

THE MOTIVATION BEHIND INDIVIDUALS' DECISIONS FOR PURSUING A MASTER PROGRAM IN CORPORATE FINANCE-INSURANCE

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Abstract: It is mandatory for each higher education program to train specialists in various fields. This study aims to develop a local theory in order to choose the Master Program of Corporate Finance - Insurance of the Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. The participants in this case study are in the exploratory professional identity phase. Choosing the Master Program for these students and assuming it in a responsible manner can lead to their expectations.

While using thematic analysis there were identified four major themes: previous experience, learning, perception and opportunity. All these contributed to the development of a local theory about motivation and there we found a work pattern, knowledge, learning and other topics in their expectations.

Once the student's motivation is determined, the teachers have the opportunity to guide the academic activity according to these professional expectations. After finding out this information, it is easier for the teachers to develop the educational offer. Professional identity also plays an important role in their development.

Keywords: corporate-finance, expectation, insurance, motivation.

JEL Classification: G22

INTRODUCTION

Corporate Finance and Insurance are some of the most complex and dynamic fields. The people who work in these fields must be prepared, determined and motivated. We believe that motivation is the real key to personal and professional development. At any moment, you need to know *how you are* and *why you are there*.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews the literature, Section 3 describes the methodology and the used data, Section 4 offers information regarding the results and Section 5 concludes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In academic literature, motivation has been defined in multiple ways and there are many theories about this subject. We chose a simple definition: “the process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained” (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008), and we remember the major theories: Maslow’s Need Hierarchy (Maslow, 1954), Adam’s Equity Theory (Adams 1963), Vroom’s Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964), Locke’s Goal Setting Theory (Locke&Latham, 1990).

In Self-Determination (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985) we can identify the most common classification of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Researchers Sekhar, Patwardhan & Singh (2013) provide a summary of the literature in the field, extracting all possible dimensions of motivation: *training, monetary incentives, job transfer, job satisfaction, promotion, working conditions, achievement, appreciation, recognition, job security, social opportunities*, having direct and indirect impact on motivation techniques.

According to Boekaerts, M. (2002, pp 9) “*as teachers, you should have a good idea of the motivational beliefs that your students bring into the classroom.*” We think that once the student’s motivation is determined, teachers have the opportunity to guide their academic activity according to these professional expectations.

Recently, Incikabi1, Pektas,Ozgelen Kurnaz (2013), in their qualitative research they focused on necessity, motivation and expectation to that could affect the offer academic in the Matematics and Science Education field. They explain that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations generally caused academic expectations.

Research Questions

These questions guides our research:

- a) Why you chose this topics?
- b) What is the motivation?
- c) Previous experience influences the choice of masters program?

d) What is the relationship between motivation and expectations of students from the Master of Corporate Finance – Insurance?

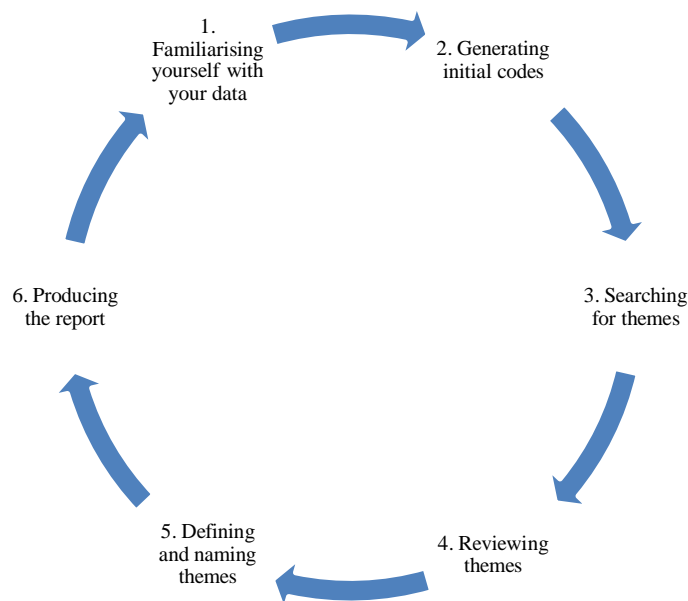
METHODOLOGY

Design research and thematic analysis

The present study uses one of the most common forms of the qualitative methods. According to Henwood & Pidgeon (1992), this method is suitable for a research which can lead to the development of a local theory.

Braun & Clarke (2006, pp. 6) define thematic analysis as: *a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within data*. Below, can find the all phases of thematic analysis, this should be viewed as *a recursive process* (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

Figure no. 1. **Six phases of tematic analysis - Braun & Clarke (2006)**



Source: our processing based on Braun & Clarke (2006)

Participants

The participants of this study weren't randomly selected; all students were invited to be part of this research. Twenty students (6 male, 14 female students) from the Master in Corporate Finance Insurance, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca, participated in this case study. Ages ranged from 21 to 30 ($M = 22.35$, $SD=1.9$) years.

Procedure

The researcher informed the participants that the goal of the study was to develop a local theory. All information for the case study was collected by using an open-ended questionnaire. The participants were asked:

- i. What was your motivation in choosing this master program?
- ii. What are your expectations after graduating this master program?

