

Exploring the Meaning of Motivation in Learning: A Qualitative Inquiry among Students

¹Sirin Sultana, ²Md Zamirul Islam

¹Ph. D. Research Scholar, Department of Education, University of Gour Banga, West Bengal, India

²Student, Department of Education, University of Kalyani, West Bengal, India

E-mail: silpisirin302@gmail.com, eduzamirul@gmail.com

Abstract - The fundamental inquiry into why students engage, persist, or withdraw from the learning process remains a central pillar of educational psychology. While quantitative metrics have traditionally dominated the field by providing correlations between motivational traits and academic achievement, they often fail to capture the lived nuances and subjective meanings that students assign to their educational journeys. This research paper employs a qualitative, phenomenological approach to explore the meaning of motivation among undergraduate students, with a specific focus on the diverse and evolving Indian higher education context. Drawing on a purposive sample of 25 undergraduate students from an urban university setting, the study utilizes semi-structured interviews to uncover the internal and external dialogues that shape their drive to learn. Grounded in the synergy of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT), the analysis identifies five core themes: intrinsic sparks as anchors of resilience, the double-edged nature of extrinsic pressures, the pivotal role of relational "relatedness" (including the "guru-shishya" bond), socio-cultural barriers as burdens of identity, and the psychological toll of the grade-oriented "race." The findings suggest that motivation is not a static trait but a fluid, context-bound phenomenon influenced by familial expectations, economic realities, and institutional empathy. The paper concludes by emphasizing the need for "motivation mapping" and relational pedagogy to nurture intrinsic drives equitably. This research provides critical insights for educators, institutional leaders, and policymakers aiming to foster student-centered learning environments in a post-pandemic landscape.

Keywords: Motivation, Learning, Qualitative Study, Student Experience, Engagement, Higher Education.

Introduction

In the complex architecture of human cognition, motivation serves as the primary engine that drives the acquisition of knowledge, the development of skills, and the persistence required to overcome academic adversity. Within

the academic realm, the concept of motivation is broadly understood as the psychological force that initiates and sustains goal-directed behavior. In the traditional dichotomy, this force is categorized as either intrinsic—arising from an inherent interest and enjoyment in the task—or extrinsic—driven by the desire for external rewards such as grades, social recognition, or financial security. However, the experience of a modern student suggests that these categories are rarely isolated; rather, they exist on a continuum where external pressures are continuously internalized, and internal sparks are often tempered by external realities.

The importance of motivation in the learning process is multifaceted. Beyond merely predicting Grade Point Average (GPA), motivation influences the selection of learning strategies, the level of cognitive engagement, and the student's overall psychological well-being. Research indicates that students with high intrinsic motivation are more likely to employ deep-processing strategies such as critical thinking and metacognitive self-regulation, which in turn foster long-term retention and academic resilience. Conversely, a lack of motivation, or "amotivation," is strongly associated with elevated stress levels, academic burnout, and the eventual withdrawal from the educational system.

Despite its recognized importance, contemporary higher education is grappling with a significant crisis of disengagement. Recent data from UNESCO and other bodies suggest that post-pandemic disengagement rates in regions like India have reached as high as 30%, a trend exacerbated by the shift to hybrid learning models that often fragment the sense of community and "relatedness" essential for academic drive. The modern student operates in a high-stakes environment where education is viewed both as a site of intellectual growth and a critical ladder for socio-economic mobility. This dual pressure can create a "double-edged sword" effect where the drive for success simultaneously fuels effort and fosters exhaustion.

The rationale for this study lies in the limitations of current research paradigms. In educational psychology, motivation is frequently quantified through surveys and effect

sizes ($r = 0.24$ in typical university correlations), yet these metrics often gloss over the "human texture" of the student experience. There is a pronounced research gap in understanding how students in non-Western, collectivist, and socio-economically diverse contexts—such as India—navigate motivation. While Western-centric studies emphasize individual autonomy, the Indian student experience is often deeply embedded in familial honor, community expectations, and caste-based negotiations.

The objective of this qualitative inquiry is to step into this gap by centering participant voices. Drawing from fieldwork in urban Indian campuses, where Hindi-English code-switching often mirrors students' inner negotiations, this study explores motivation not as a variable but as a lived phenomenon. By investigating the subjective meaning of motivation, the study aims to identify the core drivers and barriers that define the undergraduate journey, providing a foundation for more culturally sensitive and psychologically supportive pedagogies.

