

The Difference of Learning Motivation and Performance Between Full-Time and On-Job Students: A Case of Taiwan Students Majoring in Hospitality and Tourism

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This study examined students who major in hospitality and tourism education and researched the relationship among student's learning motivation and performance in a vocational education system in Taiwan. Meanwhile, the difference between on-job students and full-time students was also investigated. A structured five-points Likert questionnaire composed from the literature review was examined by 216 THTC's students who study in the Taiwan Hospitality and Tourism College and were selected as the respondents. The results of this study show that the on-job students have more learning motivation and performance than the full-time students. It also has shown that the strength of learning motivation is related to the level of the learning performance; there is significant relationship between the level of learning satisfaction and the performance of learning in all students. In conclusion, the experience of work and the time limitation before graduating will have influence on the importance of learning via students' evaluation.

INTRODUCTION

Taiwan has seen a marked increase in the number of hospitality related programs and departments in higher education institutions since 1998. The increase is even steeper from 2000 onward. As for academics around 2003, universities and colleges have established a department or graduate institute for hospitality, tourism, or leisure and recreation, of which 64 are bachelor degree programs, 17 are master degree programs, and one is a PhD degree program (Horng, 2003). This trend has continued as the fewer babies born trend in Taiwan lead to more competition in colleges.

The same observation applies to the policy of the Taiwan Government. The Tourism Bureau (TBROc, 2009) declares the "Development Plan for Six Key Emerging Industries" policy, and is named: Project Vanguard for Excellence in Tourism. In other words, the promotion of manpower quality in tourism is the

key fact to compete with others. The performance of students who major in Tourism degree will be one of the potential issues in tourism industry development. Cole, et al (2006) study results confirmed that Parks, Recreation, and Tourism (PRT) students were more likely to have changed majors. Although PRT students reports lower ACT and GPA scores, but no significant difference was found between the two groups in their motivation to learn. Many scholars believe that there is obviously a relationship between student's learning motivation and performance, but most studies focus on the teaming motivation and satisfaction but few studies focus on the learning ability of students. Therefore Lee & Huang (2007) targeted their research on the students of the in-service graduate program. They found that the stronger the student's learning motivation, the more effective they are at learning, and the in-service students have a strong attitude towards learning. With the exception of these studies, few studies focus on the college student who majoring in Tourism; or do they even conduct research on the difference between the on-job students and full time students.

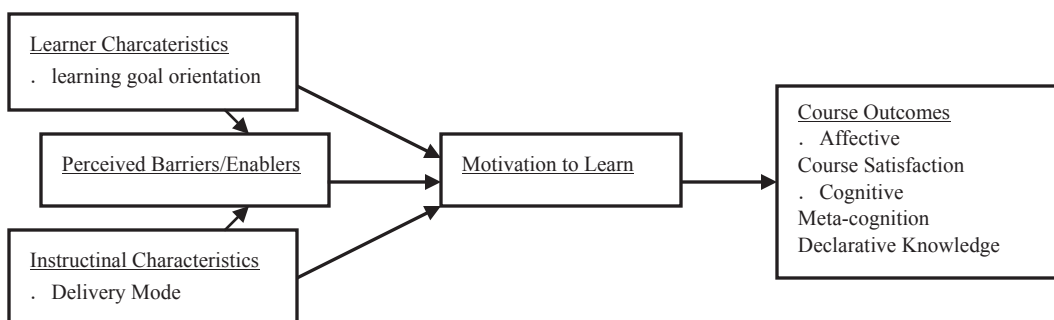
Therefore, this study will focus on the students of the Taiwan Hospitality and Tourism College (THTC). THTC located in Hualien and is a professional tourism-training college, which mainly put an emphasis on six departments—Department of Food and Beverage Management, Department of Hospitality and Hotel Management, Department of Travel Management, Department of Leisure Management, Department of Chinese Culinary Arts, Department of Western Culinary Arts, and Department of Tourism—Five-Year Division. With the exception of normal college, THTC also has the divison of night school, continuing and extension education. Most of the full-time students come from Taiwan, but the on-job students who major in night school or continuing education school live in local areas. The study is aimed at the students who play the role of either on job or not, distinguishing the difference between their learning motivation and learning performance. Also, the study intends to find the relationship and influence among the students who are on job or not for the reference of THTC's job-based curriculum design goals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning Motivation

