

An Investigation of Students' Motivation to Learn and Learning Attitude Affect the Learning Effect: A Case Study on Tourism Management Students

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ABSTRACT The chimneyless industry, "tourism", is generally considered as an important development in the 21st century which has remarkable benefit in creating many job opportunities and earning foreign exchange. However, except for the beautiful scenery, the more important thing in tourism is to provide good humanism quality as well as the service quality and attitude of "customers first". To earn the tourists' heart is a top priority in tourism industry. Therefore, the concept of tourism related education is developed in the process of pursuing better service quality. This research took the students of tourism department in public and private colleges in Taiwan as the research objects to explore whether their motivation to learn and attitude has remarkable influence on the learning effect and proposed a substantial improvement direction for human education. The data was collected via questionnaire and analyzed through the statistic software SPSS for factor analysis, reliability analysis and regression analysis. The result show that 1) the motivation to learn has high correlation with the learning attitude, 2) the learning attitude has high correlation with the learning effect and 3) the motivation to learn has high correlation with the learning effect.

INTRODUCTION

According to the analysis report issued by World Travel and Tourism Council, it indicates that the travel and tourism industry scale derived from tourism related activities have taken up 10.6% of worldwide GDP, reaching 4700 billion USD. In the respect of tourist expenditure, the personal and business traveling created 2800 billion and 700 billion USD individually. As for the exports which reached 1500 billion USD and contributed 12% of the worldwide gross exports has become the primary source for earning foreign exchange in many countries. Regarding the tourism development in Taiwan, it is necessary to set a goal not only to raise Taiwan's international visibility, but to sustain local economy, balance the development between city and countryside and increase job opportunities. Therefore, "tourism promotion" had been listed as an important policy by the government.

With the prosperous development of the domestic tourism activity that leads to a huge demand on service worker, many kinds of tourist

education and training are growing which can be seen especially on the establishment of related departments. Starting from the 1st tourism department established in Hsing Wu University, Taiwan, there are currently 205 related departments established in the whole education system including tourism, leisure activity, food and beverage, traveling and hotel etc. In order to have the students smoothly enter their future career after graduation, how to cultivate these students to be professional in tourism and travel industry are becoming critical.

Conceptual Structure Development

Motivation to Learn

Chang (2009), a psychologist, suggested that the motivation to learn is a mental process to bring up and maintain the student's learning activity and leads such activity toward the goal set by the teacher. Li (2010) proposed that the motivation to learn is a psychological factor that elicits, controls, and sustains the student's behaviors towards a desired goal, which acts as an internal force directly driving the student for learning as well as activating and wakening the learning behavior.

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The motivation to learn is an intermediate variable between stimulation and reaction, which is a point of view the learner has toward things, and the learner would generate different knowledge requests according to different points of views. Lin (2009) indicated that the student hope to get reward for their behavior, which implicates that the learning has its purpose, but the external motivation might have chance to become internal motivation. The students who have internal motivation to learn need no external temptation but they can decide to do what they want and obtain a lot of fun and sense of accomplishment from doing it; while the ones with external motivation are motivated to learn through the rewards or punishments given by others or through the identification of the value of certain behavior. In addition, Leng et.al. (2010) pointed out "the level of intrinsic motivation experienced by students indicated the interest and enjoyment while engaging in a specific task. This may lead to better persistency among students and facilitates learning process in long term." Hence, the temptation and external support are still necessary (Lin 2009).

The external motivation could be introduced in the beginning of learning and the bottleneck period. Once the student becomes independent it is no longer necessary for external reward and he/she would turn to the spontaneous learning. The internal and external motivations complement each other. In the other respect, the learning needs thrust and external motivation, which is often seen in achieving parents' expectation, learning with additional purpose and earning some enhanced rewards. Though it does not come from the student's spontaneity, if during the learning progress a student could obtain some accomplishments or could transform into self-growth requirement, it is still a good motivation internalization process.

In recent years, Lepper (2005) proposed a viewpoint suggesting the inadaptability of the contrast result between the motivation of internal interest and the external reward. The students' learning behavior might come from satisfying their curiosity or interests or from meeting the parents' expectation. For example, a student learns music after school might for satisfying his/her interest, but it is also a combination result of meeting the parents' expectation and obtaining better performance in music at the same time, therefore, both of them are not totally incompat-

ible. Lepper's (2005) research also verified that students tend to solve problem independently regarding some tasks (the behavior is driven by internal motivation), but still some learning problems shall be solved via teacher's help (the behavior is driven by external stimulation). As for learning, the student's internal interest might cooperate with the teacher or parents' external reward to form the motivation to learn (Yu 2010). This research based on the above literature and chose internal motivation and external motivation as the evaluation respects for the study of motivation to learn.

