FRAMING UNSCHOOLING USING THEORIES OF MOTIVATION

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Abstract

As more families consider alternative learning approaches such as unschooling, little is known about the role motivation plays in self-directed education. Synthesizing major concepts of several theories of motivation (transformative experience, self-efficacy, self-regulation, expectancy-value theory, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation), the research demonstrates that unschooling is a viable approach to learning. Motivation requires goals, activity and commitment to achieve outcomes (Schunk, Pintrich & Meece, 2008) and within the context of unschooling, the literature demonstrates that individuals sustain motivation so they can achieve certain tasks. The findings demonstrate a need to invoke students to follow their aptitudes and curiosity outside of the rigid structures of conventional schooling, potentially altering the current landscape of education.

Motivation and Unschooling

There are approximately 10 million children in the U.S. who do not attend mainstream, traditional educational institutions. Of these, it is estimated that 10% engage in a self-directed learning practice commonly referred to as unschooling (Vangelova, 2014). With more families becoming disenchanted by conventional approaches to education, there is a need for educators, parents, and students to consider the purpose and efficacy of unschooling and to understand the extent to which motivation plays a role. Using recognized theories of motivation as a framework, this literature review seeks to describe theories and complex concepts of motivation as they relate to the practice of unschooling. Additionally, it describes how theory and research

related to motivation can further clarify the process and practice of unschooling. The scope of the review is narrow, focusing on transformative experience, self-efficacy, self-regulation, expectancy-value theory, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as they relate to the progressive learning approach of unschooling.

Unschooling

Within education literature, unschooling connotes a learner-centered approach to education. Devoid of utilizing any pre-planned curriculum, unschooling adopts a learner-centered education model where individuals pursue their own interests (Guterson, 1992; Holt & Farenga, 2003; Martin-Chang, Gould & Meuse, 2011; Morrison, 2016). Unschooling families do not require their children to do particular assignments for the purpose of education, nor do they implement assessment as a means to measure progress (Gray & Riley, 2013). Instead, unschoolers intensively follow their interests, learning in their own ways (Gray & Riley, 2013). One unschooling family defines this approach to education as "creating an enriching environment for our children where natural learning and passions can flourish. We want our life to be about connection--to each other, to our interests and passions, to a joyful life together" (Gray & Riley, 2013, p. 8).

There are numerous terms to describe this educational philosophy. While each has its nuanced definition, their commonality is that they center on self-directed learning. Forms of unschooling include hackschooling, worldschooling, free-range learning, life learning, free schools, democratic schooling, radical unschooling, eclectic unschooling, and the Reggio Emilio approach (Dodd, 2008; Morrison, 2016).

Education theorist John Holt first introduced the term unschooling (1977). Holt and

Farenga (2003) describe unschooling as a way to allow children the freedom to learn in the world where the parent or learning facilitator is not required to play the role of a professional teacher, but to be oneself, living and learning together, pursuing questions and interests as they arise and using conventional schooling when and if necessary (2003). Gray and Riley (2013) discuss how parents provide environmental context and support to facilitate the child's learning. They assert, "Life and learning do not occur in a vacuum; they occur in the context of a cultural environment, and unschooling parents help define and bring the child into contact with that environment" (Gray & Riley, 2013, p. 7). Parents can influence and guide their children's choices by adopting a more hands-on approach (Holt & Farenga, 2003).

There is a tremendous gap in education literature with regards to unschooling. While a few foundational studies and scholarly articles exist, comprehensive, longitudinal research remains minimal. The existing literature contains various intersections of unschooling, homeschooling, constructivist learning, and other related forms of alternative education. Pitman and Smith (1987) conducted one of the most recognized research studies on homeschooling, a foundational case study of a community in the Northeastern United States comprised of 20 families. Their research sought to describe the learning process and the environment in which it takes place. They found that "humans are learners and that they cannot be prevented from learning, even in their own homes" (Pitman & Smith, 1987, p. 97). This study helped legitimize the practice of learning outside of conventional structure of school.

