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MOTIVATIONS OF TRAINING FOR TEACHING CAREER

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Abstract

The purpose of the present paper was to examine the types of motivations which underlie the training for the teaching career in Romanian graduates. The sample consisted of 103 participants, 81 females and 22 males, with ages between 22 and 50 years, who have enrolled in a postuniversity teacher training program. Were applied two self-reported instruments. Results have shown that correlations among the forms of motivation sustain the presence of the self-determination continuum model (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The hierarchy of motives indicated that extrinsic motivation through identified regulation, intrinsic motivation to know and extrinsic motivation through external regulation were the primary orientations which determine participants to engage in the teacher training program while amotivation orientation was the least. No significant differences in all types of motivation depending on gender and environment, but significant differences depending on years of teaching experience were found. Also, differences in the levels of both intrinsic motivation to know and to experience stimulation depending on their self-regulation ability. The limitations of the study and the findings were discussed taking into consideration possible directions for the future research.

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1. Introduction

One of the most widely used theory for studying healthy psychological development in different social contexts is Self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2008). SDT focuses on the peculiarity of human behavior to be self-motivated and self-determined and provides a different approach on motivation conceptualized as a multidimensional and flexible construct. SDT makes distinction between the various forms of motivation that are placed on a continuum from low

to high self-determination, each of them with various degrees of autonomy and different effects: amotivation, extrinsic and intrinsic motivations.

Intrinsic motivation defines the situations when individual engage by own choice in activities because feels pleasure and satisfaction during their accomplishment. Individual is engage in activity for itself, because is interesting in itself, and the satisfaction derives from simply participation in activity which become a goal itself. Intrinsic motivation represents the autonomous regulation pole of the continuum (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Vallerand et al. (1989) identified three specific subtypes of intrinsic motivations: to know, to accomplish things and to experience stimulations. Intrinsic motivation orientated towards knowledge appears in the situations when individuals perform an activity for the inherent satisfaction, pleasure or interest derived from learning, knowing and understanding new ideas, exploring various things. Intrinsic motivation towards accomplishment describes the situations when internal satisfaction results from the attempt to create or achieve things, to acquire or to gain something by work, or when individuals make efforts to overcome themselves. Finally, intrinsic motivation towards experience stimulation is specific for the situations when individuals involve in an activity for the pleasure derived from stimulating feelings experienced such as cognitive curiosity, aesthetic pleasure, sensorial excitement.

Conversely, extrinsic motivation involves the existence of instrumental reasons and refers to situations when individual is engaged in activities in order to attain external goals. According to Deci & Ryan (2000, 2002), extrinsic motivation has four forms, each of them with different levels of relative autonomy based on the degree they have internalized: external, introjected, identified, and integrated. External regulation describes the situations when an activity is performed because of external demands, possible constrains or rewards. Externally regulated behavior is the least autonomous behavior. Introjected regulation describes the situations when the activity is performed as result of internalizing of external contingencies. In this case, individuals tend to internalize the reasons of their actions and feel motivated to perform in order to avoid fear, anxiety, shame, disgrace, maintain self-worth or obtain approval from others. Although, the reasons of the actions are internal to the person, the introjected behavior is considered not well and truly self-determined because the reasons of the action are perceived as external, and not coming from one's self. Identified regulation occurs when behavior becomes important for individual because is valued and perceived as chosen and decided by oneself. Because internalization of extrinsic motives is higher, this form of motivation is more autonomous. Integrated regulation is the most autonomous type of extrinsic motivation that appears in only in adulthood, when identified regulations are totally internalized and become personal values, needs or beliefs but convergent with those expected by the social context. Albeit this subtype is relative similar to intrinsic motivation, is considered as extrinsic form because the reasons of the behavior are still external to the self, rather than the inherent satisfaction.

