

## Academic motivation of primary school pupils: Relation with general feelings towards school and specific aspects of the quality of school life

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*The research presented in this paper is aimed towards examining the relation between the pupils' perception of the school life quality and different types of academic motivation (external and autonomous). The data was collected using Self regulation questionnaire-Academic (Ryan & Connell, 1989) and Quality of school life questionnaire (Ainley & Bourke, 1982). The research included 434 primary school pupils from fifth to eighth grade. A positive correlation was found between all variables, where the strength of the correlation varies depending on type of academic motivation. In general, it can be concluded that those pupils who express more positive feelings towards school and who more assess specific aspects of school life more positively are more autonomously motivated to fulfill school obligations. Obtained results are discussed with reference to the relevance of pupils' quality of school life in enhancing autonomous motivation in the academic domain.*

*Key words: academic motivation, feelings towards school, pupils, quality of school life, self-determination theory.*

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## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Motivation represents a force that encourages and directs human action towards achieving a certain goal.<sup>2</sup> Differences in the behaviour occur due to different motives, internal or external. According to Deci and Ryan,<sup>3</sup> intrinsic motivation refers to the natural tendency of people to act in accordance with their own inner interests. As such, it is not only a source of satisfaction, but it is also important for their cognitive and social development. On the other side, extrinsically motivated individuals act in a certain way for the purpose of achieving an externally set goal. People differ according to the types of motivation, depending on the goals and reasons that encourage their action, and not only according to degree of motivation. It is a matter of self-determination, which is understood as a feeling of freedom that occurs when performing activities that are interesting or important to a person's character.<sup>4</sup> The key question is to what extent is people's behaviour autonomous. Intrinsically motivated persons perceive their behaviour as autonomous (self-determined), and it is accompanied by an experience of interest and enjoyment. On the other hand, controlled behaviour implies an external locus of causality, since it is determined by external pressures and controls or those arising from the person themselves. Autonomous behaviour implies a process of internalization. It is a developmental process of taking over external regulation in which individuals actively integrate social values and behaviours into a coherent image of themselves.<sup>5</sup> According to the theory of self-determination, depending on the degree of the internalization, four types of extrinsic motivation can be distinguished.<sup>6</sup> In external motivation, behaviour is motivated externally by values from the environment, and not by the individuals. These are behaviours for which individuals expect a reward, or behaviours incited by the intention of avoiding sanctions (e.g. pupil studying in order to receive a reward). In introjected motivation external regulation beginning to be internalized. The process of introjection (self-control) makes the individual less susceptible to external regulation of their behaviour (e.g. pupils studying because they would feel uncomfortable if they get a bad grade). Individuals behave this way as to maintain sense of self-worth and self-confidence, while they don't recognize introjection as their own. In identified regulation, individuals identify the value of a particular behaviour and considering it important for achieving their goal

<sup>1</sup> Na engl. prev. Mihovila Lozančić.

<sup>2</sup> R. C. BECK, *Motivation: Theories and principles*, Harlow, Prentice Hall, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> E. L. DECI, R. M. RYAN, The »what« and »why« of goal pursuits. Human needs and self-determination of behavior, *Psychological Inquiry*, 11 (2000) 4, 227-268, 233.

<sup>4</sup> Deci, Ryan, *The »what« and »why«...*, 239.

<sup>5</sup> E. L. DECI, R. M. RYAN, *SDT theory* (2005), <http://www.psych.rochester.edu/SDT/theory.html> (22.05.2020).

<sup>6</sup> Deci, Ryan, *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination...*, 135-138.

