Original Article

IMPACT OF MOTIVATION ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY SULTAN ZAINAL ABIDIN STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Background: Motivation plays an essential role in reshaping learners' behavior towards learning. This study examine the impact of motivation on students' academic performance with a special reference to University Sultan Zainal Abidin students. **Objective**: This study aim to examine the relationship between students' motivation and their academic performance (GPA). Secondly, to find out the effect of motivation on students' academic performance (GPA). **Method**: A structured questionnaire on motivation was administered on 218 University Sultan Zainal Abidin students. The students were from the Faculties of Islamic Contemporary Studies, Applied Social Sciences and Economic and Business Management. Data was analyzed using correlation analysis and a simple linear regression. **Results:** Findings of the study revealed that a strong positive relationship exist between motivation and students' academic performance. This is because the r-value from the correlation analysis is 0.667 revealing a strong link between the study variables. Similarly, result from the regression analysis indicated that motivation serves as a good predictor of students' performance. **Conclusions**: Based on the findings from the study, a strong relationship exists between motivation and Students' academic performance. Similarly, students' motivation serves as a yardstick in predicting their performance.
Keywords: *Students' Motivation, correlation, Performance.*

1 INTRODUCTION

Motivation is seen as the person's effort to accomplish his/her duties, dedicating the needed effort and continuing it [1]. Motivation plays a significant role in individual's educational life and their achievement. Motivation reflects in learners' choices of academic tasks, the time and effort they allocate to each task, their perseverance in academic tasks. Motivation also enables them correctly handle obstacles they come across in the learning process [2]. Wiegfield and Eccles (2011) believed that motivation is a multidimensional construct [3]. To them, researchers in the field of motivation in learning agree that a learners engaging in any learning condition has to answer three central questions: 'Can I do this activity?', 'Do I want to do this activity and why?', and 'What do I need to do to succeed?'

The concept of motivation is closely related to other constructs in education and psychology. They include attention, needs, goals and interests which all focuses on stimulating individual learners and rising their interest and attention towards engaging in an action or behaviors and the accomplishment of such actions or goals [4]. The concept of motivation is functional when an individual is thrilled to satisfy some need or desire. The individual will involve in, or be attracted toward actions that are perceived as having the possibility to meet this need or desire [5].
 Educational psychologists are of the view that students' motivation is an indispensable requirement for efficient learning to take place [6]. Fontana (1981) believed that, in the event of insufficient motivation to learn, the outcome of such learning will be unsatisfactory [7]. The concept of motivation has been defined differently. However, all centered on what induce a person to perform a given action. Denhardt et al. (2008) views motivation as "what causes people to behave as they do". To them, motivation sketches the achievement and pursuit of goals [8]. According to Lawler (1994) motivation is goal directed. That is individuals perform an action due to the goal they want to achieve [9]. Pettinger (1996) take a different view in defining motivation [10]. To him, motivation is environmentally dependent. That is people's action is tailored by environmental influences.

Campbell and Pritchard (1976) sees motivation as series of psychological procedures that cause the initiation, direction, intensity and the persistence of actions [11]. Denhardt et al. (2008) stressed that motivation is not observe directly [8]. They pointed out that motivation is an inner feeling that made people act in a particular way to achieve a given goal and purposes. Denhardt et al. (2008) further argued that motivation can not be controlled directly [8]. They maintain that motivation occurs within individual's minds and hearts and should not be regarded as something that people do to others. Equally they stressed that motivation is not the same as satisfaction. To them, satisfaction is past-oriented while motivation is future oriented. In view of the importance attached to students' motivation, this study examine the impact of motivational construct on the academic achievement of University Sultan Zainal Abidin students.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to assess the impact of motivation on the academic performance of University Sultan Zainal Abidin students. The precise objectives include the following:

i.   To find out the relationship between motivation and the academic performance of University Sultan Zainal Abidin students.
ii. Assessess the effect of motivation on the academic performance of University Sultan Zainal Abidin students.