In recent years, the cognition orientated motivation theory focused on the goal and way of approach to personal achievement behavior. Rezabek (1998) completed a study of the motives, barriers, and enablers affecting participation in adult distance education class in an Iowa community college. The study shows that the key factors would influence student's learning effort, one by way of teaching, and the other being students' learning motivaion. The centrality of motivation to learn in Figure 1 reflects its importance for any training or development program. Motivation to learn refers to the desire of the trainee to learn the content of a training program (Noe, 1986).

FIGURE 1
CONCEPTUAL MODEL UNDERLYING THE HYPOTHESIZED RELATIONSHIPS (Noe, 1986)



Mahon and Dannels(1998) from the view of teachers, conducted a survey of 278 academic advisors from six four-year colleges and universities determined differences in advisors' attitudes toward students matriculating at their institutions, transfer community-college students, and students coming from other four-year colleges. Advisors viewed transfer students as less prepared, less motivated, less knowledgeable about requirements and procedures, and less able to adjust to an upper-division academic environment.

Motivation to learn is generally defined as an internal state that arouses us to action, pushes us in particular directions, and keeps us engaged in certain activities (Ormrod, 1999). In psychology, there are many theoretical perspectives for studying motivation. Motivation has been studied extensively over the years using the Expectancy-Value Theory. Pintrich & Schunk (2002) holds that a student's motivation to meaningfully engage in an activity depends on two primary components: (1) the students' expectation for successfully completing the task and (2) their perceived value for that task. For example, Pintrich & Schunk (2002); Wigfield & Eccles (2000) used Expectancy-Value Theory to investigate whether there were differences in motivation to learn between PRT (park, recreation and tourism) students and students majoring in other fields. Harlen & Crick (2003) presents motivation is considered as a complex concept, closely aligned with the will to learn, and encompassing self-esteem, self-efficacy, effort, self-regulation, locus of control and goal orientation.

To sum up researchers' views, the learning motivation is divided into six items(Lee & Huang, 2007): (1)the pursue of learning; (2)the development of career; (3)refuge and stimulate; (4)social service; (5)external expectation; (6)relationship of society.

Learning Performance

Learning performance is an index that not only measures the result of learning, but also judges the quality of teaching. The top four performance determinants of a learning course and the learning thereof, pointed-out by Honore (2003), are course design, individual need, interaction and technology. The evaluation of learning performance also can be developed from Kirkpatrick's (1994) techniques for evaluation training programs' four-level model. According to Kirkpatrick's (1994) four-level model for assessing training effectiveness, evaluation always begin with level one, and then, as time and budget allows, should move sequentially through levels two, three, and four as Table 1 showed. The levels are: level 1 – reaction, a measure of participants' initial reactions to a course, usually assessed through surveys;level 2 – learning, a measure of the amount of information that participants learned, usually assessed using criterion-referenced tests;level 3 – transfer, a measure of the amount of material learned that participants actually use in everyday work, usually assessed using observations and interviews with co-workers and supervisors; and level 4 – value to the organisation, a measure of the financial impact of the training course on the bottom line of the organisation, assessment for this level is not clearly defined.

Steven (1997) translated the performance of a company's trainee events and process outcomes into the quantification. According to the quantification evaluation, researchers could identify the pros and the cons of a training plan, judge the benefits of the learner and the learning satisfaction of course design and appraisal, etc. These evaluations will be the reference of education planning exculpation. (Noe, 2003)

TABLE 1
FOUR-LEVEL MODEL FOR ASSESSING TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS

Level	element	Meaning	Contents
Level 1	Reaction	a measure of participants' initial reactions to a course, usually assessed through surveys	courses · lecturers · material and approach, etc.
Level 2	learning	a measure of the amount of information that participants learned, usually assessed using criterion-referenced tests	*learning situation and efforts
Level 3	Behavior	Behavior Transfer and working performance	participants actually use in everyday work, usually assessed using observations and interviews with co-workers and supervisors
Level 4	Results	a measure of the financial impact of the training course on the bottom line of the organisation	value to the organisation

