Motivating the student to learn : a real teacher's challenge

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Abstract: Teachers find it difficult to capture their students attention and motivate them to pursue their activities in the classroom. This difficult and complex problem has become, for many of them, a real challenge resulting in fear, worry, preoccupation and great concern that it profoundly affects their self-confidence. Where would the problem be situated? Is it something to do with the learner himself? Or is it because school activity represents only a secondary concern? Or is the problem related to social realities and prevailing values? Or is it simply a problem of pedagogical nature reflecting school failure?

Our discussion will consider the problem of poor motivation as primarily an educational problem, with an attempt to answer the following questions: How does unwillingness to learn create a challenge for the teacher and what will embarrass him more when facing unmotivated students? Are there behind reluctance objective reasons or it is simply an indicator of school failure? What are the main factors that make students manifest such a negative attitude? What strategies could better help unlock this uncomfortable situation and have these unmotivated students actively re-engaged in the learning process?

Keywords. motivation, learning, teaching, pedagogy, educational relationship.

ملخص. يجد المعلمون صعوبة في جذب انتباه طلابهم وتحفيزهم على مواصلة أنشطتهم الصفية. أصبحت هذه المشكلة المعقدة تمثّل لدى الكثيرين منهم تحديًا حقيقيًا يثير خوفا وقلقا و يؤثر سلبا على مواقفهم المهنية كما يساهم في إضعاف ثقتهم بأنفسهم. أين تكمن المشكلة؟ هل يتعلق الأمر بالمتعلم نفسه والطريقة التي يقدّر بها فوائد المشاركة في العمل المدرسي؟ أم أن النشاط المدرسي بالنسبة إليه لا يشكل سوى انشغالا ثانويا ؟ أم أن المشكلة تتعلق بالحقائق والقيم الاجتماعية السائدة خاصة في ظل التحولات الجذرية التي تعرفها المجتمعات المعاصرة ؟ أم أنها مجرد مشكلة تربوية تعكس فشل المدرسة في اكتساب ثقة المتعلم واهتمامه؟

وسنتناول انخفاض دافعية التعلم و ضعف الإقبال عليه كمشكلة تربوية تعليمية في المقام الأول تقف وراءها عوامل تتفاعل في البيئة المدرسية، مع محاولة للإجابة على الأسئلة التالية: كيف يشكل عدم الرغبة في التعلم تحديًا للمعلم وما الذي سيحرجه أكثر عند مواجهة الطلاب المنسحبين؟ هل توجد أسباب موضوعية وراء هذا الانسحاب أم أنه مجرد مؤشر على فشل المدرسة؟ ما هي العوامل الرئيسية التي تدفع إلى هذا الموقف السلبي؟ ما هي الاستراتيجيات التي يمكن أن تساهم في تجاوز هذا الوضع و العودة بالطلاب غير المتحمسين من جديد إلى الانخراط في العملية التربوية؟

الكلمات المفتاحية. الدافع ، التعلم ، التدريس ، البيداغوجيا، العلاقة التربوية

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1- Introduction

Every teacher would like to feel that teaching is for him a fulfilling job through which he can express himself, fulfill his goals, turn into reality some of his dreams and above all, reach a stimulating degree of self-satisfaction. There are problems, however, which are not facilitating for many the achievement of such objectives and expectations. The overcrowded classrooms, the poor curriculums, the administrative failures, are among the many disturbing factors which have been affecting the quality of schooling, but the real challenge which is facing teachers today and which has transformed teaching into a rather stressful experience is the students' disengagement and reluctance for which they have failed to find a practical solutions. It is increasingly becoming difficult for them to capture their students' attention and motivate them to seriously engage in school work and thus achieve encouraging learning results. This difficult and complex problem has become, for many of them, a real challenge resulting in fear, worry, preoccupation and great concern and has deeply affected their self-confidence to the extent that some of them seem to accept that not only they are in front of unmotivated persons but also that they wouldn't do better than what they have done so far. This feeling in itself makes them more hesitant towards engaging extra effort to overcome the students learning difficulties which in turn will further complicate the situation expecting therefore that an increasing number of those unenthusiastic students to leave school at an early stage, even before they have completed an adequate training that would have prepared them to confront life problems.

