Survey of Learning Motivation in Adult Learners And the Study of Effective Strategies to Improve Learning Motivation

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Abstract: This paper investigates the different learning motivations of adult learners from different occupations in some provinces and cities in China through the form of questionnaires and interviews. In this survey, the author found that adult learners of different regions, ages, gender, education background and marital status had different lifelong learning motivation, but among the respondents, the number of people with internal learning motivation was significantly more than the number of those with external learning motivation. At the same time, the author also found that gender showed a significant positive relationship between the internal learning motivation of academic improvement. In this paper, the author also puts forward four effective strategies to improve the learning motivation of adult learners.

Key words: adult learner, learning motivation, investigation, internal motivation, effective strategy

I. Foreword

Motivation is a complex and simultaneous flow phenomenon. As a learner and an educator, what factors inspire learning to move forward is an important question worth thinking about. How is the classical motivation empowerment theory in each period applied to the field of adult lifelong education and learning? “Motivation is fundamental to survival” Wlodkowski (2008). Motivation is a key to promote the transformation from Teacher-centered teaching paradigm to Students-centered teaching paradigm.

II. Literature Review

“Learning motivation” was searched on “CNKI”. Through advanced search, a total of 1112 academic papers (2000-2023) were found. Using “motivation given”, a total of 253 academic papers published by CNKI (from 2018 to 2023) were found. Using “motivation for adult education” as the key search. Through advanced search, only 46 academic papers published in the core journals and CSSCI journals of Peking University (2018-2023) were found.

In the field of pedagogy research, traditional classical motivation theory, which is new: economic or rational motivation theory can be traced back to Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations (1776 / 2000), economic incentive theory holds that human beings are rational actors, they seek to maximize their own interests and produce the highest economic returns; Behaviorist motivation

theory promoted by Pavlov, Thorndike and Skinner believes that behavior and learning are based on providing stimulus to arouse desired responses; demand driven motivation theory stems from Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (1954). Maslow believes that while human motivation is partly driven by external factors, innate and intrinsic human needs are the main driving force of human behavior; Cognitive motivation theory focuses on our thoughts and how they affect our behavior, with different perception of reality between individuals. Kurt Lewin (1935) and Victor Vroom (64 / 1995) were early theorists in this field. Classical motivation theory provides insight into adult motivation for learning and how it affects adult acquisition and participation in learning activities.

With existing many different studies: this study adopts the social survey, investigated the part of Chinese adult learners learning motivation, summarizes the characteristics of adult learners learning motivation drive, and put forward the strategy of improving learning motivation, in order to provide adult learners motivation and promotion strategy a little enlightenment.

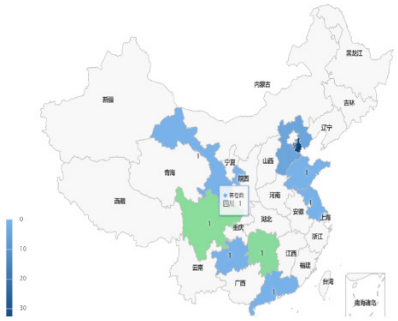
III. Investigation and Study Design and Implementation

1. Research questions

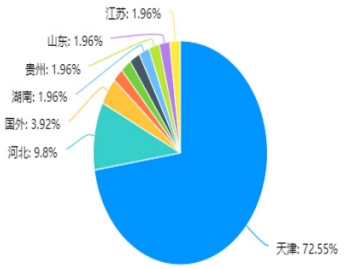
This study focuses on the investigation of the learning motivation of adult learners, and mainly answers the following four questions: (1) What is the lifelong education profile of adult learners in some provinces and cities in China? (2) What is the learning motivation of adult learners in some provinces and cities in China? (3) What are the characteristics of the learning motivation of adult learners in some provinces and cities in China? (4) How to effectively improve the learning motivation of adult learners in some provinces and cities in China?