The question is a research focus on the relationship between college students' learning motivation and performance. Lee & Huang (2007) targeted a study on the students of the In-service master program. They found students within the in-service master program have the greatest inquisitive attitude towards learning, but didn't compare with the full time students. On the other hand, they found the stronger of graduated student's learning motivation, the more effective they are at learning, but it is still difficult to understand if the college students will be in the same situation relative to the graduated students. Thus, this study is presented as an exploratory study to investigate this issue. The three research questions guiding this study were:

1. Do on-job students differ from full-time students with regard to gender and other background characteristics?
2. Do on-job students differ from full-time students with regard to learning motivation and learning performance?
3. Is students' perceived learning performance related to their perceptions of learning motivation?

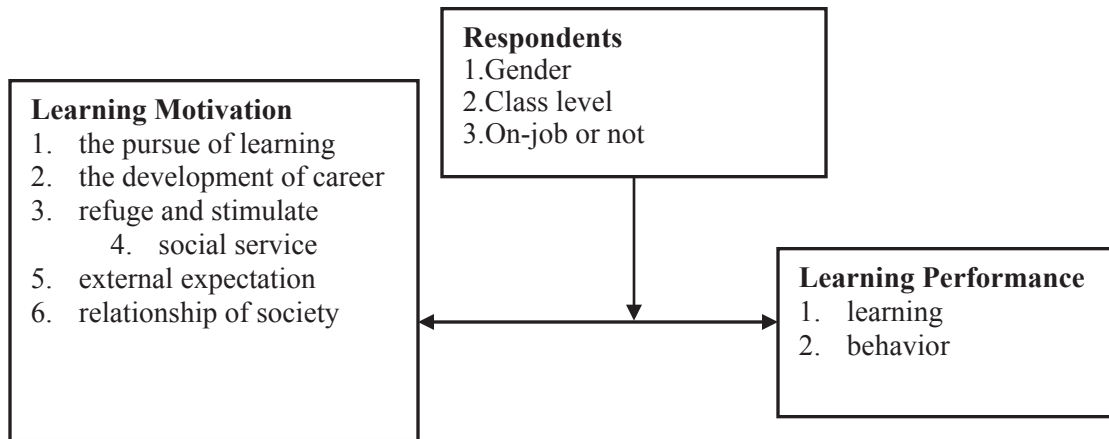
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to integrate motivation theories, and learning performance research into a comprehensive model to explain the difference between on-job students and full-time students. As Figure 2 shows, we designed an integrated questionnaire based upon an adapted version named “The motivation of participated continuing education Scales” by Lee & Huang (2007), Huang(1992), and two levels of Kirkpatrick’s (1994) four-level model.

The survey asked students to rank the extent to which they felt their learning motivation's in 26 questions from six divisions, such as the pursuit of learning, the development of career, refuge and stimulation, social service, external expectation and relationship of society; and included a more general range of scales about their majors and learning performance via 15 questions. The items under each scale, their means, standard deviations, and the scales' reliabilities scores are listed in Table 2. The “Learning Motivation” scale was measured with six 5-point items with 1 representing “strongly disagree with me” scale and 5 representing “strongly agree with me”. Overall, respondents reported a relatively high level of agreement with the six items of the “Learning Motivation” scale and the two items under the “Learning

Performance” scale. Reliabilities of the scales were examined using Cronbach's alpha. The “Learning Motivation” scale had a Cronbach alpha of 0.9357, while the “Learning Performance” scales that have a Cronbach alpha of 0.9324. According to Nunnally (1978), scales that have a Cronbach's alpha of at least 0.70 are considered reliable. The questionnaire also included questions regarding students' gender, academic level, their current major and some family situations.

**FIGURE 2
RESEARCH STRUCTURE**



A total of 286 surveys were sent out to all college students and data was collected from undergraduate students enrolled at the Taiwan Hospitality and Tourism College during the 2008/2009 academic year. All total of 216 students who completed the questionnaire, there was a total response of 83.1% completed surveys, of which 39 on-job students and 177 full-time students were representing 6 majors from across campus.

