

New media discourse effects on the development of the university students' academic motivation

El discurso de los nuevos medios afecta el desarrollo de la motivación académica de los estudiantes universitarios

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ABSTRACT:

The purpose of this research is to establish the correlation between the level of university students' academic motivation and the new media discourse environment where young individuals spend most of their quality time. We hypothesize that students' academic motivation is influenced by the new media discourse space directly and indirectly. The findings of this research also identify new media discourse factors which affect students' academic and professional activity and raise their motivation to study and gain new knowledge and proficiency.

Keywords: new media discourse space, academic motivation, university students, education

RESUMEN:

El propósito de esta investigación es establecer la correlación entre el nivel de motivación académica de los estudiantes universitarios y el entorno de los nuevos medios de comunicación donde los jóvenes pasan la mayor parte de su tiempo de calidad. Nuestra hipótesis es que la motivación académica de los estudiantes está influenciada por el espacio del discurso de los nuevos medios de comunicación directa e indirectamente. Los hallazgos de esta investigación también identifican los factores del discurso de los nuevos medios que afectan la actividad académica y profesional de los estudiantes y aumentan su motivación para estudiar y adquirir nuevos conocimientos y habilidades.

Palabras clave: nuevo espacio discursivo mediático, motivación académica, universitarios, educación

1. Introduction

The study of motivation has been a prominent area for research in psychology and education for many years (Nevid, Rathus, & Greene, 2017; Guslyakova, 2013; Dörnyei, 2001). This

interest may reflect the widespread perception of classroom teachers, tutors and lecturers who tend to regard student motivation as the most important factor in educational success in general (Dörnyei, 2001). The term motivation refers to "inner and outside factors that inspire aspiration and power in people to be frequently concerned and dedicated to profession, role or focus, or to make an effort to achieve an ambition (Ronel, & Sapungan, 2016).

In the modern globalized world there are multiple reasons why students' motivation in studying should become an important focus of scholars' attention. In our opinion, the present-day education deeply correlates with the media digital environment. In other words, the new media affect the structure and content of the modern knowledge and education doesn't exist and fulfill its key goals without the digital frameworks. Taking into account such a "close bond" between the new media discourse and academic and scientific environments we assume that there might be a link between the new media discourse space and young people's academic motivation, that is, their personal drive to study, gain new knowledge and obtain a university degree.

Thus, we introduce our working hypothesis which says that there is a direct and indirect new media discourse impact on university students' motivation to join a higher education institution and acquire professional knowledge for further career-building.

We will begin our analysis with a thorough look at the problem of motivation as a psychological mechanism and its role in university students' academic and professional development.

2. Motivation as a psychological mechanism and its role in a person's life

Motivation refers to the fact of doing an activity for itself, and the pleasure and satisfaction derived from the participation. An academically motivated student goes to class because he or she finds it interesting and satisfying to learn more about certain subjects.

Motivation as a source of activity and as a system of motivators of any activity is considered in various aspects in the psychological and pedagogical literature, which is why the concept is interpreted by the scholars in different ways.

For example, one of the approaches considers motivation as the process of the emergence of the motive formation on the basis of need (Guslyakova, 2017). Another approach says that motivation is understood as a system of motives, their combination and structure. This interpretation is most often found in the works of Russian psychologists M.V. Matyukhina, E.D. Telegina, V.A. Yadov (Guslyakova, 2013).

There is a third approach (Nemov, 1994), according to which motivation includes all kinds of motives or "motivational factors": needs, interests, aspirations, goals, motivational attitudes or dispositions, ideals, etc. In the works of S.L. Rubinshtein (Rubinshtein, 2000) one can observe an intrinsic motivation directly related to cognition as well as based on an inner driving force. It is important to mention that the motive of this driving force becomes an integral part of the content of a certain mental task, its ways of solution and the result.

On the contrary, motivation is called external if it is based on the motive of achievement, the desire for credibility and to show your own capabilities and skills. Such a division is legitimate if motivation means any reason and any impulse to action and activity in general, which can be not only a need, an inclination, a motive, but also some stimulus as an external "pushing" effect on a person.

The analysis of psychological literature makes it possible to single out the following basic approaches to the consideration of motivation: as one specific motive, as a system of motives, as a set of needs of motives, emotions, goals, interests in their complex combination and interaction.