Research Questions
i.   Is there any relationship between motivation and the academic performance of University Sultan Zainal Abidin student?
ii. Do motivation has any effect on the academic performance of University Sultan Zainal Abidin students?

Research hypothesis
The following hypothesis were raised to pilot the study:
i.   There is no any significant relationship between motivation and academic performance of University Sultan Zainal Abidin students
ii. Motivation has no any significant effect on the academic performance of University Sultan Zainal Abidin students.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Abu Bakar et al. (2010) examine the relationships between university students' achievement motivation, attitude and academic performance in Malaysia [12]. The objective of their study was to ascertain the relationships between achievement motivation, attitude and students' academic achievement. A structured questionnaire was administered on 1484 from five faculties of the University students that were selected using a cluster sampling. Obtained data was analyzed using correlation and regression analysis. The findings of their work revealed a positive significant correlation between students' attitude towards learning and achievement motivation. The study also revealed that students' attitude and academic achievement were correlated positively. Conversely, the finding also indicated that a low and negative correlation exist between students' achievement motivation and their academic performance.   In a comparative study, Tuysuz et al. (2010) assesses the difference in motivation between university students and high school students [13]. The objective of their work is to compare the motivation of high school students and that of a university student. In particular, their study is devoted toward finding how students' motivation is changing due to selecting a science career for studying in the university. To achieve this, a structured questionnaire was administered to 302 university students and 294 high school students that are in science major. An exploratory factor analysis was used to provide evidence to construct validity. Obtained data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The result of the study revealed that university students are highly motivated to science as compared to high school students. In a similar study, Mahyuddin et al. (2009) examine emotional intelligence, achievement motivation and academic achievement among students of the public and private higher institutions [14]. Findings from their study revealed a significantly low positive relationship between students' achievement motivation and their academic performance. Veena and Shastri (2013) conducted a study on achievement motivation among college students [15]. The objectives of the study are to assess achievement motivation among pure science and applied science students. Secondly, to examine the dissimilarities in achievement motivation among high and low achievers. Finally, to determine achievement motivation base on gender difference. A questionnaire was administered to 656 undergraduate students, 305 boys and 351 girls. Obtained data was analyzed using Descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney U test, and Kruskall Wallis tests. Findings of the study indicated a significant difference in achievement motivation among pure science and applied science students. However, the study revealed the absence of significant difference in achievement motivation between high and low achievers. Similarly, the finding indicated that Boys and girls varied significantly on achievement motivation.

4. METHOD

4.1 Participants : The population of the study consist of 218 University Sultan Zainal Abidin students. The population consist of 114 male and 104 female respondents. The participants were randomly selected from three faculties of the University. The Faculties are Islamic Contemporary Studies, Applied Social Sciences, Economics and Business Management within Gong Badak Campus Kuala Terrenganu Malaysia.

4.2 Instrument: A structured questionnaire on Motivation was administered to randomly selected respondents. The questionnaire consist of two sections, demographic and motivation section. The demographic section ask questions relating to the respondents while the motivational section solicit questions relating to the objectives of the study. The questions in the questionnaire were on five point likert scale ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. In all the questionnaire consist of 22 items soliciting information from the respondents. The questionaire was validated by

expert in educational psychology to ascertain its face, content, and construct validity. In determining its reliabilty, the Cronbach's alpha was used. The reliablity value was found to be 0.770 which affirm the questionnanir as a reliable tool in measuring students' motivation. Below are qestions used in evaluating students' motivation.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Matric Number…………….
2. Current GPA………………
3. Gender: Male [   ]   Female [   ]
4. Age: 15-20 years [   ]   20-25 [   ]
5. Program……………………………………………….
6. Faculty…………………………………………………
7. Semester 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