Considering that many factors can be responsible for the students' learning disengagement and that not all students have similar needs and desires nor are they motivated in the same way, and given the many tasks usually assigned to the teacher, the limited time available and the impossibility to seriously take care of each individual person manifesting such an attitude, the alternatives left to the teacher would be limited putting him in front of a real challenge, how does unwillingness to learn create a challenge for the teacher and what will embarrass him more when facing unmotivated students? Are there behind this refusal to study objective reasons or is it simply an indicator of school failure? What are the main factors present in the learning environment or missing that make these students manifest such an attitude vis-à-vis school? What methods or strategies could better help unlock such an uncomfortable situation and have these unmotivated students actively re- engaged in the learning process?

These are some issues that will be reviewed in this article. Our discussion will be based on the following considerations which many education theorists seem to support namely that:

1- Learning process adapts to the context in which it interacts and that the student's commitment and personal engagement are in turn subject to the influence of this environment.

2- The label "unmotivated students" will not be used to describe a permanent situation, but only a temporary situation caused by objective factors, some of which concern the student himself and others relate to the educational environment. Our attempt to analyze the phenomenon of learning disengagement among students is focused on educational reasons, including the classroom atmosphere, the type of treatment the learner receives, and teaching methods used.

3- No one can pretend to have exhausted all the alternatives and decide that a student can no longer be motivated.

2- Research Context and Choices:

Research relative success in identifying some aspects of the teaching situation which have been enhancing the students self-motivation (Lowman, 1984; Lucas, 1990) has generally oriented educators to free their students from the excessive dependence on the external supervision and particularly from those readymade solutions and to make them instead self-reliant and more willing to take free initiatives and produce creative attitudes and responses. Of the effects of such a feeling of autonomy, students who are psychologically prepared to take responsibility for their involvement in the educational process may seriously commit themselves to their courses and inevitably achieve positive results. Relying on some research findings, their need to feel capable and efficient should not be marginalized or underestimated and allowing them to experience moments of success and to enjoy, after personal achievements, some self-satisfaction is of great importance especially as it strengthens their self-confidence and encourages them to make further efforts and activates their readiness to face the challenges and overcome the obstacles. In the presence of favourable conditions, one decisive factor behind success, as confirmed in many investigations, is the individual's firm belief in his ability to achieve his set objectives and goals (Bridgeland.,DiIulio., & Wulsin, 2008). Since, as mentioned before, so many factors can be responsible for the students' reluctance (Bligh,1971; Sass,1989), and that not all students have the same needs and desires to learn nor are they motivated in the same way, dealing therefore, with this phenomenon is not going to be an easy task and would certainly not be controlled or overcome by adopting a single strategy. The teacher will have to adapt his approaches and all the associated mechanisms and tools to what each case requires and thus meeting the needs of every student and contributing to the creation of what some call the integrating school (Riehl,

2000 ; Levy ,2008) and to constantly supervise the educational process with innovative thinking and creativity with the aim of constantly revitalizing the educational process.

3– Why teachers feel worried in the presence of reluctant students?

With the increasing number of students lacking academic motivation (Snyder., & Hoffman,2002),and the absence of learning atmosphere filled with curiosity, concern and interest, teachers – as first concerned after parents – and who are held responsible for this failure, are beginning to feel anxious, confused and insecure.

What follows is a brief presentation of some of the most important factors that make a large number of teachers worry and lose confidence when they face indifferent and disengaged students:

3.1– *The students progress as the teachers and the students' strongest motivating factor.*

Because student progress is the most valued aspect against which teacher quality is being assessed, it remains therefore one of the strongest motivating factors, and when faced with students who apparently do not want to learn many teachers feel excessively frustrated and surprised. They may have to spend extra time and effort only to deal with this indifference in addition to the other behaviour problems (Cains.,& Brown,1996), leaving for learning activities only restricted time and tired and exhausted teachers, who, in front of this challenging reality , may feel that their previous professional training has not fully prepared them to deal with these problems of such a complex nature. Many of them, because they are unable to get out of this impasse and are actually scrambling without achieving any encouraging breakthrough, begin to think seriously about the professional choice they made, and if, by opting to the teaching profession, they would have made the right choice !!? and that is probably why an increasing number of new teachers, as it has been reported in some investigations, leave teaching within their first five years (Karsenti; & Collin ,2013), chiefly because of the repeated frustrations and disappointments they experienced, especially after all their sincere invested efforts, and consequently would have as Ryan argued, lost motivation, (Ryan ,1995) and are no more valuing their activity.