**TABLE 2
MEAN SCORES, STANDARD DEVIATIONS AND RELIABILITIES OF SCALES**

Items	Means	Standard Deviations	Cronbach's α
Learning Motivation			0.9357
the pursue of learning	3.6566	0.6780	0.8799
the development of career	3.6350	0.7145	0.8646
refuge and stimulate	3.3488	0.8333	0.7514
social service	3.4097	0.7128	0.8139
external expectation	3.5220	0.7559	0.8068
relationship of society	3.5278	0.8148	0.7885
Learning Performance			0.9324
learning	3.5313	0.6858	0.8888
behavior	3.5212	0.7417	0.9087

(N=216)

RESULTS

Table 3 details the demographic profiles of on-job and full-time students. A significantly larger group of on-job students than full-time students were female respondents ($\chi^2=0.041$, $P<0.05$). Chi-square test results indicated that either on-job or full-time students were large amount of Freshman & Sophomore than Junior & Senior's at school.

TABLE 3
RESPONDENTS' PROFILES

Scale	Items	N	%	χ^2 value
Gender	On-job Male	13	33%	0.041*
	Female	26	67%	
	Full-time Male	91	51%	
	Female	86	49%	
Class Level	On-job Freshman & Sophomore	24	62%	0.003*
	Junior & Senior	15	38%	
	Full-time Freshman & Sophomore	147	83%	
	Junior & Senior	30	17%	

* $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$

(N=216)

From the view of scale of learning motivation, there were three significant difference items. Female respondents had strong pursuit of learning and cared more about the development of their career than male students ($t = -2.6096$, $P<0.01$; ($t = -1.8288$, $P<0.05$). As Table 4 shows, on the other hand, male students had strong refuge and stimulation on learning motivation than females ($t = 1.7063$, $P<0.05$). However, there was no significant difference in terms of gender between the scale of learning motivation items, social service, external expectation, and relationship of society. In the same way, there was no significant difference stand on gender between the scales of learning performance's items.

TABLE 4
COMPARISON OF STUDENTS' GENDER PERCEIVED LEARNING
MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE

Scale	Items	Mean	SD	t value
Learning Motivation				
the pursue of learning	Male	3.5321	0.7643	-2.6096**
	Female	3.7723	0.5660	
the development of career	Male	3.5433	0.7337	-1.8288*
	Female	3.7202	0.6885	
refuge and stimulate	Male	3.4487	0.8358	1.7063*
	Female	3.2560	0.8238	
social service	Male	3.3726	0.7813	-0.7369
	Female	3.4442	0.6444	
external expectation	Male	3.4519	0.7601	-1.3151
	Female	3.5871	0.7494	
relationship of society	Male	3.5032	0.7883	-0.4263
	Female	3.5506	0.8415	
Learning Performance				
learning	Male	3.5048	0.6737	0.2931
	Female	3.5558	0.6991	
behavior	Male	3.4849	0.7752	0.2449
	Female	3.5548	0.7110	

*p<0.05; ** p<0.01; ***p<0.001

(N=216)

The mean scores of perceived learning motivation and learning performance for on-job students and full-time students are listed in Table 5. With regard to research question 2, F-tests were conducted to examine the differences in learning motivation and learning performance between the two groups. Results of F-tests revealed that there were significant differences in learning motivation scale items: “the pursuit of learning (F=18.5922, P<0.001)” and “the development of career (F=12.1615, P<0.001)”, on-job students were stronger intentions than full-time students. In the same way, there were significant differences in learning performance scale items: “learning (F=10.2533, P<0.05)” and “behavior (F=5.9396, P<0.05)”, on-job students were stronger than full-time students. On the contrary, “social service (F=4.2332, P<0.05)” in learning motivation scale was suggested that the full-time students (M=3.4562) had vigorous intent compared to on-job students (M=3.1987).