SECTION B: MOTIVATION

S/N	STATEMENT	SA				SD
1	I hardly select a course or topic and consider it as boring.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The most important thing I want during my first lecture on a given course is having the course outline.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I can spent the whole semester without missing a single lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am always curious when presented with a new learning task in a class	1	2	3	4	5
5	The more I understand a given subject the more I have the apatite of reading	1	2	3	4	5
6	Obtaining a good grade average point is always my priority.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I feel overjoyed when considered among the best students in our class.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I feel sad and disturbed when I have a low grade in a test or examination.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I always received words of encouragement from my parents, friends when I present my academic result.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I always consider myself as an underdog to force myself read even when I cover the course content.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I always compensate the efforts of my parents/guardian through hard work in school activities.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I am fully aware of the competitive nature that exist in our class.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Reading be it academic or for pleasure is part of my hobby.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Obtaining a good grade always make me feel happy.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I always want to be considered among the best students in each course.	1	2	3	4	5

4.3 Procedure

Data for the study was collected at the beginning of second semester 2014/2015 academic session. This is because the researcher intends using the most recent students grade average point (GPA) of preceding semester. The questionnaire

were distributed to students at lecture venue with the cooperation of class representatives and lecturers concern. Before administration of the questionnaire, the reseacher briefly inform the respondents on the purpose of the study and why their participation is of great importance. The reseacher equally inform them that what they are to offer in this study will not in any way affect their academic record and assures them of the confidentiality of their responses.

4.4 Statistical Analysis

Coded responses from respondents were analyzed using correlation analysis and a simple linear regression. The analysis was performed using Statisical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Table 1: The table presents the gender Distributions of study population.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	114	52.3%
Female	104	47.7%
Total	218	100%

The above table gives categories of the respondent into male and female. A total of 218 students participated in the study. Out of this figure, 114 were male students representing 52.3% of the study sample size with 104 female respondents representing 47.7% of the study sample size.

Table 2: Table presents the descriptive statistic of studied variables.

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Motivation	5.8899	.68518	218
Students' GPA	3.2517	.53915	218

The above table gives a descriptive statistic of the study variables. From the table, motivation which is the independent variable of the study is having a mean score of 5.8899 with a standard deviation of 0.68518. Students' grade point average (GPA) which is the dependent variable of the study have 3.2517 as the mean score with standard deviation 0.53915. The mean scores are the average points obtainable by each member of the sample.

Test of Hypothesis

Table 3: Table presents the correlation between Motivation and Students' grade point average

Pearson Correlation	GPA	P	N
Motivation	0.667**	0.000	218

The above table shows the correlation between motivation and students' academic performance (GPA). The correlation value of 0.667 indicated that a strong positive correlation exist between motivation and students' academic performance. This is because the correlation value 0.667 is fairly close to 1. The closer the value is to 1, the stronger the relationship. Similarly, the two variables are statistically significant at $p = 0.000$, $p < 0.05$, while the N represent the study sample that is 218. This indicates that the higher the level of students' motivation the higher will be their GPA grade and the lower the level of students' motivation the lower will be their GPA grade.

Therefore, based on the correlation value of 0.667 which indicates a strong positive correlation between the two variables, the null hypothesis there is no any significant relationship between motivation and the academic performance of UniSZA students is hereby rejected. This finding reveals that a strong correlation exist between students' motivation and their academic achievement.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Table 4: Table presents the regression coefficient of students' motivation as a predictor of GPA

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Error of Estimate
1	.667	.445	.442	.40274

Predictors: (Constant), Motivation

From the above table, R-value of 0.667 represent the regression coefficient between the study variables. The R-square value of 0.445 represent the total variability of the dependent variable as explained by the independent variables. The value revealed that motivation in learning explains 45% of the total variability in Students' GPA.

Table 5: Table presents the ANOVA Summary of Regression Analysis for Self-efficacy Predictor of GPA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	28.044	1	28.044	172.894	.000
Residual	35.035	216	.162		
Total	63.079	217			

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) table is used in measuring the fitness of the regression model. From the above table, the F-statistic value is 172.894 while the P value is 0.000, which indicates that the regression model fit the data at hand because the P value (sig.) is less than 0.05.

