

Guardians' perception of their students' academic motivation and resilience

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Purpose of study

Long term English learners (LTELs) in California are students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for more than six years, and are still struggling to master the English language well enough to succeed in the academic environment. While a variety of factors may determine which students are able to reclassify as English Proficient, and which become LTELs, many teachers and school staff cite challenges with student motivation as a key factor. Student motivation in the high school setting is a topic of continual conversation because it is the key to academic success. According to Self Determination Theory (SDT), the keys to unlocking motivation in any context are an individual's sense of independence, competence, and social relatedness. The purpose of this study is to explore which SDT elements LTEL students are experiencing in the classroom and which ones are lacking—with the intent of understanding how to better support LTEL students in the classroom.

Research Question

How do guardians of long term English learners perceive their students' academic motivation and resilience?

Methodology

Sample:

The participants in this study were a group composed of guardians of high school English students who have been identified as long term English learners, ranging from 10-12th grade.

Instrumentation:

- The primary instrument used to collect data in this study was a Qualtrics survey containing twenty four questions
- Survey questions adapted from the following existing questionnaires (primarily Likert scale responses)
 - Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction and Frustrations Scales survey (BPNSFS)
 - i.e. ““My student feels a sense of choice and freedom in their assignments at school.””
 - Global Motivation Scale (GMS-28)
 - i.e. ““My student tries to do well in school in order to feel pleasant emotions.””
 - Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30).
 - i.e. ““When my student struggles at school, they use the feedback to improve their work.””

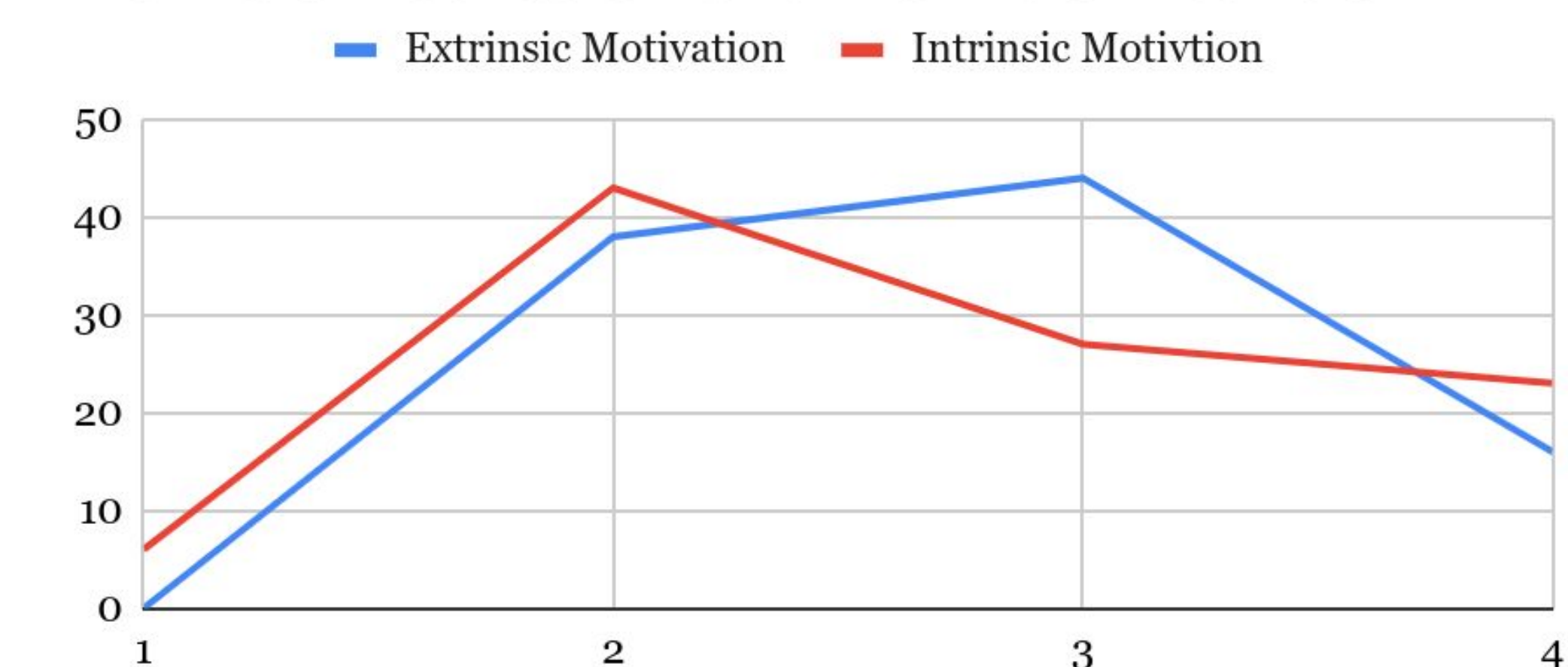
Discussion

- *Social Relatedness* with teachers was noted as important by some guardians, but social relatedness with peers was not mentioned at all. Further research on this would be beneficial.
- *Competence* is distinctly identified as important by guardians—thus fostering confidence and a growth mindset in LTEL students may be largely beneficial to their motivation in academic classes.
- A focus on shifting LTEL students' source of motivation from extrinsic to intrinsic would be beneficial.
- A significant number of guardians identified lower levels of *academic resilience* in their students—this may be related to their sense of *competence*. Further research on this may be significant and beneficial.

Results

- Most guardians indicated extrinsic sources of motivation (such as grades, passing tests, and completion of assignments).
- This is significant because *extrinsic* motivation is a less effective form of motivation. Students are more successful when they are *intrinsically* motivated.

Extrinsic Motivation and Intrinsic Motivation



- All three elements peak at a rating of 3—but *social relatedness* has the lowest level within rating 3. Notably, none of the guardian responses mention *social relatedness* as a hindrance to their students' success in the classroom.

Autonomy, Competence and Social Relatedness



- Data consistently indicates that *competence* is a key factor in LTEL students' motivation.
- 8% of responses indicated that guardians perceived their children to demonstrate high levels of academic resilience, 52% of guardians perceived their children to demonstrate medium levels of academic resilience, and 40% of guardians perceived their students to demonstrate fairly low levels of academic resilience.