Theoretical Framework

To explore the "meaning" of motivation, this research synthesizes three key theoretical frameworks that address the psychological, hierarchical, and calculative dimensions of human behavior. This multi-lens approach ensures that the qualitative data is interpreted with both depth and theoretical rigor.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Ryan and Deci, posits that human motivation is sustained by the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

- **Autonomy** involves the need to feel volitional and in control of one's actions, where behavior is an expression of the self.
- **Competence** refers to the innate drive to experience mastery and effectiveness in interacting with one's environment.
- **Relatedness** is the need to establish meaningful social connections and feel a sense of belonging within a community.

In an educational setting, SDT suggests that environments that support these needs foster intrinsic motivation and the internalization of extrinsic goals. However, in the competitive Indian context, these needs often clash with institutional realities: overloaded syllabi erode autonomy, bell-

curve grading undermines competence, and high-pressure examinations can fragment the sense of relatedness among peers.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs provides a structural framework for understanding how motivation is contingent upon the fulfillment of prerequisite needs, ranging from physiological survival and safety to the pinnacle of self-actualization. While traditional educational models focus on the higher tiers of esteem and self-actualization, this research acknowledges that for many students, particularly those from low-income or marginalized backgrounds, the pursuit of education is first and foremost a struggle for "safety" and "security". In the 21st-century context, this hierarchy is increasingly fluid, as social and belonging needs (relatedness) often act as the gateway to academic persistence even when basic financial needs are not fully met.

Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT)

Situated Expectancy-Value Theory (SEVT) focuses on the cognitive evaluation students perform when deciding to engage in a task. It posits that motivation is a product of:

1. **Expectancy for Success:** The individual's belief in their ability to perform a task.
2. **Subjective Task Value:** Comprising intrinsic value (enjoyment), utility value (usefulness), attainment value (importance to identity), and Cost (the perceived negative consequences of engagement).

In the Indian student experience, the "Cost" component—encompassing effort cost, emotional cost (anxiety), and opportunity cost—often looms larger than the perceived value, leading to amotivation or burnout.

Integration and Qualitative Justification

Integrating these theories allows the study to analyze motivation as a multidimensional phenomenon. SDT provides the "fuel" (the needs), Maslow provides the "infrastructure" (the hierarchy), and EVT provides the "decision-making mechanism" (the calculation). A qualitative exploration is uniquely suited to this framework because "meaning" is inherently interpretive. While a survey can tell us *that* a student feels amotivated, a qualitative inquiry tells us *how* that amotivation is felt—perhaps as the "exhaustion of chasing parental expectations" or the "weight of financial pressure in a place like India".

Theoretical Model	Primary Driver of Motivation	Relevant Educational Constructs
Self-Determination Theory (SDT)	Satisfaction of Basic Psychological Needs	Autonomy, Competence, Relatedness, Internalization.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs	Progressive Fulfillment of Human Demands	Safety, Belonging, Esteem, Self-Actualization.
Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT)	Belief in Success vs. Perceived Worth	Task Value, Cost (Effort/Emotional/Opportunity).
Skill-Gap Theory	Perception of Competence Discrepancy	Current Skill vs. Required Skill, Training Needs.

Review of Literature

Albert Bandura (1997) emphasized the role of **self-efficacy** in motivation, suggesting that students’ beliefs in their capabilities significantly influence their engagement and persistence in learning tasks. High self-efficacy has been consistently associated with greater academic motivation and achievement.

Paul R. Pintrich (2003) expanded motivation research by integrating cognitive and contextual perspectives, arguing that motivation is dynamic and influenced by classroom environments, teacher practices, and peer interactions. He emphasized the role of goal orientation and self-regulated learning in sustaining student motivation.

Carol Dweck (2006) introduced the concept of **mindset**, distinguishing between fixed and growth mindsets. Students with a growth mindset are more likely to embrace challenges and persist in learning, demonstrating higher levels of intrinsic motivation.

Kathleen M. Quinlan (2015) argued that meaningful learning motivation is closely linked to students’ sense of purpose and identity. Her work suggests that students are more motivated when learning is perceived as personally relevant and connected to their future aspirations.

