

Intrinsic Motivation Towards Understanding the Self in Tertiary Education

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Abstract

Intrinsic motivation emphasized engagement that was self-initiated and sustained by the inherent value of the activity itself. This study aimed to determine the percentage of tertiary students who exhibited high levels of intrinsic motivation in the understanding of the self subject. The study utilized a descriptive design, and data were collected from college students of Cebu Technological University – Malabuyoc Extension. A total of 80 participants were selected using simple random sampling through survey questionnaires adapted from Oclaret (2021), based on the Intrinsic Motivation Scale, specifically a 5-point Likert scale. Most participants were in the age bracket of 18–19 years old (61.25%), and there were more female participants (58.75%) than male participants (41.25%). Participants were also equally represented across the four departments and three-year levels. No null hypothesis was formulated or tested. The study focused on describing the level of intrinsic motivation of tertiary students toward understanding the self. The findings showed that students taking the Understanding the Self course demonstrated consistently high intrinsic motivation, sustained interest, and a strong sense of competence. These factors collectively fostered active engagement, achievement-oriented behavior, and a continued commitment to self-awareness and personal development. It was recommended that higher education institutions, educators, curriculum developers, and students work collaboratively to promote autonomy-supportive and reflective learning environments that strengthened intrinsic motivation, self-awareness, and personal development, thereby enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes.

Keywords: *intrinsic motivation, understanding the self, tertiary students, descriptive study, self-awareness*

Introduction

Intrinsic motivation is defined as the extent to which an individual engages in an activity due to its enjoyment and fulfillment benefits on itself (Guay et al., 2015). It promotes deep learning strategies, which promotes critical thinking and reflective practices in tertiary education necessary to develop an identity and understand oneself (Sánchez-Oliva et al., 2025). Understanding the Self in tertiary education, especially within the Philippine General Education curriculum is a preparative course that examines the nature of the identity, elements contributing and causing a personal identity (CHED Memorandum, 2015). It is an important part in helping students to become interested in learning, motivated in putting effort to achieve their goals, and shape their attitude to their academic skills (Bedel et al., 2017). In addition, good learners are aware of their own fundamental needs and powers to optimize their capabilities, dispositions and as well as potentialities to become self-actualized individuals (Baygi et al., 2017).

The studies conducted by the universities indicate the importance of intrinsic motivation in self understanding in higher education. It had a positive correlation with academic achievement at the University of Amsterdam (Taylor & Jungert, 2019). It was encouraging long-term commitment at the University of Ottawa (Vallerand et al., 2017). It improves self-efficacy, cultural responsiveness, and performance, as well as lifelong learning (Sun, 2022). A study by Frontiers in Education discovered that intrinsic motivation is related to self-esteem among graduate students (Sharifzadeh & Khojasteh, 2024). American higher education is expected to equip students with professional, civic and personal challenges (Magolda, 2023). Educational performance increases professional achievement and national objectives. The efficacy of oneself is a predictor of success in the long-term (Talsma et al., 2018). Motivation gives ownership of learning and performance power (Patall et al., 2019). The self-determination theory maximizes motivation through competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Gagné et al., 2022). Motivation influences study methods, performance and adaptation. Intrinsic motivation can be influenced by the use of grades as rewards. Performance has a strong relationship with motivational factors (Honike et al., 2020).

The recent researches indicate a disparity of higher education in terms of the lack of intrinsic motivation of students to learn more about themselves outside of academic and career objectives. Colleges and universities tend to be more concerned with technical skills and job preparation and pay less attention to the development of self-awareness and identity of the students. Such a deficiency in focus can touch upon the personal development of students, their values, and well-being (Komarraju et al., 2020). The difficult aspect of intrinsic motivation is also the fact that it is very internal and depends on personal interests and self motivation (Reeve, 2024). To address this gap, tertiary institutions should encourage reflective learning, support student autonomy, and make learning experiences more personally meaningful in order to strengthen students' intrinsic motivation and self-understanding. The overall goal of this research is to establish the percentage of tertiary students that have high degree of intrinsic

motivation in the understanding of the self subject. The research aims at making constructive suggestions in improving the teaching habits and classroom settings in order to enable self motivated learning behavior. Finally, the study aims at delivering information to assist teachers and schools to establish positive learning conditions that promote intrinsic motivation. Moreover, the study will be significant to students in order to attain a higher level of self-understanding and personal development during the time of acquiring higher education.

