



# Analysis of How to Improve Students' Learning Efficiency by Using Students' Sense of Gain and Happiness

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**Abstract.** It is universally acknowledged that students' learning efficiency and their learning motivation have been inextricably intertwined. Without appropriate learning motivation, it is difficult to maintain students' long-term learning efficiency. Learning motivation, which refers to the incentive tendency to stimulate and maintain learning behaviour, is imperative to achieve a certain academic goal. And learning motivation is closely related to students' learning interest, learning needs, external encouragement, learning consequences, and other factors. Among the aforementioned factors, the learning interest can generate a sense of happiness and gain, which further exerts a positive effect on improving students' learning efficiency. This article will explore ways to use students' sense of acquisition and happiness to influence or even change students' learning motivation to improve their learning efficiency.

**Keywords:** Sense of Happiness · Sense of Gain · Learning Motivation · Learning Efficiency · Learning Interest

## 1 Introduction

As educators, how to improve students' learning efficiency so that students can achieve ideal learning outcomes has always been a direct problem we have to face. From various related studies, we found that learning efficiency is closely related to learning motivation and many other factors. And there is a direct relationship between learning motivation and learning interest, so how to affect students' learning interest has become a very important topic we want to talk about. This article will mainly discuss why we should use this method to improve their learning efficiency from how to use students' sense of acquisition and well-being to influence or even change students' learning motivation.

## 2 Learning Motivation and Learning Efficiency Affect Learning Consequences

The premise of exploring the function of happiness and gain in improving students' learning efficiency is to understand the relationship between learning outcomes, learning motivation, and other relevant factors. This paper will focus on this idea to expand the discussion.

## 2.1 Learning Motivation

Learning motivation, which can be further divided into internal motivation and external motivation, plays an indispensable part and is a powerful driving factor that impact students' learning achievements. In the process of teaching practice, these two kinds of motivations appear alternately in students, which may affect and even modify one other. According to Yerkes-Dodson's Law "maintaining a dynamic and moderately intensified learning motivation during the learning process can maximize the retention of students' learning efficacy." [1] It is understandable that compared with extrinsic motivation, the intrinsic one is more significant in driving students' learning.

### 2.1.1 Intrinsic Motivation

What are the performances of intrinsically motivated students? "Intrinsically motivated students can actively participate in the learning process and gain insight into their academic performance prior to teacher assessment; they are curious, enjoy challenges, and are independent in problem-solving." [2].

Based on David P. Ausubel's theory, "achievement motivations in the context of school education are composed of cognitive drives, self-improvement drives, and affiliate drives." [3] It has been discovered in the process of teaching practice that once students are equipped with a suitable internal drive, they will generate proper internal cognitive drive, which is of vital significance to stable learning motivation.

### 2.1.2 Extrinsic Motivation

In practice we have found that extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are equally important. "Once extrinsically motivated students achieve their goals, they tend to avoid failure, choose unchallenging tasks, or fail once they fail." [4] In daily teaching, teachers frequently utilize students' external motivation to intrigue their studying interest. The most prevalent form of external motivation is the token incentive, or the teacher's acknowledgement and appreciation. However, the exclusive application of external stimulus may cause students to become fatigued.

## 2.2 Learning Efficiency

Learning efficiency refers to a manifestation of how quickly students receive knowledge. The question of how to enhance students' learning efficiency is one that every instructor should be confronted with on a regular basis.

It is obvious to identify a dialectical relationship of harmony and unity among learning interest, learning ability, and learning efficiency. To attain particular learning goals, the abovementioned three elements should be integrated to function in students' learning process.

### **3 Learning Interest**

#### **3.1 Extrinsic Motivation and Learning Interest**

According to Deci and Ryan, when students are already interested in a learning task and display spontaneity, providing external material rewards may reduce the attractiveness of this activity. It not only weakens students' internal motivation but also renders them difficult to maintain a favourable attitude towards this activity for a long time. In this situation, rather than focusing on the benefits of external incentives, teachers are required to continuously mobilize students' enthusiasm and engage them in their own internalization of the concepts while imparting knowledge, culture, and values.