The type of learning that takes place among unschoolers is multidimensional and developmental. One example of unschooling is a learner's interest in bicycles. The learner's curiosity can lead to a study of how bicycles work which falls under the topic of science, who invented the bicycle which can be categorized as biography, and when the bicycle was invented

which is a history topic. The learner could also explore the business component of modern bicycles, and study manufacturing or marketing as well as multiple other areas of knowledge (Holt & Farenga, 2003). The learner may conduct research by reading, completing projects, or interviewing relevant people but the central idea is that the learner selected the topic and ensuing activities (Holt & Farenga, 2003). A natural, organic process, this is the type of learning that occurs both during early childhood and in the adult years as individuals enter the workplace (Holt & Farenga, 2003).

While literature on unschooling is limited, there are a few landmark studies that have been conducted on homeschooling. Homeschooling differs from unschooling in the notion that it is an elective practice where parents directly educate their children under their own oversight and influence in a home setting (Donnelly, 2012). Emerging as a direct result of John Holt's early activism and research, home education emerged in the 1960s (Taylor-Hough, 2010).   The roots of homeschooling relate to religious reasons and decades later, there is still a tension between secular and religious-motivated homeschoolers (Dobson, 2000).

Motivation and Learning

Literature on learning tends to support the idea that motivation impacts student behavior and plays a role in learning. There are numerous theories and constructs that seek to describe how motivation in learning works. This comprehensive review describes how major concepts and theories of motivation play significant roles in the context of unschooling. Specifically, the research covers constructs such as transformative experience and self-regulation and motivation-based theories such as self-efficacy, expectancy-value theory and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Transformative Experience

In recent years, the theory of transformative experience has emerged in motivation and learning literature. Its historical framework is based on the work of John Dewey (1938). Dewey espouses that there is an organic and intrinsic connection between education and personal experience. Experience itself cannot always stand alone as an educational experience; rather, everything depends upon the quality of the experience. Dewey argues some experiences may even be detrimental to learning. Such experience occurs when learners engage with ideas, resulting in a changing of perspective (Dewey, 1938, 1998).

Recent literature acknowledges Dewey's progressive contributions. Pugh first named the term "transformative experience" to describe the impactful experiences that occur "when students actively use curricular concepts in everyday life to see and experience the world in a new, meaningful way" (Pugh, 2004; 2011). A complex, conceptual construct, transformative experience engages students in areas of behavioral, cognitive, and emotion (see Heddy & Sinatra, 2013; Pugh, 2002; 2011; Pugh & Girod, 2007; Shernoff, 2012). From a motivational perspective, it is a learning transaction in which a learner finds meaning with the subject matter through deep engagement (Pugh, 2011).

Transformative experience provides an optimal learning environment where learners become intrinsically motivated and achieve mastery (Shernoff, 2012). Pugh (2002; 2011) argues that transformative experience is a process where an individual actively uses a concept or idea which results in a change in perception. Ultimately, the experiential value of the concept is realized. In other words, the learner actively uses what h/she is studying and then adopts a

different perspective of the world. According to Shernoff (2012), this shift occurs within thoughts, feelings, and actions.

The goal of transformative experience instruction is to reinforce concepts learned in a traditional classroom setting with engaging experiences outside of the classroom (Heddy & Sinatra, 2013). Morgan (2010) offers evidence of how transformative experience results from undergoing profound engagement with unfamiliar places and experiences. Morgan argues that the worldview held by individuals can be disrupted as a result of new experiences (2010). As learners explore and actively use concepts, they are relating them to their own experience, both behaviorally and cognitively (Heddy & Sinatra, 2013). This theory of motivation highlights the shift in consciousness or a broader awareness (Morgan 2010).

The literature often connects transformative experience to experiential learning theory, another framework often used to increase learner motivation. Kolb (1984), a major contributor to this theory, posits that the process of learning is a cycle that is implicit and continuous. Similar to transformative experience, Kolb argues that a specific experience incites reflection and results in formulating a hypothesis about the meaning of the experience (1984).