2. Research Process and Approach

Based on the theories or views of some scholars in this field (Wlodkowski, Daniel Pink, Pushkar & Conway, Vroom, Bandura, Adams, etc.), the questionnaire was designed with reference to the existing design ideas of some classical scales and relevant scales of some scholars, and the results of the open questionnaire survey. After the initial questionnaire survey, pre-test, reliability analysis and item analysis of the survey results, select the questions with significant differences, delete the questions that did not reach the significant level, eliminate the items with semantic ambiguity and overlapping concepts, and form the final questionnaire. The questionnaire includes 18 questions. The object of this study within the scope of some provinces and cities in China, using “questionnaire star” questionnaire (including interview questions four), unified through mobile phone code quiz, recycling by the paper answer a total of 57, answer from the national six provinces and cities units (Tianjin, Hebei, Hainan, Guizhou, Shandong, Jiangsu), and a small part of recycling from abroad. (See Figure 1-2) and analyze the data results using SPSS 26.



Picture 1 Map of the questionnaire distribution



Picture 2 The source of questionnaire

In order to verify the rationality and reliability of the survey data, the reliability and validity tests of the teacher version of the questionnaire were performed. The questionnaire data was imported into SPSS 26. 0 software, and the reliability analysis was done first, indicating that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the questionnaire was 0. 824>0. 8 (see Table 1). According to the recommendation of Nunnally (1967,1978), the Cronbachα coefficient is lower than 0. 35 is low reliability and should be rejected; between 0. 35 and 0. 7 is acceptable; Cronbachα coefficient higher than 0. 7 is high reliability. The reliability test results of this questionnaire show that the reliability is good, that is, the questionnaire is stable and reliable. Then the validity analysis was made, and the teacher questionnaire Bartlett test was significant (p value is 0. 000), KMO = 0. 804 (see Table 2), indicating that the questionnaire validity was good, very suitable for factor analysis, and the results were valid.

Table1 Sample reliability analysis

Clone Bach Alpha	Number
0.824	18

Table2 KMO and Bartlett test for 0

KMO Sampling Adequacy Measure		0.814
Bartlett's Sphericity Test	Approx. Chi-Square	847.553
	Degrees of Freedom	120
	Significance	0.000

IV. Research Findings

1. Description and analysis of basic data (gender, age, marital status, educational level, job position)

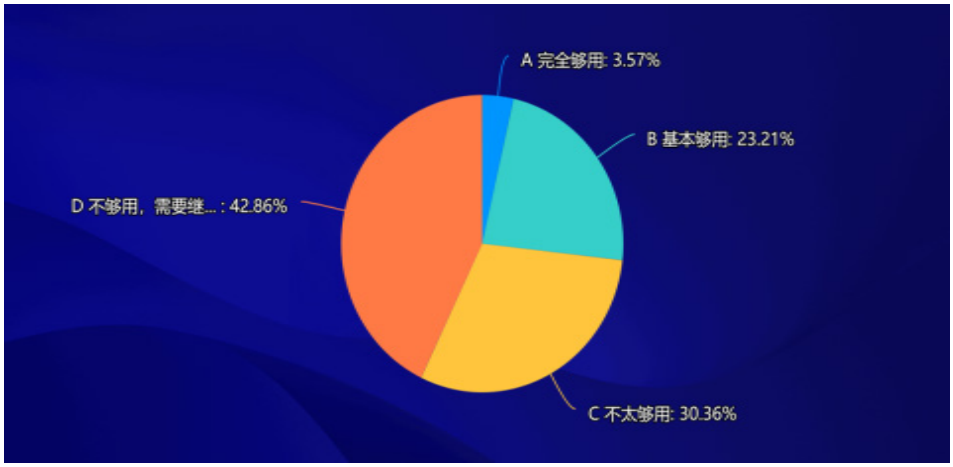
The total number of subjects in this survey was 57. In the gender dimension: female 78. 57%, male 21. 43%. In the age dimension: 7 people, “25-30 years old”, accounting for 12. 5%; “30-40 years old” 27 people, accounting for 48. 21%; “over 40 years old” 22 people, accounting for 39. 29%. It shows that people aged 30-40 pay more attention to this issue, while people aged 25-30 and over 40 pay relatively less attention to this issue. In the dimension of marital status:

the number of married is 47, accounting for 83. 93%; the number of unmarried is 9, accounting for 16. 07%. This shows that most of the people involved in the survey are married people. In the dimension of education level: the most common option is to have a master's degree, accounting for 60.71%. Followed by a bachelor's degree, accounting for 16. 07%. The proportion of the other options does not exceed 11%. It can be seen that among the most respondents who filled out the questionnaire had a master's degree. Job dimension: 80. 36% of respondents are university teachers, 10. 71% are managers, 7. 14% of respondents are other types of staff 1.79% of respondents are enterprise workers. There were no community workers or freelancers involved in this survey. In summary, in all the subjects, there were more women, more people between 30-40 years old, more married people, more respondents with master's degrees, and more respondents with university teachers.