The landscape of motivation research from 2018 to 2025 has moved beyond simple trait-based analysis to more ecological and systemic perspectives. Both national and international studies emphasize that motivation is fluid and context-bound—less a trait and more a dialogue between the individual and their surroundings.

International Perspectives:

Global research consistently demonstrates that intrinsic motivation is a more reliable predictor of long-term academic success than extrinsic rewards. Longitudinal studies in university settings show that motivation typically peaks in the first year—driven by the novelty of new experiences—and declines steadily in later years due to burnout, career uncertainty, and increasing academic demands. This "sophomore slump" or later-year decline is often attributed to a shift from interest-based learning to performance-based anxiety as the reality of the labor market approaches.

Furthermore, the "cost" of education has emerged as a significant deterrent. In contexts ranging from the U.S. to Europe, students cite emotional costs (anxiety, stress) and opportunity costs (giving up income) as major factors in their decision to withdraw. However, the role of social support remains a powerful moderator; students who perceive high levels of teacher and peer support report higher levels of behavioral and emotional engagement.

The Indian Higher Education Context:

In India, motivation is inextricably linked to socio-cultural stratifications, including caste, gender, and the rural-urban divide. Research into the impact of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 highlights a persistent "skill gap" between academic curricula and industry requirements, which significantly affects student motivation by reducing the "utility value" of their degrees.

Recent qualitative work among Indian undergraduates has uncovered "motivational ecologies" where traditional collectivist values—such as family honor and community service—interplay with modern aspirations for individual success. For many Indian students, "relatedness" extends beyond the immediate classroom to familial or communal

expectations, making the internalization of extrinsic goals a culturally mandated process.

Focus Area	Key Findings (2018–2025)
Intrinsic vs. GPA	Intrinsic motivation explains over 64% of variance in GPA indirectly through learning strategies.
Gender Dynamics	Female students score higher in both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in non-Western settings.
Socio-Cultural Factors	Caste and gendered expectations are primary drivers of dropout and attrition in India.
Peer Support	Peer groups act as "safe spaces" that mitigate the stress of virtual/hybrid learning transitions.
Evening Programs	Motivation in evening students is heavily impacted by work-study conflict and financial independence.

Identified Research Gaps

Despite the wealth of data, two primary gaps remain:

- Western Dominance:** Most qualitative research on the "meaning" of motivation is based on Western populations, failing to account for the collectivist and hierarchical nuances of the Global South.
- Voice-Centered Depth:** Quantitative studies quantify motivation but fail to capture the "lived phenomenon"—the ebb and flow of daily academic struggle. There is a scarcity of Indian-specific qualitative work that centers emerging adults' stories, particularly in the post-COVID landscape where hybrid learning has amplified motivational fractures.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, phenomenological, and interpretive research design. The choice of phenomenology is particularly appropriate here as it focuses on describing the "essence" of a lived experience—in this case, the experience of "being motivated" or "losing motivation" in an undergraduate environment.

Participants and Setting:

The research was conducted with 25 undergraduate students at a mid-sized urban university in India. The setting is reflective of Bhopal's bustling academic landscape, where a diverse mix of students from various socio-economic backgrounds and regional origins (urban and rural) interact. The sample included students from diverse disciplines,

including Science, Commerce, and Humanities, to capture a broad range of motivational orientations.

Participant Characteristic	Description/Count
Total Number (N)	25 Undergraduate Students
Age Range	18–22 years (Emerging Adulthood)
Gender Distribution	Near parity (reflecting current Indian higher ed trends)
Academic Level	Years 1 through 4 (diverse representation)
Socio-Economic Background	Mixed (including low-income and first-generation learners)

Sampling:

Purposive sampling was used to select participants who could provide rich, descriptive accounts of their motivational journeys. Recruitment was conducted through campus announcements and faculty referrals, targeting a balanced mix of "highly engaged" and "struggling" students to understand the full spectrum of motivational experiences.