What may strongly confirm this that many studies gave clear indications of other teachers who continue to assume their role, even under unfavourable conditions with many shortcomings and less material incentives, and yet we find them excited about their work and motivated to stay in the profession by their students encouraging results.(Bakker.,& Bal ,2010; Demerouti., et al , 2010) As research has also shown, their sense of efficacy is reinforced by the students improved performance (Khan., Fleva., & Qazi,2015) and affect positively their job satisfaction (Caprara.,

et al, 2003), especially during what some writers call the challenging teaching years (Tschannen-Moran., & Hoy, 2007;Wolters.,& Daugherty,2007). Therefore, when this important source of motivation is weakened or absent, teachers become less enthusiastic in performing their role and many of them would naturally start to think seriously about leaving this profession.

3.2– *Difficulty of defining what should be done.*

The embarrassment, anxiety and discomfort felt by the teacher are also caused by his inability to determine what should be done to face the lack of responsiveness of this group of students who are not providing him with any signal that can help him reorganize and restructure his lessons. Teachers need to know how are they doing, and to occasionally receive clear signals of where they are heading and what have they achieved and what progress is being made and where have they apparently failed, and what adjustments should be made to improve the learning situation? (Seldin,1997).This type of feedback is psychologically reassuring and, as Ashford and Cummings argued, people naturally like to obtain it "even if it has no impact on their performance" (Ashford., & Cummings, 1983), let alone if performance improvement essentially relies on feedback primarily on feedback, as in the case of the teacher who frequently uses this latter to guide his lessons and organize his interventions. To learn more about the benefits of feedback particularly in achieving effective learning and teaching, the reader is referred to Humphrey & Timperley's article entitled "The power of feedback". (Hattie.,& Timperley,2007) In the presence of disengaged and indifferent students, however, it wouldn't be easy for most teachers to make fair and balanced decisions of what they should do next to get out of relational crisis. The absence of the required feedback will get a number of these teachers confused and less confident with all the risk that some would lose control over the learning situation. In such circumstances they may decide to end the scenario as quickly as possible, and consequently fall into unacceptable errors and anti-pedagogical mistakes that would rather reinforce the negative attitude to school learning.

What makes the teacher more embarrassed while facing this particular challenge that many of his important questions arising from the concrete educational context to which the answers are crucial in any attempt to overcome the problem that has almost paralyzed the educational process, remained unanswered because his principal partner:"the student" who usually provides these answers is actually standing behind the process and outside the teacher's influence.

We can imagine the degree of uncertainty faced by any teacher who is expected to continue to play his role and supervise activities and propose initiatives without being convinced of their importance and usefulness, and the effects of all that on his professional life. A main source of

relief for him is the self-satisfaction and the pleasure he gets from his achievement with his students, especially when it results in improvement of their performance and contributes to the changing of their attitudes and learning strategies for the better. A successful pedagogic relationship with the student can alone motivate him not to care too much about the many obstacles naturally faced in his education environment, but when such a strong psychological and moral support is lost, it is likely that the conscious, balanced and purposeful teacher will also be lost.

3.3– *Self-esteem and the challenged teacher.*

Many investigators have found that job satisfaction, job performance and self-efficacy are naturally linked with self-esteem (Bowles., Gintis.,& Osborne, 2001) which can be justified by the fact that people with high self-esteem are expected to have a lot of confidence in themselves and often succeed in handling whatever situation they are confronted with. The feeling of being challenged and of being unable to raise the challenge, on the other hand, would affect the teacher's self-confidence and self-esteem. For him it's a defeat and a failure, and students do not care about him and less pay attention to his abilities, skills and competencies. They are not responding to his enthusiasm and to his forward looking positions, and apathy and indifference are prevalent inside the classroom. This is why he is no longer convinced that he has a role to play, and that in front of the students he is losing credibility. All these aspects are not unfortunately working in favour of restoring hope and confidence and psychological stability but are, on the contrary, contributing at the teacher's level to the development of psychological disturbances and the reinforcement and consolidation of negative attitudes towards teaching as a profession. These seemingly dead-end conditions which strongly threaten the teacher's self-worth and self-esteem, undermine his dignity, and may generate more anxiety and discomfort and, as research has reported, persistent job stress may easily turn into professional dissatisfaction, (Schwarzer., & Hallum, 2008) which in turn will have negative effects on his self-efficacy (Betoret, 2006 ; Skaalvik., & Skaalvik,2007) even if he has all the qualifications to achieve success and reach higher levels of job performance.