In addition to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Deci & Ryan (1985, 2000) identified amotivation as a third type of motivation characterized by absence of regulations. Amotivated individuals are neither intrinsically nor extrinsically motivated. They usually perceive their actions as determined by external forces and without results and experience feelings of incompetence, indecision, absence of purpose, lack of control and power over events. Consequently, they often stop to make efforts in their activities. The types of motivations are posited on the continuum in terms of their relative autonomy and self-

determination which is associated with healthy psychological functioning (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2000b, 2008).

Motivational changes occur naturally through the process of internalization. In various social contexts, individuals tend to assimilate social behavioral regulations that initially depended on external rewards, and transform them into personal values. Unless SDT posits that motivational changes take place from one type of motivation to the next on the continuum because of the placement of the different types of motivation on the self-determined continuum, actual data are insufficient to confirm this issue (Vallerand, Pelletier, & Koestner, 2008).

2. Purposes of the Study

In the light of Self-determination theory, the present study aims to examine all types of motivations discussed above in a Romanian sample of graduates who choose to train for the teaching career in a post-university program. The following research questions were addressed:

- Why do graduates choose to engage in a training program for teaching career?;
- Are significant differences between the types of motivation depending on gender, work environment, and teaching experience?;
- Are participants with different levels of self-regulation ability motivated more or less?

The main objectives of the study were as follows:

- To identify the various types of motivation which determine graduated participants to engage in post-university program of training for teaching career and the relationships among them;
- To investigate differences in the forms of motivation depending on gender, work environment, and teaching experience;
- To examine the relationship between motivational forms and on the level of self-regulation.

Arising from these objectives, the study was conducted to test the following hypotheses:

H1. We anticipate a configuration of the relationships among motivational forms in concordance with the self-determination continuum model.

H2. We suppose that are differences in the types of motivation depending on gender, work environment, and teaching experience.

H3. We presume significant differences of the intensity of motivational forms depending on the level of self-regulation ability.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The sample of the present study consisted of 103 graduates, possessing a licence degree, 81 females and 22 males, with ages ranged from 22 to 50 (mean age=33.34, SD=8.61). All the participants have finished the first level of the post-university psycho-pedagogical and didactic program in order to become teachers and have enrolled on the second level of the teacher training program. A total of 78 were temporarily or permanently employed in the educational system, 15 were employed in other domains than education, and 10 were unemployed. Of the 78 participants that already were employed in the educational system, 3 were primary school teachers, 45 secondary school teachers, and 30 high school teachers. Their

teaching experience ranged from 0 to 26 years (mean age=3.38, SD =5.70). 56 of them were newly qualified teachers and beginners with less than 3 years of experience and 10 of them with more than 10 years teaching experience. 77 participants were from urban and 26 from rural environment.

3.2. Instruments

The Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) is one of the most used instruments which assess all constructs discussed above. The original French-Canadian version of was developed by Vallerand et al. (1989) and then validated in English (Vallerand et al., 1992). The scale consists of 28 items divided into seven distinct subscales with 4 items for each subscale: three subscales of extrinsic motivation (identified, introjected, and external regulation), three subscales of intrinsic motivation (motivation to know, toward accomplishment, and to experience stimulation), and one subscale of amotivation. In this study, all 28 items were first translated from English into Romanian language. 16 items of them were administered in their unmodified content based on a translation and back-translation procedure. Minor changes of items wording were made such as: instead of studies/school/college education/years of education was used “program“ word for seven items, “license degree“ instead of high-school degree in one item content, and for other four items was used the syntagm “professional training“ instead of studies/school/high school degree. The participants were asked to respond using a 7-point scale, ranging from 1=“does not correspond at all” to 7=“corresponds exactly“, and indicated to what extent each of the items corresponds to one of the reasons why they chosen and enrolled on the post-university teacher training program – first and second level. Examples of items for each subscales are: “Because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things” (Intrinsic motivation to know subscale), “For the pleasure that I experience while I am surpassing myself in one of my personal accomplishments” (Intrinsic motivation toward accomplishment subscale), “For the high feeling that I experience while reading about various interesting subjects” (Intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation subscale), “Because I think that this program will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen” (Extrinsic motivation into identified subscale), “To prove to myself that I am capable of completing my professional training” (Extrinsic motivation into introjected subscale), “In order to obtain a more prestigious job later on“ (Extrinsic motivation into external regulation subscale), “I don’t know; I can’t understand what I am doing in this program“ (Amotivation subscale). The subscale scores were calculated as the mean scores of the four component items. High scores on subscales indicate high levels of particular motivation.