(e.g. pupils studying because they want to understand the subject, or because they consider that it will be useful to them). In integrated motivation, the individual also perceives the instrumental value of an activity for achieving a particular goal whereupon accepts it as his own behaviour or opinion. External and introjected regulation are controlled types of regulation, while identified and integrated regulation represent autonomous types of regulation. According to Deci et al., integrated regulation isn't usually displayed in middle childhood, and that emphasis should be placed on intrinsic motivation, since school children vary in intrinsic motivation to fulfil school obligations.<sup>7</sup>

Social environment may encourage or hinder intrinsic motivation depending on whether it enables individuals to satisfy basic psychological needs for autonomy, relatedness and competence. The results of the research indicated that the teachers' support of pupil autonomy leads to greater curiosity, desire for challenges and greater intrinsic motivation.<sup>8</sup> Actions that can lead to sense of relatedness involve showing warmth, care, and letting people know they matter. The need for competence refers to an individual's need to feel successful and to have control in their environment.<sup>9</sup> These tendencies largely depend on the stimulus of the social environment. Experiences gained in the classroom are related to motivation.<sup>10</sup> In this respect it should be noted that pupils whose intrinsic motivation was encouraged from an early age continue expressing it later in life.<sup>11</sup> The key question is how to create condition in which people will motivate themselves.<sup>12</sup>

The true learning process emphasizes the importance of pupils' emotions and affective experiences in school.<sup>13</sup> In this sense, pupils' positive assessments of school life quality are relevant to their motivation.<sup>14</sup> One of the first measures of school life quality was created by Epstein and McPartland.<sup>15</sup> It consisted of several dimensions—student attitude toward school, commitment to school work and relationship with teachers. In order to include other dimensions, this

<sup>7</sup> E. L. DECI et al., Need satisfaction and the self-regulation of learning, *Learning and Individual Differences*, 8 (1996) 3, 165-183.

<sup>8</sup> E. L. DECI et al., Characteristics of the rewarder and intrinsic motivation of the rewardee, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 40 (1981) 1, 1-10; R. M. RYAN, W. S. GROLNICK, Origins and pawns in the classroom. Self-report and projective assessments of individual differences in children's perceptions, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50 (1986) 3, 550-558.

<sup>9</sup> Deci, Ryan, *The »what« and »why«...*, 252-253.

<sup>10</sup> P. R. PINTRICH et al., Classroom and individual differences in early adolescents' motivation and self regulated learning, *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 14 (1994) 2, 139-161.

<sup>11</sup> A. E. GOTTFRIED, Academic intrinsic motivation in young elementary school children, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 82 (1990) 3, 525-538.

<sup>12</sup> E. L. DECI, R. FLASTE, *Why we do what we do: Understanding self-motivation*, London, Penguin books, 1996.

<sup>13</sup> M. CHABOT, D. CHABOT, *Emocionalna pedagogija*, Zagreb, Educa, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> UNESCO, *Education for all – The quality imperative*, UNESCO publishing, Paris, 2005.

<sup>15</sup> J. L. EPSTEIN, J. M. MCPARTLAND, The concept and measurement of the quality of school life, *American Educational Research Journal*, 13 (1976) 1, 15-30.

model was expanded. Williams and Batten's<sup>16</sup> model of students' assessments of quality of life in school refer to students' general well-being in school and feelings towards specific dimensions of school life: importance of schooling, a sense of success, self-motivation in learning, experience learning as enjoyable activity, teacher-student relations, students' relations with classmates and other school members. Ainley and Bourke<sup>17</sup> also makes distinction between general perception of quality of life in school and its specific dimensions. Their model assess students' general satisfaction with school, perception of the importance of education in personal life, sense of success in fulfilling school obligations, relations between teachers and students, enjoyment in learning at school, and relations between students themselves and other school members. Building upon this model, Leonard defines the quality of school life as positive and negative experiences related to the school, including other emotions regarding specific dimensions of school life.<sup>18</sup> The first systematic research on the quality of life in school date back to the 1970s.<sup>19</sup> The findings suggest that pupils who assess the quality of school life more positively, express greater motivation to learn. Similar results were obtained in other studies.<sup>20</sup>

The importance of teacher and classmates' behavior for student's motivation is recognised within self-determination theory. Accordingly, research has found a positive relationship between relatedness, autonomy and competence support by teacher and student autonomous motivation.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, results of other studies indicate that the teacher-student relationship positively affects students' academic motivation.<sup>22</sup> When it comes to role of other students, research results indicate the existence of a connection between social and emo-

<sup>16</sup> Williams, Batten (1981), cited in: N. S. PANG, Students' quality of school life in Band 5 schools, *Asian Journal of Counselling*, 6 (1999) 1, 85-86.

