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Basic hope, attitudes, and motivation to learn during educational activities in physical education students

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Abstract

This study aimed at assessing a degree of the basic hope and motivation character (typical behavior) showed by the physical education students during their educational activities. It was assumed that the degree of the basic hope may determine students' approach and motivation to learn (study). Eighty four students of the physical education at the Academy of Physical Education and Sport (APhES) in Gdańsk participated in this study, including 47 male and 37 female students aged between 22 and 28 years. Three scales (questionnaires) were used. The first BHI-12 served to measure basic hope; RMD to measure three attitudes of the examined students: 1) rivalry (R); 2) drive for mastering (M); 3) diligence (D), and MIE, which enables to assess motivation character (internal and external) of the students. An analysis of the obtained data indicated that the examined students are characterized by the basic hope level was higher than the average. Typical attitudes during learning are related to both diligence and drive for mastering. Physical education students are characterized by the internal motivation during study. Both gender and sport activity does not differentiate significantly the degree of basic hope, attitudes, and motivation to learn.

Keywords: Hope, basic hope, attitudes, motivation to learn, physical education students

Introduction

Hope, attitudes, and motivations are imminent features of the human personality. It is, therefore, interesting to acquaint students' attitudes, motivations and hope to achieve their goals. Research in this field is not voluminous. Therefore, the author wanted to get more information on the hope, attitudes, and motivation to successful completion the studies. Students of the Physical Education Faculty are perfect material to investigate their basic hope level, attitudes, and motivation to learn.

Other authors deal mostly with theoretical basis of these three elements and human personality development. Psychologists the term "hope" relate mainly to the belief about themselves, i.e. chances to achieve an aim and positive expectation of the own events in the future (Trzebiński, Zięba, 2003) ^[1].

Term "basic hope", according Erikson (2000, 2002) ^[2, 3], should be understood as a general, early formulated conviction that the surrounding reality have sense and is favorable. Degree of this conviction exerts an effect on the human reactions to emerging difficulties and challenges, deciding on the development of personality (cit. Trzebiński, 2004, p.173) ^[4]. Strong feeling of hope helps to cope with the loss and to build a new order. The loss may be an impulse to personality development, being a start to something good. Moreover, Trzebiński and Zięba (2003a, 2004) ^[5, 4] suggest that the strong hope helps to use chances, coping with challenges and facilitate to see "lucky events" such as a possibility of the choice, offer of help or the ways of coping with stress, especially existential one.

Validity of such a suggestion certifies Snyder *et al.* (1997, 2006) ^[6, 7], who showed that the students with strong hope are more confident, energetic, and creative. Moreover, high level of hope exerts an effect on the quality of life, which is related to the mental well-being. Bailey and Snyder (2007) ^[8] found relationship between hope and with satisfaction with life in the group of students. Similarly, Valle *et al.* (2006) ^[9] ascertain that the young people of the high hope level were more satisfied with life, measured during one year. According to Matczak and Sałata (2010, p. 23) ^[10], persons characterized by the high hope level (both basic and hope to

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gain success) have also significantly higher level of the emotional intelligence. Krok (2013, p. 168) ^[11] thinks that hope to achieve success is a good predictor of the majority of features of the psychic well-being in both hedonistic and eudemonistic traditions. Keyes *et al.* (2002) ^[12] think that the strong hope in the psychological intervention enables positively work through life experience. Low hope level in adults is connected with the symptoms of depression and behavioral problems (Snyder, Lopez, Shorey, 2003) ^[13].

Other important designations in the title of this study are motivation and social attitude. Motivation as the majority of the scientific concepts is coming from the Latin (moveo, motum, semoveo), meaning motion, moving, causing, and bringing about (Gasiul, 2007) ^[14]. Motivation colloquially understood is an excitation, and encouragement for action. In the psychology, are existing two concepts “motive” and “motivation”. Motive is reserved or the desires, which do not directly serve to meet biological needs or are strongly connected with learning, e.g. human need of achievements. Motivation is related to all processes involved in the initiations, directions, and maintenance of both physical and psychic activities (Zimbardo *et al.*, 2011, pp. 60-62) ^[15]. From the point of view of pedagogy, motivation means “activity of the motives, i.e. tensions determining a direction and volume of the body activity” (Niemierko, 2002, p. 11) ^[16].