Methodology

Design

The research design was descriptive design, which was suitable in the process of gathering and collecting the required data. This design enabled the researchers to investigate intrinsic motivation with regard to comprehending the self. The purpose of the study was also to find out recommendations with regards to intrinsic motivation among first-year to third-year students in all programs at CTU Malabuyoc. The study adopted a descriptive research in which the researchers employed an extensive range of research methods to explore a single variable (McCombes, 2019). After all, the study goal was to establish the percentage of tertiary students that displayed high intrinsic motivation in the Understanding the Self subject.

Flow of the Study

The research was an input-process-output (IPO) research. The inputs of this study are the participants' profiles in terms of age, gender, program/department, and year level. This also included the mean scores of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self in terms of self-awareness, self-reflection, personal growth, and self-determination. This study employed a descriptive research design, where data were collected, organized, analyzed, and described using appropriate statistical tools. Additionally, the study aimed to provide recommendations as its outcome.

Respondents

The participants of the research were first-year to third-year students of all the programs in CTU-Malabuyoc. The survey was done to 80 students. These students suited perfectly in the study because they were a representative of the population whose level of intrinsic motivation was assumed to affect the knowledge of the self subject. The authors employed a simple random sampling technique to pick the respondents. The method was used to have an unbiased and representative sample, as each population member had the same opportunity of being included in the sample. Simple random sampling was especially appropriate in the case of extremely homogeneous populations, and the members were selected randomly to participate in the study (Bhardwaj, 2019).

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Students Respondents
(n=80)

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Female	47	58.75%
Male	33	41.25%
Total	80	100%

Environment

The data were taken from Cebu Technological University-Malabuyoc Extension. The distance between Cebu City and Malabuyoc is 125.3 km via Barili. Cebu, the university is located in Poblacion Dos, Malabuyoc, Cebu. The extension campus caters to students from the local community, providing accessible education and opportunities for academic advancement. The extension university offers BSHM, BIT, BTLED, and BEED. Malabuyoc Extension provides both undergraduate and graduate programs, catering to students from Malabuyoc and nearby municipalities. It has a dedicated team of 37 teachers and 8 staff members.

Research Instrument

The researcher used a survey questionnaire that had Likert scale. The questionnaire included three sections Part I was the demographic profile of the participants in terms of name and age; sex and course program. Part II was a modified questionnaire of the research of (Oclaret 2021) of the intrinsic motivation scale. In this section, there were seven constructs, i.e. need for achievement, competence, failure fear, interest, expectations of authority, acceptance by peers and teacher feedback style. The respondents were required to rate the items on a 5-point Likert Scale with 5 strongly agree, 4 agree, 3 neutral, 2 disagree and 1 strongly disagree.

Data Collection Procedure

After carrying out the data collection, the researchers received an ethical clearance of the involved review board to ensure that ethical standards were upheld in the study. A transmittal letter was also sent to the Campus Director of CTU Malabuyoc to formally seek permission in order to undertake the study. The potential participants were informed with a participant information sheet and informed consent form on the purpose of this study, procedures to be undertaken,

their rights as participants, voluntary nature of the participation and how their data was handled on the information sheet upon consent. Participants who signed a written consent form were the only ones to be accepted into the study to make participation informed and voluntary. Data were collected when schools were out of session so as to have minimal interference with the school activities. About 15 to 20 minutes were allocated to the participants to fill out the survey

questionnaire. In order to ensure the data confidentiality and privacy, all the responses were anonymous, and no personal information was provided. All the data were safely disposed once the study was finished and the final manuscript has been provided. The ethical problems, such as voluntary participation and confidentiality, were thoroughly observed during the course of the study.

Preliminary Procedures.

The following were the preliminary preparations followed to be sure of the accuracy of data gathering. The researchers first had to pilot test the questionnaires presented to a sample of students of the Cebu Technological University - Malabuyoc Extension Campus to have the questionnaires assessed and their feedback obtained. Second, the researchers drafted a transmittal letter which was signed by the research chairman of CTU–Malabuyoc and the campus director. The survey questionnaires were then given to the students through the simple random sampling method by the researchers.

