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## THE APPLICATION OF SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY IN THE CLASSROOM AND OBTAINING HIGH QUALITY LEARNING OUTPUT

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### ABSTRACT

**W**ith the kind of youngsters present in our classrooms, nothing else works with them, other than motivation. Among the copious amount of motivational theories by stalwarts, I would like to choose the Self-Determination Theory to be applied in the classroom and to experiment and find out how much it impacts the learning process. The Self-Determination Theory is concerned first and foremost with creating a self-interest in the learning and improving their confidence level in their capacities and attributes. This theory has more to do with internal boosters and unconscious assimilation of values. The life style in this fast world can only promise an internal motivation and there are so many socio-political factors that determine and effect the internal motivation. This paper deals with an idea of employing the self-determination theory consciously in the classroom to support our learners achieve a high quality learning output.

**KEYWORDS-** Self-Determination Theory , Obtaining

*High Quality Learning Output , socio-political factors*

### INTRODUCTION :

We, the teachers are particularly concerned with how to move ourselves and our students to act. We are not alone. There are parents, trainers, coaches and managers and human resource officers battling with their mentees in order to let them find energy and passion, contribute effort and ideas and sustain interest and commitment. We, the human beings, are moved by external factors and depend a lot on the various modes of reward systems. Money rewards, perks, good grades, positive and constructive feedback from others etc form the external motivation system.

We are also motivated from within, by our interests, curiosity, passion and our commitments. This is called internal or intrinsic motivation. This internal motivation can sustain even without any appreciation or monetary rewards. And now the interplay between the extrinsic forces action on us and our intrinsic motives and needs(which is inherent in human nature ) is the territory of Self-Determination theory.

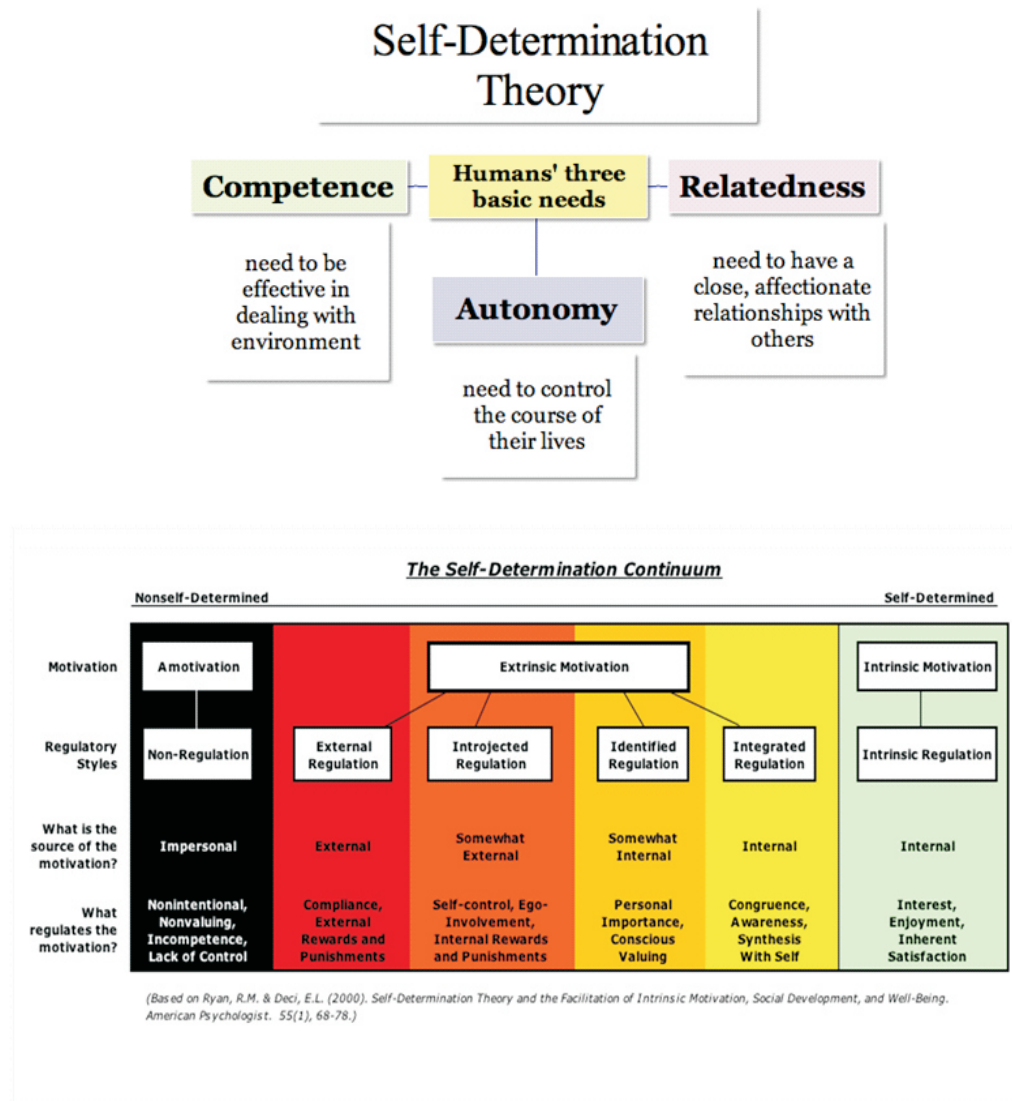
Self –Determination Theory was developed by researchers Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. Their theory is concerned with human motivation, personality and the resultant optimal functioning. The following is their definition of their SDT theory as published in their articles in Elsevier in 2015.