However, the common thing in these values is that motivation is always a stimulating process, a realization in action and behavior of certain needs and interests. In this sense, it is precisely needs and impulses that are the source of motivation, although sometimes the

needs for activity themselves can be determined by their motivation.

In foreign psychology, among theories of motivation there are two categories: content (Herzberg, 1968; Maslow, 1998; McClelland, 1988) based on the identification of those inner motives (needs) that force people to do so, and not otherwise, and procedure (waiting theory, justice theory, Porter and Lawler model), which are based on how people behave taking into account their perception and cognition.

In the context of our research, motivation is "a system of motives, which is a hierarchical structure of the driving forces of a person's behavior, related, on the one hand, to the structure of a person, and, on the other hand, to the specific situation" (Guslyakova, 2017). The motivation of the individual, determining his behavior, activities and features of social relations, has an impact on professional self-determination, and then on satisfaction with the profession.

As it is well known, in addition to dividing motivation into external and internal, there is also a classification of motives based on their attitude to the content of educational activities. The motives associated with the content of educational activities make it attractive for students to master the knowledge and skills, develop their abilities (cognitive motives, achievement motive, instrumental motives, motives of functioning). Motives that are not related to the content of educational activities make the learning situation itself attractive for students (game motives, social motives, motives of "expected value").

Instrumental motives or impulses are considered as a desire to use acquired knowledge and skills in later life. The existence of instrumental impulses was first mentioned by Canadian and American researcher Victor Vroom in his famous book "Work and Motivation" (1964) (Vroom, 1994). He noted that assessments of the possible consequences of this action are very important for the decision to choose an action. The main criterion of instrumental moving existence is a certain "expectation complex", which includes the interpretation of the results of further life training.

Students, who usually have instrumental impulses, evaluate the content of the training, by saying something like: "It is required for me to ...; I will need this for ... ". Updating of instrumental impulses occurs in a situation when a student understands the degree of importance of the material studied for his future life. As a rule, this happens when a young person faces everyday practical situations that become important to him (Markova, Mathis, & Orlov, 1990; Heckhausen, 2010; Hjelle, & Ziegler, 1992; Guslyakova, 2013). One of such important life activities that university students face on a daily basis is their interaction with the new media discourse environment.

3. New media in the contemporary world and their interaction with university students

It is common knowledge that communications media are central to the major developments of modern societies. They have contributed to the creation of nation-states and national identities; ideas of citizenship and freedom; the development of political culture and the public sphere; modern consumer culture and modern ideology. The increase in the volume and velocity of information and images hurtling around the globe makes obsolete people's ideas about time and space, relationship with other people, about work and education. The new media technologies are fast, exciting and promise the unlimited access to their resources. And it is true that they also help to shape young people's consciousness and define their life, academic and professional values and priorities. The most popular and commonly known social media platforms such as Facebook, VKontakte, Whatsapp, Viber, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Youtube, and Google have become a versatile, adaptable tool for information transfer, study, academic and professional discussions. We may assume that the new media environment is able to combine the logical and the intuitive, the intellect and the feelings, the concept and the experience, the idea and the meaning" (Rogers, 1983).

In our opinion, the present-day media are much more than just an ordinary quick and comfortable information transfer. They have become an integral part of people's lives, their behavior and cognition; habits and ways of communication and collaboration with each

other. We suppose that the new media discourse space facilitates not only the exchange of information which is extremely vital for modern individuals, but it also facilitates the exchange of emotional and motivational contents, including messages emphasizing joy, excitement, disappointment, concern, etc. Thus, the present-day new media can be briefly characterized as "alter ego" of the modern human nature. While interacting with the new media world, people, especially the younger generation, are looking for answers to their multiple questions about who they are; what they are wishes, goals and ambitions; what education they would like to obtain and where they need to move forward in the future. One can obviously see that the new digital environment has recently extended its functions from being an information mediator to becoming a human advisor, confident, a facilitator, a life coach and a motivator.

Taking into account the above mentioned facts, it is logical to assume that the new media discourse space influences the university students' life and academic performance as well. Therefore, it can be a serious motivating factor for a modern student to strive for new knowledge, new academic and scientific projects and to build a prospective career in the field chosen.