“Attitude” psychologically is understood as a stable pattern evaluating reaction to the said person, object or affair. According to the classic definition, attitude is more or less consistent pattern of the affective, cognitive and conative, i.e. behavioral, reactions (feelings, thoughts, and behavior) to the psychological object (Maliszewski, 2001, p. 102) ^[17]. An attitude – generally positive or negative attitude to somebody or something – is reflected in the beliefs, emotions or planned behavior (Myers, 2003, p.152) ^[18]. In the social psychology, an attitude to some object (man, thing, event, idea) is relatively stable tendency to valuation of this object both positively and negatively (Wojciszke, 2013, p. 200) ^[19]. Attitude may also be named an opinion which contains valuating and emotional component. In contrast to the opinions, attitudes are very difficult to change (Aronson, 2012, p. 114) ^[20]. Important features of the attitude are: sign (may be positive or negative) and volume (higher or lower). Other attitude dimensions include: complexity, degree of the said attitude relation with other ones, durability. Attitudes influence processing of information on the subjects they concern, facilitating this process on one side, and deforming it on the other side (Siuta *et al.*, 2009, pp. 192-193) ^[21]. It is assumed that behavior shapes and forms the attitudes (Myers, 2003, p. 163) ^[18]. Contemporary understanding of the attitude usually contains a few components: cognitive (consent conviction or an opinion of another person); affective (emotionality or feeling); evaluative (positive or negative); motivated (dispositions to act). There is a controversy about, which of these components is the more important. How the term attitude is used, depends mainly on the theoretic orientation with which the author is connected (Reber, 2002; cit. Tomicki, 2016) ^[22, 23].

Taking the above into consideration, one may assume that the basic hope, i.e. students’ positive conviction that the world is well-ordered, sensible, and generally favorable for people, will determine their attitudes and motivation to learn (study) during educational activities.

Objectives

This study aimed at determining degree of basic hope,

attitudes and motivation character (typical behavior) in the physical education students during their educational activity. It was assumed that level of basic hope may determine their attitudes and motivation to learn (study). Author expected to get answers to the following questions:

1. What is a level of basic hope related to the study in the physical education students?
2. What values of the attitude indices (diligence, motivation, and rivalry) are characteristic for the group of examined students?
3. What attitudes demonstrating by the examined students during educations activities may be considered typical?
4. Are interdependence of the basic hope degree and students’ attitude and motivation to learn?

Protocol

Participants

Eighty four students of the physical education at the Academy of Physical Education and Sport (APhES) in Gdańsk participated in this study, including 47 male (55.95%) and 37 female (44.05%) students aged between 22 and 28 years (M=22.976; SD=1.397). In this group about 77% of students aged 22 and 23 years. Detailed age distribution of the examined students is shown in Fig. 1.

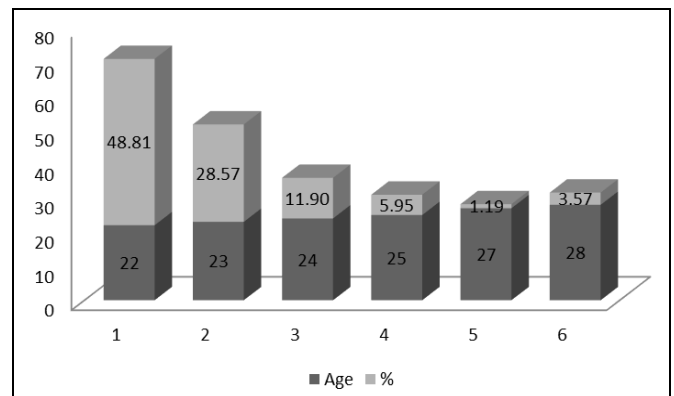


Fig 1: Histogram of the number and percent of the students’ age.

Sport activity (SA – membership in the sport club and an active participation in the competitions) declared about 66% of the examined students, while 33.34% did not. The most frequent forms of SA the following disciplines may be included: training in the gym (13.09%), football (10.71%) handball (8.33%), and swimming (about 6%). Distant race, basketball, volleyball, fitness, and MA trained about 4% of the examined students. Single students trained various sport disciplines – together 27 disciplines and sport competitions. Time of SA training was between 2 and 18 years (M=5.000; SD=5.396).

Leisure sport activity (LSA) declared about 90% of the examined students, frequently with SA. LSA included distance races (17.85%), cycling (14.29%), and swimming (7.14%). Next training in the gym (10.71%), football (8.33%), ski (7.14%), skating (5.95%), and tennis (4.76%). Other types of LSA declared single students.

