



## A Study of Nursing Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Adapting to Crisis

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Information of Article	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Article history:</i> Received: July 2024 Revised: July 2024 Accepted: August 2024 Available online: August 2024</p> <p><i>Keywords:</i> learning motivation learning effectiveness family factors personal factors</p>	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical role of medical professionals worldwide, placing unprecedented demands on medical education systems, particularly in densely populated regions like Henan Province, China. This conceptual paper explores the determinants of learning effectiveness through the lens of learning motivation among medical students in public universities in Henan Province. Drawing from a comprehensive review of existing literature, this study proposes a theoretical framework that highlights the significant influence of family and personal factors on students' learning motivation and, consequently, their learning effectiveness. By excluding school-related factors, the paper focuses on the nuances of how parental relationships, material satisfaction, parental education, students' perception of learning, self-confidence, and choice of learning tasks shape the motivational landscape for medical students. Furthermore, the paper discusses the mediating role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in linking these determinants to learning outcomes. The context of public medical education in Henan Province, with its unique challenges and opportunities, provides a backdrop for this exploration, emphasizing the need for educational strategies that are sensitive to the socio-cultural and economic realities of the region. The paper concludes with implications for practice, recommending targeted interventions to foster an environment conducive to enhancing motivation and learning effectiveness among medical students. Future research directions are suggested, including the empirical testing of the proposed framework and the exploration of school factors' roles in a comprehensive model of learning motivation.</p>

### 1. Introduction

The global upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic at the start of 2020 has precipitated unprecedented changes in societal norms, with education systems worldwide facing unparalleled challenges. Among these, medical students, who are at the forefront of future healthcare delivery, have experienced significant shifts in their learning environments and mental well-being. The stringent demands of medical education, necessitating high levels of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, place a considerable burden on these students. This is further compounded by the pressures of future career responsibilities, potentially leading to increased stress, fear, and anxiety, thereby impacting their learning status (Simeng, 2022).

The focus on quality education and new curriculum reforms in China highlights a mismatch between educational ideals and the prevailing exam-oriented system, particularly in medical education. This misalignment tends to overlook the intrinsic motivation and creativity of students, underscoring a need for fostering environments that stimulate students' personal and professional growth (Geng, 2022). Existing literature points to the influence of demographic characteristics, family environment, and psychosocial factors on learning motivation among college students, underscoring the complex interplay of internal and external factors in educational outcomes (Wang, 2020).

Notably, the exploration of learning motivation among clinical medical students remains limited, particularly in understanding the impact of internal psychological factors such as self-esteem and belief in a just world. As medical students navigate the rigors of their coursework and prepare for their roles in healthcare, the cultivation of strong learning motivation becomes essential for their success (Cui, 2021).

This paper aims to dissect the determinants of learning effectiveness through the lens of learning motivation, concentrate on the nuanced influences of family and personal factors among medical students in public universities in Henan Province. By doing so, it endeavors to contribute to the discourse on enhancing medical education and supporting the holistic development of future medical professionals.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Influences on Learning Motivation*

#### *2.1.1 Family Factors*

The family's role in shaping learning motivation is profound, serving both as a cornerstone for emotional support and a potential source of motivational conflict. Research by Hao & Li (2022) emphasizes the skewed focus on material needs within families, often at the expense of higher psychological needs such as belonging and self-actualization. Zhang et al. (2021) discuss the impacts of parenting styles on students' motivation, suggesting that neither excessive leniency nor undue strictness fosters a conducive learning environment. Instead, balanced and supportive family dynamics are crucial for nurturing motivated learners.

#### *2.1.2 Personal Factors*

Personal factors, including students' perceptions of learning, self-confidence, and task selection, significantly influence motivation. The interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations shapes students' engagement with learning tasks (Wang et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2020). Self-efficacy, or students' belief in their ability to succeed, emerges as a key determinant of learning motivation, with successful experiences bolstering this belief (Li, 2021; Li & Cao, 2021). Furthermore, the choice of learning tasks, influenced by students' interests and perceived task difficulty, affects their motivation and learning outcomes (Zhuang, 2022).

#### *2.1.3 Motivation and Learning Effectiveness*

Internal motivation, driven by interest and the desire for self-fulfilment, is closely linked to students' self-determination and autonomy, fostering a conducive environment for learning effectiveness. Conversely, external motivation, centered around rewards or avoidance of punishment, lacks this intrinsic connection, potentially impacting students' engagement and satisfaction with the learning process (Li & Chen, 2022).

This literature review has identified key family and personal factors influencing learning motivation among medical students, emphasizing the pivotal role of intrinsic motivation in driving learning effectiveness. By focusing on these dimensions, the review sets the stage for a detailed exploration of how these factors interplay to impact the academic and professional preparedness of medical students, aiming to provide actionable insights for enhancing medical education.

## **4. Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study aims to explore the determinants of learning effectiveness, specifically through the mediating role of learning motivation among medical students in public universities in Henan Province, with an exclusive focus on family and personal factors.

### *Family Factors*

Family factors, such as material satisfaction, parental education, and the dynamics of the parental relationship, are hypothesized to significantly influence the learning motivation of medical students. The literature suggests that a nurturing family environment that balances material needs with emotional and psychological support fosters a conducive atmosphere for enhancing students' intrinsic motivation to learn.

### *Personal Factors*

Personal factors encompass the students' perception of learning, self-confidence, and their approach to selecting learning tasks. These factors are integral in shaping the students' internal cognitive framework towards learning,

affecting their intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. The level of self-efficacy, or belief in their own abilities, along with their intrinsic interest in the subject matter, plays a critical role in motivating students towards achieving their learning goals.