Data Collection Tools:

1. **Semi-Structured Interviews:** Lasting 45–60 minutes, these interviews focused on the students' perceived drivers of motivation, their academic challenges, and the role of their social environment.
2. **Open-Ended Questions:** Participants were asked to describe moments of high and low motivation, using metaphors or narratives to capture the "emotional weight" of their experiences.
3. **Motivation Mapping:** A visual exercise where students plotted the "peaks and valleys" of their motivation over the previous academic term, followed by an explanation of the factors behind each shift.

Data Analysis Procedure:

The data were analysed using inductive **Thematic Analysis**. The process involved:

- **Familiarization:** Repeated reading of transcripts to understand the general narrative arc.
- **Initial Coding:** Identifying recurring phrases (e.g., "doing it for my parents," "spark in the lab," "exhaustion from the race").
- **Theme Development:** Grouping codes into larger conceptual categories grounded in the theoretical framework (SDT, EVT, Maslow).
- **Refinement:** Reviewing themes against the raw data to ensure they authentically represent the participants' voices.

Ethical Considerations:

Participation was strictly voluntary, and written informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality was maintained through anonymization of names and academic institutions. The researcher remained sensitive to the power dynamics inherent in the Indian "guru-shishya" context, ensuring that students felt safe to share negative experiences without fear of institutional repercussion.

Results / Findings

The thematic analysis revealed five major themes that describe the complex meaning of motivation for these students. These findings illuminate the internal and external forces that shape their academic trajectories.

Theme 1: Intrinsic Sparks as Anchors of Resilience

For many students, motivation is anchored by "intrinsic sparks"—moments of genuine curiosity or personal relevance that sustain effort even amid structural setbacks. These sparks often originate from a specific course elective, a hands-on

laboratory experience, or the realization that their studies can solve real-world problems. One student noted that while the overall syllabus felt like a burden, a single project on community health "felt like it belonged to me," transforming their approach to the entire semester. This theme aligns with the SDT need for autonomy and the EVT component of intrinsic value, suggesting that a sense of "ownership" over learning is the most potent defense against burnout.

Theme 2: The Double-Edged Sword of Extrinsic Pressures

Extrinsic motivation was experienced not as a simple reward system but as a complex "double-edged sword." On one hand, parental expectations and the drive for financial independence were powerful initial motivators, particularly for first-generation university students. On the other hand, the constant pressure to succeed "for the family" often led to high-stakes anxiety and psychological fatigue. Participants described a "heavy silence" in their homes regarding grades, which acted as a more powerful—and often more taxing—motivator than any external praise.

Theme 3: Contextual Enablers: Peer Bonds and Faculty Empathy

A recurring finding was the vital role of "relatedness" as a fuel for motivation. Students described peer groups not just as social circles but as "academic safe spaces" where they could navigate the difficulties of hybrid learning and complex assignments. Similarly, faculty members who demonstrated empathy and "transformational leadership" were seen as key catalysts for motivation. The "guru-shishya" bond—a relationship defined by mutual respect and holistic mentorship—was highlighted as a transformative force that could turn a student's a motivation into active engagement through a single supportive conversation.

Theme 4: Socio-Cultural Barriers: The Burdens of Identity

Motivation was also perceived through the lens of socio-cultural identity. Students from marginalized communities (e.g., Dalit or ST categories) described an additional layer of "motivation to disprove" stereotypes of incompetence. For female students, motivation often involved a struggle for autonomy against gendered expectations such as early marriage or domestic responsibilities. These participants didn't just feel motivated to "learn"; they felt motivated to "exist and persist" in an environment that often felt unwelcoming.

Theme 5: The Psychological Toll of the "Grade Race"

Finally, the meaning of motivation was frequently overshadowed by the "grade-oriented approach" of the Indian

education system. Many students expressed a sense of "academic regret," feeling that their intrinsic curiosity was being crushed by the mechanical requirements of rote learning and high-stakes testing. This "performative extrinsic" motivation—where students engage in activities (like note-

taking) merely for show—was identified as a common symptom of intrinsic voids. The feeling that "it's never enough" regarding academic achievement was a dominant sentiment, leading to a state of chronic stress.