“Self-determination Theory (SDT) is a motivational theory of personality, development, and social processes that examines how social contexts and individual differences facilitate different types of motivation, especially autonomous motivation and controlled motivation, and in turn predict learning, performance, experience, and psychological health. SDT proposes that all human beings have three basic psychological needs – the needs for competence, autonomy, and



relatedness – the satisfaction of which are essential nutrients for effective functioning and wellness. Satisfaction of these basic needs promotes the optimal motivational traits and states of autonomous motivation and intrinsic aspirations, which facilitate psychological health and effective engagement with the world”

Hence, their hypothesis propagates that people have three basic psychological needs. They are : Competence, Autonomy and Relatedness. The following are their models of SDT:



Looking at the models given by them, one would understand that they focus not only on the internal/intrinsic motivation and external/extrinsic motivation, but also on the interplay between these two and also the lacuna between the two. The duo define the two types of motivations: internal and external in the following way: “doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequences” which means an individual is believed to feel motivated to do something for the sake of the activity itself and not just for the potential gains he/she might get on doing that activity. It involves the kind of happiness and satisfaction that the individual derives out of doing that activity. The duo call it ‘the positive experience of performing’. On the other hand, the external motivation is defined as the following, “a construct that pertains whenever an activity is done in order to attain some separable outcome” which means the individual is performing an activity for the want of rewards, (monetary & perks), and recognition from the external sources. Hence in both the cases, the impelling cause or the motive is different. This article attempts to review the

applications of SDT in the classroom in bringing out a high quality learning output.

From the empirical evidences presented by the above mentioned theorists, we understand that we have to provide a better platform for the students for both internal motivation and autonomous types of extrinsic motivation to sustain their interest and to optimize their learning in the educational contexts. It is also evident to see that when the teachers upkeep the students' basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness, their performance in the academics is found to be really promising, thereby the teachers themselves are motivated intrinsically and extrinsically as the resultant by-effect.

### HOW DO WE APPLY SDT IN OUR CLASSROOM?

- Identifying the students' need/ doing the need analysis and relating the topic to the real life situations
- Structuring the teaching-learning process/ lesson plans based on the need analysis
- Providing platform for active participation
- Making the students the owners of their learning through extra responsibilities like self-study
- Fostering graded guidance through autonomy-supportive model
- Challenging their competency
- Providing a constructive and positive feedback on their performance
- Showing empathy and providing emotional support
- Avoiding being judgmental when students express their dislike in some topics and including the moral value of that topic when teaching the uninteresting topics
- Giving them sufficient choices and at the same time teaching them how beneficial it is learn all without omitting anything.

### CONCLUSION

We, the teachers have been doing all these for centuries together. But applying the SDT consciously in the classroom is sure to bring the desired output, that is, the high-quality learning as this model is motivating the students from within. We can motivate the students through good grades, certificates and appreciation etc but when the energy comes from within, that too without the expectations for reward or recognition, is sure to sustain his energy life-long. This will bolster and stimulate him to be wonderful learner and put forth his quality learning. We, the teachers are also motivated intrinsically when our mentee puts forth his/her best efforts and exhibits high-quality learning.

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