There is no doubt that the educational process is supported morally and practically when the teacher plays his role with positive self-image and high self-esteem. If his self esteem collapses, however, it becomes difficult for him to bear all the problems and obstacles he may daily face. As for reluctance and indifference he would not be able during these moments of weakness, to tolerate negative attitudes and allow for further opportunities to improve the educational situation.

3.4– *Teaching as a stressful experience and not a fulfilling job.*

Teaching which had been for centuries regarded as a noble profession with a high social statute has changed during the last two or three decades to a very stressful job.(Chan, 2002 ; Liu.,& Onwuegbuzie,2012) The prevalence of stress in teaching is confirmed at different times and in many countries (Kyriacou., & Sutcliffe, 1978; Borg., & Riding,1991; Manthei., & Gilmore, 1996), and these growing signs of unease are felt by an increasing number of teachers (Browne, 2007), and the stressful aspect of teaching is rated as the second highest reason to push teachers leave the profession. (McIntryre,2006 ; Chapain, 2008; Weiss, 1999) Poor student motivation has been identified among other potential stressors. (Betoret,2009 ; Skaalvik., & Skaalvik, 2011). The degree of what was considered to be a desirable and motivating stress (Selye,1976) has been surpassed and teachers are facing situations and events over which they have only relative control thus creating psychological distress manifested either in depression or in anxiety. (Mirowsky., & Ross, 2003) In such critical moments, students' reluctance or indifference could easily change into a secondary concern and the teacher himself would become the real problem. He would be gradually losing control over his temper and emotions, and consequently over the educational teaching–learning situation. Since he cannot show the necessary patience while interacting with his students he would be less able to take advantage of his abilities, skills and competencies, and his self–efficacy is therefore strongly reduced, (Klassen.,et al ,2013) and with self–satisfaction far to be reached, (Collie., Shapka.,& Perry,2012) he will be consequently less committed to the job.(Klassen., et al, 2013) , and the intention to leave the teaching job, as research has shown, is strongly predicted. (Skaalvik.,& Skaalvik,2011). Engagement work with vigor, dedication and feeling of being absorbed has been particularly related to fulfilling jobs, (Bakker., Albrecht.,& Leiter,2011) however, results from international studies have also shown that self efficient teachers were known with their high engagement and high job satisfaction with less intention to leave teaching on the one hand and with low levels of burnout or stress on the other. (Avanzi., et al, 2013; Brouwers., & Tomic,2000; Collie., Shapka., & Perry, 2012; Gilbert.,Adesope.,& Schroeder, 2014; Klassen.,& Chiu, 2010; Saricam.,& Sakiz,2014; Skaalvik., & Skaalvik, 2014).

4– Is reluctance a reality or an apparent symptom of school failure ?

It is common practice in educational circles to attribute school failures to the student, and to focus the search for causes exclusively in what is directly related to him. For the majority, success depends primarily on the student's effort and perseverance in learning, and if this effort is absent, almost everything would stop, and apparently when a student withdraws and no longer

wants to engage in the learning process, nothing can be done without his or her actual participation. However, when we examine closely the situation and how the influence is being distributed, we realize that the student represents the weaker, more vulnerable and least influential party, especially in restricted conditions that allow him only to play the role of the passive recipient with limited opportunities for direct intervention on the educational process. It is therefore unrealistic to hold him responsible for all school failures, especially when scientific research for decades has held other parties responsible for school results as well, including the negative attitudes towards school and learning disengagement that some students seem to display and which probably have nothing to do with their personal abilities or even with their desire and determination to learn. And here are few illustrative examples which clearly show the difficulty of holding the student alone responsible for his failure:

1. The student who is lacking basic skills which help him manage the learning situation cannot be expected to show clear signs of motivation or enthusiasm before he is taught those required skills.(Daly., et al, 1997). He should at least be given the chance to experience some success that will reinforce his desire to seriously and purposefully handle his learning tasks. How would he be expected to show motivation while he is facing obstacles he doesn't have the necessary skills to overcome? It is more probable that he would first feel frustrated and disappointed especially when he knows for sure that he has no chance to successfully handle the situation he is confronting, and later if he is left to himself without being provided with the adequate support he may be asking if he is not wasting time and effort at school, ... reflections which will first reinforce negative attitudes towards few specific learning situations and may later be generalized to all school activities.