Theme	Lived Manifestation	Theoretical Alignment
Intrinsic Sparks	"The lab project felt like it was mine."	Autonomy, Intrinsic Value
Extrinsic Pressures	"Doing it so my parents' sacrifice isn't wasted."	External Regulation, Utility Value
Relational Bonds	"My professor asked how I was, not just my grades."	Relatedness, Social Support
Identity Hurdles	"I have to work twice as hard to prove I belong."	Competence (Threatened), Attainment Value
The "Grade Race"	"I'm just surviving from one exam to the next."	Amotivation, High Effort Cost

Discussion

The findings of this study provide a nuanced interpretation of motivation that extends beyond standard psychological models, particularly in the way "meaning" is constructed by the students.

Interpreting Findings through Theory

When viewed through Self-Determination Theory, the findings emphasize that in the Indian context, **Relatedness** is often the "primary nutrient" that enables autonomy and competence. While Western models often prioritize individual choice, these students found their sense of volition *through* their relationships with others—be it a parent, a mentor, or a peer group. This "collectivist autonomy" is a significant insight for educational psychology in non-Western settings.

Through the lens of Expectancy-Value Theory, the study highlights the overwhelming role of **Cost**. For many participants, the expectancy of success was high, and the utility value of the degree was clear, yet the "emotional cost" of the high-stakes environment was so great that it suppressed their intrinsic joy. This suggests that "interventions" should not just focus on making learning "fun" (intrinsic value) but on making it "safer" (reducing emotional cost).

Comparison with Previous Studies:

The findings align with international research regarding the decline of motivation over time and the negative impact of amotivation on stress levels. However, this study adds a distinct "Indian flavor" by showing how the traditional "guru-shishya" dynamic can serve as a powerful moderator for these global trends. Unlike Western studies that often focus on teacher "leadership style," these students emphasized the "empathy and personal bond" of the teacher as the primary motivator.

Furthermore, while previous research on "dropout" focused on academic failure, our findings suggest that attrition is more closely linked to a student's "sense of belonging" and the psychological hurdles of "identity shame". This reinforces the idea that motivation is as much a social phenomenon as it is a cognitive one.

New Insights on the "Meaning" of Motivation

A key insight emerging from this inquiry is the concept of "**Motivation to Disprove**." Standard theories focus on "achievement goals" (to do well) or "avoidance goals" (not to fail). However, for marginalized students, motivation was often about "vindicating" their identity against societal stereotypes. This suggests that for many, motivation is a form

of social resistance—a finding that is rarely captured in quantitative models but is essential for understanding equity in education.

Implications

The findings of this research offer practical pathways for reforming higher education to be more student-centered and psychologically supportive.

For Teachers: Adopting Relational Pedagogy

Teachers should transition from being mere "transmitters of information" to "mentors of motivation." This involves:

- **Motivation Mapping:** Using brief, reflective exercises to understand the specific drivers and barriers of their students.
- **Autonomy Support:** Providing choices in assignments and projects to foster "intrinsic sparks" and a sense of ownership.
- **Human-Centered Style:** Recognizing the "emotional cost" of the curriculum and providing space for students to express their anxieties without judgment.

For Institutions: Creating Motivational Ecosystems

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) must move beyond individual-centered models to "institutionally responsive" models.

- **Strengthening Mentorship:** formalizing the "guru-shishya" bond through structured mentoring programs that prioritize psychosocial support alongside academic guidance.
- **Fostering Digital Equity:** Ensuring that hybrid and online learning environments are designed to sustain "relatedness" through virtual peer groups and interactive platforms.
- **Inclusive Environments:** Actively addressing "caste and gender biases" through cultural awareness initiatives and inclusive teaching practices to reduce the "identity burden" on marginalized students.

For Policymakers: Shifting the Paradigm

Policymakers should use the framework of NEP 2020 to move away from the "grade race" toward a more holistic view of student success.

- **Flexible Curricula:** Reducing the rigidity of academic requirements to allow students to pursue "intrinsic interests" across disciplines.

- **Well-being Oriented Policy:** Integrating mental health and psychological fulfillment as core indicators of institutional quality.
- **Equitable Access:** Moving beyond "enrollment parity" to focus on "persistence equity" by addressing the socio-economic factors that sap motivation in disadvantaged groups.

Conclusion

This qualitative inquiry has sought to peel back the layers of student motivation to uncover the rich, sometimes painful, and always complex "meaning" behind the undergraduate experience. By centering the voices of 25 students in urban India, the study has shown that motivation is far more than a correlation with GPA; it is a lived dialogue between a student's inherent curiosity and the structural realities of their world.

