

Gender Differences in Intrinsic Motivation

Presenters: Countess Authement, Rhianna Rich, Devin Bourque,
Seth Tackett, MS, & Janelle McDaniel, Ph.D.

Abstract

Intrinsic motivation can be seen as an internal drive to help an individual complete a goal. The purpose of this study was to examine the gender differences as it relates to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The study included 310 participants that filled out a brief consent and demographics form, followed by a questionnaire. The questionnaire was composed of the Academic Motivation Scale, Survey Items of Factors Influencing the Choice of Major, Survey Items for Enjoyment of the Major, Survey of Perceived Employment Opportunities After Graduation, the Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE). The results show that gender had a significant impact on intrinsic motivation ($F(1,301) = 4.161, p=0.042$. with females scoring higher than males.

Introduction

- Academic Motivation has been studied by many different social scientists (Deci, 1971; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Schunk, 1991) primarily with the end goal of understanding and improving student outcomes and success.
- Intrinsic Motivation (IM) is more of a cognitive and humanistic view of motivation that springs from an understanding of people as they unfold and develop both physiologically and psychologically from biological givens.
- Deci (1971) found that when an individual was offered an external reward such as money, their intrinsic motivation tended to decrease, however, when that individual was provided with verbal reinforcement and positive feedback, intrinsic motivation tended to increase.

Methods

- IRB Approved
 - 310 Participants
 - Measures Used:
 - Academic Motivation Scale
 - Survey Items of Factors Influencing the Choice of Major
 - Survey items for Enjoyment of Major
 - Survey of Perceived Employment Opportunities After Graduation
 - Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory
 - Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale
 - General Self-Efficacy Scale
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Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics - Males

	N	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intrinsic Motivation	63	21.33	16.7249	5.51262
Extrinsic Motivation	65	16.33	21.6154	3.99011
Valid N (listwise)	63			

Descriptive Statistics - Females

	N	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intrinsic Motivation	238	31.33	18.2045	5.01149
Extrinsic Motivation	238	38.67	23.7423	3.63654
Valid N (listwise)	234			

ANOVA

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Intrinsic Motivation

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	109.056 ^a	1	109.056	4.161	.042
Intercept	60775.985	1	60775.985	2318.927	.000
Sex	109.056	1	109.056	4.161	.042
Error	7836.391	299	26.209		
Total	104332.778	301			
Corrected Total	7945.446	300			

Discussion

- This study explored the difference between male and female academic motivation. Academic motivation was studied by measuring intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
- According to Desi, Cascio, & Krussel (1975) and Vallerand & Bissonnette (1992), it is evident that females are more intrinsically motivated than males in an academic setting, however, females are also prone to decreases in intrinsic motivation when presented with positive reinforcement, while males are prone to increases.
- Furthermore, the results of these studies indicate that although intrinsic, academic motivation appears to be significantly higher in females, positive feedback has a negative effect on this value.

References

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