Participants also requested to complete the Self-Regulation Scale (SRS) (Schwarzer, Diehl & Schmitz, 1999) which assesses the individuals’ self-regulation capacity in goal-pursuit situations when surpass difficulties in maintaining and pursuing their actions. The scale contains ten items which reflected the ability of focus attention and emotion-regulation. High scores indicated high self-regulation ability. Responses are rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “not at all true” to 4 = “exactly true for me”. The internal consistency of the scale was .82. Both scales were administered on the half of the second semester of academic year.

4. Results

First, we examined the factor structure and the reliability of the subscales in attempt to provide a relative empirical support for the scale. Exploratory factor analysis using principal components method with Oblimin rotation ($\delta = .30$) was conducted. All items had communalities higher than .50 and factor loadings over .40. The seven factors that emerged explained 73.69% of total variance. Three of seven factors had similar combinations of items loadings consistent with the original factors of the AMS. Cronbach's alpha was performed to examine the internal consistencies of AMS and its seven subscales. Results showed very high reliability of the total scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .912$) and good reliabilities of all its seven dimensions: .819 for Intrinsic motivation to know subscale, .745 for Intrinsic motivation toward accomplishment subscale, .772 for Intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation subscale, .803 for Extrinsic motivation to identified subscale, .818 for Extrinsic motivation to introjected subscale, .805 for Extrinsic motivation-external regulation subscale, and .836 for Amotivation subscale. All corrected item-total correlations were above .30.

Means and standard deviations were calculated for each subscale. Also, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to examine the specific patterns of associations between the AMS subscales based on SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2008). r^2 coefficient of determination as indicator of effect size was calculated. Results showed high significant positive correlations between the three types of intrinsic motivation (from .66 to .72, $p < .01$). On the other hand, the three types of extrinsic motivation have medium and relative high significant and positive intercorrelations (from .41 to .63, $p < .01$). Also, all three types of internal motivation have high significant positive correlations with external motivations to identified and introjected regulation, and lower correlations with external motivation to external regulation. Amotivation showed low significant negative intercorrelations with two subtypes of internal motivation (to know and toward accomplishment), as well as with two of three subtypes of external motivation (identified regulation and introjection) (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and correlations between the subscales of AMS

	m	SD	IM_know	IM_accom	IM_stim	EM_ident	EM_introj	EM_regul
IM_know	5.57	1.15	-					
IM_accom	5.29	1.23	.72**	-				
IM_stim	4.51	1.44	.66**	.70**	-			
EM_ident	6.01	1.09	.69**	.61**	.49**	-		
EM_introj	5.27	1.50	.56**	.70**	.57**	.63**	-	
EM_regul	5.43	1.48	.39**	.26**	.22*	.52**	.41**	-
Amotiv	1.22	.70	-.22*	-.27**	.03	-.26**	-.19*	-.09

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 1 indicates that the primary orientation of the participants that underlie their decision to enroll and participate in the teacher training program was extrinsic motivation to identified regulation, followed by intrinsic motivation to know and extrinsic motivation to regulation, while amotivation orientation was the least.

To assess gender differences in the types of motivation, independent-mean t-tests and effect sizes (r^2 coefficient's value) were calculated. Results revealed no significant differences in all types of motivation between females and males. Furthermore, were no significant differences in all subscales

depending on work environment, as well as between participants that are employed and unemployed in education system. Nevertheless, participants with less than three years of experience have significantly higher scores in their intrinsic motivations to know ($t=2.96$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .17$) and towards accomplishment ($t=3.06$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .165$), as well as in their levels of extrinsic motivation to identified regulation ($t=3.58$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .11$) and to introjected regulation ($t=3.24$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .09$) than teachers with more than three years of teaching experience. The effect sizes are high in both first cases and medium to high in the last cases.