Experiential learning requires the learner to take initiative, manage decision-making, and ensure accountability as well as engage in holistic intellectual, emotional, social, and physical activities in the learning task (Association for Experiential Education, 2016). The philosophy centers on the notion that meaningful learning results from a dynamic process which is driven by both concrete action and reflection. These two dimensions represent transactions occurring between individuals and their environment (Kolb & Kolb, 2008). As a holistic approach to acquiring knowledge, experiential learning provides an explanation for how learners connect

with the curricular material where they transfer experience into knowledge (Passarelli & Kolb, 2012).

Transformative experience and experiential learning exemplify a major goal of unschooling, learning in the context of a cultural environment (Morrison, 2016). Rolstad and Kesson (2013) provide an overview of unschooling's historical roots as well as what the practice currently entails. They offer several examples of how learners engage with curricular ideas one of which includes a learner named Kat who has a fascination with tree houses which led her to study geometry in order to learn principles that will aid her design and construction of a tree house. The authors describe the process:

> Kat has taken repeated, precise measurements of the site, has drafted a site plan on grid paper, and has created two scale tree house models using grid paper, toothpicks and tape. When she first began her design, she was obligated to create her own grid paper, painstakingly drawing out a tiny-sized grid on a large piece of paper so that she could proceed with her design (Rolstad & Kesson, 2013, p. 62).

In this situation, Kat has found personal relevance in studying tree houses, enabling her to deeply connect with geometry and other related principles needed to support her learning. According to Dole & Sinatra (1998) significantly engaging with material of interest is the defining characteristic of transformative experience. Rolstad & Kesson (2013) go on to describe how unschooled learners are not trained to exhibit behaviors that emulate academic learning. Rather, their exploration and play establishes a solid foundation for future, more complex learning (Rolstad & Kesson, 2013).

Another example of an unschooler being motivated as a result of transformative experience is a six-year-old described in Rolstad and Kesson's article (2013). The learner

"initiated a study of geography and map-making that began with basic directional orientation, involved endless hours of building cities with blocks and other materials and resulted in the creation of about 200 maps of increasing complexity" (Rolstad & Kesson, 2013, p. 41). According to the authors, during the first few weeks, the child moved from mapping out states and regions of the United States to other continents and eventually the solar system. Continuing for a few months, the child eventually learned not just geography but concepts regarding spatial and temporal relationships, astronomy, area, perimeter, population, and boundaries (Rolstad & Kesson, 2013). Within the course of a year, the learner taught himself to calculate sums and compare values using adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing, all of which began with an atlas (Rolstad & Kesson, 2013). The learning that takes places as a result of unschooling is a primary example of transformative experience, a concept that plays a role in motivation.

Self-Efficacy

A useful theory to understand how motivation works in regards to unschooling is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy can be defined as an individual's perception of his or her ability to accomplish certain skills or tasks (Williams, King & Koob, 2002; Bandura, 1997). In the context of unschooling, self-efficacy is important for both the learner and the parent who is facilitating the learning environment.

Research available on self-efficacy in alternative education tends to focus on the role of parental involvement. Parents who pursue alternative forms of education are heavily involved as research suggests they are more likely to think about the outcomes that will follow their involvement activities (Ice & Hoover-Dempsey, 2011). In other words, parents are motivated to be highly involved in their child's learning because they think about their children going on to

experience success later in life. Studies conducted focused on conventional education also associate parental involvement with personal self-efficacy beliefs, particularly for elementary, middle, and high school students (Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, & Apostoleris, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992; Shumow & Lomax, 2002).