4. University students' academic motivation through the new media framework

Motivation is an important foundation of academic development in students. Research has consistently found that academically motivated students tend to perceive school and learning as valuable, like to learn, and enjoy learning-related activities (Eccles, & Wigfield, 2002; Zimmerman, 2008;). Studies have identified lack of motivation as a primary reason for underachievement (Wigfield, Lutz, & Wagner, 2005). And with increasing negative experiences in school, some students begin to stop trying hard because they think that effort will not make a difference for them. Lack of motivation leads not only to disengagement with university in general, but to underachievement and dropping out of the university in the end (Glass, & Rose, 2008). Numerous factors have significant effects on learning and motivation. For example, university climate, educators' beliefs and perceptions, their professionalism; family and social values have been demonstrated as important factors affecting student motivation (Rowell, & Hong, 2013). However, despite the fact that these elements are immensely important for understanding student behaviors at the university, our research centers on the motivation of students as it closely relates to the new media discourse environment.

University students' round-the-clock access towards the new media space raises the question of young people's academic motivation in its correlation with the new media discourse. No doubt, the digital environment can motivate young individuals to go to their classes and get a university degree and it certainly does so. Our research question is how far the new media is able to penetrate into a young person's consciousness and make an impact on their academic motivation.

In our next paragraph we will introduce our experimental findings which will help to clarify this issue.

5. Methodology

Our study and scientific interpretations of the media discourse space influence on the academic motivation of university students is based on the theoretical approach of Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky who believed that the professional consciousness of the individual is not 'a static and fixed person's consciousness, but the consciousness of an evolving, spiritually growing person who is committing an effort and work on his development and spiritual liberation' (Vygotsky, 2006). On the other hand, we also support the phenomenological approach by Carl R. Rogers and Rosalind F. Dymond (Rogers & Dymond, 1954), which focuses on the social impact of the external environment (in our case it is the media environment) on the subjective perception of self, thus placing the individual's personal position in the foreground, making it more active and free in decision-making and

being responsible for self- determination.

To test our hypothesis about the level of correlation and influence of the new media discourse environment on the formation of university students' academic motivation, we developed a survey and interviewed 61 bachelor students from three higher education institutions ((Moscow State Pedagogical University, RUDN University (Moscow), South Ural State Humanitarian Pedagogical University (Chelyabinsk)). In the survey on a 10-point scale ranging from '1' (never), '5' (sometimes, quite often) to '10' (always) students were asked how they personally understand the term "motivation"; what can motivate them; what motivates them to study at the university; how far the new media space helps them in their academic performance; if they agree that the modern digital world makes a strong effect on university students and their academic and professional success, etc. We also conducted regression, correlation and factor analyses in order to better and deeper understand the interaction between our respondents' academic motivation level and their activity in the new media discourse space. It was not only important for us to confirm the correlation between the variables under analysis, but also to identify how strong the correlation might be and which factors define the relationship between university students, their new media discourse presence and the development of their academic motivation.

6. Results

The findings showed us that most participants of our survey regard motivation as "a driving force to act" and "a strong desire to fulfill an action and achieve some goals" (more than 70%). Besides, for some students motivation is "force, energy and inspiration to live, to move forward and to look for some new interests, occupations; ways of developing an individual's skills and knowledge" (20%). Motivation may also be "the desire to make the world better based on other people's experience; to make it better than the previous generations did it" (10%).

When asked what can motivate a student and change the attitude about themselves, the following answers were received: "a definite purpose"; "other people's success in a certain professional sphere"; "when I realize that I can be useful to other people"; "films, books and stories about people who achieved something"; "social environment"; "an unexpected change of event"; "some interesting business"; "negative attitude towards me, when people tell me that I will give up"; "my family and friends"; "responsibility", etc. Some students also mentioned the number of literature, scientific, historic and political and media figures who can inspire them to achieve their goals and ambitions. Among them it is worth mentioning Martin Eden (by an American writer Jack London); Yevgeniy Bazarov (by a Russian writer Ivan Turgenev "Fathers and sons"); A Russian poet Alexander Pushkin, a Soviet writer Mikhail Bulgakov, a Soviet poet Vladimir Mayakovskiy; scientists Mikhail Lomonosov; Albert Einstein; Stephen Hawking; a Russian president Vladimir Putin and a Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny; a Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov; Russian media bloggers Alexandra Mitroshina, Amiran Sardanov, a European media blogger Anastacia Kay; the educational media channel Oxford inside.

It was also interesting to discover that university students may be motivated to study at the university because they are just "interested in study itself" (more than 50 % of the surveyed); because they can meet with their friends (25%); communicate with charismatic lecturers (15%) and they don't want to make up their missed classes (10%).