Self-regulation ability (SR), as external criteria, showed positive significant correlations with all types of intrinsic motivation (intrinsic motivation to know- SRS: $r = .28$, $p < .01$; intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation- SR: $r = .26$, $p < .01$; intrinsic motivation towards accomplishment- SR: $r = .21$, $p < .05$), and with extrinsic motivation to identified regulation ($r = .18$, $p < .05$). Amotivation had nonsignificant correlation with self-regulation. Based on the mean of participants' self-regulation scores, the sample was divided in two subgroups: with low and high self-regulation capacity, respectively. To assess differences in motivations depending on the level of self-regulation, independent t-test was applied. Results revealed significant differences in the levels of intrinsic motivation to know ($N_1=58$, $N_2=45$, $m_1-m_2 = -.59$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .065$), and intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation ($m_1-m_2 = -.78$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .07$). Therefore, participants with high level of self-regulation have higher internal motivations to know and towards accomplishment than those with low self-regulation ability. r^2 coefficients' values indicated medium effect sizes in both cases. No differences were found in extrinsic forms of motivation depending on the self-regulation ability.

5. Discussion

This study seeks to identify the motives that conduce the training for teaching career in a Romanian sample of graduates. According to Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2008), were examine the three forms of motivations - intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation - with their subtypes and the relationships among them. The used instrument was the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand et al., 1989). The AMS was first translated and then were made minor changes of few items' wording. The internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) of the total scale and its seven subscales were estimated. The findings indicated that the total scale and the subscales have good reliabilities over 0.80 except Intrinsic motivation toward accomplishment, and Intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation subscales with acceptable reliabilities of 0.74 and 0.77.

Concerning the hierarchy of motivations in our educational context, the main form that led graduates to enroll and participate in a postuniversity teacher training program was extrinsic motivation through identified regulation. Motivation through identified regulation is an internalized form of extrinsic motivation because involves consciously valuing a goal (Vansteenkiste et al., 2005). The meaning of this type of motivation in the context of option for the teacher training program is the fact that graduated participants decided to involve in the post-university program after an estimation of its importance and necessity for the teaching career. The reasons of their actions are internalized and their behavior is relative self-determined. In other words, graduates have chosen to engage in the teacher training program because they considered that the psycho-pedagogical and didactic program is important for the progress in their future career and recognized the benefits of this activity for themselves.

The second important motivation that determines participants to engage in the teacher training program was intrinsic motivation to know which means that they made efforts to achieve training activities for the pleasure and the satisfaction they experience while learning about teaching profession, trying to understand psycho-pedagogical and didactic knowledge.

The placement of intrinsic motivation to know in the hierarchy of motivational forms on the second position is relatively similar with the findings reported by other research which revealed that the persons who choose to enter the teaching career are rather motivated by intrinsic motivations than by extrinsic motivations (Rosenholtz & Smylie, 1984).

The third important motivation that leads participants to involve in our teacher training program was extrinsic motivation through external regulation. An explanation for the presence of this type of motivation in the hierarchy of the first three motives which describing our sample is that participants engaged in the teacher training program because they pursue to satisfy some external demands such as teachers requirements, possible influences of their families or from others or to obtain possible rewards associated with the teaching profession they chosen (security job, job status, long vacations, time for family). Another explanations for this motivation it could be the fact that graduates engaged in a postuniversity teaching program because of external constrains of job market which impede, delay or discourage them to enter in other professional domains that they like. Also, is important to underlie that amotivation was the least orientation in the present sample of graduates.