Data Gathering.

The researchers gave the approved letter and requested the permission of the campus director of Cebu Technological University-Malabuyoc Extension about the study. The researchers also administered the survey questionnaires to all the respondents through simple random sampling. Data collection was under administration from the second to the third week, of September 2025. Finally, analyzed and interpreted data were obtained.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, that is the weighted mean, were employed in this study. Descriptive statistics were the particular techniques that were applied to calculate, describe, and summarize the collected research data logically, meaningfully and efficiently (Vetter, 2017). This quantitative research utilized the weighted mean to make an analysis of the responses to the Likert scale questions of the questionnaire. The weighted mean, according to the authors like (Adamma et al., 2018), was used to analyze survey data or academic performance (where specific variables are treated more significant than others). This established the mean rate of consensus among the respondents with respect to their intrinsic interest in the knowledge of the self subject. Weighted mean was also most appropriate in the measurement of attitudinal variables given that frequency of each option of responses was taken and gave the the general tendency of one population.

Treatment of Data

In this research there were the following statistical treatments.

Frequency Distributions and Percentage. This was utilized to describe the profile of the respondents.

Weighted Mean. This was used to determine the levels of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self by the respondents.

Scoring Procedure

This study employed the five-point Likert scale in the quantitative interpretation of the data. The scoring system guided the respondents in answering the indicators found in the questionnaire. The weighted mean was computed for each indicator to determine the overall level of intrinsic motivation, and the results were interpreted based on the established scale ranges. Furthermore, the weighted mean analysis allowed researchers to prioritize indicators that most strongly predict motivational outcomes. Ultimately, the study suggests that enhancing intrinsic motivation can improve overall performance in similar future assessments. The analysis also revealed that specific indicators have varying degrees of influence on the respondents' intrinsic motivation, necessitating customized approaches in intervention design. Recognizing these influential indicators enables researchers to refine questionnaires for more precise measurement of motivational constructs. The study further underscores that intrinsic motivation is a key driver of sustained engagement and quality of responses in quantitative surveys.

A. Intrinsic Motivation Towards Understanding the Self in Tertiary Education
having the indicators found in the questionnaire.

Scoring	Scale	Categoric Response	Verbal Description
5	4.20 – 5.00	Strongly Agree	Indicates a very high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students.
4	3.40 - 4.19	Agree	Indicates a high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students.
3	2.60 - 3.39	Neutral	Indicates a moderate level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students.
2	1.80 – 2.59	Disagree	Indicates a low level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students.

1	1.00 – 1.79	Strongly Disagree	Indicates a very low level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students.
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Results and Discussion

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered to determine the level of intrinsic motivation of tertiary students toward understanding the self. The data collected from the respondents were organized, tabulated, and analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, and weighted mean.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Below is the presentation of the inclusion criteria of the profile of the respondents, which is part of the sub-problem of the study. In this chapter, collected data were interpreted and analyzed. This chapter contains 8 tables that are presented as follows. Table 2 presents the respondents' profile, followed by Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 which present tabulated and computed data on mean scores of the intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self.

Table 2 indicates demographic profile of the respondents in relation to age, gender, academic program and year level. The age group of 18-19 years old (61.25) is the most representative with the age group of 20-21 years old (31.25) coming after it followed by the 35 and above years old (1.52). This age correlates with the young adulthood, the period when the sense of identity exploration and self-observation is observed, which is applicable to the topic Understanding the Self (Arnett, 2016).

Table 2
Demographic Profile of the Respondents (N=80)

		Frequency (f)	Percentage %
Age	18 – 19	49	61.25%
	20 – 21	25	31.25%
	21 – 22	5	6.25%
	24 - Above	1	0.012%
Gender	Female		
	Male	47	58.75%
Year Level		33	41.25%
	First Year	51	63.75%
	Second Year	16	20.00%
	Third Year	13	16.25%

Academic Program			
	COE	38	47.5%
	COT	14	17.5%
	CBM	28	35.00%
Total		80	100%

Gender-wise, the female students (58.75) are slightly higher than male students (41.25) and this is also expected in case of tertiary enrolment in courses related to social sciences (UNESCO, 2021). Whereas previous research has identified gender differences in motivation, this study is dedicated to the description of the overall motivational profile, but not the comparison of groups (Ryan and Deci, 2017).

