

IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATION IN PREPARING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FOR FUTURE CAREER

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Abstract

A career choice is a very important, deciding point in the life of a young person. The already lengthy academic discussion on the structure of motivation for a career is relevant in its conclusions. As was already mentioned, in modern society the intrinsically motivated professional is desirable. The study is aimed to discover the career motivation drivers of Slovak university students. Connection between instrumental, cognitive and social motivation is compared with selection of variables: gender, education level, duration of studies. Empirical survey was conducted on a sample of one hundred and thirty respondents coming from Slovak universities. The findings showed that there is a direct correlation between instrumental, cognitive motivation and the time spent studying, however the findings are not statistically significant.

Key words

Motivation, university study, student survey, career, Slovak Republic.

JEL Classification: M51, M53, M54

Introduction

The fast paced modern society has transformed lives and the traditional values of the society. Innovations and change impacted human behavioural patterns including motivation as behaviour is influenced by behavioural direction and life's goals. The study's target is young people undergoing university education and therefore preparing for the future career. Author's interest lied in understanding motivation, life's goals impacting the behaviours in the preparation for the future careers. It is assumed that the motivational patterns during university studies directly impact the later life's quality and approach towards job and career. As Langmeier a Krejčířová (2006) suggest career choice selection is impacted by external conditions and individual motivation. Žiaková and Balogová (2012) suggest it is crucial to understand the motives behind the desire to pursue university degree, as the self-realization of the motives can be connected to active/ passive participation in the educational process.

1. Career motivation in previous research

Nowadays the higher education institutions play an ever-increasing role. The importance is seen in the readiness of the youth to be able to play an active role in the adult life and be flexible as well as critical towards personal and/or professional challenges. The role of the institutions lies in creating motivational

atmosphere and opportunities that foster such behaviours. Žiaková and Balogová (2012) claims motivation does not only derive from doing the job but also the career preparation phase. Therefore it is assumed that it's crucial to understand the motives, needs and goals activating the youth to prepare for the future career. The prerequisite of prosperous and harmonized society is qualified and motivated workforce.

Haase (in Marinas, Igrat, Agoston, 2014) classify the career selection motives into cognitive personal factors like self-realisation, need of autonomy, social status, personal development or financial success, and contextual or environmental factors such as the social pressure, the families members' professional activities, the labour market or the economic environment According to (Bulková, Hibký, 2016) students are mainly influenced by the external's motivation factors such as having a degree, monetary benefits related to higher education, social status and public admiration.

University education is instrumental in achieving the external motivation objectives. On the other hand the self-fulfilment, satisfaction and the conviction of education's importance are not key driver of motivation. Similarly family background of higher educated parents is neither a factor with high motivational impact for students (Bulková, Hibký, 2017).

Ahmed, Sharif, Ahmad (2017) claim that interest in the subject has strong and positive relationship while; ease in grades, financial outcomes, and future

job opportunities are less related or have minor impact on students' decision for particular field and subject. Interest in the subject is also related and has some linkage with personality type. Mismatch of the personality and lack of interest in the subject is dangerous, and could end up into disastrous results in terms of student dissatisfaction, demotivation, lack of productivity leading to increased drop outs and career failure. On the contrary, the students' performance could excel and deliver better results if the area of study is matching and aligned with the intrinsic factors of the individual's personality, leading to internal satisfaction, motivation and commitment.

A career choice is a very important, deciding point in the life of a young person. The already lengthy academic discussion on the structure of motivation for a career is relevant in its conclusions. As was already mentioned, in modern society the intrinsically motivated professional is desirable. According to Lamanauskas, Augienė (2015) university studies is a significant stage for future career designing. It is obvious, that certain competencies are being formed during that period. It is likely, that their significance is different, and also certain differences in terms of sex are possible. Carried out research revealed career management competency structure. Main competencies were distinguished and the abilities identifying them: problem solving, social, change managing, self-awareness, communicative and leadership competencies. The most expressed in career competency structure is problem solving competency (SI=0.89), the least – leadership competency (SI=0.74). Besides, a statistically significant deviation was fixed in terms of sex. For girls problem solving, social, change managing, self-awareness competencies are more important than for boys. However, communicative and leadership competencies are equally important for both genders equally. More and more stability seeking is substituting lifestyle (private life is more important than professional duties are) as leading career motivation, because of higher social-economic insecurity in the country and the increased number of the unemployed people (Ivantchev, Stoyanova, 2015).

2. Methodology

The aim of the study is to identify the preferred motivation behind university studies among Slovak students. The study has narrowed motivation in the construct of the selected three types: instrumental, social and cognitive. The motivation preferences were compared with the following variables:

1. Comparison of the motivation types in correlation with education level
2. Comparison of the motivation types in correlation with the gender
3. Comparison of the motivation types in correlation with the study duration

The aim was to identify if there is statistically significant correlation between motivation types and education level, gender and the study duration. The level of the motivation and its structure was defined by M-2 questionnaire. Respondents were offered five point scale that allows the individual to express how much they agree or disagree with a particular statement, this is based on Likert Scale.