Green and Hoover-Dempsey (2007) conducted a study investigating motivations behind pursuing alternative education from 136 parents of children ages five to thirteen years. The study determined that parents who subscribe to homeschooling had a particularly strong sense of self-efficacy in enabling their children to succeed in their education practices. The results also suggest that homeschooling parents appear to be motivated to construct an active role in their child's education. While the study focused specifically on homeschooling families, its results can still be applied to unschooling. In Gray and Riley's study, one parent describes his/her role, "As a parent, I am my children's experienced partner and guide and I help them to gain access to materials and people that they might not otherwise have access to. I introduce them to things, places, people that I think might be interesting to them but I do not push them or feel rejected or discouraged if they do not find it interesting" (2013, p. 8). While the parent does not direct the learning, his/her role is to provide the support and materials needed for students to pursue their own learning (Rolstad & Kesson, 2013). Consequently, their involvement in the learning process strengthens self-efficacy (Ice & Hoover-Dempsey, 2011).

Bandura (1977) established a major framework and identified four primary sources of feelings or expectations of self-efficacy. They include previous performance accomplishments where an individual has experienced mastery of the same or a similar task within the mastery experience. Secondly, the individual has witnessed others being able to successfully master the task. Thirdly, social or verbal persuasion influences self-efficacy. Bandura argues, "People are

led, through suggestion, into believing they can cope successfully with what has overwhelmed them in the past" (1977, p. 197). Lastly, the individual has experienced positive emotion in some aspect. When fear, anxiety, stress or other "aversive arousal" occurs, the individual is less likely to expect success (Bandura, 1977, p. 198).

Evidence of Bandura's self-efficacy framework is present in several studies. Morrison (2016) conducted a qualitative study of mothers who participate in unschooling, documenting experiences and motivations for adopting the lifestyle of unschooling. The below excerpt demonstrates the impact of verbal persuasion from a mother of one child.

> This year I had a little crisis of faith at one point and I almost enrolled my daughter into kindergarten and all of them, all of the educators I know, were instrumental in keeping me on the path. My daughter has a high IQ, and she is gifted, she's already reading at the 6th grade level and, they were informing me how she would not be, she would not be well received in a typical kindergarten classroom as many schools would not make accommodations for a kindergartener in the gifted program. And I was told by my mom I was doing the right thing, you could see [my daughter] thriving so I should stick with it because the schools do not honor the sort of learning that [she] wants to do.

This passage demonstrates Bandura's self-efficacy construct of the importance of validation of others (1977). The mother experiences persuasion from other educators as well as her own mother which strengthened her belief in her ability to successfully facilitate her daughter's learning.

Another facet of Bandura's self-efficacy is the deep and widespread connections the unschooling community offers. Due to technology, unschooling families can easily connect. Gray and Riley's study found that one of the major reasons parents practice unschooling is that

they are familiar with the success of other unschooling families (2013). Through social media, websites, writers, speakers, and other means, families interested in unschooling vicariously witness others successfully mastering it. This finding is consistent with Morrison's research as the mothers had confidence in their abilities to unschool "because they had observed things in the past which confirmed the 'rightness' of the educational choices for their families" (2016, p. 63). For families who may not associate with mastery-oriented peers, or other unschooling families who are finding success in their endeavors, motivation can suffer (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996).

In addition to establishing characteristics of self-efficacy, Bandura also contends that the individual feelings of self-efficacy vary on three dimensions (1997). In his work, he calls attention to the notion of magnitude as the individual should consider similar tasks in which h/she feels confident. Second, Bandura highlights generalizability, or the ways in which similar tasks can be applied to something else undergone by the individual (1997). A third attribute named by Bandura is the idea of strength (1997). This aspect describes the extent to which the individual believes s/he can complete the task (1997).

Bandura asserts that self-efficacy will be higher if an individual has previously experienced direct mastery as opposed to witnessing another person's mastery (1997). The philosophy of unschooling captures all of the above characteristics as it enables a students to take on tasks where they can feel confident (magnitude), apply their experience to other tasks (generalizability), and empower them to take on additional tasks because they believe they will complete them.