<sup>17</sup> Ainley, Bourke (1992), cited in C. LEONARD, *Quality of school life and attendance in primary school*, doctoral thesis, 2002, <http://nova.newcastle.edu.au/vital/access/manager/Repository/uon:687> (04.01.2021), 40-41, 141-142.

<sup>18</sup> Leonard, *Quality of school life...*, 225.

<sup>19</sup> Epstein, McPartland, *The concept and measurement...*

<sup>20</sup> Z. RABOTEG-ŠARIĆ et al., Kvaliteta života u osnovnoj školi: povezanost sa školskim uspjehom, motivacijom i ponašanjem učenika, *Društvena istraživanja*, 18 (2009) 4-5, 697-716; M. KÖSTERELIOĞLU, I. KÖSTERELIOĞLU, Effects of high school students' perceptions of school life quality on their academic motivation levels, *Educational Research and Reviews*, 10 (2015) 3, 274-281.

<sup>21</sup> R. MAULANA et al., Autonomous motivation in the Indonesian classroom: Relationship with teacher support through the lens of self-determination theory, *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 25 (2016) 3, 441-451.

<sup>22</sup> R. A. FEDERICI, E. M. SKAALVIK, Students' perceptions of emotional and instrumental teacher support: Relations with motivational and emotional responses, *International Education Studies*, 7 (2013) 1, 21-36; M. C. OPDENAKKER et al., Teacher-student interpersonal relationships and academic motivation within one school year: Developmental changes and linkage, *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 23 (2012) 1, 95-119.

tional peer support and motivational outcomes.<sup>23</sup> Interpersonal relations and academic motivation are in a reciprocal relationship. Based on the fact that differences in the type of motivation can be observed at the interpersonal and intrapersonal level depending on the domain and situation,<sup>24</sup> this research focuses on examining the relationship between the assessment of the quality of life in school and different types of academic motivation.

## 1. Methodology

### 1.1. The aim of the research

The aim of this research is to examine and analyse the relationship between different types of academic motivation (external, introjected, identified and intrinsic) and assessment of the quality of school life, both at the level of general feelings towards school and with regard to its specific aspects.

H1: It is assumed that those pupils who express more positive feelings toward school are more autonomously motivated, i.e. achieve higher results on the identified regulation scale and the intrinsic motivation scale than on the external regulation scale and the identified regulation scale.

H2: It is assumed that those pupils who assess specific dimension of school life more positively (relevance of schooling, sense of achievement, learning experience, social integration, and relationship with the teachers) express higher degree of autonomous motivation by achieving higher results on the identified regulation scale and the intrinsic motivation scale than on the external regulation scale and the identified regulation scale.

### 1.2. Participants and procedure

The study involved 434 pupils from 8 primary schools located in different regions of the Republic of Croatia (Central Croatia, the Croatian Littoral and Dalmatia). Namely, 230 girls and 201 boys, of which 100 attend the fifth grade,

<sup>23</sup> R. FELNER et al., Adaptation and vulnerability in high-risk adolescents: An examination of environmental mediators, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 13 (1985) 4, 365-379; D. L. DUBOIS et al., A prospective study of life stress, social support, and adaptation in early adolescence, *Child Development*, 63 (1992) 3, 542-57; K. R. WENTZEL, Relations of social goal pursuit to social acceptance, classroom behavior, and perceived social support, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 86 (1994) 2, 173-182; S. HARTER, Teacher and classmate influences on scholastic motivation, self-esteem, and level of voice in adolescents, in: J. JUVONEN & K. R. WENTZEL (Eds.), *Cambridge studies in social and emotional development. Social motivation: Understanding children's school adjustment*, Cambridge University Press, 11-42.

<sup>24</sup> R. M. RYAN, E. L. DECI, Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being, *American Psychologist*, 55 (2000) 1, 68-78.