Each motivation type was represented in series of statements. The total value of the given motivation type was calculated based on calculation of averages on the given type of the Likert Scale. These values were transferred into percentages, where -5 represented 100 %. χ^2 test was used to validate the selected research hypothesis, to show dependencies between A and B statements. If the p-value is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis that there's no difference between the means and conclude that a significant difference does exist

In this article we set out three scientific hypotheses.

H1: It is assumed that there is a statistical significance between the education level and the preferred motivation. H₁ has not been confirmed.

H2: It is assumed that there is a statistical significance between gender and the preferred motivation. H₂ has not been confirmed.

H3: We assume that there is a statistical significance between the study duration and the preferred motivation. H₃ has not been confirmed.

3. Results

Comparison of motivation type and the level of education

In this section the correlation between the education level and motivation preferences was researched. Comparison was conducted through application of the χ^2 dependency test. The variables were put into percentages as explained in the Methods section.

Table 1: Education Level and percentage of preferred motivation by type

Education Level	Social Motivation	Instrumental Motivation	Cognitive Motivation
1. Bachelor's Level	80,52	79,85	65,5
2. Master's Level	73,6	82,83333	69,92857

Source: Own creation.

Table 2: χ^2 test for validation of dependency between motivation and Education Level

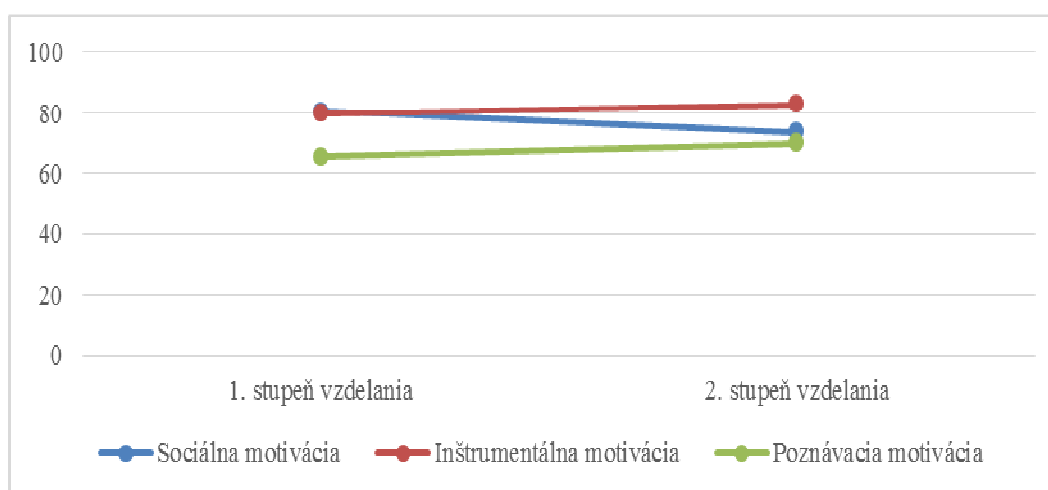
	chi-sq	p-value	x-crit	sig
Pearson's	0,509699	0,775033	5,991465	no

Source: Own creation.

As the p-value is $(0,775) > \alpha (0,05)$, we reject the null hypothesis that there's no significant dependency

between the means and conclude that a significant difference does not exist

Graph 1: Comparison between types of motivation and dependency with Educational Level



Source: Own creation.

As can be seen from the graph, social motivation is slightly dominating with instrumental and cognitive closely following. In the secondary/master's level of university education instrumental motivation comes before the social. In comparison with undergraduate/bachelor level of studies cognitive motivation follows an increasing trend. As can also be seen, the following differences within the findings are not statistically significant.

Comparisson between motivation preference types and gender

In the following section the correlation between the gender and motivation preferences was researched. Comparisson was conducted through application of the χ^2 dependency test. The variables were put into percentages as explained in the Methods section.

Table 3: Percentage of motivation per defined type

Gender	Social Motivation	Instrumental Motivation	Cognitive Motivation
Male	79,42857	78,71429	63,08163
Female	78,69565	81,03261	67,47283

Source: Own creation.

