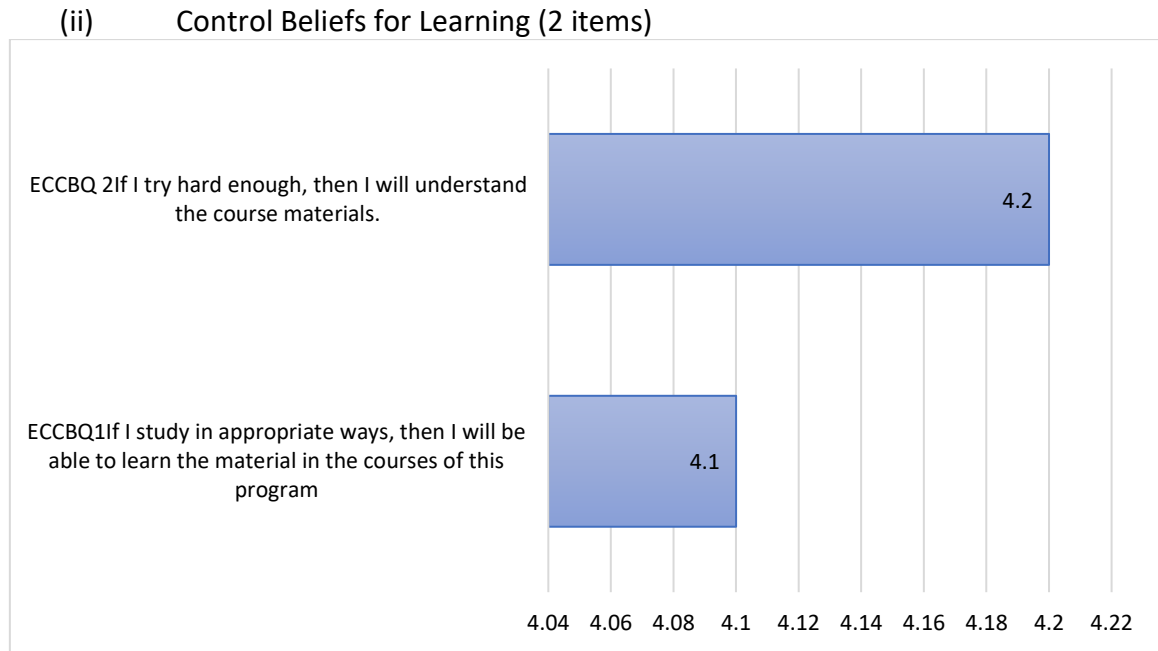


Figure 9-Mean for Control Beliefs for Learning

Figure 9 shows the mean for control beliefs for learning. The item “try hard enough, then I will understand the course materials” had a mean of 4.1. Next, the item on “study in appropriate ways, then I will be able to learn the material in the courses of this program had a mean of 4.1.

Findings for Valence

This section presents data to answer research question 3: How does valence influence learners’ motivation? In the context of this study, valence is measured by 5 items in the affective components.

Affective Component -reversing (5 items)

