

Learning motivation and self-esteem of students in the classroom

Lilach Lea Cohen

The primary purpose of this essay is to survey the most important factors indicating the relationship between learning motivation and self-esteem among students. It reviews relevant research published during the last two decades on the subject of learning motivation and presents theories, approaches and models offering various emphases on the subject.

Among the factors that affect motivation, the discussion focuses on theories and approaches that relate to learning motivation and self-esteem. It treats a series of sub-topics, with the goal of increasing parents' and teachers' awareness of the importance of self-esteem in relationship to learning motivation. These sub-topics include: the need for achievement (goal theory); self-esteem; self-image and dealing with failure; causal attribution; self-esteem and meaningfulness; motivation, self-esteem and peer groups; classroom competence; learning motivation and advice for teachers; learning motivation and parents.

In the last section, I have attempted to build an inclusive system, uniting many of the factors that bear an influence on self-esteem and are influenced by it in relation to learning motivation. This system brings together the work of three central theoreticians and researchers in the field. It incorporates the ideas of Ames and Assor (2001), who emphasized factors that provide for the basic psychological needs of the student, with those of Wentzel (2004), who emphasized the importance of students' classroom competence. These approaches are integrated into a new, comprehensive model of learning motivation and self-esteem, which I believe may be of use to future researchers and contribute to the work of professionals in the fields of psychology and education.