

# Variables Affecting Student Motivation Based on Academic Publications

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## Abstract

In this study, the variables having impact on the student motivation have been analyzed based on the articles, conference papers, master's theses and doctoral dissertations published in the years 2000-2017. A total of 165 research papers were selected for the research material and the data were collected through qualitative research techniques through document review and content analysis. According to the research results, the most important factors affecting student motivation are the fields of teacher, teachers' classroom management skills and their teaching methods. In this research, factors having less influence on the student motivation are parental communication, student characteristics and study fields. In addition, relational search type was used more than others, mostly students were selected as the study group and most researches were conducted in USA and Turkey.

**Keywords:** Motivation, classroom management, teaching method, publications

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since scientific researches are of great importance in terms of the development of science, it is necessary to study these researches carefully and pursue them continuously in order to be aware of the developments in the future. Odom et al. (2005) indicate that assessing the results of previous research and the scientific research process will contribute greatly to scientific progress by examining the contextual development of academic work written in the relevant field. It is a generally accepted fact that education system has a great effect on the continuous development and improvement of a society and the educational research has really significant impact on the development of the education system (Çepni and Küçük, 2002). Giving the necessary support to scientific research provides benefits to the level of development of the country positively and gives direction to the policy that needs to be planned for the future (Turan, Karadağ, Bektaş and Yalçın, 2014).

In the literature, motivation is identified as a force that stimulates, directs and sustains behavior (Brophy, 1998, Glynn and Koballa, 2006; Palmer, 2005). On the other hand, student motivation or learning motivation is defined as "the tendency of a student to find meaningful and useful academic activities and to try to obtain academic benefits from them" (Brophy, 1998, p. 205). According to Cavas (2011), motivation is a fundamental education variable as it helps previously learned skills, strategies and behaviors to promote new learning and performance. Without motivation, proper curriculum and good instruction are not enough to guarantee the success of students (Dornyei and Csizer, 1998).

There are factors affecting student motivation and student achievement considerably on the basis of establishing effective and efficient learning-teaching process in education systems. The studies show many motivational factors (psychological, social and cultural): Intrinsic and extrinsic directions, parental influence and participation, family history, peer pressure, self-efficacy expectations, effort, value attributed to a relative, anxiety, self-regulation and determination of goals, talent perceptions, learning strategies, teaching style and school environment (Brophy, 1998, Garcia, 1995, Nolen and Haladyna, 1989, Pintrich and Schunk, 1996, Singh, Granville and Dika, 2002). For example, it is stated that the school environment optimizes motivation and learning when it is accessible, secure, positive, personalized and empowering. Teachers here, of course, play a very important role because they are an integral part of the school environment. Researches indicates that teachers' knowledge and skills, motivation level, qualifications, forms of evaluation, teaching style, quality of enthusiasm and enthusiasm can contribute to the motivation of the learners. The more enthusiastic, motivated and qualified teachers are in teaching and evaluating, the greater the capacity to increase learners' motivation to learn (Williams and Williams, 2011). Furthermore, lack of participation in the parents' education of the students may have a negative impact on the sense of incompleteness and lack of value for the materials the children read because studies indicate that there is significant relationship between parent involvement and children's academic motivation and educational development (Gottfried, Fleming, and Gottfried, 1994).

Motivation is a critical component of learning and plays a very important role in helping students become involved in academic activities. Motivation is defined as a situation that gives energy to behavior, directs and sustains it. This includes goals and activity requiring that the objectives provide motivation to move and action. Action requires effort and insistence to operate for a long period of time. Motivation involves a set of beliefs, perceptions, values, information and actions that are totally related to each other. Motivation can lead to many behaviors and it is important to understand the importance of motivation in an educational setting (Suhag,

Larik, Tagar and Solangi, 2016). Learning motivation is a vital precursor to profound and effective learning. On the contrary, the absence of the same learning component is a major preventive factor preventing deep and effective learning (Covington, 2000; Maehr and Midgley, 1991). According to Schumann (2004, p. 264), positive emotions (motivation) between the strong motivation and the learning process affect the cognitive process positively; the cognitive process delivers new knowledge; new knowledge learned also strengthens positive feelings (motivation). Motivation supports learning progressively; So that students can develop rich, adaptable skills rather than simple tasks (Beck 2004). This is the power of learning with motivation and, in this way, students are able to acquire and think through information, actively process it, and use it effectively (Dai and Sternberg, 2004).