119 the sixth, 103 the seventh, and 112 eighth grade. The consent for conducting the research was requested from the school principals. The informed consent of the pupil's parents was collected. The research was conducted only with those pupils who agreed to participate. To ensure anonymity, the questionnaires were encrypted and didn't collect information that would indicate the identity of the respondents. In addition, all collected data are analysed and interpreted at the group level.

### 1.3. Instrument

The *Self-regulation questionnaire-Academic*<sup>25</sup> is based on the self-determination theory in the academic domain. A translation of the questionnaire was used which had been previously utilized by Sviben<sup>26</sup> whereby word formulations that refer to students have been changed to make the questionnaire suitable for primary school pupils. It examines different types of motivation regulation, i.e. the reasons why pupils perform their obligations at school. The questionnaire consists of 32 statements divided into four subscales:

1. *External regulation* (e.g. »because I will get in trouble if I do not fulfil my school obligations«, 9 items)
2. *Introjected regulation* (e.g. »because I will be ashamed if I don't fulfil my school obligations«, 9 items)
3. *Identified regulation* (e.g. »because it is important to me to fulfil my school obligations«, 7 items)
4. *Intrinsic motivation* (e.g. »because I love fulfilling my school obligations«, 7 items).

Pupils responded to the statements by choosing one of the answers on the Likert scale (1 - *completely disagree*, 2 - *mostly disagree*, 3 - *not disagree, nor agree*, 4 - *mostly agree*, 5 - *completely agree*) where a higher score indicates a higher degree of certain type of academic motivation. The Cronbach alpha values of internal consistency were calculated. The obtained values indicate satisfactory reliability (external regulation - 0.84, introjected regulation - 0.85, identified regulation - 0.86, intrinsic motivation - 0.87).

The *Quality of school life questionnaire*<sup>27</sup> consists of 38 items that, in addition to general feelings towards school, examine several domains of school

<sup>25</sup> R. M. RYAN, J. P. CONNELL, Perceived locus of causality and internalization: Examining reasons for acting in two domains, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57 (1989) 5, 749-761.

<sup>26</sup> Sviben, *Percepcija nastavničkog stila ponašanja...*, 44-45.

<sup>27</sup> Ainley, Bourke (1992), cited in Leonard, *Quality of school life and attendance...*, 140-141.

life quality. A version of the adapted instrument was used in the study.<sup>28</sup> All statements begin with a formulation »For me, school is a place...«. The first scale, entitled *General feelings towards school* consists of 6 items and examines the pupils' general feelings towards school (e.g. »I really like to go each day«). The *Relevance of schooling* subscale also consists of 6 items and examines the pupils' perceptions of the importance of school education for their future (e.g. »the things I learn are important to me«). A subscale entitled *Learning experience* (5 items) examines the degree to which the pupils find learning at school an interesting and enjoyable activity (e.g. »learning is fun«). The next subscale, *Achievement* (5 items) examines the pupils' experience of success in fulfilling school obligations (e.g. »I am successful as a pupil«). Subscale *Social integration* (8 items) examines the relationship between pupils and others at school (e.g. »other pupils accept me as I am«) whereas the *Relationship with the teachers* subscale (4 items) examines the relationship between teachers and pupils (e.g. »my teachers are fair to me«). Participants responded by choosing one response on the five-point Likert scale (1 – *completely disagree*, 2 – *mostly disagree*, 3 – *not agree, nor disagree*, 4 – *mostly agree*, 5 – *completely agree*) where a higher result indicates more positive feelings towards school, a sense of greater importance of schooling, a more positive experience of learning in school, a sense of greater success in performing school obligations, a more positive experience of relationships between pupils and teachers as well among pupils and other people in school. An internal consistency analysis was performed (the Cronbach alpha) and satisfactory results were obtained: 0.90 for the general feelings towards school, 0.92 for the relevance of schooling, 0.89 for the achievement, 0.89 for the learning experience, 0.85 for the social integration and 0.86 for the relationship with the teachers.

## 2. Results

As it can be seen in Table 1, all values of arithmetic means, except the value related to learning experience, are greater than midpoint value of 3 which indicates that pupils express somewhat divided feelings towards school.