2.   The effort needed in completing a task is perceived by the student to be beyond his capacity. This will strongly affect the degree of his willingness to engage in the learning process and do what he is asked to do. Research has shown that when the perceived effort behind a learning situation increases, learners are not willing to engage in and are more willing to participate when such perceived effort decreases. (Friman.,& Poling,1995).They won't be motivated enough to make the attempt to meet the challenge if they consider the learning situation as requiring more than what they can afford, and unless adequately helped to review their assessment and reconsider the learning task more objectively, disengagement would be their practical choice.(Hattie.,& Timperley,2007)

3. The student whose attention is not captured or attracted remains outside the process of learning and therefore cannot become a subject of change of any nature or kind, and there is no

reason why teachers should expect him to be attached to classroom activities if they have failed to draw his attention and to convince him of the importance of their lessons. An inattentive student, although physically present, is just like an absent student since he is not following what is taking place inside the classroom. How is he going to be motivated if he is not concentrating on what is said to him. Unless the teacher – by matching learning activities and the teaching instructions to the abilities of the classroom (Gettinger., & Seibert, 2002) or by linking his teaching topics with specific interests or functional learning objectives or vocational choices (Celikoz, 2010 ; Kern., Bambara., & Fogt, 2002 ; Miller.,et al,2003) – makes some success in promoting active student engagement, there is no hope that his desire to learn could be improved.

4. The student who hasn't witnessed encouraging consequences of making effort in attending lessons and effectively trying to learn may not fully engage in the learning process. His desire to pursue the classroom tasks and improve his school performance can be strengthened by reinforcers like feeling of self–efficacy, peer acceptance, teachers praises and rewards, parents approval...etc (Akin–Little., et al, 2004). These extrinsic reinforcements, not only, can be efficient temporarily and for relatively short times but, as some research seems to confirm, they are usually overused.(Boggiano., et al ,1987) Sometimes, they make even able students under pressure with endless growing expectations for good performance (Baumeister., Hutton.,& Cairns, 1990; Hennessey., Amabile., & Martinage, 1989; Lepper., Greene.,& Nisbett,1973; Kohn, 1993; Mueller.,& Dweck,1998), that's why teachers should take advantage of these moments and intensively exploit the attendance and follow up their students by helping them build permanent positive attitudes towards learning, acquire basic skills and develop strategies that may facilitate their future healthy community engagement.

5. There is no doubt that lack of confidence can reduce the learners' motivation level. Low confident learners, for most of the time, are not convinced of the successes they may achieve because they do not believe in their self–efficacy and are always underestimating what they are doing and what they are capable of doing. Self-confident persons, on the opposite, set goals and objectives and undertake tasks and projects, in spite of the difficulties and the handicaps they may encounter, and continuously improve their motivation level. (Deci,1975; Seligman,2006). They not only showed better performance but were found highly motivated.(Jacobs et al,2002). Thus, it remains within the teachers' psychological and educational obligations to prepare their students to face obstacles and challenges and to give them the opportunities to develop self confidence.

6. Educational failures have also been linked to poor school environments. In many cases the favorable conditions for learning are not provided, and if learning is not taking place, unlearning is the probable alternative to fill the vacuum left, since many students will enter into daydreams and into deep reflections that will take them away from what the teacher is dealing with inside the classroom. For many researchers, teachers are supposed to be the producers of stimulating environments that allow students to learn as much as possible (Senge., 2014; Senge., et al , 1994) and not simply the active providers of information which their students passively receive (Lengnick– Hall., & Sanders, 1997). Learners are usually exposed to limited number of motivating experiences, and not all the main sources of motivation are being adequately exploited, which means that many individual students are left to themselves without the necessary support adapted to their proper needs before they get involved in the learning process, which makes their academic success an impossible task since they remain outside the learning circle. Five important sources of motivation have been particularly emphasised by Williams, K.and Williams, C. (2011) namely: the student who is ready to learn, the qualified teacher, the realistic content, the appropriate teaching method and the effective environment. These five sources ideally should be working at the same time and their outcomes cannot be objectively determined through few superficial behavioural aspects displayed by the students such paying attention, asking questions, answering questions often adopted by teachers to assess the degree of their students interest in their lessons.(Palmer,2007).

