# Extrinsic Motivation

## EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

### KEY TERMS

* Extrinsic motivation: a motivation that is driven by external rewards (tangible or intangible) or to avoid punishment.
* Operant conditioning: when someone or something is conditioned to behave in a certain way due to a reward or consequence.
* Intrinsic motivation: a motivation to do an activity purely for its inherent satisfaction rather than for some other reward or consequence.

Disclaimer: ChatGPT 3.5 was used in creating this article

### What is extrinsic motivation?

Extrinsic motivation is the motivation to participate in an activity or engage in a certain pattern of behavior based on meeting an external goal. It is driven by the desire to receive a reward or avoid punishment. Some examples of extrinsic motivators include grades, money, praise, and trophies. While this may be good in the short term, it may not always lead to sustained motivation in the long run. Kendra Cherry, MSEd, related extrinsic motivation to operant conditioning. She had this to say: “Extrinsic motivation is involved in operant conditioning, which is when someone or something is conditioned to behave a certain way due to a reward or consequence.”(Cherry, 2022)

### How does extrinsic motivation help students in school?

External rewards can be a good thing to help students stay motivated and on task. It’s a good start-up motivation, especially if the students lack motivation to begin with or don’t yet have the skills to complete a task. Extrinsic motivation can push students to work harder and accomplish their tasks because there’s a guaranteed reward associated with it. Some of these rewards could include good grades, extra credit, extra praise or recognition, or a homework pass. (Motivating students,2017)

### How does extrinsic motivation harm students?

“Instructors should recognize that extrinsic motivation may actually distract the student from the learning process. Although extrinsic motivators might work in the short term, such motivators do not work over the long haul. Students who are learning material for a reward typically do not continue to learn the material once the instructor removes the reward.” (Motivating students,2017) If the students are focused on extrinsic motivation, it could lead to a decrease in intrinsic motivation, a sole focus on grades instead of receiving a genuine understanding of the material, a dependency on external rewards, or a lack of transferable skills.

### Why is this important for teachers to know?

Extrinsic motivation plays a role in shaping students’ behavior, learning outcomes, and overall classroom dynamics. It can be used to manage classroom behavior, increase classroom engagement and participation, and can help students develop more intrinsic motivation, or motivation to do an activity purely for its inherent satisfaction rather than for some other reward or consequence, over time. Teachers should know how to effectively use extrinsic motivation in their classroom in a way that can help students and eventually lead them to develop their own intrinsic motivation.

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