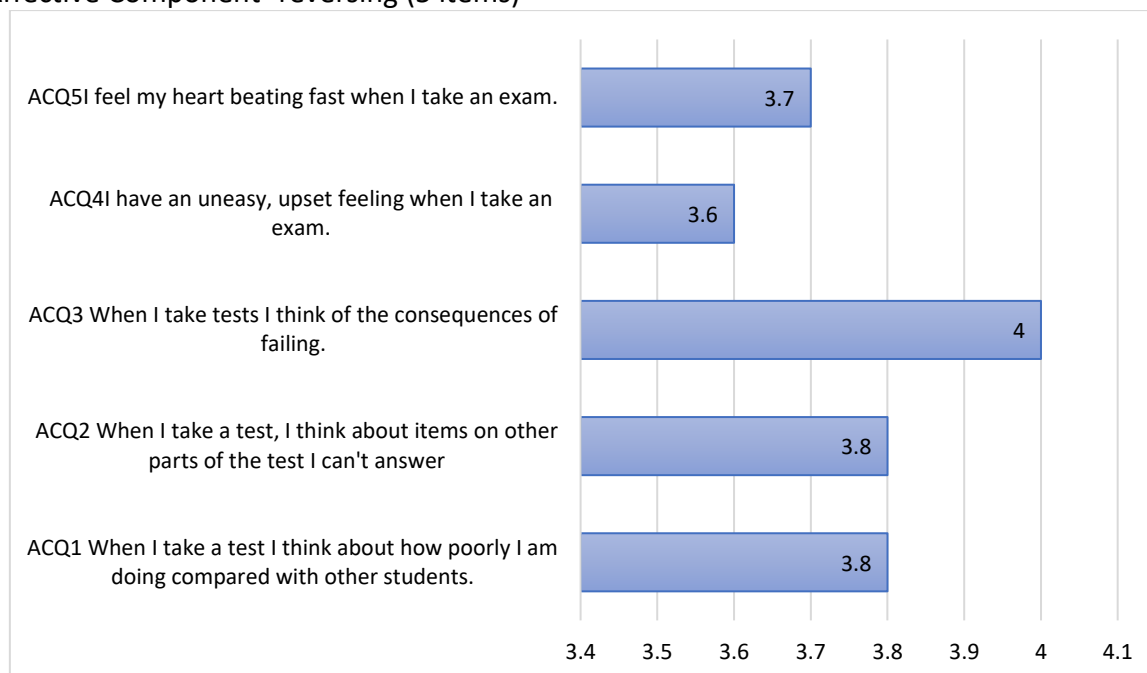


Figure 10-Mean for Affective Component

Figure 10 shows the mean for the affective component. The highest mean is 4 for the item “When I take tests I think of the consequences of failing”. This is followed by two items with the mean of 3.8 and they are “When I take a test I think about how poorly I am doing compared with other students”, and “When I take a test, I think about items on other parts of the test I can't answer”.

Findings for Relationship across variables

This section presents data to answer research question 4: Is there a relationship across variables for motivating factors?

To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between motivating factors, data is analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in table 3, and 4 below.

Table 3
Correlation between instrumentality and expectancy

		MEANINSTRUMENTALITY	MEANEXPECTANCY
MEANINSTRUMENTALITY	Pearson Correlation	1	.725**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	103	103
MEANEXPECTANCY	Pearson Correlation	.725**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	103	103

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

Table 3 shows there is an association between instrumentality and expectancy. Correlation analysis shows that there is a high significant association between instrumentality and expectancy ($r=.725^{**}$) 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 strong positive relationship between instrumentality and expectancy.

Table 4

Correlation between instrumentality and valence

		MEANINSTRUMENTALITY	MEANVALENCE
MEANINSTRUMENTALITY	Pearson Correlation	1	.212*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.032
	N	103	103
MEANVALENCE	Pearson Correlation	.212*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	
	N	103	103

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows there is an association between instrumentality and valence. Correlation analysis shows that there is a low significant association between instrumentality and valence ($r=.212^{**}$) 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 instrumentality and valence.

Conclusion

Summary of Findings and Discussions

The influence of instrumentality towards learners' motivation is measured by three different value components. The three value components are intrinsic goal orientation, extrinsic goal orientation, and task value beliefs. Based on the findings, many respondents find that understanding the course content is the most satisfying intrinsic goal orientation value. In terms of extrinsic goal orientation, a lot of respondents find that getting good grades and improving overall grade point average (GPA) are very rewarding. Many respondents also agree that the usefulness of the course materials as well as understanding the subject matter are two highly important task value beliefs. In terms of expectancy, its influence towards learners' motivation is measured by students' perception of self-efficacy and control beliefs for learning. Many respondents think that self-efficacy is when that they will do well in a course after considering the difficulty of the course, the lecturer, and their own skills. As for control beliefs in learning, they believe that they will understand the course materials when they work hard. One way to measure the influence of valence in learners' motivation is by using several affective components. Based on the findings, a lot of respondents consider the consequences of failing when they learn a course.

Learning about expectancy as well as valence, there is a strong positive relationship between instrumentality and expectancy. This could mean that when a learner has strong instrumentality values, the learner possesses good self-efficacy and positive control beliefs in learning. On the other hand, the relationship between instrumentality and valence is weak positive. It is possible that when a learner has strong instrumentality values, it does not necessarily affect the learners' affective components.

These findings are aligned with a study conducted by Mat Halif et al. (2022) as the study reported that positive academic attitudes, which fulfil the desire for self-actualization, may lead to good academic performance. To further elaborate, learners with positive mindset towards learning may perform well academically. In addition, Bahri and Corebima (2015) explained in their studies that strong intrinsic values to learn will help learners with their extrinsic values. It means that when a learner is interested to learn and go through the process of learning, the learner may find it easier to adapt with the instructor's teaching style as well as the complexity of the course.

(Pedagogical) Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

To sum up this study, motivation to learn can be influenced by a lot of factors. In terms of instrumental values, learners' interest towards the course or subject influence their learning motivation. Learners who possess good self-efficacy may also develop strong learning motivation. As for affective component, learners' self-awareness and self-actualization do help to build positive learning motivation.

All in all, this study contributes towards literature related to learning motivation. This study also investigates three different variables that could influence learning motivation. The three variables are instrumental values, expectancy values, and affective component values. However, it would contribute more to the literature if future researchers look into the influence of mentioned variables towards learning motivation across different disciplines. It is possible that learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation goals differ from one discipline to another.

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