According to Suhag et al. (2016), motivation has several effects on the learning and behavior of students: Firstly, motivation leads behavior to specific goals. Motivation sets specific goals that people strive for and, thus, influences the choices of students. Motivation also increases the effort and energy to determine whether a student will pursue a task that is difficult with enthusiasm or lifeless attitude. Motivation will be an important factor affecting the learning and success of the students by affecting the initiation and continuity of the activities, increasing the time of the students' duties. Motivation affects how information is processed and how it is processed as it increases the cognitive processing process and, thus, motivated students get more inclined to understand and examine material than to observe learning movements just superficially.

According to Palmer (2007), student motivation is an essential element for high quality education, and learning does not really occur unless a constant motivation is provided for the student. Internal motivation and external motivation are common types of motivation used in researches (Deci and Ryan, 1985, Brief and Aldag, 1977). According to Deci and Ryan (1985), intrinsic motivation depends on individual feelings, internal instincts and desires, but external motivation depends on the incentives of external events, their purpose, and their external stimuli. Intrinsic motivation arises from within the individual, and is guided by pleasure and satisfaction performed on the challenge. Internal motivation has a unique possibility to release human potential (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Wang, Lin and Chen (2008) classify learning motivation as a five-step process: Desire to know, willingness to participate in an activity, desire to comply with official requirements, and desire to reach a social goal and desire to escape. Shih (2010) examined learning motivation in two groups as career advancement and learning.

As a result, the examination of the content of the scientific documents in the field of motivation has great importance on educational process. In this study, 165 scientific studies were examined and the variables that affect the motivations of the students were determined. This research can be regarded as very important to determine the future needs for motivation in the field of education and to provide necessary development.

The purpose of this research is to determine the variables that affect the student motivation and thus it examines and analyses the studies that influence student motivation. This study will help to increase the awareness about educational process.

## 2. METHOD

Since the purpose of this research is to determine the variables that affect the student motivation, it examines and analyses the studies that influence student motivation. The studies consist of the articles, conference papers, graduate theses and doctoral dissertations published in 2000-2017. A total of 165 publications were selected for content analysis. The distribution of researches by type is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Distribution of Researches by Type

Research Type	n	%
Article	132	80
PhD thesis	19	11,51
Conference report	10	6,06
Master's thesis	4	2,42
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>100</b>

### Data Collection

The data were collected from 165 academic publications. First the researchers were collected and then the content of each research was analyzed. Document review covers the analysis of written materials that provide information about the issues that need to be investigated (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006). A document review is a systematic review of existing records or documents as the data source. The basic condition for a successful document review is that the necessary documents can be found, examined and necessary arrangements can be made so that a synthesis can be made that will reveal certain situations or views (Karasar, 2007). Taking into account the processes determined by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2006) in the document review, the full texts of the research papers in the study group were obtained from the databases. In this study, the document review was

carried out following the following steps: a) Accessing documents, b) Control of authenticity, c) Understanding of documents, d) Analysis of the data and d) Using the data. The study's working group includes published articles, conference notices, master's theses, and doctoral dissertations on "factors affecting the motivation of students".

### Data Analysis

The research data obtained by the document analysis were analyzed by content analysis method. 165 scientific studies published in the years 2000-2017 were examined. The main goal in content analysis is to reach the concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data. The basic process in content analysis is to bring together similar data within the framework of specific concepts and themes and interpret them by organizing them in a way that readers can understand (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006). In the process of analyzing and interpreting 165 scientific studies, attention was paid to the stages of naming, category development, validation and reliability, frequency calculation and interpretation. In the stage of naming and category development of content analysis, each of the articles was examined carefully and the variables affecting the motivations of the students were classified under the categories.

### Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure internal validity of the work, it is expected that the findings and results obtained should reflect the reality. Explanations on how these checks being made should be clear and understandable enough to satisfy the reader (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). Accordingly, in order to obtain internal validity, the data obtained in the investigation were interpreted after the information on the situation presented in the findings was presented. It was noted that the articles assessed for validity and reliability were analyzed based on the opinion of the researchers. The frequency and percentage of repetition of the analyzed scientific studies based on the determined categories were calculated and interpreted based on this information. In studies conducted by researchers, the method, data collection tools, sampling and data analysis were analyzed. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) state that sharing qualitative research with experts in this field and receiving feedback from them will increase the reliability of the study. In the method for external validity, the description of the researcher, the study group, the process of collecting and analyzing the data are explained in detail. To ensure the internal reliability of the study, the coding performed during the analysis of the data was independently made and compared by two investigators. In order to ensure the external reliability of the work, the approach of work, the steps followed and the methods used are clearly presented in details.

## 3. FINDINGS

Within the scope of the research, a total of 165 documents were analyzed and the pattern/method distribution of the surveys is given below in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Researches by Pattern / Method

Pattern / Method	Number of Research
Relational Search	108
Experimental study	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>

According to the data in Table 2, two categories emerged in terms of research design/method. 108 of the research documents are related to relational search type and 57 of them are experimental studies. The distribution of the researches according to the study group is given in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of Researches by Study Group

Working group	Number of Research
Student	120
Teacher Student	23
Research document	15
Teacher	4
Teacher-parent-student	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>

There are 5 categories in the study group of research documents examined according to Table 3. The study group consists of 120 articles, 23 teachers, 15 research articles, 4 teachers and 3 teacher-parents-students. It is observed that more research has been done on students and teachers. The distribution according to the countries in which the research was conducted is given in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of Researches by Country of Origin

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Number of Research</b>
USA	76
Turkey	10
Canada	6
Netherlands	6
Malaysia	5
Australia	4
China	4
Britain	3
Japan	3
Singapore	3
Finland	3
Pakistan	3
Indonesia	3
Germany	2
Ireland	2
Norway	2
Greece	2
Hungary	2
Israel	2
Iranian	2
India	2
Saudi Arabia	2
South Korea	2
Taiwan	2
Spain	1
Italy	1
Swedish	1
Austria	1
Slovakia	1
Romania	1
Moldova	1
Latvia	1
Czech Republic	1
South Africa	1
Brazil	1
United Arab Emirates	1
Thailand	1
Kenya	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>

In Table 4, there are a total of 38 countries whose research documents are examined. 76 of researches were conducted in the USA, 10 in Turkey, 6 in Canada and the Netherlands, 5 in Malaysia, 4 in Australia and China, 3 in the UK, Japan, Singapore, Finland, Pakistan and Indonesia, 2 in Germany, Italy, Sweden, Austria, Slovakia, Romania, Moldova, Latvia, the Czech Republic, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Norway, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Iran, India, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Thailand and Kenya. It is clear that the studies carried out in the field of student motivation are mostly in the USA and Turkey.

Four findings were obtained from the obtained data. The themes created are the subject of the research, the design/method, the study group, and the countries where the researches are done. The categories under the theme of the study are given below in Table 5.

Table 5. Distribution of Researches by Theme/Subject.