#### **3.2 Cultivation of Students' Interest in Learning**

##### **3.2.1 The Learning Interest of Young Students**

For students at a young age, teachers need to discover those piquing students' interest in learning in time and use these things to motivate them. The things that children of this age come into contact with in their daily life are constantly updated and increased, thereby resulting in their constantly changing psychological requirements. Therefore, it is very important for teachers to update innovative and dynamic stimuli in the classroom and use staged goals to motivate students.

##### **3.2.2 The Learning Interest of Middle School Students**

Middle school students are less sensitive to token rewards, basic competition mechanisms, and teacher praise in educational activities. For students of this age group, completing the pre-set staged goals is considered more crucial for inspiring students to turn external motivation into an internal driving force.

Especially for middle-level students and underachievers, teachers are responsible for providing them with reasonable and purposeful learning assignments. The most essential thing for these children is to equip them with a continuously strengthened sense of achievement in their studies. In this case, students will establish strong self-esteem and transform the cognitive drive of the subject.

### **4 A Sense of Happiness and Gain**

There is a dialectical and unified relationship between the sense of gain and the sense of happiness, which are both constantly transforming.

Students' perceptions of enjoyment are more complex and abstract, while the sense of gain is relatively more concrete and tangible. Under continuous reinforcement, the specific latter one will be transformed into the intangible former one to a large extent. In the process of acquiring knowledge, students will feel more fulfilled, thus enhancing their academic mood, learning interest, and learning efficiency, and further possessing a sense of happiness.

## 4.1 A Sense of Happiness

Subjective well-being is the most significant component of a sense of happiness, which, in a broad sense, refers to a series of joyful and pleasurable emotions subjectively generated by human beings based on their own satisfaction and security.

The sense of happiness obtained in academic activities is similar to academic emotion, and it is based on two aspects: various emotions triggered by academic success or failure, as well as the emotions accompanied by learning activities. For primary and secondary school students, the sense of happiness can be divided into two elements: emotion and cognition. On the one hand, the emotion part refers to the emotional experience of individual students in real life. "Satisfaction is the main component and manifestation of happiness, and students have been able to distinguish the value of happiness from different sources". [5].

On the other hand, the cognitive component refers to students' self-evaluation of their satisfaction and recognition, which is the result of the interaction between students' current living conditions and their own view of happiness. It is divided into three parts: one's overall life, one's life in specific areas (home or school), and the evaluation of the current situation of self-development.

This article focuses on the section of the cognitive component, which explores ways to use students' sense of well-being to improve their learning efficiency.

### 4.1.1 Factors Affecting Happiness

Subjective well-being is influenced by a variety of factors, including teachers' encouragement and praise, students' internal drive, and school curriculum settings and management forms, etc. For those with underdeveloped learning ability, it is not enough to gain a sense of happiness simply by learning. To illustrate, if their sense of achievement is not strengthened in time, they are likely to acquire learned helplessness, leading to students' resistance to learning and limited learning efficacy. This problem can hardly be solved by teachers' encouragement and external material incentives.

If students are in a state of learned helplessness for a long time, teachers' simple encouragement will have little influence. Some students also resist teachers and the school due to their autocratic and inflexible way of management, which seems to reduce students' sense of well-being. It will also exert a profound impact on students' learning efficiency, learning outcomes, and their values.

### 4.1.2 Happiness and Learning Efficiency

"Students with a sense of happiness are more willing to put good thoughts into good deeds, thereby maintaining a high possibility of achieving success and health. They are more optimistic about overcoming difficulties and challenges, less responsive to setbacks and threats, and more likely to ignite achievement motivation to complete difficult tasks"[5] As mentioned above, learning interest, learning ability, and learning efficiency are mutually reinforcing and complementary in learning activities. Students who are sufficiently satisfied on a cognitive level will generate strong learning interest and learning efficiency, allowing them to further improve their learning ability so as to accomplish the ultimate goal of learning.