When it comes to specific dimensions of school life, pupils find schooling personally relevant and perceive themselves as successful in fulfilling school obligations. However, when it comes to experiencing learning in school as an interesting and enjoyable activity, pupils express divided assessments. Furthermore, pupils assess the quality of the relationship between pupils and teachers less positively than the quality of the relationship between pupils and other people in school. When it comes to controlled types of academic motivation,

<sup>28</sup> Rabotež-Šarić et. al., *Kvaliteta života u osnovnoj školi...*, 701-702.

## 1. Number of items, means and standard deviations for the measured variables

Variable	$N_{\text{Items}}$	$M$	$SD$
General feelings towards school	6	3.21	1.01
Relevance of schooling	6	4.08	0.88
Achievement	5	3.90	0.81
Learning experience	5	3.00	1.04
Social integration	8	3.85	0.73
Relationship with the teachers	4	3.54	0.76
External regulation	9	3.69	0.84
Introjected regulation	9	3.67	0.84
Identified regulation	7	3.90	0.90
Intrinsic motivation	7	3.08	1.02

pupils express equal, average assessments on the external regulation scale and the introjected regulation scale. Pupils also expressed average score on the intrinsic motivation scale while the highest score were expressed on the identified regulation scale.

In order to determine association between the different types of academic motivation and quality of school life, the effect of age (grade) was removed since the research included pupils from fifth to eighth grade. For that purpose, a partial correlation was selected.

Table 2. Correlation matrix for examined variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Feelings towards school	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Relevance of schooling	0.60	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Achievement	0.57	0.56	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Learning experience	0.82	0.62	0.48	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Social integration	0.54	0.39	0.53	0.39	1.00	-	-	-	-	-
6. Relationship with the teachers	0.83	0.77	0.65	0.83	0.66	1.00	-	-	-	-
7. External regulation	0.25	0.38	0.29	0.28	0.14	0.31	1.00	-	-	-
8. Introjected regulation	0.39	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.17	0.41	0.71	1.00	-	-
9. Identified regulation	0.57	0.64	0.56	0.63	0.34	0.65	0.49	0.70	1.00	-
10. Intrinsic motivation	0.65	0.49	0.47	0.74	0.36	0.66	0.31	0.55	0.73	1.00

All variables included in the research are positively correlated to a statistically significant degree (0.01 level).

In order to answer the first research hypothesis, the connection between pupils' feelings towards school and different types of academic motivation was examined. As it can be seen in Table 2, the existence of a statistically significant correlation between the general feelings towards school and external regula-



tion was obtained. A slightly higher, although also weak, correlation was found between the general feelings towards school and introjected regulation. When it comes to autonomous types of motivation in the academic domain, existence of almost equally high, moderately strong correlation between identified regulation and intrinsic motivation on the one hand and general feelings towards school on the other hand was confirmed.

In order to answer the second research hypothesis, the connection between pupils' assessments of specific dimensions of school life and different types of academic motivation was examined. The obtain results indicate the existence of a weak correlation between the assessment of the relevance of schooling and external regulation. A similar correlation was found when it comes to introjected regulation. A higher correlation was observed between autonomous types of motivation and the relevance of schooling. The assessment of relevance of schooling was more correlated with the identified regulation compared to intrinsic motivation. In both cases correlations are moderately strong. Analysing the correlation between different types of academic motivation and the sense of achievement, low correlation was found between external regulation and a sense of achievement, with an increase in correlation coefficient when it comes to introjected regulation. As in previous case, the sense of achievement is more correlated with the identified regulation compared to intrinsic motivation. However, in both cases the correlations are moderately strong. The highest correlation was observed between the assessment of learning experience and intrinsic motivation. The results also indicate the existence of moderately strong correlation between the assessment of learning experience in school and identified regulation compared to introjected regulation and external regulation, where the correlation coefficients are significantly lower. The lowest correlation was found between the assessment of social integration and external regulation. A similar degree of relatively weak correlation was observed regarding introjected regulation. A somewhat higher correlations were observed when it comes to autonomous types of motivation – identified regulation and intrinsic motivation, whereas it should be noted that both of these are relatively weak connections. When it comes to the quality of the pupils' relationships with teachers, the existence of weak correlations with controlled types of motivation – external and introjected regulation – was established. When it comes to autonomous types of motivation, the correlations are higher wheres similar degree of moderately strong correlations was found for both identified regulation and intrinsic motivation.