They didn't have a time limit to answer the above questions, and their identities or personal details are confidential.

Tool

According to Buiga, Dragoş, Lazăr, Mare, & Parpucea (2010) the open-ended questions are indispensable in gathering information on sensitive issues such as those related to measuring attitudes, needs and motivations.

The present study aims to develop a local theory about the motivation behind individuals' decisions for pursuing a master program of Corporate Finance-Insurance. We have used a questionnaire with two open-ended questions to find more information about their motivation and expectation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Each of the 6 six steps of the thematic analysis were respected, for example, the table below includes two coding examples. But according Clarke & Braun (2013), this process is not linear and was necessary to read again for getting a deep understanding of the text.

Table no 1 Coding exemples

Coding	Text fragment
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Need for change	<i>"I wanted a change [...]"</i>
Acquiring new knowledge	<i>'I wish to acquire more knowledge within this area to aid me in my future career.'</i>

Source: our processing

The findings from the data were presented under four main patterns:

Figure no. 2. **Students motivation**



Source: our processing

A) Students motivation - A1) Previous experience – our results show that there are three major aspects:

Continuity of studies

The desire for continuity in studying a subject can also be based on familiarity with that subject. An example to that effect is provided by S₂₀:

'The reason behind my choice to specialise in Corporate Finance and Insurance is that I wish to continue studying the subjects which have captivated my interest the most and in which I feel the most capable of reaching the highest proficiency, namely Finance and Insurance.'

The influence of authority – teachers can influence students' choice of a master's programme. Two relevant examples are given below:

S₁₅: *'thanks to the thesis adviser.'*

S₁₇: *'to continue studying insurance, and that is thanks to teacher X, who taught the subject in a way that made it enjoyable.'*

Need of change

S₅: "I wanted a change [...]"

S₁₈: "I wanted to study something new."

A₂) Learning

Results show that there are five aspects on which the choice of a master's programme is based. During the learning process, expertise is attained both by gaining deeper insight into previously existing knowledge and by acquiring new knowledge. All these subthemes incorporate the learning process,

In-depth knowledge

S₁₄: *'I wanted to gain more in-depth knowledge'*

Acquiring new knowledge

S₁₀: *'I wish to acquire more knowledge within this area to aid me in my future career.'*

S₁₉: *'through which one can acquire knowledge which will aid me in choosing a job.'*

Two other subthemes have been identified within the same part: **the desire to exceed oneself** and **the broadening of one's knowledge**.

A₃) Perception - is defined in this study as a subjective reflection of the motivation that lay at the foundation of one's choice of a master's programme. This comprises:

Choosing a master's programme based on one's perception of the entrance exam

S₃: *'I found the entrance exam easier than the ones for other specialisations'.*

S₆: *'the study material for the entrance exam was easy for me to learn'.*

The quality of the master's programme

S₁₃: *'it provides high quality education.'*

Prospects

S₁₁: *'I thought that the insurance and finance area could make for a promising career'.*

S₁₉: *'The Corporate Finance and Insurance master's gives one good career prospects'.*

A₄) Opportunities

Some of the students focused on the opportunities the master's can offer, which are as follows:

The double specialisation of the master's programme

S₅: *'enhancing my knowledge in two areas, namely Finance and Insurance.'*

S₁₆: *'The career opportunities it provides, both in the corporate area and in insurance.'*

The desire to find employment abroad (financial justification)

S₇: 'I want to move to Germany [...] and there is a lot of focus on finance and insurance there, which means there are jobs that pay better in these areas.'

B) Students' expectations

As for the expectations students have once they have graduated from the master's programme, they refer to:

B₁) Learning, which translates as expectations regarding the acquisition of knowledge within finance

S₄: 'I expect to gain new, less theoretical and more practical knowledge'

S₅: 'to gain specialised knowledge in the area.'

The batch of collected data also revealed the students' **desire to exceed** their current knowledge level. Some of the participants mentioned their wish to increase the level of knowledge they have already acquired in finance (which includes insurance).

The desire to exceed oneself

S₆: 'I would like to enhance my knowledge in the area'

The desire to put knowledge into practice

S₆: 'I hope to learn how to put it into practice, too'

S₁₈: 'I hope to gain enough knowledge, which I will put into practice.'

Moreover, it is clearly noticeable how S₆ demonstrated full awareness and responsibility with respect to her choice of a master's programme. Acquiring new knowledge and the desire to put that knowledge into practice are realistic expectations when it comes to professional training. These realistic expectations are attainable upon completion of the master's programme, for they are the result of conscious assumptions. Consequently, one may also point out the use of the conjunctive mood (in Romanian) 'să învăț' (I may learn), 'să dețin' (I may acquire), 'să am' (I may have) etc., which marks an attainable or possible act.

One interesting aspect to note was this new learning dimension, manifested as **curiosity** to gain an in-depth understanding of finance and insurance.

Curiosity

S₁: 'To have a better understanding of everything that has to do with finance and insurance.'