7. Absence of innovation and creation opportunities: as Cropley writes, the standard tools we've relied on for so long in parenting and teaching evaluation, reward, competition, and restriction of choice can in fact destroy creativity... (Amabile,1989, p.79). By doing so, we are depriving students of experiences that inevitably lead to self–satisfaction, one of the strongest intrinsic form of motivation. Surprisingly, teachers insist to have their students under their absolute control while they are unable to keep them enthusiastically engaged in their planned activities. Yet, if they provide a non–threatening and non–controlling climate and open the classroom practices to some of their students choices and personal preferences they will be working with self–reliant, passionate and committed learners. Amabile argues, people will be most creative when they feel motivated primarily by interest, satisfaction and challenge of the work itself and not by external pressures.(Amabile,1989, p.78) It is clear that the effort invested to gain learners' confidence and get them more involved in the educational process is less than what is required, and as discussed above, not all the possibilities to encourage the student learning engagement have yet been exhausted and fully exploited. Accordingly, labelling

students " indifferent" or "reluctant" persons is a distortion of the truth and the jumping over important details. It is safer and more practical to consider in the first place that teachers have failed to motivate students to learn than to simply close the discussion by holding the student responsible for the learning failure, just like the imprisonment of ordinary school children and adolescents in the identity of bad pupils (Perrenoud, 1991) which doesn't envisage any strategy to change these peoples destiny.

5– How can learning motivation be enhanced?

Many factors have been found to facilitate the development of negative motivation towards learning , and here are some lightening details :

5.1– *Competition is not aimed to improve learning and acquire skills.*

The main objective of providing a competitive environment is for the individuals and groups to gain the statute of winner, achieve some excellence or show some prevalence, but not necessarily acquire skills, develop capacities and competencies or improve performances.

5.2– *Students accomplishments are not systematically valued.*

Students accomplishments are improperly appreciated and rarely given the importance they deserve, at least as a direct encouragement and a feedback for the achievers to do better and seek greater achievements.

5.3– *Students' needs are often ignored.*

The teacher's interventions are not always based on the students individual needs. It is not an exception to find in each class a number of struggling learners who are most of the time left to frustration and later to repeated failures affecting strongly their learning engagement.

5.4– *Students' attention is taken for granted.*

Many self confident teachers believe that since the lessons are well shaped and clearly presented, students should evidently be attentive. Unfortunately this is not always the case, and many teachers make no objective effort to test their students' attendance taking it for granted.

5.5– *The allowed degree of learning autonomy is too low.*

This factor, as many theorists seem to think, does affect school personal engagements, and, as Gehlbach and Roeser argue, the more students perceive autonomy, the more engaged they become in learning.(Gehlbach.,& Roeser, 2002). However, since many teachers are rather preoccupied with controlling their students and imposing their views and strategies, learning autonomy decreases and students are, as Macfarlane put it , "...being restricted in how they learn, when they learn and what they learn".(Macfarlane, 2016).

As far as teachers are concerned, learning motivation can be enhanced at different levels through practical devices and by taking advantage of some of their working and efficient tools.

1. *At the self-conviction level*: It is difficult for teachers who have no faith in their students and feel unconfident about their capacity of learning to maintain strong relations with them. Making effort with these students, as they assess, will not bring any important change. For this reason, it is preferable for teachers to build their teaching role on motivating optimistic and positive expectations so that they may engage in the educational process with no reservations and less hesitation. Believing that his students can learn is in itself a strong motivation for the teacher which will give him necessary justifications not to give up providing effort and repeating attempts.

2. *At the level of dealing with the students*: The reassuring feeling of dignity and of being respected is for many students another important source of learning motivation. We cannot expect them to show interests in lessons where their dignity and sense of self-worth are not being preserved. It should be noted that their dignity and respect are often transgressed and violated on the pretext of achieving discipline.