As concerns the relationships among the AMS subscales, were anticipated significant positive correlations both among the three types of intrinsic motivation and among the three types of extrinsic motivation. High correlations among the three subscales of intrinsic motivation indicated that these subscales assess a related construct (intrinsic motivation). Situation is the same for the three subscales of extrinsic motivation. Correlations among themselves support the assumption that the three subscales assess a similar but not single construct. Also, all three forms of internal motivation have high significant positive correlations with external motivations through identified and through introjected regulation, and lower correlations with motivation to external regulation. Similar correlations were reported by Vallerand et al. (1989, 1993). Moreover, correlations between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are higher than correlations between intrinsic motivation and amotivation. The lasts two have negative correlations because internal motivation and amotivation are opposite ends of the continuum. Also, correlation between the intrinsic motivation to know and extrinsic motivation through identification ($r = .69$) as adjacent subscales is higher than subscales farther apart (e.g. intrinsic motivation to know- extrinsic motivation through identification, $r = .56$; intrinsic motivation to know- extrinsic motivation through regulation, $r = .39$). Correlations among the AMS subscales sustain the presence of the self-determination continuum model postulated by Deci & Ryan (1985). Nevertheless, some results are out of line with aforementioned model. The first discrepancy refers to the fact that introjected regulation showed a stronger correlation with intrinsic motivation towards accomplishment ($r = .70$) than with identified regulation ($r = .63$), which is in between these two subscales. The second discrepancy is that amotivation has a stronger negative correlation with identified regulation ($r = -.26$) than with intrinsic motivation to know ($r = -.22$), which is farther apart on the self-determination continuum. Similar results were reported by previous research (Orsini et al., 2015). In general, our first hypotheses was supported.

On the second purpose of the study, results have shown no significant differences in all types of motivation depending on gender, work environment, and employed in educational system but significant differences depending on years of teaching experience. So, teachers with more than three years of teaching experience have significantly lower levels of their intrinsic motivations to know, intrinsic motivations towards accomplishment, extrinsic motivation to identified regulation, and extrinsic motivation to introjected regulation than participants with less than three years of experience in educational system. Our second hypotheses was partially supported. Results could be interpreting as a decrease in the levels of these motivations during the first three years of teaching profession. This fact could be extremely worrying as concerns decreasing of intrinsic motivation for teaching profession in young graduates and beginner teachers because could lead to negative effects such as low involvement and demotivation, low job performance and job satisfaction, and finally, to leaving the teaching profession.

Concerning the relationship between motivation and self-regulation, as hypothesized, the findings point out positive significant correlations of self-regulation ability both with all three types of intrinsic motivation, and with extrinsic motivation to identified regulation. Intrinsically motivated behaviors and extrinsically motivated through identification behaviors are associated with higher levels of self-regulation ability. No correlation was found between amotivation and self-regulation that is in according with SDT that posits amotivation as nonregulated extreme of the continuum. Moreover, participants with high self-regulation have higher levels of internal motivation to know and of motivation towards accomplishment than those with low self-regulation ability.

6. Conclusions

This study has certain some limitations. First of them refers to the fact that our sample didn't cover the whole reality of the Romanian graduates who train for teaching profession through post-university programs in attempting to employee in education system. Therefore, our findings cannot be generalized. The second limitation refers to the instrument we used. The examination of the factor structure by EFA and the reliabilities of the subscales do not provide a sufficient empirical support for the scale. By token, future research will attempt to validate the adapted version of AMS in our educational context and to verify its adequate psychometric properties in large samples of Romanian graduates enrolled in training programs for teaching career.

Beyond identifying the dominant forms of motivation that determine graduates to enroll and participate in post-university programs in general, and in post-university teacher training programs, in particular, is more important to point out both the more and the less attractive factors for the teaching career and to analyze the ways in which could be increased the motivations in persons who choose to enter in teaching profession, so that the teaching activity carried out on highest level. The findings of the present study could give some possible directions for future research concerning the investigations of various types of motivation of training for the teaching career.

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