Learning Attitude

Li (2010) defined attitude as "the psychological tendency of which a person evaluate some respects of the environment around him in his/her way of like or dislike". In the respect of evaluation, it includes symbols, objects, concept and people. Lin (2009) mentioned attitude as "the internal reaction tendency of which an individual interact with the environment toward people, things or situations"

Chang (2010) raised an example to explain such theory: P is a student in the third year of a junior high school, O is his/her parents and X is the regulation of entrance examination (The Basic Competence Test for Junior High School Students). The student hopes to abolish the exam and substitute it by direct entry regulation but the parents object, so the student is at a cognition unbalance status. In order to solve the anxiety of unbalance, the student would alter the cognition structure in a few possible ways such as reducing the respect to the parents due to their inconsiderate to the needs and feelings of schooling or starting to object abolishing the regulation of the entrance examination for complying the parents' attitude.

Hsu (2010) considered that the learning attitude denotes the attitude toward learning everything, which is molded by the environment but not inherited congenitally and is a phenomenon but not the essence. Hence, it is alterable. It can cultivate the student for establishing the active learning attitude through proper counseling measurement in schooling. From the learning perspective, the attitude a student has toward people, things and events which are involved in the process of learning activity such as teachers, teaching materials, facility and environment

would profoundly influence his/her learning behavior and performance. In addition, the learning behavior would also affect the student's learning result.

Radocy and Boyle (2003), Li (2009), Chang (2009), Hsu (2010) all considered that the learning attitude contains the following respects:

1. *Cognitive Component*: The cognitive component is the faith or knowledge a person holds toward things. Therefore, a sense of fact statement in evaluation often comes with the attitude cognition, which suggests the agreement or refusal a person feel toward the attitudinal subjects. For example, students know that teachers have abundant professional knowledge and are able to present the teaching materials in a well-organized way.
2. *Affective Component*: The affective component is also called the emotive component, which denotes a person's emotional feeling, including the positive and negative respect such as honor and depreciation, like and dislike, sympathy and repulsion etc. For example, the student evaluates the teacher as a friendly person and would like to be close with the teacher.
3. *Behavioral Tendency Component*: The behavior means the reaction tendency a person has toward the attitudinal subjects, that is, the external behavior a person shows when he/she need to react to the attitudinal subjects including any possible reactions such as tendency, evasion or apathetic about things. For example, the student would accept the activities arranged by the teacher in a respectful way and actively consults the teacher for professional questions.

Learning Effect

Tsai (2009) explored the learning effect that high school teachers have after continuing to attend the professional educational activities, which includes four respects of 1) professional subject ability, 2) professional education ability, 3) general ability and 4) professional attitude. Huang (2011) explored the overall performance the student has on learning accomplishment and attitude after teaching activities. Cheng (2010) suggested that evaluating the student's learning accomplishment is also a major item for teach-

ing quality evaluation. The learning effect is subjected to the factors such as course design, teaching method and learning behavior etc. The purpose of the students' learning is to monitor self-learning, to review what they have learned and to learn how to learn, therefore, the learning effect is the most direct demonstration of learning accomplishment. Kung (2010) explored the self-confirmation of student regarding the learning ability during the teacher's teaching process. The learning effect is an index to evaluate the teacher's accomplishment and the teaching quality as well as the learner's learning accomplishment. The learning effect is subjected to teaching strategy, course design and course content. Hung (2010) considered that the learning effect shall include two respects:

1. Learning effectiveness – including test achievement, completion percentage and time and semester score etc.
2. Learning gain – including learning satisfaction, achievement and preference etc.

Therefore, this research takes the learning effectiveness and learning gain as the respects for teaching accomplishment evaluation.

The Relative Researches of Motivation to Learn, Attitude and Effect

Chang (2009) once promoted that raising the student's motivation to learn is a huge thrust for improving the learning effect. Welch (2010) examined high school students' attitudes toward science after participating in a robotics competition. Welch (2010) stated, "results indicate that students who participated in the robotic competition had a more positive attitude toward science..." and "the results imply that the FIRST Robotics Competition program that engage students in authentic scientific problems can significantly improve students' attitudes and views of science." When a student feels interested in learning, he/she would take an active and promising attitude to learn, understand and participate in learning activities. In a review of research on motivation and learning, Bulunuz (2012) concluded that "working on fun, interesting, and playful materials engage deeper cognitive processing, arouse a wider, more emotional, and more personal associative network, and motivation in learning and teaching science." For the design of teaching, it's necessary to take the student's motivation to learn into consideration and intro-

duce any factor into the teaching process to help with the student's motivation to learn by which the student's motivation to learn and the music learning effect could be improved (Cheng 2010). Therefore we could establish the following hypotheses:

- H1: The motivation to learn and the learning attitude are highly correlated.
- H2: The learning attitude and the motivation to learn are highly correlated.
- H3: The motivation to learn and the learning effect are highly correlated.