TABLE 5
COMPARISON OF ON-JOB AND FULL-TIME STUDENTS' PERCEIVED LEARNING
MOTIVATION AND LEARNING PERFORMANCE

Scale	Items	Mean	SD	F value
Learning Motivation				
the pursue of learning	on-job	4.0641	0.5628	18.5952***
	full-time	3.5669	0.6696	
the development of career	on-job	3.9872	0.6402	12.1615***
	full-time	3.5574	0.7082	
refuge and stimulate	on-job	3.2051	0.9901	1.4169
	full-time	3.3804	0.7943	
social service	on-job	3.1987	0.7930	4.2332*
	full-time	3.4562	0.6876	
external expectation	on-job	3.7051	0.6536	2.8176
	full-time	3.4816	0.7724	
relationship of society	on-job	3.6410	0.7429	0.9192
	full-time	3.5028	0.8296	
Learning Performance				
learning	on-job	3.8429	0.5705	10.2533*
	full-time	3.4626	0.6914	
behavior	on-job	3.7802	0.5522	5.9396*
	full-time	3.4641	0.7668	

*p<0.05; ** p<0.01; ***p<0.001

(N=216)

To address research question 3, regression analysis was conducted between students' perceived learning motivation and learning performance. Results of the correlations are displayed in Table 6. The correlations between learning motivation and learning performance were significant, especially between the learning motivation's items of the pursuit of learning($r=0.0576$ and $r=0.3876$) and social service. ($r=0.1646$ and $r=0.2139$) for the learning and behavior of learning performance.

TABLE 6
REGRESSION BETWEEN SCALES OF LEARNING MOTIVATION
AND LEARNING PERFORMANCE

Learning Motivation	Learning Performance	
	Learning	Behavior
the pursue of learning	0.5676**	0.3876**
the development of career	0.0067	0.2065*
refuge and stimulate	0.0508	0.0640
social service	0.1646*	0.2139**
external expectation	-0.0080	-0.1191
relationship of society	0.0139	0.1144
F	33.9836	32.4744
P	0.0000**	0.0000**
R ²	0.4938	0.4825

*p<0.05 **p<0.01

DISCUSSION

This paper has presented the findings of a study about the relationship between learning motivation and performance via on-job or full-time students majoring in hospitality and tourism management in the Taiwan Hospitality and Tourism College. The study highlights the problem that we hypothesized; on-job students have stronger motivation and better performance than full-time students, but it could not be proven from the survey. In other words, on job students have a strong motivation to learn, but there is no remarkable learning performance to compare with full-time students. The on-job student cohort in hospitality and tourism courses in Taiwan are diverse, having variable levels of related skills, training and employment experience in the hospitality and tourism sector when they embark on their studies.

This explorative study has revealed that, the scale of learning motivation present high predictability for “the pursuit of learning”, “the development of career”, and “social service”. Therefore, the students own level of pursuit of learning, like service with others, and have interest in career development, who will be a good indicator of student performance. The findings of this study have generated a number of questions and propositions that could be useful in a future study. However, results of this study did not show that on-job students’ motivation to learn was significantly lower than that of full-time students. For both groups, their perceived learning motivation and learning performance was significantly correlated.

Not only did this study show that on-job students were no less motivated than full-time students, it also suggested that there is a stronger relationship between on-job students’ perceived learning motivation and their performance of learning, compared with that of full-time students. Given these results, tourism instructors may want to be particularly sensitive to creating an environment that supports students’ motivation of learning via career development, social service, while also easing student interest and an enhanced sense of importance and usefulness of the academic material covered in the major. Tourism educators and advisors may want to focus full-time students’ attention on how they should pursue their learning to ensure positive outcomes of teaching.

This study only used Taiwan Hospitality and Tourism College's on-job students and full-time students as an example which is another limitation of the study and that this sample may not truly represent the student population on campus as on-job student respondents or Taiwan students in general. Educators in tourism should pay special attention to these differences in order to develop effective strategies to motivate students to learn.

We hypothesised that we might be dealing with different groups within the sample: those who see the on-job experience developed within their motivation and performance in learning; and another group for whom full-time students would be focusing on learning motivation for their career. We suggest that further research is needed on this view of students' working or who have intern experiences to try to identify further connections between the expectations and career aspirations of our students.

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