Examining a Model of Student Involvement with Learning and Intrinsic Motivation to Learn
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Conceptual Framework

A general conceptual framework, adapted from models suggested in both marketing and education,\(^1,2\) was assembled to drive the development of the model used in this study.

Objectives

Among the multiple research objectives for this project were:
- To examine the relationship between personal involvement and intrinsic motivation in a pharmacy education context.
- To examine the relationships between described educational processes and the constructs of personal involvement with learning and intrinsic motivation to learn.

Involvement in This Context

- The RRPII used to measure involvement performed reliably in this educational context: Cronbach’s alpha = 0.93 in development sample.
- Cronbach’s alpha = 0.90 in validation sample.
- PY2 students were the group most involved with learning. Involvement and motivation to learn throughout the curriculum.

Assessing the Measurement Model

- The partially mediated model had significant improvement over the fully-mediated model in the development sample, as indicated by a chi-square difference test.
- The strength of relationships among variables can be seen in the partially mediated model below.

Assessing the Structural Model

- The relationships among variables in the structural model were examined using structural equation modeling (AMOS 8.0).
- Three alternate models were tested in both samples, to find which best explained the data.

Results

- The data were gathered from two schools of pharmacy using self-administered surveys distributed to students in the didactic portion of their curriculum (PY1-3). Responses were anonymous.
- A total of 373 usable responses were obtained. \((n=198\) for development sample, \(n=175\) for validation sample).

References


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Limitations

- The sample was limited in scope (two schools only), but considered sufficient for this exploratory investigation and adequate for the proposed analyses. Expanding the sample to additional schools may have yielded additional data to inform the model development and improved understanding of the influence of educational process variables on attitudes toward learning in pharmacy.
- Although every effort was made to avoid specification error in the model conceptualization, it is possible that another model would fit the data equally well or better. Some process variables originally proposed were left behind during model purification; it may be that those variables, if measured more appropriately, may have improved the model.
- Item generation was difficult. It is possible that important aspects of the process variables were inappropriately omitted from measurement, thereby decreasing the content validity of the measure.

Disclosure

- Further investigation of the construct of involvement may show promise in pharmacy education. The RRPII performed well in this context, and may be useful for future studies involving student attitudes toward learning.
- It was interesting that at both schools, the middle didactic year (PY2) was the one where students experienced the highest involvement with their learning. Reasons why this is the case for the middle year, rather than the first or last didactic year, should be explored, as that information could be helpful to schools seeking to improve student involvement and motivation to learn throughout the curriculum.
- Although instructor attributes were found to have no significant effect on involvement and intrinsic motivation in this study, that result is counter-intuitive. Indeed the educational literature suggests that the teacher can make a difference in learner motivation. Perhaps measuring instructor attributes differently may reveal a stronger relationship.
- In addition to the possible measurement improvement discussed, model modifications also should be explored to identify additional process variables that may be influenced by educators to increase student involvement and intrinsic motivation to learn.