Field	f	Variables Affecting Student Motivation	f
Teacher Classroom Management Skills	167	Teacher communication skills	33
		Teacher's classroom management ability	30
		Helping students in determining goals	17
		Positive attitude	15
		Provide effective participation of students in the classroom	14
		Understand the needs and information of students	13
		Help students improve their personality	11
		Give responsibility and courage	9
		Keeping expectations high	9
		Out-of-class interaction between teacher and student	5
		Use of prizes	4
		Create a free and comfortable teaching environment	3
		Ethical behavior	2
		Preliminary judgments	1
The burnout of teachers	1		
Teacher Teaching Methods	140	Teaching methods and strategies used	36
		Use instructional technologies	25
		Making topics interesting	23
		Use of material	18
		Establishment of a student-centered learning environment	12
		Use of mobile technologies in lessons	8
		Integration of education and education with real life	5
		The homework is appropriate for the student	4
		To inform the students about the goals of the course	4
		Select course resources from students' own lists	3
Positive feedback	2		
Parent Communication	12	School-family cooperation and informing parents	12
Student Features	10	The emotional proximity of the students to the lesson and the subject	9
		The quality of service that students perceive	1
<b>School</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>School management, school climate and culture</b>	<b>4</b>

There are 5 categories in terms of the purpose/subjects of the research documents examined in Table 5. The most important areas affecting student motivation are the field of teacher teaching methods (Teaching methods and strategies, use of instructional technologies, making topics interesting, use of materials, formation of student centered learning environment, use of mobile technologies in lessons, integration of education and teaching with real life, conformity of assignments to student level, giving the course resources from the students' own lists, providing positive feedback), repeated 140 times, and the field of teacher classroom management skills (Teacher communication skills, classroom management ability, assisting students in determining goals, positive attitude, providing active participation of students in class, understanding student interests and needs, helping students to develop personality, giving responsibility and encouragement to students, the use of rewards, the creation of a free and comfortable learning environment, ethical behavior, the prejudices of teachers and the exhaustion of teachers) having the frequency of repetition 167 in researches. The other areas that have less influence on student motivation according to the table are the area of parent communication (school-family cooperation and parental information) with 12 repetition frequency in researches, the field of student characteristics which repeats 10 times (the emotional proximity of the students to the lesson and the subject) and 4 times repeated school (school management, school climate and culture).

#### 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the research results, the most important factors affecting student motivation are the field of teacher, classroom management skills and the field of teachers' teaching methods. In the research, factors that have less influence on the student motivation are parental communication, student characteristics and school fields. This study also indicates that more research was conducted in relational search, students were selected mostly as study group and research was carried out mostly in USA and Turkey.

One of the most important areas affecting student motivation is the factor of classroom management skills of the teacher. In general, effective classroom management is a practice that enhances the students' independent learning abilities, productivity and achievement, and the most important purpose is to prevent teaching and learning process from being interrupted and to continue in a well-organized teaching and learning



environment. Providing effective classroom management remains as a major challenge for teachers (Evertson and Weinstein, 2006). According to the study by Elliot (2009), teachers' classroom management skills are the main determinants of effective classroom climate formation. The communication skills that the teacher has in this field have a very important place in the student motivation. Teacher-student associations established in a qualified and confident communication environment affect both student motivation and academic success in a positive way (Erwin, 2003). In addition to classroom formal communication skills, informal communication outside the classroom seem to strengthen the relationship between educators and students (Pogue and Ahyun, 2006; Jones, 2008). In this way, students have the opportunity to share their subjects and problems with their teachers and continue to operate in a more motivated way, feeling more valuable (Jaasma and Copper, 1999; Lau, 2003). As Erden (2005) states, teachers need to establish an effective communication environment and positive learning environment for the class. The results of this study indicate that the teacher's ethical behavior influences student motivation. The positive attitude of the teachers has great effect on the motivation of the students by influencing the motivation of the students, the attitude towards the school and studying, and the confidence of the students (Öztürk, Koç and Şahin, 2003). Teachers in the classroom should try to show positive attitudes and avoid student embarrassment, criticism, humiliation and punishment. Again, according to the research result in this field, the prejudice of the teachers influences the motivation of the students. Teachers' beliefs have great influence on student attitudes and behaviors. Beliefs are inherently cognitive and do not change easily unless they are important for a long time to develop (McLeod, 1992). The study also points out that, in this field, the burnout feeling in the teachers affects the student motivation negatively. Burnout feelings of teachers can significantly reduce the quality of life and cause deterioration in teaching productivity (Koustelios and Tsigilis, 2005). As teachers' burnout increases, the student criticism increases, participation in both classroom preparation and classroom activities decreases. For this reason, the sense of efficacy of students in the school is often diminished; in other words, teachers' burnout reduces the motivation that influences the learning and participation of learners (Maslach and Leiter, 1999). According to Shen et al. (2015), teachers' burnout significantly weakens the motivation of students.