Self-regulation

Self-regulation is a related concept found in studies pertaining to academic motivation. Self-regulation as a theoretical perspective emerged out of social cognitive theory and describes certain processes where learners rely on cognitive, behavioral, and motivational strategies to construct knowledge (Allen, 2013). When students monitor and control their learning, they engage in self-regulation (Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro, Lovett & Norman, 2010; Mayer, 2011). Self-regulated learning involves students' ability to take ownership of the learning process through helping them stay aware of their progress and as students observe their learning process.

Ice and Hoover-Dempsey conducted a longitudinal study examining how parents' involvement in children's learning impacted student proximal achievement outcomes, with specific regard to self-regulatory strategy use (2011). The study looked at results within both homeschooling and public schooling settings. In particular, the researchers surveyed 64 parents consisting of 30 public school parents and 34 homeschool parents. The research questions explored whether involvement activities predicted academic achievement among home- and public-school parents and children. While the study emphasized the role of parental involvement, its findings are still relevant to the role of self-regulation in alternative education setting.

The results suggested that in comparison to the conventionally schooled children, the homeschooled students had significantly stronger efficacy and learning regulation strategies, as reported by parents. The researchers name specific self-regulatory strategies that promote learning and developmental success such as goal-setting, planning, self-monitoring and evaluation, and appropriate help seeking (Icy & Hoover-Dempsey, 2011). The study cautions that limitations of the study include its small sample size and that notion homeschool parents

may be more likely to report positive outcomes. Nevertheless, this highlights a need for further investigation into the relationship between alternative learning and proximal achievement outcomes.

A specific construct found within self-regulated learning is the notion of self-regulation of motivation, or the awareness and active control of one's motivation (Wolters, 2003). The practice of self-regulating one's motivation can deepen learning. Wolters (2003) argued that self-regulation of motivation occurs when learners "purposefully act to initiate, maintain, or supplement their willingness to start, to provide work toward, or to complete a particular activity or goal" (Wolters; 2003, p. 190). In other words, an individual must be willing to control their motivation around an objective. Wolters work also discusses the importance of volition in learners, or an individual's willingness to do something.

For unschoolers, volition and self-regulation of motivation may be higher as the autonomous nature of unschooling can compel learners to complete an activity. A recent study examining self-regulation among Australian home educated students identified the connection between self-regulated learning and homeschooling (Jackson, 2016). Using structured interviews, the qualitative research sought to explore similarities and differences between home education and conventional schooling. Using both grounded and historical sociocultural theories, Jackson found that students identified three areas where self-regulation occurs while learning at home (2016). Specifically, interviewees most commonly discussed opportunities for flexibility, freedom, and self-direction in their home learning. This is illustrated in the following comment by a ten-year-old learner, "It [learning at home] allows me to choose what, how the days are run, and everything like that." A seventeen-year-old interviewee also praises the degree of flexibility available with homeschooling, adding that it allows the freedom of choosing what

to study and when (Jackson, 2016). Data from additional student interviews reveal a strong relationship between learning and autonomy. It is evident that self-regulating both motivation and learning play significant roles in the learning process.

Expectancy-value Theory

There are several frameworks that describe motivation, achievement, and incentives. Expectancy-value theory is one of the most recognized motivation theories in the literature. Literature on motivation usually involves ideas about values, or the notion that individuals can be motivated only when they are inherently interested in an activity or they believe it is important or needed in order to achieve their goals (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Expectancy-value adopts this notion with a cognitive lens as it asserts the idea that individuals are motivated both by their reasons for engaging in tasks and their expectations for success (Johnson & Sinatra, 2011). For example, if a learner values an activity, this impacts their persistence and performance of the tasks involved.