Table 6: Table presents the regression coefficient of motivation as a predictor of Performance (GPA)

Variable	B	SE	β	t	p
Constant	.161	.237		.683	.496
Motivation	.525	.040	.667	12.149	.000

Dependent variable: students GPA.   * p < .05. ** p < .01.

The coefficients table shows the effect of an independent variable over the dependent variable. Analysis of the coefficient table shows that when the independent variable is constant, we have a t-statistic value of t= -0.683 with a value of P= 0.496, this is statistically insignificant because P > 0.05. On the other hand, motivation has a t-statistic value t= 12.149 with P= 0.000. This indicate that the two variables are statistically significant because P= 0.000, P< 0.05. The unstandardized coefficient measures the extent to which the independent variable can predict the dependent variable. From the table, when the independent variable is constant, students' GPA was predicted to decrease by 0.161%. However, students' motivation (independent variable) is predicted to increase academic GPA (dependent variable) by 0.525%. That shows that for any additional unit of students' motivation in learning, their GPA is predicted to increase by 0.525%. Based on the obtained results, the null hypothesis that says motivation have no any significant effect on the academic performance of UniSZA students is rejected. The findings revealed that students' motivation has a positive effect on students' performance. Similarly, the findings also revealed that motivation serves as a good predictor of students' academic performance.

5 Discussion

The main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between motivation and the academic performance of University Sultan Zainal Abidin students, secondly to assess the effect of motivation on students' academic performance. During the course of the study, two null hypothesis were raised in line with the research objectives to pilot the study. Computed result from the correlation analysis revealed that a strong positive correlation exist between motivation and University Sultan Zainal Abidin students' academic performance. The value of the computed r was found to be r= 0.667 at p= 0.000, p< 0.05 level of significance. The obtained correlation value of 0.667 indicates that a strong relationship exist between motivation and University Sultan Zainal Abidin students' academic achievement. This shows that for any increase in students' motivation, there will be a positive improvement in their academic performance (GPA). Based on the obtained result, the null hypothesis that says there is no any relationship between motivation and the academic performance of University Sultan Zainal Abidin students is rejected. The study revealed that a strong positive relationship exist between motivation and the academic performance of Universtiy Sultan Zainal Abidin students. This findings correspondent with the work of Abu Bakar et al. (2010) [12]. To answer the second research objective, regression analysis was employed. Obtained result shows that students' motivation has a positive effect on students' academic performance and can serve as a good predictor of students' GPA. This was based on the R-square value obtained from the model summary table which indicates that 45% of the total variability in students' GPA is explained by the independent variable (motivation). Furthermore, result from the coefficient table indicated that students' motivation predicts 0.525% of students' GPA. That is to say for any increase in students' motivation, their GPA is predicted to increase by 0.525%. Therefore, based on the obtained coefficient value, it can be concluded that motivation serves as a good predictor of GPA among University Sultan Zainal Abidin students. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis that says motivation has no any significant effect on the academic performance of University Sultan Zainal Abidin students. The findings corresponds with the work of Ikhwan et al. (2009) [16].

6 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusively, the study revealed that University Sultan Zainal Abidin students' academic performance is having a positive relationship with their motivation in learning. This mean that for any increase in students' motivation, their academic performance will increase in the same direction. Additionally, the study indicated that motivation serves as a good predictor of students' performance (GPA). That is motivation can serve as a yardstick to measure the expected level of performance (GPA) of students. Therefore, lecturers/parents or guardians should find a means of motivating their students/children due to its effect in boosting students desire to learn. Similarly, the students should also find a way for rewarding themselves for accomplishing a set target.

However, a further studies need to be conducted to using a different sample that will include all the faculties within the institution. This will enable a more generalization of the finding to entire study population.

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