Concerning academic program, the majority of respondents represent the College of Education (47.5%), the College of Business and Management (35) and the College of Technology (17.5%), which means that various disciplines are represented. The respondents include students from first year to third year, capturing different stages of tertiary education associated with the development of intrinsic motivation and self-awareness (Magolda, 2023).

Overall, the diversity in age, gender, program, and year level provides an appropriate context for examining students' intrinsic motivation toward understanding the self (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Schunk, 2020).

In this study, Intrinsic Motivation Towards Understanding the Self in terms of need for achievement among the participants are shown below.

Table 3
Need for Achievement
(N= 80)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. I want to learn more about myself through my studies.	4.35	Strongly Agree
2. I am highly driven to improve my selfawareness and promote personal development.	4.44	Strongly Agree
3. I make objectives that motivate me to learn more about and comprehend who I am.	4.03	Agree
4. I'm motivated to do well in pursuits that help me identify my personality and ideals.	4.15	Agree
5. I take pride in working toward becoming a better version of myself.	4.24	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	4.242	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.20-5.00

(Strongly Agree)

3.40-4.19 (Agree)

2.60-3.39 (Neutral)

1.80-2.59 (Disagree)

1.00-1.79 (Strongly Disagree)

As presented in table 3, the highest mean score was obtained by Indicator 2, “I am highly driven to improve my self-awareness and promote personal development” ($\mu = 4.44$), which was interpreted as ***strongly agree***, indicates a ***very high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students***. This result suggests that the respondents possess a strong intrinsic desire for self-improvement and personal growth. On the other hand, the lowest mean score was recorded for Indicator 3, “I make objectives that motivate me to learn more and comprehend who I am” ($\mu = 4.03$), interpreted as ***agree***, indicates a ***high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students***. Although the response remains positive, the relatively lower mean may indicate that respondents are less consistent in setting specific and structured personal goals.

The overall mean for intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self in terms of need for achievement is 4.242, indicates the verbal interpretation of ***Strongly Agree***. This means that the students got a ***very high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students***.

The finding shows that high need achievement helps in motivating the students to learn more about themselves and work towards unending development in higher education. They also proudly identify themselves as better people, which can be taken into consideration as high level of intrinsic motivation and focus on personal development as well as the values of self-determination theory which underlines the importance of growth, ability, and purpose in learning (Ryan and Deci, 2017). Furthermore, this suggests that students are driven not only by academic success but also by a deeper desire for personal meaning and self-fulfillment. Such motivation enables them to persist despite challenges and remain committed to their long-term goals. Ultimately, fostering intrinsic motivation in higher education can lead to more engaged, self-aware, and purpose-driven learners.

In this study, Intrinsic Motivation Towards Understanding the Self in terms of perceived competence among the participants are shown below.

Table 4
Perceived Competence
(N= 80)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
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1. I have the confidence that I can evaluate my own advantages and disadvantages.	3.875 advantages	Agree
2. I have the confidence that I can use the knowledge get in the classroom to improve my personal growth.	4.15	Agree
3. I am able to set meaningful objectives that are consistent with my identity and values.	3.975	Agree
4. I have confidence in my abilities to analyze and comprehend my feelings, ideas, and actions.	4.05	Agree
5. I have confidence in my capacity to make decisions that foster my own development.	4.125	Strongly Agree

Composite Mean

4.035

Agree

Legend: 4.20-5.00 (Strongly Agree)

3.40-4.19 (Agree)

2.60-3.39 (Neutral)

1.80-2.59 (Disagree)

1.00-1.79 (Strongly Disagree)

As presented in table 4, the highest mean was obtained by the indicator 5, “*I have confidence in my capacity to make decisions that foster my own development*” ($\mu = 4.125$), interpreted as **strongly agree**, indicates a **very high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**. This finding suggests that respondents demonstrate a strong sense of confidence in their decision-making abilities, particularly in matters that contribute to their growth and self-improvement. Conversely, the lowest mean was recorded for the indicator, “*I have the confidence that I can evaluate my own advantages and disadvantages*” ($\mu = 3.875$), interpreted as **agree**, indicates a **high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**. This may indicate that while students feel capable in applying knowledge and making decisions, deeper self-evaluative skills may still be developing.