### 3. Discussion

This study examines and analyse pupils' perception of the quality of life in school and their motivation to fulfil school obligations. The assumption that those pupils who express more positive feelings toward school are more autonomously motivated has been confirmed. It was found that the more satisfied pupils are with the school, the more autonomously motivated they are to perform school obligations. The obtained results are in line with the findings of the study which found that identified regulation is positively correlated with school enjoyment.<sup>29</sup> A positive connection between attitudes toward school and academic motivation was also found in other studies.<sup>30</sup> The obtained results can be explained by the fact that pupils' feelings towards school represents a reflection of their overall academic and social experiences in the school, which may or may not be positive. In that sense, every teacher should rethink core questions such as: »Do pupils like to be in school?« or »Do pupils perceive school as a place where they feel proud to be pupils?«

Another hypothesis that assumes that those pupils who assess specific dimension of school life more positively are more autonomously motivated to fulfil school obligations is largely confirmed. Namely, those pupils who perceive learning in school as a fun and challenging activity are more autonomously motivated to perform school obligations. This is especially important in light of the fact that pupils often need to learn the contents and develop the skills for which they do not show much interest. In that sense, balance between important and challenging activities can be motivation stimulating element.<sup>31</sup> The obtained results can be explained by understanding that teachers' support of pupil autonomy through implementation of challenging and interesting learning activities can be seen as stimulating element in terms of pupils' autonomous motivation. Furthermore, it was found that the pupils who perceive school education as more important are more autonomously motivated whereas correlation is slightly lower on the scale of intrinsic motivation compared to the identified regulation scale which also represents a moderately strong connection. The obtained results are somewhat expected, since the pupils are young, and relate to the fact that the identified regulation implies an individual who considers learning in school important in the future. Namely, when it comes to identified regulation, one identify the value of a particular behaviour since considers it important for achieving certain goal (e.g. a pupils who are studying because they want to know the subject or because they consider it valuable in

<sup>29</sup> Ryan, Connell, *Perceived locus of causality...*, 754-756.

<sup>30</sup> McCoach (2000), cited in M. STERN, *Evaluating and promoting positive school attitude in adolescents*, Springer Science + Business Media, 2012.

<sup>31</sup> T. URDAN, E. SCHOENFELDER, Classroom effects on student motivation: Goal structures, social relationships, and competence beliefs, *Journal of School Psychology*, 44 (2006) 5, 331-349.

the future). Similarly, it was found that pupils who experience themselves as more successful in fulfilling school obligations are more autonomously motivated. The correlation between sense of achievement and intrinsic motivation is somewhat lower compared to the identified motivation, but both of them represent moderately strong relationship. The obtained results can be explained by understanding that positive image of one's own school achievement can be seen as a factor that is closely related to related to pupils' autonomous motivation. The way pupils experience their own competence affects their motivation to learn, since it affects how they cope with learning situations.<sup>32</sup>

When it comes to more autonomous types of motivation in relation to the perception of social integration, correlation coefficients are somewhat higher. Namely, pupils who perceive relationship between pupils and others at school more positively are more autonomously motivated to fulfil school obligations. Many studies have shown that positive social relationships have a positive effect on academic motivation.<sup>33</sup> The obtained results can be explained by understanding that pupils with sense of school belonging perceive themselves as more autonomous and show a higher level of motivation. Related to the above, it should be noted that pupils are affiliated with school rules, goals and values when their need for connection, belonging and friendship is met within the school.<sup>34</sup> The teachers are perceived as those who are most responsible for creating conditions that encourage autonomous motivation which implies existence of positive interpersonal relations with pupils, characterised by acceptance, respect and support. Obtained results also indicate that pupils who assess the quality of the interpersonal relations between teachers and pupils more positively express a greater degree of autonomous motivation, both regarding identified regulation and intrinsic motivation. The results are in line with previous studies which indicate that the pupils who have experienced responsive and positive interaction with their teachers are more motivated.<sup>35</sup> The obtained results can be partly explained by understanding that an atmosphere of care represents motivation stimulating element.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> R. DECHARMS, *Enhancing motivation: Change in the classroom*, New York, Irvington, 1977.