2. Data Description and Analysis of Learning Motivation Survey Results

□1□The Availability of Existing Knowledge

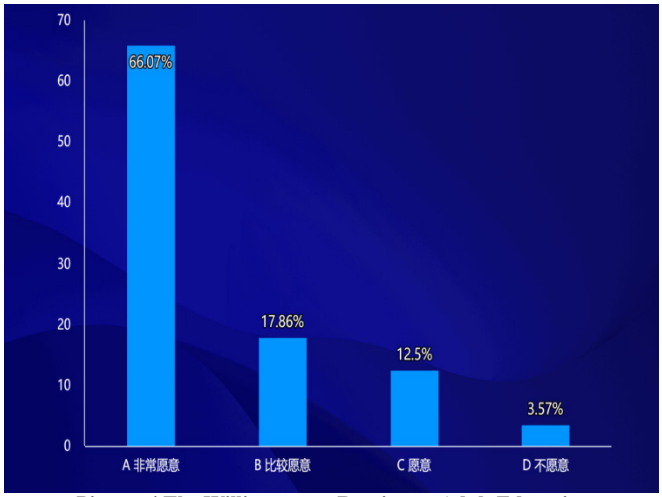
As can be seen from the data table, more than 70% of people think their knowledge level is not enough and need to continue their study and education. Among them, option D has the highest proportion, accounting for 42. 86%, indicating that a large number of people think that their knowledge level is not enough and need more learning and education. In contrast, only 3. 57% believe that their knowledge level is fully sufficient, indicating that most people think they need to further improve their knowledge level.



Picture 3 The Availability of Existing Knowledge

□2□The Willingness to Receive an Adult Education

According to this table, the following conclusion can be drawn that the vast majority (83.93%) are willing to receive adult education or lifelong education, with the most willing population having the highest proportion (66.07%). Only a minority (3.57%) said they were unwilling to receive adult education or lifelong education. The number of people choosing “more willing” and “willing” is relatively small, accounting for 17. 86% and 12. 5%, respectively.



Picture 4 The Willingness to Receive an Adult Education

(3) The Current Situation of Receiving Adult Education or Training

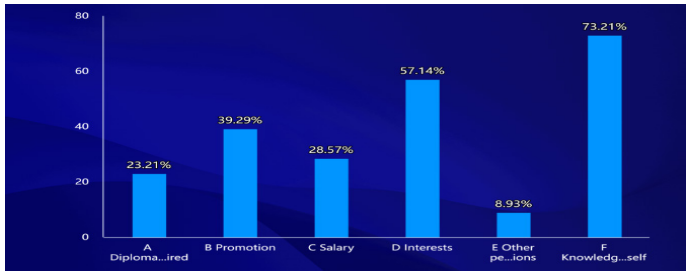
Among them, 21 said that they were currently receiving adult education or training, accounting for 37. 5%; 35 said that they were not currently receiving adult education or training, accounting for 62. 5%. It can be seen that most people have not received adult education or training, and we need to further improve people's awareness and attention to adult education or training.

(4) The Model of adult Education

30. 36% chose the online learning mode, 1. 79% chose the offline learning mode, while 67. 86% chose the combination of the two models. It can be seen that most people prefer to combine online learning and offline learning, because this learning model is more flexible and efficient.