Wigfield and Eccles (2000) published a comprehensive review of expectancy-value theory where they investigate change in the ability beliefs, expectancies for success, and subjective values in regards to change in both adolescents and children. Additionally, the researchers explore why children complete a task as well as the surrounding beliefs regarding their abilities (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Their framework, the expectancy-value model of achievement motivation, is a comprehensive visual representation of the constructs involved. It is rooted in previous expectancy-value models but is more social cognitive in nature (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). It depicts how performance, effort and persistence impact the completion of a task (see Eccles, 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 2000; Johnson & Sinatra, 2011; Schunk, Pintrich &

Meece, 2008). The diagram below describes the ways in which an individual values tasks, and how motivation and the desire to complete tasks plays a role, and the influence of perception of beliefs, stereotypes, and gender roles.
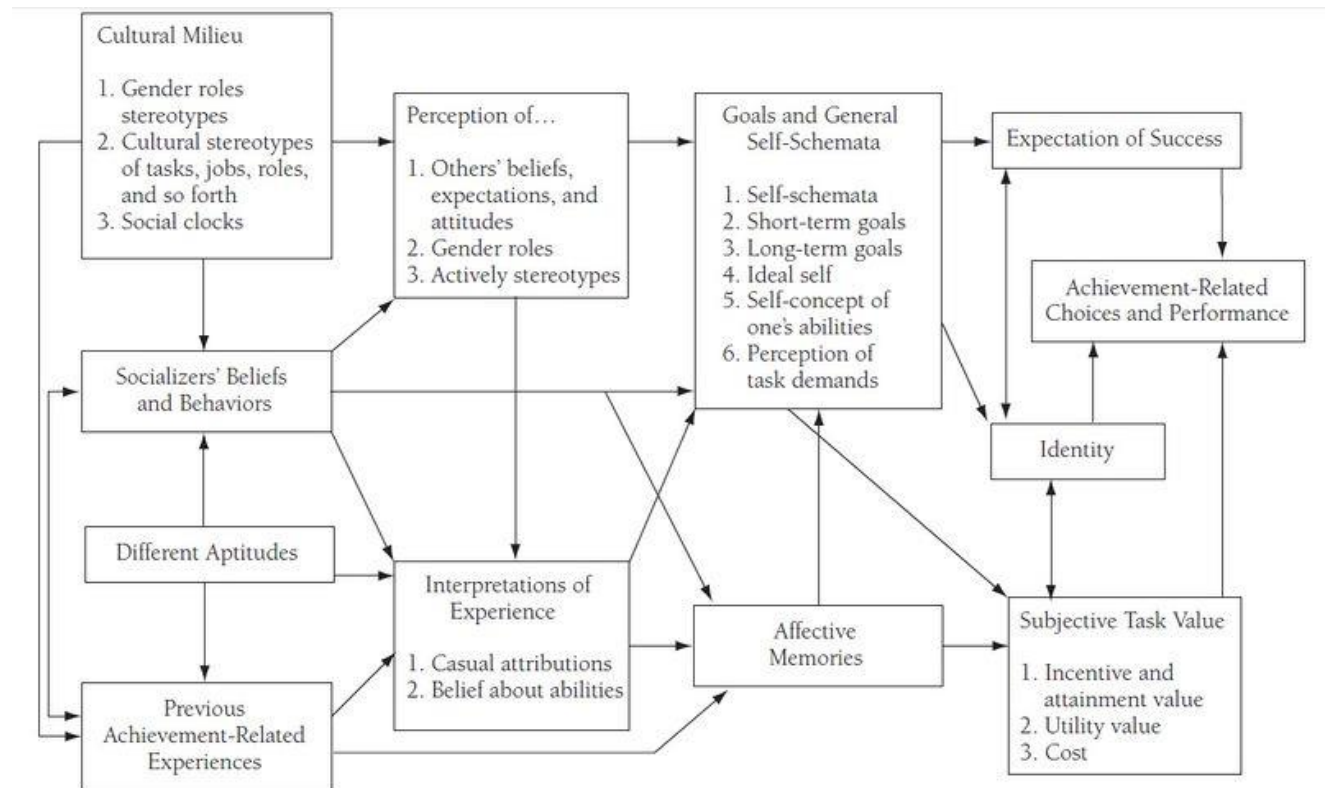

Figure 1. Expectancy-value model of achievement motivation (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000)

While there are many influences contributing to achievement motivation, it is necessary to focus on one component of the model in order to describe how expectancy-value theory can strengthen the learning that takes place in unschooling. In particular, subjective task value is an important aspect of expectancy-value theory. The figure above lists several attributions associated with subjective task value. They include utility value, attainment value, intrinsic value, and cost.

