BOOK REVIEW

Motivating Every Learner

Alan McLean, who is a Principal Psychologist in one of Scotland's educational services, has written this book for teachers on how to motivate learners effectively by accounting for individual differences. In his previous book *The Motivated School* (McLean, 2003) he offers a comprehensive and dynamic theory of motivation for learning, and in this book he talks about how to bring motivation in the classroom. The book draws on the experiences that Alan McLean has had in life with his children and also his work in schools, one of which was a special school for students having emotional and behavioural problems. Apart from these books he has developed several training programs which are being used widely both by teachers and education administrators in Scotland.

In this book McLean looks into motivation as a two-way process and its impact on learners' aspects of learning and discipline. The book is a useful one for anyone who wants to understand the dynamics of motivation for learning, but it primarily focusses on teacher-pupil interaction, as his earlier works. It is divided into five parts focussing on the pupil, their strategies for self-motivation, what teachers do to motivate their pupils, how pupils adapt to the classroom climate through their learning stances and finally how teachers need to adapt to pupils' different stances.

The first two chapters focus on 'teacher-pupil interactions and how they can promote pupil's engagement in learning and motivational resilience' (p.5). Motivation is seen by the author as a complex interaction between the individual, his/her relationship (in this case the teacher and peer) and between the school and the outside world. McLean presents all these aspects, in the form of a matrix where different permutations and combinations can be worked out in the aspects of

motivation. Further in the chapter McLean goes on to list the three needs of the learner namely 'Affiliation, Agency and Autonomy', which he refers to as the "three As". This 'Learner Need Matrix' forms the basis of discussions in the later chapters. These needs are seen as giving power and direction to the goals of an individual. And the satisfaction of these needs will influence self-motivation of the pupils. The 3A needs of McLean are influenced by one of psychology's new and influential theories called 'Self-Determination Theory', as propounded by Deci and Ryan. These relationships and interactions are defined convincingly with examples, for better understanding of the reader.

After listing the basic goal and concepts behind learner motivation in the first part, the second part of the book talks about what learners do to motivate themselves. Here the author traces the link between needs shaping personality and the relationships as catalyst to their motivation. The personalities are seen as an interactive process of resilience and reactivity, leading to three types of personality — resilient, cautious and impulsive. If the 3As are met, then the pupil will experience energising emotions and if unmet, children's emotions would be negative — restricting, draining and distorting.

The third section talks about what teachers do to motivate their pupils through their different teaching styles. Here the teacher is viewed as an individual whose teaching style and strategy to motivate the pupils is influenced by his/her own motivation. McLean has been able to account for nearly all possible links to learner's motivation by giving due attention to the aspect of work conditions of the teachers as a prerequisite for engaging pupils in learning. The chapters effectively show how the teacher's motivation is an essential prerequisite to pupil motivation. It also discusses how the interaction of the four energisers with the 3A needs can be formed as the basis of analysing the classroom climate. Besides, McLean also touches upon the content of curricula and its impact on pupil motivation, though the issue would have been dealt with in greater detail as both school and teacher perform within the boundaries set by the curricula.

The fourth part of the book goes on to discuss how the matrix works in developing different learning stances and the learners' adaptation. The concept of 'learning stances' is elaborated in this section which acts as a classroom-focussed guide for teachers. He comes up with nine learning stances, associated with the 3A design. The stance matrix in this part helps teachers to better understand the pupils and thereby

utilise the correct teaching style for developing effective motivating attitute to learn. The book concludes with a description of stance-specific teaching styles and energisers for teachers which will help them motivate every pupil in their classroom and school to learn.

After reading the book one who thinks: Are the teacher, pupil and peers the only important links in the motivation of the learner at school? I for one would love to see how the administration, curricula along with other school practices could be managed to impact learner motivation. Though the book does touch upon the aspect of the curriculum yet it does not deal effectively with this issue and leaves the reader wanting more. No doubt the book has been written in a style that simply puts across complex concepts in practicable ways. Important concepts have been duly represented in a clear and concise manner for easy reference. The book is focussed on driving across the understanding of motivation in learners and though draws from the research both early and recent that has contributed to the development of the concept of motivation but does not burden the school teacher who is the target reader of the book with their references and details. On the whole, the book is a simple and effective guide for teachers, for both beginners and experienced alike, to bring about effective teaching and instil learning motivation in students, taking special consideration of varying pupils' learning abilities. This dynamic of teacher-pupil interaction, being a two-way process, is not easy to operationalise the way the book proposes, however if followed strictly then it will stimulate effective teaching-learning experience, which was long missing and forgotten.

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