The Conceptual Structure of This Research

In conclusion of the above literature review and hypotheses, we defined the conceptual structure of this research as shown in Figure 1 to explore the relationship between the motivation to learn and the learning effect.

THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH METHOD DESIGN

Operational Definition and Measurement of Variables

(1) Motivation to Learn

The motivation to learn is divided into two levels, the internal motivation and the external motivation. All questions were evaluated by 7-

point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The overall reliability coefficient of internal motivation is 0.82 while the external motivation is 0.86.

(2) Learning Attitude

The learning attitude is divided into three levels, the cognitive ingredient, the affective component and the behavior tendency ingredient. All questions were evaluated by 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree and to 7 = strongly agree. The overall reliability coefficient of cognitive component is 0.80, the affective component is 0.87 and the behavioral tendency component is 0.83.

(3) Learning Effect

The learning effect is divided into two levels, the learning effectiveness and the learning gain. All questions were evaluated by 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The overall reliability coefficient of learning effectiveness is 0.88 while the learning gain is 0.81.

Research Subject

The subjects of this research were the students of tourism department in public and in private colleges. The distribution and collection of

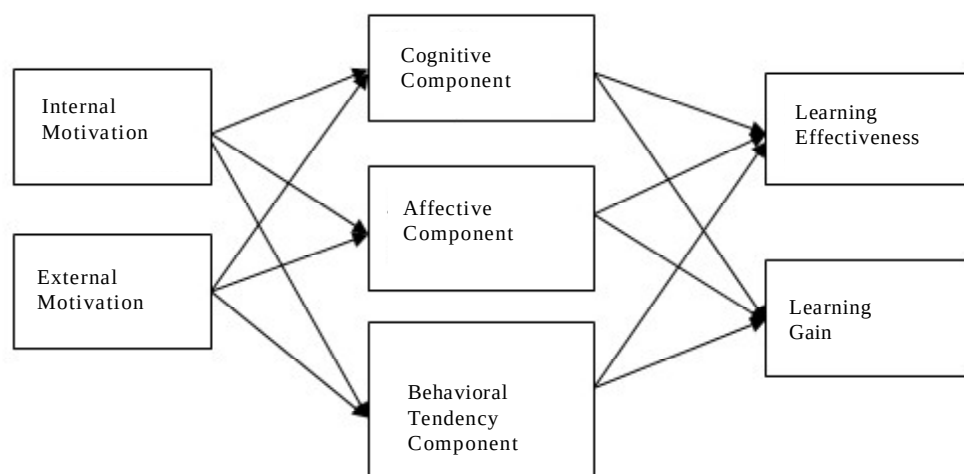


Fig. 1. The conceptual structure of this research

the questionnaire were proceeded on site with 400 samples distributed and 248 samples collected at a recycle ratio of 62%. The public and private college includes the follows: Fu Jen Catholic University, Ming Chuan University, Tunghai University, National Chi Nan University, Providence University, Chinese Culture University, Shih Hsin University, I Shou University, National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism, and Shih Chien University.

Analysis Method

The researchers introduced the regression analysis to understand the relationship between the motivation to learn, learning attitude and the learning effect.

RESULTS

The Regression Analysis on the Motivation to Learn and the Learning Attitude

This research adopted the multiple regression analysis to verify the hypotheses and the theoretical structure. The first regression step is to verify the impact of the motivation to learn on the cognitive component. The analysis result shown that only the internal motivation has positive impact on the cognitive component (Beta=0.241, $p=0.011$). The second regression step is to verify the impact of the motivation to learn on the affective component. The analysis result shown that only the internal motivation and external motivation have positive impact on the affective component (Beta=0.227, $p=0.025$; Beta=0.216, $p=0.029$). The third regression step is to verify the impact of the motivation to learn

on the behavioral tendency component. The analysis result shown that only the internal motivation and external motivation has positive impact on the behavioral tendency component (Beta=0.209, $p=0.042$; Beta=0.281, $p=0.000$) (Table 1). Hence, the hypothesis 1 of high correlation between the motivation to learn and the learning attitude are partially verified.