The overall mean for intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self in terms of perceived competence is 4.035, indicates the verbal interpretation of **agree**. This means that the students got a **high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**.

The findings show that the students possess a positive self-efficacy sense and believe that they can take control of their own learning and development that the research claims that high self-efficacy and self-controlled learning correlate with confidence, goal setting and personal development among students (Zimmerman, 2016). Furthermore, this suggests that strengthening intrinsic motivation can further enhance their confidence, goal setting, and personal growth. In addition, it may encourage students to become more self-directed, resilient, and committed to achieving their academic and personal aspirations. It can also help them develop a deeper understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement. Through

continuous self-reflection, students may become more responsible for their own learning outcomes. This heightened awareness can lead to better decision-making and improved academic performance. Ultimately, fostering intrinsic motivation supports lifelong learning and sustained personal development.

In this study, Intrinsic Motivation Towards Understanding the Self in terms of fear of failure among the participants are shown below.

Table 5
Fear of Failure (N=80)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. I sometimes worry about discovering qualities in myself that I may dislike.	3.675	Agree
2. I'm afraid of failing to meet my own expectations while learning about myself.	4	Agree
3. I avoid deep self-reflection because I'm afraid of what I may discover.	3.425	Agree
4. I avoid self-exploration because I am afraid I will struggle with it.	3.2	Neutral
5. I am worried when assignments require me to face personal issues.	3.338	Neutral
Composite Mean	3.528	Agree

Legend: 4.20-5.00

(Strongly Agree)

3.40-4.19 (Agree)

2.60-3.39 (Neutral)

1.80-2.59 (Disagree)

1.00-1.79 (Strongly Disagree)

As presented in the table 5, indicator 2, “I’m afraid of failing to meet my own expectations while learning about myself” ($\mu = 4.00$), the highest mean scores were obtained and are interpreted as **agree**, which indicate **a high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**. The fear of not meeting these self-imposed expectations can act as both a motivating factor and a source of anxiety, highlighting the internal tension associated with self-evaluation. In contrast, the lowest mean was recorded for the indicator 4, “I am worried when assignments require me to face personal issues” ($M = 3.338$), interpreted as **neutral**, indicates **a moderate level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**. The relatively lower score may indicate that

structured assignments provide guidance or a safe framework for self-exploration, reducing the intensity of fear associated with personal challenges.

The overall mean for intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self in terms of fear of failure is 3.528, indicates the verbal interpretation of *agree*. This means that the students got a *high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students*.

In this study, Intrinsic Motivation Towards Understanding the Self in terms of interest among the participants are shown below.

Table 6
Interest
(N= 80)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. I am interested in gaining a better understanding of the subject.	4.438	Strongly Agree
2. I enjoy learning and understanding the subject.	4.325	Strongly Agree
3. I possess great interest in the subject.	3.95	Agree
4. The subject stimulates my mind and motivates me to learn.	4.288	Strongly Agree
5. Studying the subject keeps me interested and motivated.	4.288	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	4.258	Strongly Agree

Legend: 4.20-5.00 (Strongly Agree)

3.40-4.19 (Agree)

2.60-3.39 (Neutral)

1.80-2.59 (Disagree)

1.00-1.79 (Strongly Disagree)

As presented in the table 6, indicator 1, “I am interested in gaining a better understanding of the subject” ($\mu = 4.438$), interpreted as *strongly agree*, indicates a *very high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students*. Majority of respondents are highly motivated to deepen their knowledge of the subject and value comprehension as a key aspect of their learning. On the other hand, the lowest mean was recorded for the indicator 3, “I possess great interest in the subject,” with a mean of **3.95**, interpreted as *agree*, indicates a *high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students*.

Although this is the lowest mean, it still shows that students have a positive attitude toward the subject, with slight differences in their level of interest.