The literature establishes four components related to subjective task value. Utility value

describes the belief that a task is useful to one's future goals (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Attainment value refers to the degree to which an individual confirms or refuses key aspects of one's self-identity or self-schema (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). The task value of cost is defined as the perceived negative consequences associated with engaging in a task. Lastly, intrinsic value, according to Wigfield and Eccles, refers to the pleasure an individual derives from the task at hand (2000).

It is possible to identify subjective task value in the context of unschooling. For example, an unschooler demonstrating utility value may construct a map of nearby hiking routes where the individual will later apply her knowledge and navigate. That individual exhibits attainment value if she associates the task with her self-schema or identity (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). To apply the task value of cost, the unschooler may avoid studying physics in depth because the time required for that takes time away from more preferred activities such as map-making or hiking. In regards to intrinsic value, the practice of unschooling exemplifies this as learners pursue their own interests to study in depth, thereby deriving enjoyment from their self-directed learning. Unschooling provides many avenues for learners to engage in subjective task value.

Intrinsic Motivation

One of the most important ways to strengthen learning is to invoke intrinsic motivation among students. According Pintrich & Schunk (1996), intrinsic motivation is described as an individual engaging in a behavior for its own sake because it is enjoyable. The motivation comes from within the individual as the individual engages in activity without concern of the external reward. Intrinsic motivation is a major component of unschooling considering the philosophy allows individuals to exert choice over their environment.

Early literature on intrinsic motivation posited that there is a desire for people to feel competent and behave and interact successfully within the environment (White, 1959). From a human development perspective, this need appears among infants grabbing objects that call their attention as well as older children who examine and manipulate objects in order to control the environment (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Named effectance motivation by White (1959), this idea calls upon the importance of feeling satisfied by mastering an activity or in the case of unschooling, an educational concept. Effectance motivation in the context of unschooling is important because the philosophy of unschooling provides a system where individual interests can be developed and nurtured (Levin-Gutierrez, 2015).

Harter's Theory of Effectance Motivation relates to unschooling as it describes how mastery goals, reinforcement, and behavior interact in order to support learning. Research on education supports Harter's hypothesized model as numerous recommendations resulting from the research speak to many attributes of unschooling. Some of these include fostering the desire for students to challenge themselves, encouraging students to satisfy interests and curiosity as opposed to attaining good grades, and promoting independent judgment versus relying on a teacher's opinion (Pintrich and Schunk, 1996). In addition, the authors emphasize the importance of encouraging independent attempts to achieve objectives and complete tasks as opposed to greater dependence on the teacher (1996).

The concept of intrinsic motivation is connected to the idea of self-determination and autonomy. Research on how self-determination relates to intrinsic motivation in education is vast. It is well established that choice affects intrinsic motivation (Swann & Pittman, 1977; Zuckerman, Proac, Lathin, Smith & Deci, 1978). Swann and Pittman's foundational study determined that children who believe they had choice over their activities and play increased

their intrinsic motivation (1977). Conversely, researchers Deci and Ryan found that evaluation and assessment can decrease intrinsic motivation (1987).