(5) Motivation for Receiving Adult Education

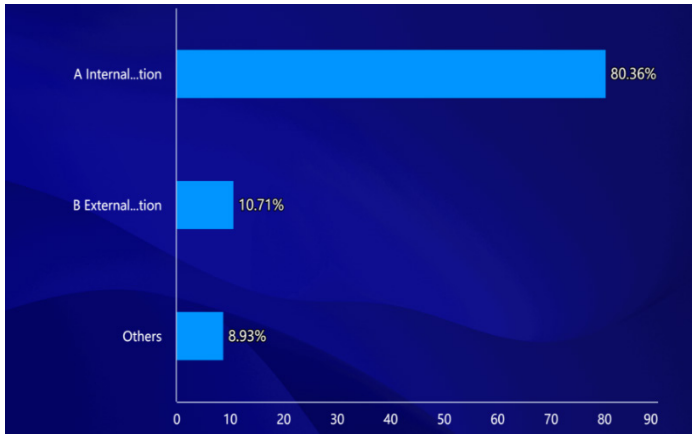
A received 23. 21%, B 39. 29%, C 28. 57%, D 57. 14%, E 8. 93%, and Option F 73. 21%. Comprehensive analysis is available, and option F (knowledge, ability improvement, self-enrichment) is the main motivation for participants to participate in lifelong learning, accounting for up to 73. 21%. Followed by option B (promotion), accounting for 39. 29%. Option C (salary) was 28. 57%, and option D (interest) was 57. 4%. The proportion of option A (diploma requirement) and option E (expected by others) was relatively low, with 23. 21% and 8. 93%, respectively.



Picture 5 Motivation for Receiving Adult Education

(6) Internal Motivation and External Motivation

Most people (80. 36%) believed that intrinsic motivation was more important, only a few people (10. 71%) thought that external motivation was more important, and others (8. 93%) chose other options.



Picture 6 Internal motivation and external motivation importance selection

(7) The Role of Learning Motivation

92. 86% of respondents believed that lifelong learning motivation played a positive role in learning, while only 7. 14% said it did not. Therefore, most people believe that lifelong learning motivation plays a positive role in the learning process.

3. Description and Analysis of the Interview Records

(1) The Adequacy of the Time for Receiving Adult Education

85. 2% of respondents reported that they did not have enough time to receive adult education or training. The reasons were: too busy with work; too much work; slack in study; give up halfway; consuming a lot of energy and time; fragmented time.

(2) Participants believe that the motivation to participate in adult learning shows a diversified trend. Career space has requirements for academic qualifications; self-growth, physical and mental health, work needs, family education; to improve their quality, strengthen professional training, keep pace with The Times; personal interest and willingness; to update knowledge system, interests; to improve their professional competitiveness; work unit needs, grasp new knowledge and constantly improve their professional ability, etc. Among them, internal motivation occupies the dominant position, and most of the learning motivation mentioned by the investigated objects belong to the category of internal motivation, which is exactly like Confucius' The Analects of Confucius-Yong Ye: "Those who know are not as good as those who are good, and those who are good are not as good as those who are happy." And Wlodkowski's (2008) view: Motivation

is basic to survival and means being purposeful. coincides. The Internal capacities of individuals, primarily emotional and cognitive, give rise to feelings, aspirations, perceptions, attitudes and thoughts. Thus, intrinsic motivation is relatively more important than extrinsic motivation.



Picture 7 General motivation and the most important motivation of adult education

(3) Suggestions for the reform of courses related to adult education

Seventy-five percent of the respondents hoped that the teaching mode of adult education related courses could be changed and reformed accordingly, while some respondents hoped that the course assessment method and class time would be more flexible, tolerant and diversified.

(4) Demand for adult education course teachers

53% of the respondents proposed that the teachers of adult education courses should first have a high level and comprehensive professional knowledge, and then improve the clarity and ease of understanding. In addition, they also hoped that the lecturers could improve their enthusiasm and passion in teaching.