The overall mean for intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self in terms of interest is 4.258, indicates the verbal interpretation of ***strongly agree***. This means that the students got a ***very high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students***.

In this study, Intrinsic Motivation Towards Understanding the Self in terms of Authority Expectation among the participants are shown below.

Table 7
Authority Expectations
(N= 80)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. I am more focused on taking responsibility just to meet my teacher's expectations.	3.9	Agree
2. I prioritize on my personal development over my authority figures.	3.775	Agree
3. I place more emphasis on self-reflection than my personal growth.	3.612	Agree
4. I participate more in self-reflection activities because I engage in them more.	3.725	Agree
	3.613	Agree
5. I feel under pressure simply to meet my teacher's standards.		
Composite Mean	3.725	Agree

Legend: 4.20-5.00
(Strongly Agree)
3.40-4.19 (Agree)
2.60-3.39 (Neutral)
1.80-2.59 (Disagree)
1.00-1.79 (Strongly Disagree)

As presented in table 7, the highest mean was recorded in the indicator 1, “*I am more focused on taking responsibility just to meet my teacher's expectations,*” with a mean of 3.9 ***agree***, indicates a ***high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students***. Students are motivated to fulfill responsibilities and meet their teacher's standards, indicating that authority expectations play a role in guiding their actions. The lowest mean was observed in the indicator 3, “*I place more emphasis on self-reflection than my*

personal growth,” with a mean of 3.612 *agree*, indicates a **high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**. Although slightly lower, it still shows that students value self-reflection but focus more on personal growth than just meeting authority expectations.

The overall mean for intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self in terms of authority expectations is 3.725, indicates the verbal interpretation of *agree*. This means that the students got a **high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**.

In this study, Intrinsic Motivation Towards Understanding the Self in terms of peer acceptance among the participants are shown below.

Table 8
Peer Acceptance
(N= 80)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. I am more encouraged to explore my identity when I feel accepted by my peers.	4.168	Agree
2. I become hesitant to show my true self if I believe my classmates may not understand or support me.	3.613	Agree
3. I'm motivated to reflect deeper with peer support.	4.013	Agree
	3.4	Agree
4. I hide certain parts of myself to fit in with my classmates.		
5. I discover myself more easily when I feel accepted by my peers.	4	Agree
Composite Mean	3.838	Agree

Legend: 4.20-5.00

(Strongly Agree)

3.40-4.19 (Agree)

2.60-3.39 (Neutral)

1.80-2.59 (Disagree)

1.00-1.79 (Strongly Disagree)

As presented in table 8, the highest mean was recorded in the indicator 1, “*I am more encouraged to explore my identity when I feel accepted by my peers,*” with a mean of 4.168 *agree*, indicates a **high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**. It positively influences students’ willingness to explore their identity and

engage more openly in self-reflection. The lowest mean was found in the indicator 4, “*I hide certain parts of myself to fit in with my classmates,*” with a mean of 3.4 *agree*, indicates a **high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**. Even though it is the lowest mean, it still indicates a positive trend, showing that students may sometimes conform but generally feel accepted and supported by their peers.

The overall mean for intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self in terms of peer acceptance is 3.838, indicates the verbal interpretation of *agree*. This means that the students got a **high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**.

In this study, Intrinsic Motivation Towards Understanding the Self in terms of teacher feedback style among the participants are shown below.

Table 9
Teacher Feedback Style
(N= 80)

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. I feel more encouraged to reflect on myself when my teacher provides supportive and constructive feedback.	4.238	Strongly Agree
2. I stay motivated to learn about myself when I get positive feedback on my growth.	4.475	Strongly Agree
3. I become less interested in self-reflection activities when the feedback given feels too critical.	3.513	Agree
4. I feel motivated to keep learning about myself when my teacher acknowledges my growth.	4.275	Strongly Agree
5. I am discourage from engaging self-reflection if feedback is centered only on grades.	3.55	Agree
Composite Mean	4.010	Agree

Legend: 4.20-5.00

(Strongly Agree)

3.40-4.19 (Agree)

2.60-3.39 (Neutral)

1.80-2.59 (Disagree)

1.00-1.79 (Strongly Disagree)