While it is known that the power of choice can incite motivation, there is less scholarly research on the ways in which intrinsic motivation operates in the context of unschooling. Gray and Riley provide one of the only studies on the challenges and benefits to unschooling (2013). Along with other key findings, their work revealed what role intrinsic motivation plays in unschooling. A qualitative study that surveyed 232 families on motivations behind pursuing unschooling and its perceived positive and negative aspects, many of the responses cited connections related to intrinsic motivation. Specifically, 133 (57.3%) of the respondents described advantages of unschooling for their children's learning, in particular. They perceived their children as learning more efficiently and eagerly, and learning more life-relevant material, than they would if they were in school. For example, one parent wrote, "The children can delve deeper into subjects that matter to them, spend longer on topics that interest them. They can participate in the real world, learn real life skills, converse with people of all ages" (Gray & Riley, 2013, p. 16). While there is little research available highlighting to what extent unschooling fosters intrinsic motivation, the nature of unschooling provides learners with the power of choice and as a result, stronger self-determination.

Extrinsic motivation has the ability to undermine intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is defined as participating in an activity because it is a means to an end (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Extrinsically-motivated individuals complete tasks because they believe there will be something in return (Lei, 2010). They believe their participation will result in outcomes such as rewards, teacher praise, or avoiding punishment. In traditional educational settings, extrinsic motivation permeates the system through grades, tests, arriving on time, and other

environmental constraints (Levin-Gutierrez, 2015). Intrinsic motivation opposes the notion of rewards systems, which are often offered in traditional school settings in order to increase motivation.

In the context of unschooling, it can be argued that extrinsic rewards are minimized. There is no assessment to determine if a child has achieved mastery; rather, mastery is determined by a self-evaluative process which is driven by intrinsic motivation (Levin-Gutierrez, 2015). When a student is provided with stickers for reading, for example, the student is then focused on a motivator from outside. Author Levin-Gutierrez elaborates:

> For a child who begins school with a love for reading, his or her intrinsic motivation may be killed by giving him/her stickers for reading books. The association the child makes with continuously receiving something in exchange for reading is that he will read to get something. Their purpose changes meaning and hence their actions are guided by the external motivator. This causes the child to learn that reading is done to get something and not for pure enjoyment which is what would maintain the action of reading in the long run (2015, p. 39).

Researchers Rolstad and Kesson (2013) provide accounts of several unschoolers as they relate to the inherent self-direction made available by alternative education. The below excerpt demonstrates an unschooler's intellectual curiosity as opposed to participating in an activity as a means to an end, a hallmark of extrinsic motivation:

> Well you know, in school when the teacher asks you a question, she doesn't really care what you think, and neither does anyone in the class. In college, when the teacher asks a question, he really is interested in what you say, and what he says is interesting.
> And the other students in the class listen to what you say, and they say really interesting

things too. College is just so much more real than school (p. 61).

As unschooling and other alternative education practices provide choices to learners of what and how to learn, learners feel they have greater control and according to literature, intrinsic motivation increases (Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999). Similarly, when leaners feel they have control over their learning, they feel empowered (Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999). The nature of unschooling and similar forms of alternative education can maximize intrinsic motivation and minimize focus on extrinsic rewards.

It is clear there are many aspects to how motivation works in learning, particularly in regards to the philosophy and practice of unschooling. While the scholarly literature on unschooling as it relates to motivation is limited, it is evident that the highly autonomous nature of unschooling plays a significant role in motivation. This literature review described key theories, constructs, and concepts related to motivation as they connect to the practice of unschooling. Additionally, it highlighted how unschooling has the ability to enhance self-efficacy, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation using expectancy-value theory as a foundation. It discussed complex frameworks such as transformative experience and self-regulation in order to further legitimize the practice of unschooling.

There remain various gaps among the literature on unschooling and alternative education practices. The dearth of studies available underscores the need for deeper knowledge around the symbiotic relationship of unschooling and motivation. As motivation requires goals, activity and commitment to achieve outcomes (Schunk, Pintrich & Meece, 2008), the process of unschooling can help individuals sustain motivation so they can achieve certain tasks. Considering motivation is one of the most influential factors for successful learning (Levin-Gutierrez, 2015),

engaging students to follow their aptitudes and curiosity outside of the rigid structures of

conventional schooling has the potential to alter the current landscape of education.

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