The themes identified—ranging from the "intrinsic sparks" that provide resilience to the "identity burdens" that complicate academic persistence—highlight the need for a fundamental shift in how we approach educational psychology. We must move away from seeing students as data points in a "grade race" and begin to see them as individuals navigating a high-stakes journey of self-discovery and socio-economic survival.

Future Research Directions

Future research should expand this qualitative inquiry to include:

1. **Longitudinal Voice Studies:** Tracking how the "meaning" of motivation shifts as students move from first year to their first job.
2. **Rural and Indigenous Contexts:** Exploring the specific motivational drivers in students from the "most marginalized" communities whose voices are still largely missing from the literature.
3. **The Impact of AI:** Investigating how Generative AI tools like ChatGPT affect the "sense of competence" and "intrinsic drive" in a generation that is increasingly "digital native".

Ultimately, the goal of education must be to nurture a student's "internal drive" equitably, ensuring that every learner has the "safety" to explore their curiosity and the "relatedness" to sustain their journey. Only then can higher education fulfil its promise as a site of true intellectual and personal transformation.

REFERENCES

- [1] Assefa, T., & Tilwani, S. (2025). Teacher leadership and student engagement in higher education. *Journal of Educational Leadership*.
- [2] Bandu, J., & Ryan, R. M. (2024). Perspectives on self-determination theory and student persistence. *Psychological Review*.
- [3] Biboso, J., & Dela Cruz, M. (2025). Students' motivation strategies and attitudes in learning social sciences. *Psychology and Education*, 38(7), 776–799.
- [4] Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2020). Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness. *Guilford Press*.
- [5] Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2024). Situated expectancy-value theory: A review. *Annual Review of Psychology*.
- [6] Filgona, J., Sakiyo, J., & Gwany, D. M. (2020). Motivation in learning. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*.
- [7] Haulzel, L., & Van Beuningen, R. (2024). Intrinsic motivation and GPA: A mediating model of learning strategies. *PMC Psychology*.
- [8] Kumari, S., Jain, S. K., & Kumari, R. (2025). Voices from the classroom: A qualitative exploration of how motivation shapes undergraduate students' experiences. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(4), 2615-2620.
- [9] Kumar, V., & Kapoor, R. (2024). Motivation and self-regulation in higher education success. *Journal of Educational Psychology*.
- [10] Lovett, M. C., et al. (2023). Enhancing college teaching through a deeper understanding of student motivation. *AETR Journal*.
- [11] Meena, R. K. (2023). Universal access and equity provisions in NEP 2020. *Journal of Anthropological Studies*.
- [12] Ministry of Education. (2024). AISHE 2021-22: All India Survey on Higher Education. *Government of India*.
- [13] Moges, B., & Korhonen, H. (2024). Inclusive learning environments and cognitive engagement. *Educational Research Review*.
- [14] Patidar, S. (2025). Sustaining digital platforms: A study of DIKSHA and SWAYAM. *Journal of Teacher Training*.
- [15] Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). Self-Determination Theory. *Guilford Press*.
- [16] Salman, A., & Yanpar-Yelken, T. (2024). Motivation and communication in ESL classrooms: A study based on Maslow. *AESS Archive*.
- [17] Scoulas, J., et al. (2025). Comprehensive perspectives on university student success and adjustment. *Journal of Student Success*.
- [18] Singh, J. (2018). Navigating academic landscapes: Meanings and purposes. *Indian Mental Health Journal*.
- [19] Srivastava, S. (2024). Emotional maturity and yogic interventions in adolescents. *IJFMR*.
- [20] UNESCO. (2023). *Global Education Monitoring Report: Technology in Education*.
- [21] Watrous, Faith A. (2025). Situated motivation for an undergraduate degree: A phenomenology. *Old Dominion University*.

Citation of this Article:

Sirin Sultana, & Md Zamirul Islam. (2026). Exploring the Meaning of Motivation in Learning: A Qualitative Inquiry among Students. *International Research Journal of Innovations in Engineering and Technology - IRJIET*, 10(4), 86-93. Article DOI <https://doi.org/10.47001/IRJIET/2026.104011>