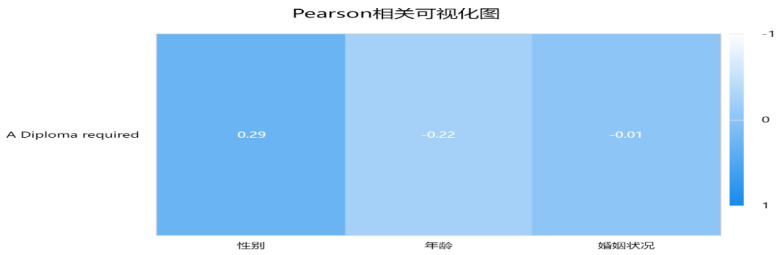
4.Element Correlation Analysis

Table3 Pearson Correlation Data

Pearson相关-详细格式

		性别	年龄	婚姻状况
A Diploma required	相关系数	0.287*	-0.221	-0.010
	p 值	0.032	0.102	0.940

p<0.05 ** *p*<0.01



Picture 8 Pearson Correlation visualization diagram

This paper presents an association analysis of variables for “motivation for adult education” and “gender”, “age” and “marital status”. Through Person correlation test, it is found that there is significance between gender and degree requirement motivation (A Diploma required), the correlation coefficient value is 0. 287, and the correlation coefficient value is greater than 0, indicating that there is a positive relationship between gender variable and gender and the motivation of degree requirement. There is no significance between age and motivation for degree requirement, correlation coefficient value is-0. 221, correlation coefficient value is close to 0, and p value is greater than 0. 05, indicating that there is no correlation between age and motivation for degree requirement. There is no significance between marital status and motivation for degree requirement, correlation coefficient value is-0. 010, correlation coefficient value is close to 0, and p value is greater than 0. 05, indicating that there is no correlation between marital status and motivation for degree. (Picture 8)

5. Proposed Strategies to Improve the Learning Motivation of Adult Learners

Based on the above survey results endowed by the learning motivation of adult learners, this paper puts forward some suggestions and strategies to improve the learning motivation for the problems such as the lack and mismatch of motivation found in the survey:

1. According to the humanistic motivation theory, there is a close connection between demand and motivation. According to the hierarchy of needs theory (Need Hierarchy Theory, 1970) proposed by Abraham Maslow, people's needs are divided into lower needs (physiological, safety, belonging, respect) and upper needs (self-realized growth needs). Only after the lower needs are met, the upper needs can be continuously met, that is, the principle of priority. The need for personal growth will become a strong driving force of personal growth motivation. Therefore, as educators, they should first give priority to meet the lower needs of adult learners, and then improve and strengthen the motivation of realizing their upper needs.

2. According to the cognitivist motivation theory, the internal theory is the main cause of all induced processes and the source of motivation for all activities in the world. Therefore, educators should pay attention to the induction and stimulation of the internal motivation of adult learners. According to Vroom's expectation theory (Expectancy Theory), there are three motives: expectation (Expectancy), means (Instrumentality) and inducement (Valence). Therefore, educators should start from the relationship between efforts and achievements, clarify the relationship between reward and personal goals, and try to match the rewards given by educators

and the individual expectations of adult learners, so as to optimize the output of results.

3. According to Bandura's self-efficacy theory (self f-efficacy), self-efficacy is highly correlated with learners' confidence, task difficulty and persistence of motivation. Therefore, educators can adopt relevant methods and strategies to improve self-efficacy to improve adult learners' self-efficacy while improving their learning motivation.

4. According to the theory of impartiality (Equity Theory) proposed by Adams, educators can try to achieve the basic justice of the input and output perceived by learners themselves. That is, to create a fair, just and reasonable input-output reward and punishment environment, so that the positive emotions of adult learners can be continued, so as to enhance personal learning motivation.

VI. The Conclusion

A practical survey in some provinces and cities in China was focused on the learning motivation of adult learners. Research shows that adult learners of different regions, age, gender, education, marital status have different lifelong learning motivation; among respondents, the number of people with internal learning motivation is significantly more than the number of people with external learning motivation. Gender showed a significant positive relationship between gender and internal learning motivation for academic promotion.

There are still two deficiencies in this paper: (1) the survey data of the subjects is 57, the sample data scale is small, and the survey objects should be more extensive and diverse; (2) The analysis of the interview discourse text of the interviewees should be supplemented, and the word list can be retrieved for the analysis and interpretation of semantic rhyme.

There are many uncultivated research directions and perspectives on related research: how to effectively empower the education of adult learners; methods and strategies to improve their self-efficacy; how to build the internal motivation of adult learners; the correlation between internal motivation and external motivation of adult learners, the relationship between adult learners' needs and learning motivation are all hot topics in relevant future research.

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