At the same time it is important to mention that more than half of our respondents agreed about the strong motivating factor of the new media discourse environment on their academic performance at the university. The summery of the regression, correlation and factor analysis confirms this statement and allows forecasting the new media influence on the younger generation and young individuals' academic motives in the future.

Table 1
Basic regression statistics of the dependence of the students' academic motivation on the new media discourse space

| | | Adjusted | Std.Error of | |
|--|--|-----------------|---------------------|--|
|--|--|-----------------|---------------------|--|

| Multiple R | R-Square | R-Square | estimate: | Number of observations |
|------------|----------|----------|-----------|------------------------|
| 0,565264 | 0,519524 | 0,509439 | 3,182 | 61 |

It can be seen from table 1 that the level of correlation coefficient (multiple R) is equal to 0,56, which means the existence of a liaison between our respondents' academic need to study and their reference towards the new digital discourse. There is a 52% confidence (R-square) that academic motivation of the students surveyed is defined by their interacting with the new media resources, including social networks, education platforms, different media channels and blogospheres.

The results of the regression analysis conducted in the research are also supported by the findings of the correlation and factor analyses (tables 2 and 3 correspondingly).

Table 2

Results of the correlation analysis of the new media discourse impact on the university students' academic motivation (marked correlations are significant at $p < ,05000$)

| | Var 1 | Var 2 | Var 3 | Var 4 | Var 5 | Var 6 | Var 7 | Var 8 | Var 9 | Var 10 |
|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Var1 | 1,00 | -0,08 | 0,18 | -0,07 | 0,01 | 0,10 | 0,11 | 0,08 | 0,37 | 0,14 |
| Var2 | -0,08 | 1,00 | 0,27 | 0,06 | 0,09 | 0,14 | -0,07 | 0,13 | -0,07 | 0,35 |
| Var3 | 0,18 | 0,27 | 1,00 | 0,25 | 0,25 | 0,19 | 0,07 | 0,13 | 0,30 | 0,13 |
| Var4 | -0,07 | 0,06 | 0,25 | 1,00 | 0,29 | 0,16 | -0,07 | 0,12 | 0,31 | -0,01 |
| Var5 | 0,01 | 0,09 | 0,25 | 0,29 | 1,00 | 0,12 | -0,04 | 0,03 | 0,26 | 0,05 |
| Var6 | 0,10 | 0,14 | 0,19 | 0,16 | 0,12 | 1,00 | 0,51 | 0,23 | -0,04 | 0,37 |
| Var7 | 0,11 | -0,07 | 0,07 | -0,07 | -0,04 | 0,51 | 1,00 | 0,08 | 0,01 | 0,21 |
| Var8 | 0,08 | 0,13 | 0,13 | 0,12 | 0,03 | 0,23 | 0,08 | 1,00 | 0,23 | 0,11 |
| Var9 | 0,37 | -0,07 | 0,30 | 0,31 | 0,26 | -0,04 | 0,01 | 0,23 | 1,00 | -0,06 |
| Var10 | 0,14 | 0,35 | 0,13 | -0,01 | 0,05 | 0,37 | 0,21 | 0,11 | -0,06 | 1,00 |

Var 1 – importance of academic motivation; Var 2 – motivation by famous bloggers and media persons; Var 3 – degree of new media space academic support; Var 4- strong media motivation in students' education; Var 5 – frequency of students' academic use of new media resources; Var 6 – frequency of students' reference towards new media when looking for a job or volunteering; Var 7 – students' interest and intention to try distance learning and MOOCs courses; Var 8 – learning foreign languages with the help of new media environment; Var 9 – new media as a source of help and support for university students' academic performance; Var 10 – new media discourse space as a source of useful, interesting, comfortable and important academic environment for university students.

Table 2 demonstrates the presence of correlations between variables that signify our university students' academic interest, their motivation and their use of the new media discourse environment (for example, variables 1, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 – 0,37; 0,3; 0,31; 0,26; 0,23). The data presented show the importance of academic motivation in young individuals' life. Good education is a social and progress driver. University students understand that their academic success depends on their academic performance and enthusiasm which can be raised by the presence of the new media space in their lives and study. Young people

frequently refer to new media sources as a means of support, help and free consulting activities. They apply for MOOCs courses or would like to do it in order to improve their professionalism. Students learn foreign languages in the new media environment, look for a job or any social activity they would like to participate. There is a good correlation between variables 6 and 7 (0,51), which stand behind distance learning, looking for a job and the new media environment making it easier to organize those things. Nowadays it is becoming more and more popular for the younger generation to study online, work from home owing to the opportunities of the new digital environment, be a member of a certain volunteering group and donate to different charity groups. Thus, we may assume that the new media discourse is a good motivating instrument to gain new knowledge through virtual institutions, apply for a job or become a volunteer.