3. *At the strategical level*: When students are continuously talked to be cautious and to have deep reflections with some reserves before displaying any behavior, we cannot expect them to adopt courageous steps through which a qualitative breakthrough in the learning results could be achieved. It is a fact that important achievements are not always attained without taking risks and getting into some adventure imposed by the different challenges, an aspect which many educators have been overlooking, while risk taking is essential to innovation, particularly in a time when culture is integrating risk as an aspect of everyday life (Beck,1992) and not simply something which can be avoided or even eliminated, since the avoiding reaction is rather perceived as lost opportunities. This ability to explore risks in responsible ways is not expected to develop without serious invested effort and where again education is solicited to play a major role particularly in achieving the objective which has, under the new life conditions, taken some priority over many traditional objectives, namely to help people become capable risk-takers and develop problem-solving and decision-making abilities (Young, 1991) and learn how to think independently (Eppler-Wolff., & Davis, 2009), because naturally, as Young's conviction, learning is the reward of taking risks (Young, 1991, p.8), an opinion shared by many other researchers (Sutterby, 2009). Because students' independence is crucial for their future self-charge taking, teachers should leave the progress measurement on the hand of their students by emphasizing on the mastery aspect of the learning situation. This independence will

have consequent meaning for them if they are provided with the opportunities to develop their proper skills and interests and acquire the necessary qualities that would facilitate their social productive integration and not simply to insist on them to succeed in gaining degrees or grades. There are of course many considerations which can help overcome many of the difficulties encountered in learning situations with unmotivated persons, some of which can be summed in the following:

1. Learning experience should be constructed on students' concrete needs. It will put the student in a rewarding situation and actively sustain his learning.

2. Students learning should be built on their strengths and on what they already know and master and relating it if possible to their interests and experiences. Trying to reach learning objectives by relying on their weaknesses and on skills they haven't yet acquired is an adventure which is expected to end with much frustration and more fallings and failures for both students and teachers.

3. Linking learning experiences with practical actions so that students curiosity and motivation remain continuously stimulated and his participation activated.

4. The learning process should move under high and realistic expectations. This factor has been found powerfully affecting students performance.

5. Helping students set achievable goals so that they may experience and taste success. The disappointing and frustrating experiences as a result of failure have sometimes catastrophic consequences on the whole learning process.

6. Self motivation is not always reinforced by the student comparing himself with other students or through open competition among them. This sometimes interferes with learning especially when it produces stress and anxiety. It would be better and more constructive for the individual students to be compared in their achievements with themselves and with what they are effectively capable of. They will probably come to know themselves better without having to face humiliating or embarrassing situations while compared with others.

7. The learners' enthusiasm and self motivation can also be a natural outcome of the enthusiasm which teachers may show towards their subject. Unenthusiastic teachers cannot become a source of motivation for unmotivated learners and are more likely to reinforce reluctance and indifference among them.

8. Educational exams and tests are conceived and built as evaluative tools to help both teachers and students assess the learning process and see to what extent the main objectives have been reached. It also shows the type of problems and difficulties encountered and helps identify

weaknesses which future lessons should handle. Using them to threaten students so that they may observe more seriousness in their learning engagement has not proven any efficiency (McKeachie, 1986) and has been perceived as an unconstructive manipulation which has encouraged many to react in an unproductive manner such as dishonesty and immoral behavior. Students should receive feedback about their actions and how would they improve their achievement (Cashin, 1979) and any achievement or success, no matter how modest it is, has to be counted and rewarded. This will make them more self-confident with a higher self esteem. (Lucas, 1990). Many of these aspects have been nicely developed by Barbara Gross Davis.(Davis, 1999)

6– Conclusion

From all what has been discussed so far we may come to the conclusion that it is not safe to consider a real existence of indifference and lack of student interest in school activities before ensuring that :

1. Excitement and enthusiasm are first exhibited by the teachers themselves. The students are usually very sensitive to the way their teachers behave and may show some special interest to many of their reactions, statements and comments.

2. The teaching content has some relevance to the students life challenges and objectives.

3. Students are continuously provided with feedbacks that allow them to evaluate their performance and make the necessary adjustments and therefore rise to the encouraging achievement level.

4. Full psychological support and educational assistance of every individual student is ensured, particularly to those at risk, enhancing thus his self-confidence and self-esteem and his feeling of being unconditionally accepted.

Before such conditions are met it is unfair to accuse the students as the disengaging party and to be held all the responsibility of the learning process failure. It is probably safer and more constructive to question the educational credibility of the displayed learning activities and the efficiency of the methods being used and the way students were accompanied during the whole learning process. This objective evaluation may provide teachers with important details which can be exploited in building efficient strategies and in finding practical answers to whatever problems or difficulties they may have been confronting.

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