B₂) Employment

Most expectations targeted the possibility of obtaining a job within the area of expertise. Several such examples are given below:

S₃: *'finding a better job in this area, a job that I like and that pays well'*

S₁₁: *'I would like to pursue this line of study and get the certifications I need to become an actuary.'*

S₁₇: *'After I graduate I will pursue a career in insurance.'*

Moreover, an **Aspiration towards competence** has also been identified:

S₁₃: *'I hope to become a good specialist.'*

S₁₄: *'To become much better trained, so that I can afford to have high expectations of an attractive, well-paid job.'*

All these expectations about obtaining employment or aspiring to become a good specialist in the area are based both on intrinsic (previous experience) and on extrinsic motivation (the influence of authority, the double specialisation and other opportunities).

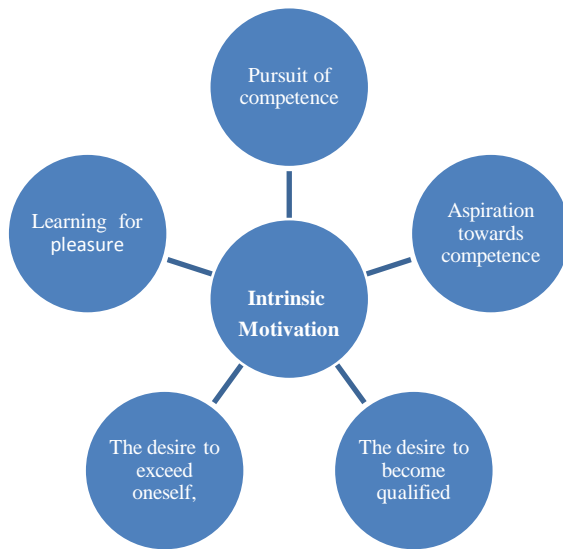
As most subjects focused on knowledge acquisition and obtaining a job, this atypical theme attests a new set of expectations of the non-financial kind, founded on the desire to exceed oneself. *'I want, I would like very much for this master's programme to enable me to enhance my expertise, to raise my knowledge level way above the current one.'*

Personal satisfaction

S₁₈: *'I hope that at the end of my master's studies I will be happy to have chosen this specialisation'.*

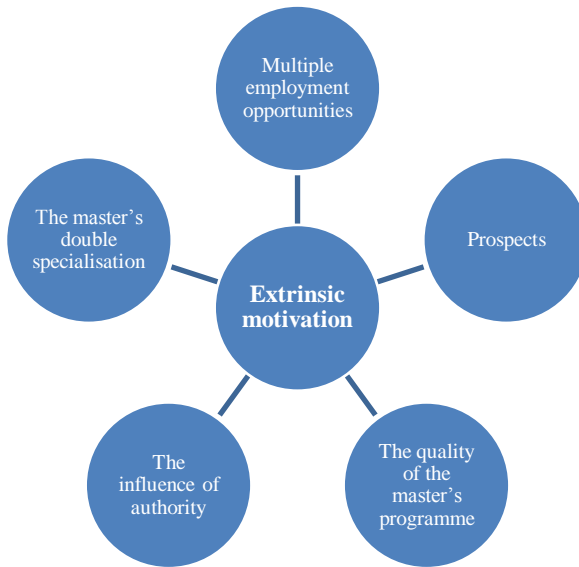
The two main types of motivation were identified in the batch of collected data.

Figure no. 3. Intrinsic Motivation



Source: our processing

Figure no. 4. Extrinsic Motivation



Source: our processing

As illustrated by the figure above, intrinsic motivation includes aspects which are influenced by internal factors and pertain to the individual, while for extrinsic motivation it is external factors that play a major role.

CONCLUSIONS

Using thematic analysis this article investigates the relationship between motivation and expectations of students from the Master of Corporate Finance – Insurance. Our research started from the general to the particular case, also we were collected objective evidence, empirical inductive approach to support the local theory.

Motivation based on *previous experience* is often associated with *the desire to obtain employment within the area*. It is interesting to note that *teachers' personalities – role models* are integrated within *the desire to exceed oneself*. The aspiration to exceed oneself stems from a desire for self-fulfilment as compared to the achievements of a role model.

As far as *learning* is concerned, one cannot identify a rule with a certain applicability, but rather a set of expectations which regard *the learning process: knowledge*, as well as *employment*.

Based on their *perception* of choosing a master's programme, students' expectations are directed towards *the desire to put knowledge into practice* by becoming employed.

The opportunities provided by this master's programme generate expectations with respect to acquiring the necessary knowledge to be able to face any challenge at the work place.

As for the practical implications, teachers have the possibility to steer their instruction activities towards fulfilling the students' expectations.

Thus, the local theory which best describes the study that we have conducted can be phrased as follows:

When it comes to the motivation behind choosing a master's programme, as defined by previous experience, learning, perception and opportunities, students' expectations upon completion of the master's generally translate as obtaining employment in their area of expertise by means of acquiring the necessary knowledge.

With the aid of the above-mentioned local theory, the students of the *Corporate Finance and Insurance* programme have expressed their desire to become integrated into the labour market. Their conscious and responsible choice of a master's programme may lead to the fulfilment of their declared expectations.

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