## **4.2 A Sense of Gain**

The different notions of the sense of gain and the sense of happiness are closely connected. Students' sense of acquisition mainly refers to the subjective psychological feelings of their knowledge acquiring process and abilities, which are strongly influenced by students' learning experience. [6] To illustrate, students' experience of achievement in the learning process will directly affect whether students have a sense of achievement. In practice, we found that when students enjoy the learning process very much, the whole process of accepting the learning content is relatively easy and pleasant, and when the learning results are presented, students will have a great sense of satisfaction and a sense of achievement when they successfully practice the content they learned that day. They think they have completed the task of the day and have indeed gained knowledge and can use it, and this gain is something they can actually see and get through their teacher's feedback. This sense of achievement will be transformed into a sense of acquisition, and the acquisition of this sense of acquisition will also have a positive impact on students' academic mood and learning effect and form a virtuous circle.

### **4.2.1 Obtaining a Sense of Gain**

The key factors affecting the development of the sense of acquisition include family, schools, and teachers. From the perspective of a family, parents' attitudes toward children's learning status and learning outcomes can affect students' sense of achievement. When children are in an appropriate learning status and achieve their goals, parents' timely encouragement can transform children's sense of achievement into a sense of gain to a greater extent. As a result, children may be able to attain better learning outcomes with higher learning efficiency. However, in reality, many parents do not respond appropriately to their children's academic performance. For example, some demanding parents will choose to treat students' outstanding performance with a suppressive tone. Students' lack of positive reinforcement will impair their academic performance and emotions so that it is difficult for them to gain a sense of achievement.

From the perspective of schools and teachers, a reasonable school curriculum setting and an organized class management can create a positive and relaxed class atmosphere, which will enhance students' interest in learning and a sense of gain.

## **5 Using Students' Sense of Happiness and Gain to Improve Their Efficiency**

### **5.1 What Should Schools Do**

#### **5.1.1 School Curriculum Setting Should Pay Attention to Students as the Main Body**

With the constantly updated policy, each school has begun to conduct research on exploring the effective curriculum arrangement. However, the focus of the curriculum setting should be more in line with students' interests and needs. Teachers should also be aware of the purpose of setting the course.

In the daily teaching process, many teachers believe that some courses are useless and unnecessary for improving students' academic achievement. And students, who originally had high expectations for the course, may find a psychological gap and be unable to achieve the desired result in the end.

### **5.1.2 The Teaching Activities Should Avoid Formalization**

In daily teaching activities, teachers may only shoulder the responsibilities set by the school automatically and mechanically, which do not provide happiness or satisfaction to students, but rather increase their pressure. For example, students are sometimes required to complete tasks such as painting or copying newspapers immediately before the test. At this time, students should take the initiative to strengthen and consolidate their subject knowledge rather than conducting extracurricular artistic tasks.

## **5.2 What Should Teachers Do**

Although many teachers understand that students should be the center of class management, they frequently manage students in an ineffective manner because of the school's inflexible requirements or their unconscious fear of being disgusted with their own management. This usually happens to new teachers who tend to be more concerned with what students and leaders think of themselves and ignore the real needs of students. Therefore, teachers must always reflect on their own state of mind and make appropriate modifications to the course setting.

## **5.3 What Should Parents Do**

A comfortable and friendly family atmosphere will help students develop a sense of happiness and gain. In this situation, parents should pay more attention to students' academic emotions rather than the mere learning results and grades. When confronted with the ups and downs of students' performance, parents' optimistic words and deeds can effectively motivate children's academic mood and relieve their academic pressure accordingly.

## **6 Conclusion**

To conclude, happiness and gain are closely related to students' learning interest and learning efficiency. The combined efforts of schools, families, and teachers should pay more attention to the acquisition of students' sense of happiness and gain. Under such circumstances, students can retain a high academic mood and improve their learning efficiency so as to achieve better learning effects.

**Authors' Contributions.** Su Yilin conducted a literature review and wrote this paper.

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