To sum up, our hypothesis about the correlation between the new media discourse space and our respondents' academic motivation has been proved. In order to perceive which factors define the existence of the above mentioned correlation, a factor analysis has been conducted (table 3).

Table 3
Results of the factor analysis of the new media discourse impact on the university students' academic motivation (marked loadings are > ,700000)

| | Factor 1 | Factor 2 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Var1 | 0,335717 | 0,156595 |
| Var2 | 0,125079 | 0,404993 |
| Var3 | 0,628347 | 0,254362 |
| Var4 | 0,635037 | -0,034049 |
| Var5 | 0,591345 | 0,002834 |
| Var6 | 0,117604 | 0,803586 |
| Var7 | -0,085047 | 0,649717 |
| Var8 | 0,332955 | 0,299192 |
| Var9 | 0,764483 | -0,134325 |
| Var10 | 0,006397 | 0,712886 |
| Expl.Var | 1,992528 | 1,938057 |
| Prp.Totl | 0,199253 | 0,193806 |

Var 1 – importance of academic motivation; Var 2 – motivation by famous bloggers and media persons;
 Var 3 – degree of new media space academic support; Var 4- strong media motivation in students' education;
 Var 5 – frequency of students' academic use of new media resources;
 Var 6 – frequency of students' reference towards new media when looking for a job or volunteering;
 Var 7 – students' interest and intention to try distance learning and MOOCs courses;
 Var 8 – learning foreign languages with the help of new media environment;
 Var 9 – new media as a source of help and support for university students' academic performance;
 Var 10 – new media discourse space as a source of useful, interesting, comfortable and important academic environment for university students.

As a result, we may observe the presence of two factors which can explain the new media

impact of the university students' academic motivation level. The first factor has been named as *the factor of the strong media support of the academic performance* that the new digital environment provides to students today (var 3,4,5,9 – 0,63; 0,64; 0,59; 0,76 correspondingly). It is true that the present-day media is an enormous source of answers to our respondents' academic questions. At the same time university students are often apt to deal with the new media discourse when they need to find a job or if they participate in different volunteer projects. Therefore, the second factor which explains students' motivation to turn to the digital media nowadays is called *the factor of professional and social activity* (var 2, 6, 7,10 – 0,40; 0,80; 0,64; 0,71 correspondingly).

At the beginning of our study we mentioned that according to the regression analysis university students' academic motivation is defined by the new media discourse influence by 52%. At the same time the results of the data factorization demonstrates a strong correlation between university students' academic and professional demands and the new media environment offers. This statistical information suggests augmenting and amplifying the new media presence in university students' lives especially with the development and improvement of scientific and technological progress in the world.

4. Conclusions

The aim of our study was to identify and analyze how far the new media discourse space may affect the university students' academic motivation level at the present time. It has been predicted that there exists the interaction between the new digital environment and young individuals' reference to it for academic, scientific and professional purposes. Our findings have showed that for most of the respondents the term "motivation" is not an empty word, but a driving force, an inspiration to move forward, to set goals and try to achieve them. Thus, academic motivation is of a great interest and an important problem in young people's education and career-building. It is also essential because motivated students tend to engage in activities that help them to learn and act highly in academic settings; they take the time to use effective learning and study strategies, and seek help from others when needed.

Our research demonstrated that one of the most effective sources of young people's academic, scientific and professional help and support has become the new media discourse environment. Its present-day content, comfortable and quick ways of information search and presentation, round-the-clock interaction with users motivate university students to study, seek for knowledge, join social, academic and professional groups, forums and communities. In general, the contemporary new media space can be perceived as a successful and impactful mechanism which is able to motivate young individuals to broaden their minds, to develop their scientific and professional experience; to become more independent and mature individuals. We suggest that in the future scholars should better focus their attention on analyzing the new media discourse space as an intricate instrument of motivation as a psychological mechanism in the life of the younger generation. It will be necessary to perceive what factors are going to make a stronger impact on the development of young individuals' consciousness: family, friends, society or the new media discourse environment which has already been playing different roles in the modern human minds.

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