#### *Learning Motivation*

Learning motivation, categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, is posited to mediate the relationship between the identified determinants (family and personal factors) and learning effectiveness. Intrinsic motivation, deriving from an individual's internal desires for self-fulfillment and interest in the subject, is expected to have a stronger influence on learning effectiveness than extrinsic motivation, which is driven by external rewards or avoidance of penalties.

#### *Learning Effectiveness*

Learning effectiveness, the ultimate outcome of interest, is defined in terms of academic performance, engagement with the learning material, and the achievement of learning objectives. It is posited that enhanced learning motivation, particularly intrinsic motivation, directly contributes to improved learning effectiveness among medical students.

#### *Operationalization of Constructs*

The study will operationalize these constructs using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative measures will assess the impact of family and personal factors on learning motivation and effectiveness, while qualitative assessments will explore the nuances of students' motivational experiences.

#### *Implications for Research and Practice*

This revised conceptual framework narrows the focus to family and personal influences on learning motivation, excluding school factors. By understanding how these dimensions interact to affect learning outcomes, the study aims to offer insights that can inform strategies to support medical students' educational journeys, enhancing the overall quality of medical education.

### **5. Context of Public Medical University in Henan Province**

Public medical universities in Henan Province operate within a unique socio-economic and cultural context that influences the educational experiences of medical students. These institutions are tasked with not only providing a comprehensive medical education but also addressing the healthcare needs of one of China's most populous provinces. The blend of urban and rural communities within Henan presents diverse healthcare challenges that medical education aims to address, necessitating a curriculum that is both theoretically sound and practically applicable across different healthcare settings.

One of the primary challenges faced by public medical universities in Henan is the balancing act between meeting the high demand for medical professionals and ensuring the quality of medical education. The pressure to produce competent healthcare professionals can sometimes lead to a heavy emphasis on theoretical knowledge at the expense of practical skills. Furthermore, the rapid advancements in medical science and technology require constant curriculum updates, a challenge compounded by limited resources and faculty expertise in cutting-edge medical innovations.

Another significant challenge is the psychological stress experienced by medical students due to the high expectations and intense nature of their studies. This is exacerbated by the competitive environment and the societal pressures associated with pursuing a medical career in China. These factors can affect students' learning motivation and overall well-being, impacting their learning effectiveness and future professional performance.

Despite these challenges, there are considerable opportunities for enhancing medical education in Henan Province. The diverse healthcare needs of the province's population offer a rich learning ground for medical students, providing them with a wide range of clinical experiences. This exposure is invaluable in developing well-rounded medical professionals who are adept at handling various medical scenarios.

Moreover, the push towards educational reform and the emphasis on quality education in China present an opportunity for medical universities in Henan to innovate and improve their teaching methodologies. Integrating more practical experiences, utilizing technology in learning, and fostering a supportive learning environment can significantly enhance students' motivation and engagement. Collaborations with healthcare institutions and research centers can also enrich the curriculum, ensuring that students are exposed to the latest medical knowledge and technologies.

The context of public medical universities in Henan Province, characterized by its specific considerations, challenges, and opportunities, plays a significant role in shaping the learning experiences and motivations of medical students. By addressing these contextual factors, educators and policymakers can better support students in their pursuit of medical excellence, ultimately contributing to the improvement of healthcare delivery in Henan Province and beyond. Future research and educational strategies should take these contextual nuances into account to enhance the effectiveness and relevance of medical education in the region.

## **6. Discussion and Theoretical Implications**

This conceptual exploration underscores the intricate roles that family and personal factors play in shaping learning motivation among medical students, proposing a framework where these elements directly and indirectly influence learning effectiveness. Drawing from the literature, the discussion has highlighted how supportive family environments and positive personal characteristics, such as high self-efficacy and a deep interest in learning, are pivotal in cultivating a strong intrinsic motivation. This intrinsic motivation is, in turn, identified as a critical determinant of enhanced learning outcomes.

### *Theoretical Implications*

The proposed framework enriches the academic dialogue surrounding motivation in medical education by offering a nuanced understanding of its determinants. It advances the theoretical discourse by spotlighting the mediating function of motivation, bridging family and personal influences with learning effectiveness. This perspective invites a reconsideration of motivational strategies within medical education, advocating for a holistic approach that encompasses beyond just the academic or school-based interventions.

### *Limitations and Future Research*

A notable limitation of this conceptual framework is the deliberate exclusion of school-related factors, which may also significantly impact students' motivation. Future research could adopt a more inclusive model that integrates these factors to provide a comprehensive view of the motivational landscape within medical education. Moreover, the reliance on existing literature and theoretical propositions calls for empirical studies to validate the proposed relationships. Subsequent research could employ mixed-methods approaches to explore the dynamics of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations and their impacts on learning effectiveness, potentially offering empirical support to the theoretical framework suggested herein.

## **7. Conclusion**

This paper has woven together the strands of literature on family and personal determinants of learning motivation to propose a conceptual framework that highlights their significance in medical education. It posits learning motivation as a critical mediator that translates these influences into learning effectiveness, offering a new lens through which to examine and enhance the educational experiences of medical students. By charting out limitations and directions for future research, it lays the groundwork for empirical investigations that could further refine and expand upon the theoretical insights presented, with the ultimate goal of fostering environments that nurture the motivational and educational needs of future medical professionals.

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