As presented in table 9, the highest mean was recorded in the indicator 2, *“I stay motivated to learn about myself when I get positive feedback on my growth,”* with a mean of 4.475 **strongly agree**, indicates a **very high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**. This shows that supportive and positive feedback from teachers strongly encourages students to engage in self-reflection and continue learning about themselves. On the other hand, the lowest mean was found in the indicator 3, *“I become less interested in self-reflection activities when the feedback given feels too critical,”* with a mean of 3.513 **agree**, indicates a **high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**. It still reflects a generally positive attitude, indicating that while overly critical feedback may reduce interest, students remain motivated overall when teachers provide constructive guidance.

The overall mean for intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self in terms of teacher feedback style is 4.010, indicates the verbal interpretation of **agree**. This means that the students got a **high level of intrinsic motivation towards understanding the self among tertiary students**.

Table 10

OVERALL MEAN ON DIMENSION OF INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

Dimension of Intrinsic Motivation	Mean	Interpretation
1. Need for Achievement	4.242	Strongly Agree
2. Perceived Competence	4.035	Agree
3. Fear of Failure	3.528	Agree
4. Interest	4.258	Strongly Agree
5. Authority Expectations	3.725	Agree
6. Peer Acceptance	3.838	Agree
7. Teacher Feedback Style	4.010	Agree
Overall Mean	3.948	Agree

The general average on the scales of the intrinsic motivation to comprehend self is given in Table 10. The calculated total mean of 3.95 which is construed as Agree implies that tertiary students tend to have very high degree of intrinsic motivation towards the understanding of the self. This implies that learners are motivated to engage in self-reflection, personal growth, and self-awareness activities as part of the Understanding the Self course.

Of the seven dimensions of intrinsic motivation, interest received the highest total mean of 4.258 which is translated to Strongly Agree as indicated in Table 10. This observation means that the students are interested, like and personally relevant to the subject and this indicates a high intrinsic motivation to learn more about themselves.

Conversely, the lowest total mean of 3.528 that is read as Agree was registered in fear of failure. This means that though the students have some degree of concern or apprehension when performing self-reflection or addressing personal constraints, they are moderate and not a big obstacle to the overall motivation of the student. The findings suggest that fostering relevance and personal meaning in learning materials can boost intrinsic motivation, leading to deeper engagement. Strategies such as personalized learning tasks or reflective journaling may reduce fear of failure by making self-assessment less threatening. Enhancing self-efficacy through positive feedback can mitigate apprehension and strengthen overall intrinsic motivation. Ultimately, balancing relevance-driven tasks with confidence-building activities can optimize students' motivational levels and academic performance.

Table 11
Analysis of the correlation of the demographic profile
and the intrinsic motivation

Need for Achievement vs. Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile	Computed Chi-Square	Df	Chi-Square Critical Value	Result	Interpretation
Age	8.916	9	16.919	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Sex	4.960	3	7.815	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Year Level	5.384	6	12.592	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Academic Program	11.143	6	12.592	Ho Accepted	Not Significant

Perceived Competence vs. Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile	Computed Chi-Square	Df	Chi-Square Critical Value	Result	Interpretation
Age	5.727	6	12.592	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Sex	2.584	2	5.991	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Year Level	4.191	4	9.488	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Academic Program	3.152	4	9.488	Ho Accepted	Not Significant

Fear of Failure vs. Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile	Computed Chi-Square	Df	Chi-Square Critical Value	Result	Interpretation
Age	6.982	12	23.337	Ho Accepted	Not Significant

Sex	1.562	4	9.488	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Year Level	5.207	8	15.507	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Academic Program	6.438	8	15.507	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Interest vs. Demographic Profile					
Demographic Profile	Computed Chi-Square	Df	Chi-Square Critical Value	Result	Interpretation
Age	6.173	6	12.592	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Sex	2.803	2	5.991	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Year Level	6.901	4	9.488	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Academic Program	5.236	4	9.488	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Authority Expectations vs. Demographic Profile					
Demographic Profile	Computed Chi-Square	Df	Chi-Square Critical Value	Result	Interpretation
Age	5.859	9	16.919	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Sex	1.411	3	7.815	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Year Level	4.595	6	12.592	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Academic Program	7.060	6	12.592	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Peer Acceptance vs. Demographic Profile					
Demographic Profile	Computed Chi-Square	Df	Chi-Square Critical Value	Result	Interpretation
Age	7.985	12	23.337	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Sex	7.838	4	9.488	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Year Level	7.038	8	15.507	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Academic Program	5.228	8	15.507	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Teacher Feedback Style vs. Demographic Profile					
Demographic Profile	Computed Chi-Square	Df	Chi-Square Critical Value	Result	Interpretation
Age	5.009	9	16.919	Ho Accepted	Not Significant