The Regression Analysis on the Learning Attitude and the Learning Effect

This research adopted the multiple regression analysis to verify the hypotheses and the theoretical structure. The first regression step is to verify the impact of learning attitude on the learning effectiveness. The result shown that the cognitive component, affective component and behavioral tendency component have positive impact on the learning effectiveness (Beta=0.264, $p=0.000$; Beta=0.223, $p=0.027$; Beta=0.251, $p=0.005$). The second step is to verify the impact of learning attitude on the learning gain. The result shown that the cognitive component, affective component and behavioral tendency component have positive impact on the learning gain (Beta=0.259, $p=0.002$; Beta=0.239, $p=0.011$; Beta=0.219, $p=0.028$) (Table 2). Hence, the hypothesis 2 of high correlation between the behavioral tendency component and the learning effect are verified.

The Regression Analysis on the Motivation to Learn and the Learning Effect

This research adopted the multiple regression analysis to verify the hypotheses and the theoretical structure. The first regression step is

Table 1: The regression analysis of the motivation to learn and the learning attitude

Dependent → variable	Learning attitude								
Independent variable ↓	Cognitive component			Affective component			Behavioral Tendency component		
	B	Beta	P	B	Beta	P	B	Beta	P
Internal motivation	1.927*	0.241	0.011	1.736*	0.227	0.025	1.597*	0.209	0.042
External motivation	1.322	0.187	0.127	1.614*	0.216	0.029	2.326**	0.281	0.000
F value	8.362	13.722	22.253						
R ²	0.168	0.234	0.281						
Modified R ²	0.135	0.212	0.267						
*p<0.05 **p<0.01									

Source: Arranged by this research

Table 2: The regression analysis on the behavioral tendency component and the learning effect

Dependent → variable Independent variable ↓	Learning effect					
	Learning effectiveness			Learning gain		
	B	Beta	P	B	Beta	P
Cognitive component	2.135**	0.264	0.000	2.091**	0.259	0.002
Affective component	1.733*	0.223	0.027	1.951*	0.239	0.011
Behavioral tendency component	2.032**	0.251	0.005	1.623*	0.219	0.028
F value	15.831	23.743				
R ²	0.224	0.294				
Modified R ²	0.203	0.271				
p<0.05 **p<0.01						

Source: Arranged by this research

Table 3: The regression analysis on the motivation to learn and the learning effect

Dependent → variable Independent variable ↓	Learning effect					
	Learning effectiveness			Learning gain		
	B	Beta	P	B	Beta	P
Internal motivation	2.046**	0.257	0.003	2.133*	0.268	0.000
External motivation	2.286**	0.279	0.000	1.646*	0.221	0.025
F value	21.264	31.581				
R ²	0.275	0.315				
Modified R ²	0.252	0.287				
*p<0.05 **p<0.01						

Source: Arranged by this research

to verify the impact of the motivation to learn on the learning effectiveness. The result shown that the internal motivation and external motivation have positive impact on the learning effectiveness (Beta=0.257, p=0.003; Beta=0.279, p=0.000). The second step is to verify the impact of the motivation to learn on the learning gain. The result shown that the internal motivation and external motivation have positive impact on the learning gain (Beta=0.268, p=0.000; Beta=0.221, p=0.025) (Table 3). Hence, the hypothesis 3 of high correlation between the motivation to learn and the learning effect are verified.

CONCLUSION

From the result of this research regarding the students of tourism department, the motivation to learn and the learning attitude are highly correlated; the learning attitude and the learning effect are highly correlated and the motivation to learn and the learning effect are highly correlated. Hence, in this chapter we summarized important results and findings for conclusion and proposed the following suggestions regarding the feasibility of the research result.

1. Enhance the Interaction in Class: It is noticeable from the result that the motivation to learn and the learning attitude of the students of tourism department are very important. Therefore, for the course design in tourism department, the student's motivation to learn and learning attitude could be enhanced by integrating software and hardware into an interactive mode of teaching. The multi-interaction of software-hardware integration could lead the students to do many different kinds of interaction. An effective interaction could immediately let the teacher know the learning status of the student as well as letting the student to participate in the situation of teaching quickly. Hence, it is suggested to introduce interactive actions such as teaming, discussion and competitive learning into the teaching of tourism department and execute effectively to raise the student's motivation to learn and the learning attitude in order to improve the learning efficiency.

2. The Combination of Course and Current Event: It is necessary to understand the problems that the students of tourism department have before helping them. Therefore, we can

understand what problems they encounter through their learning records and give immediate assistance. In addition, the collected students' learning data shall be post processed and analyzed to identify the content which they have difficulty understanding as the basis for teaching adjustment and review enhancement. Through such mode of learning the students of tourism department appear much better in the motivation to learn and learning attitude than the teaching of oral lecture, which we believe would be helpful for the improvement of learning effect regarding the student of tourism department.

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