Table 4: χ^2 test for validation of dependency between motivation and gender

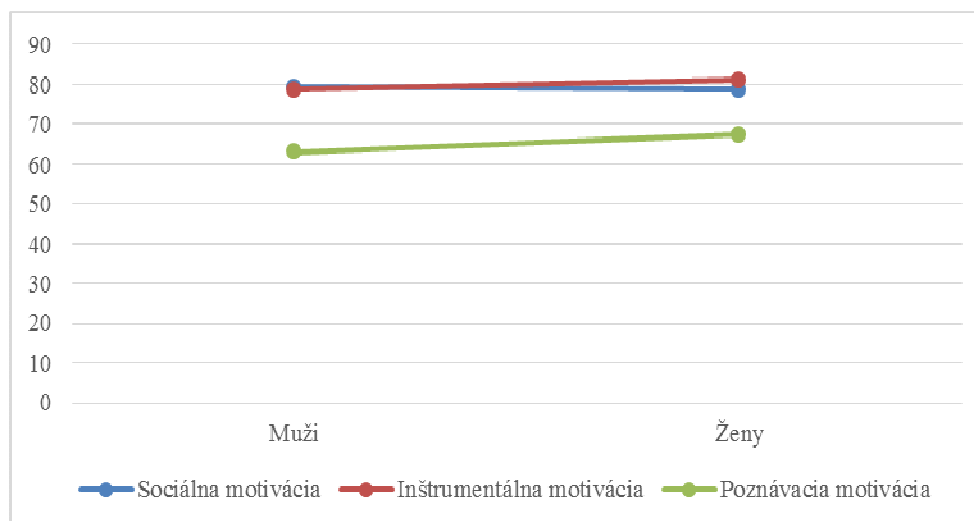
	chi-sq	p-value	x-crit	sig
Pearson's	0,105102	0,948806	5,991465	no

Source: Own creation.

As the p-value is (0,949) > α (0,05) we reject the null hypothesis that there's no significant dependency between the gender and motivation and conclude that

a significant difference does not exist. Similarly graph 2 shows the level of motivation is similar among men and women.

Graph 2: Comparison of motivation types in dependency with gender



Source: Own creation.

As can be seen in the graph instrumental and social motivation is dominant, however there is no statistical significance of the results.

Comparisson of motivation type in relation to the study duration

In this section the correlation between the duration of the education and motivation preferences was researched. Comparison was conducted through application of the χ^2 dependency test. The variables were put into percentages as explained in the Methods section.

Table 5: Motivation types in the context of study duration in percentages

Duration of study (in years)	Social Motivation	Instrumental Motivation	Cognitive Motivation
1	78,00	77,50	66,25
2	82,59	75,29	58,38
3	80,38	81,23	67,05
4	84,33	83,33	69,61
5	66,44	82,50	70,14

Source: Own creation.

Table 6: χ^2 test for validation of dependency between motivation and the study duration

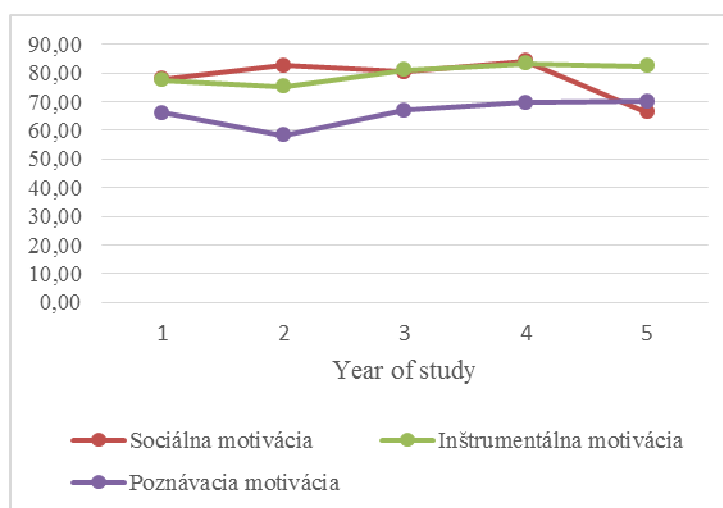
	chi-sq	p-value	x-crit	sig
Pearson's	3,303795	0,913872	15,50731	no

Source: Own creation.

As the p-value is $p(0,913) > \alpha(0,05)$ we reject the null hypothesis that there's no significant dependency between the study duration and motivation and conclude that a significant difference

does not exist. Similarly graph 3 shows the level of motivation is similar throughout the duration of the studies.

Graph 3: Comparison of motivation types in dependency with the study duration



Source: Own creation.

Conclusion

The aim of the article is to find out if there is a significant correlation between instrumental, cognitive

and social motivation and gender, education level, duration of studies

The results showed that in the undergraduate level (bachelor's) the preferred type was social motivation.

This fact can be connected with the importance of social context in the early years of the study duration.

Students of universities form relationships where prestige and positive appreciation is of an importance. In the graduate (master's) level of education the importance of instrumental motivation grows, that can be connected to clearer career goals and closeness to the actual career. Similarly the cognitive motivation follows a growing pattern in the graduate level of studies that may possibly relate to deepened interest in the study field, career.

Even though some conclusions were drawn, there seems to be no statistical significance between types of motivation and identified parameters. In regards to gender variations men prefer social over instrumental

and cognitive motivation. Women on the other had start with instrumental as the premiere type, with social and lastly depend on cognitive motivation. There wasn't any statistical correlation identified in case of gender and motivation types either.

Lastly the correlation between the study duration and favoured motivation type was looked upon. The results showed that with time spent on the studies instrumental and cognitive motivation importance grows. This is a positive finding for the study. The future graduate seeks the need of problem solving, applying gained knowledge and the motivation to reach set goals. For the future research it would be suggested to enlarge the sample to be able to draw statistically significant conclusions.

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