One of the factors that effect student motivation positively in the documents examined is related with teaching methods of teachers. According to Bayraktar's research (2015), in order to create an effective teaching and learning atmosphere in a classroom, it has been achieved that teacher's effective use of methods, techniques, tools and materials in relevant teaching field has an important effect on student motivation. Mendes (2003) also emphasized that an effective classroom environment, which enhances the motivation of the students, should be sufficient for the teaching methods and techniques of the educators. By using exciting and unique teaching techniques during training, the trainers better adapt the students to the lesson, which enables them to get the motivation for success (Bolkan and Goodboy, 2010). It is also seen that the ability of the students related to this field to choose the course sources from their own lists has effect on the motivation of the students. When students are given more primary resources (in other words, recommended book chapters), the achievement score is higher, and, thus, it is expected that providing more learning resources on a topic forms a more complete and richer mental model of the mechanisms underlying the problem that encourages learning (Te Winkel et al., 2006). Patall et al. (2008) emphasizes that choice of every kind increases inner motivation. This shows that providing options gives students the opportunity to experience autonomy and competence that increases subjectivity and motivation. The resources provided to the pupils should be informative, including learning topics, so that the choices of the pupils should be related to the learning theme (Katz and Assor 2007). Providing original literature sources is more effective in providing the necessary motivation to provide students with a degree of preference to autonomous motivation, perceived competence, and allowing them to select a pre-determined set of resources throughout the self-development process, while helping to answer questions to measure factual knowledge, allowing them to choose from a predetermined list seems much more useful than using teacher authority (Wijnia et al., 2015). Research findings show that positive feedback from teachers in this area has an effect on student motivation. Borich (2011) argues that positive feedback can be a motivating factor in his research, and teacher praise motivates him to imitate what he sees in his students, so getting positive feedback is a confidence building. For this reason, a student will want to praise again when he is praised by a teacher, and he will continue to be more willing to do the same.

The results of this research also indicate that the parent communication has less influence on the student characteristics and the school field student motivation than the field of classroom management skills and teaching methods. According to the researchers, parents' participation in the education process significantly affects the motivation and academic achievement of the learner (Fan & Chen, 2001; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Patall, Cooper, & Robinson, 2008; Pomerantz & Moorman, 2010; Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007); Spera, 2005). Research suggests that for students with an important support system, motivation and participation are likely to be higher than for non-supportive students (Marks, 2000). The support of parents in education is an indispensable part of the student's motivation and academic success. Again, in the field of student characteristics, according to another research result, the positive emotional experience plays an important role in academic

achievement and has an important influence on the ultimate success and motivation of academic undergraduates (Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2009). In many studies, the importance of quality of service in education has been emphasized. (O'Neill and Palmer, 2004, Parri, 2006, Quinn et al., 2009). Anna Davula and Bellamkonda (2016) have proved that the perceived quality of service of the students has a direct positive effect on satisfaction, loyalty and motivation. In the field of the school, both the school climate and student motivation have been associated with continuous academic achievement in current research (Gilman & Anderman, 2006; Hardre & Reeve, 2003; Stewart, 2008).

Considering the results obtained in this research, the following can be suggested:

- Research on the factors influencing student motivation in international and national journals can be evaluated comparatively.
- Researchers can focus on subjects that are less or never studied in the field of motivation.
- Extensive research on the relationship between teaching methods and strategies and student motivation can be done.
- Studies on how to increase student motivation more effectively can be considered by scanning the available resources on the field.

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