<sup>33</sup> Kösterelioglu, Kösterelioglu, *Effects of high school students' perceptions...*, 278.

<sup>34</sup> K. F. OSTERMAN, Students' need for belonging in the school community, *Review of Educational Research*, 70 (2000) 3, 323-367.

<sup>35</sup> Deci, Ryan, *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination...*, 255; Osterman, *Students' need for belonging...*, 359; D. H. SCHUNK et al., *Motivation in Education: Theory, Research, and Applications*, Boston, MA, Pearson, 2014.

<sup>36</sup> Deci et al., *Characteristics of the rewarder and intrinsic motivation...*; Ryan, Grolnick, *Origins and pawns in the classroom...*

## *Conclusion*

The research presented in this paper is aimed towards examining the relations between pupils' perception of the quality of school life and different types of academic motivation. The relevance of this research is based on the understanding that the obtained results can potentially contribute to the creating conditions that stimulate more autonomous forms of pupils' academic motivation in terms of quality of school life.

It was found that those pupils who express more positive feelings towards school as well as pupils who perceive learning in school as more interesting and enjoyable activity show a higher level of the identified regulation and intrinsic motivation. When it comes to controlled forms of motivation, correlations were much weaker. In comparison to controlled types of motivation, higher, almost equal correlations are found between pupils' assessments of interpersonal relations between pupils and other people in school and identified regulation on one side and intrinsic motivation on the other. Similar connections were found between assessment of teacher-pupils relations and academic motivation where generally weaker correlations have been identified. When it comes to relation between assessment of the relevance of schooling on one side and sense of achievement in fulfilling school obligations on the other, tendency of correlation growth is partially evident where the highest correlation is determined at the level of the identified motivation. Generally, this research has shown that feelings towards school and specific aspects of school life are factors that play a significant role in pupils' academic motivation with an emphasis on autonomous types of motivation. Obtained results can serve as a starting point for creating the conditions that will contribute to the quality of school life, and thus the social environment that stimulates the development and maintenance of autonomous forms of academic motivation. In that sense, questionnaires used in this study could be used by teachers as a foundation for planning, conducting and assessing the strategies aimed at simultaneous strengthening the quality of school life and pupils' autonomous motivation. Based on certain limitations of the conducted research, several recommendations for future research can be made. Namely, future research could include qualitative research methods and other groups of participants such as high school pupils and university students. In addition, other potentially relevant variables can be used in drawing the conclusions regarding cause-and-effect relationships.

Marija Buterin Mičić\*

*Akademski motivacija učenika osnovnih škola – povezanost s općim osjećajima prema školi i pojedinim aspektima kvalitete školskog života*

Sažetak

Cilj istraživanja predstavljenog u ovom radu je usmjeren na povezanost između učeničkog doživljaja kvalitete školskog života i njihove akademske motivacije: kontrolirane (eksternalne i introjicirane) i autonomne (identificirane i intrinzične). Pri prikupljanju podataka korišteni su *Self regulation questionnaire-academic* (Ryan i Connell, 1989) i *Quality of school life questionnaire* (Ainley i Bourke, 1982). U istraživanju su sudjelovala 434 učenika petih, šestih, sedmih i osmih razreda osnovne škole. Utvrđeno je postojanje pozitivne korelacije između svih varijabli uključenih u ovo istraživanje pri čemu razina korelacije ovisi o vrsti akademske motivacije. Učenici koji pozitivnije doživljavaju školu i specifične aspekte školskog života ujedno su više autonomno motivirani za izvršavanje školskih obveza. Dobiveni rezultati su razmotreni s posebnim naglaskom na važnost kvalitete školskog života učenika u poticanju autonomne motivacije u akademskoj domeni.

Ključne riječi: *akademska motivacija, kvaliteta školskog života, osjećaji prema školi, teorija samodeterminacije.*

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