Sex	2.666	3	7.815	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Year Level	3.435	6	12.592	Ho Accepted	Not Significant
Academic Program	4.134	6	12.592	Ho Accepted	Not Significant

Table 11 presents the results of the Chi-Square test of independence used to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the respondents' demographic profile (age, sex, year level, and academic program) and the different dimensions of intrinsic motivation, namely need for achievement, perceived competence, fear of failure, interest, authority expectations, peer acceptance, and teacher feedback style. The results show that in all cases, the computed Chi-Square values are lower than the corresponding Chi-Square critical values. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted.

This means that there is no significant relationship between the demographic variables and the different dimensions of intrinsic motivation. In other words, intrinsic motivation does not significantly differ according to age, sex, year level, or academic program. The respondents generally share similar levels of intrinsic motivation regardless of their demographic background.

The findings suggest that students' motivation to learn is not influenced by their personal demographic characteristics. Whether a student is younger or older, male or female, in a lower or higher year level, or enrolled in a different academic program, their level of intrinsic motivation remains relatively the same. This indicates that intrinsic motivation may be more personal and internal rather than dependent on external demographic factors.

Moreover, the results imply that all students have similar tendencies in striving to achieve their goals, building their competence, managing fear of failure, maintaining interest in their studies, meeting authority expectations, seeking peer acceptance, and responding to teacher feedback. Since no significant differences were found, it can be assumed that motivation is commonly experienced among students in the institution where the study was conducted.

These findings are important because they suggest that strategies to improve intrinsic motivation can be applied equally to all students. Educators do not need to design different motivational approaches based solely on demographic characteristics. Instead, teachers may focus on creating supportive and engaging learning environments that encourage all students to develop their internal drive to learn.

In conclusion, Table 12 shows that demographic profile does not have a significant relationship with intrinsic motivation. The level of intrinsic motivation among the respondents is generally consistent across different groups. This highlights the idea that intrinsic motivation

is a shared characteristic among students and is not determined by age, sex, year level, or academic program.

Conclusion

Building on the empirical evidence presented herein, it is clear that students enrolled in this course Understanding the Self show high levels of intrinsic motivation, intellectual curiosity and thought to be capable, which in turn facilitates their engagement and personal development. The strong focus on achievement with long-term persistence shows a strong internal motivation in the learners to understand their identity and develop their personal characteristics. While participation in learning is governed to a certain extent by extrinsic motivators (e.g. expectations set by the instructor, peer approval, and feedback mechanisms), learners generally maintain considerable agency over the course of their learning. Nevertheless, the prevalence of the fear of failure implies that it may be that affective dimensions mitigate the effects that students have in engaging in self-reflective stressors. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of a noncoercive, autonomy-affirming learning environment in helping to create a meaningful interaction and a rich learning environment in the context of the Understanding the Self curriculum.

Recommendations

It is suggested that educators and educational institutions apply instructional strategies that have been specifically designed to eradicate fear of failure in learners especially those with lower scores on motivational metrics. By fostering a climate of supportiveness and non-threatening environment, instructors are able to facilitate true self-expression and reflective practice without the baggage of having a shroud of judgment over the process. The balance of formative assessment, reflective journaling and open dialogue can help to reframe mistakes as opportunities for development and not failures. In addition, guidance counselors and faculty may offer targeted interventions that strengthen emotional stability and self-confidence, particularly among students that show signs of anxiety with respect to self-reflective tasks. Activities and workshops on self-acceptance, growth mindset and emotional awareness can also help reduce apprehension and boost intrinsic motivation amongst participants.

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