Methods

Three questionnaires (scale) were used in this study. The first one named BHI-12 is a self-report tool. It includes 12 statements. Examined person indicates a degree of an agreement with each statement, choosing one answer out of a 5-point scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. Three answers have buffer character and are not taken for an

analysis of the results. In case of the fourth answer reversed scoring rule is applied. The obtained scores may be 9 to 45. Reliability (calculated with Cronbach's alpha) is 0.70; for this study $\alpha=0.58$. Satisfactory stability of this tool was also confirmed (correlation 0.62 after 2 months). Both experimental and correlation studies confirmed correctness of this questionnaire.

Low scores were in the range 23 – 31 in males and 16 – 31 in females; high scores were 31.5 – 45 in males and 31.5 – 43 in females. The higher score, the higher basic hope (Trzebiński, Zięba, 2003, p. 7) [1]. BHI-12 may be used for both individual and group tests in teenagers over 16 years of life and adults. It may also be used in the scientific studies – follow-up of certain general correctness – and diagnostic processes – determination of the psychological features of the said person or category of the individuals to foresee the prognosis ((Trzebiński, Zięba, 2003, p. 21) [1].

The second questionnaire (scale) RMD is used to measure three attitudes of the student: 1) rivalry (R); 2) mastering (M); 3) diligence (D). This scale was designed by Szejnberg (Szejnberg, Jasiński, 2015) [24], basing on Franken's scale (2005, pp. 188-189) [24]. This questionnaire contains 19 statements indicating what the students may do both in school (learning) and at home. The examined student should assess how each statement characterizes him. Examined students answers range in a 4-point scale in which: 1 – does not concern me at all; 2 – concerns me in a small way; 3 – it does concern me greatly; 4 – it concerns me.

The third questionnaire (scale) is named MIE (motivation internal external) and contains 13 statements enabling to define motivation character (Szejnberg, Jasiński, 2015) [24]. Examined students have to use a 5-point Likert scale. Nine first statements are related to the internal motivation (statements 1 – 9). The remaining 4 statements – external motivation (10 – 13). In a 5-point Likert scale the answers mean: 0 – strongly disagree; 1 – not agree; 2 – have no opinion; 3 – agree; 4 – strongly agree. Summing up the answers – first answers to the questions related to the internal motivation then, external motivation, and one may assess attitude of each students to learning (study).

Statistical analysis

Collected data were analyzed, using basic methods of the statistical analysis. The following marks were used: n – sample size; \bar{x} – arithmetic mean; SD – standard deviation; t – T test value; df – degree of freedom; p – significance level. Markings of the analyzed variables are given in the text.

Results

Basic hope level

Index of the general basic hope level in the physical education students measured with BHI-12 proved to be variable. Score of BH for about 50% of the examined students ranged from 30 to 35 (i.e. standard ten = 6-8). The obtained result indicates that BH level is higher than the average level in every second student. Characteristic for respondents was statement 11 (in BHI-12). In this case about 60% of students “rather agree” that the “World is in fact sensible, and something is in it, even if we sometimes feel lost” (58.33%). Moreover, about 90% of students think that the statement “Every cloud has a silver lining” is more adequate or their experience and feelings. Scores of this statement was: 4 – 36.90% and 5 – 53.57%. Some students chosen this statement “It is not this bad, what would not work out for the worse”. Percent distribution of the standard ten rating for BHI-12 is shown in Fig. 2.

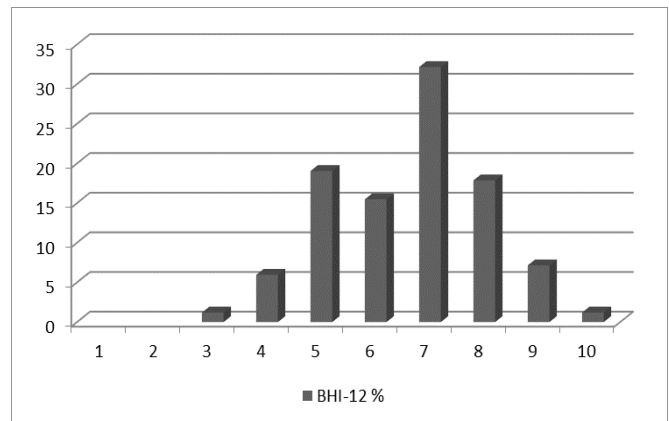


Fig 2: Percent distribution of the standard ten rating for BHI-12.

Students' attitudes to learning during educational activity

The most characteristic students' attitudes to learning during educational activity were these, which received the highest scores, i.e. equivalent to the statements such as “it does concern me greatly” or “does not concern me at all” given by more than 50% of the examined students (see Woynarowska-Soldan, Tabak, 2013, p. 661) [25]. An analysis of the obtained data related to the RMD questionnaire suggested that over 50% of the students showed 5 out of 19 attitudes from the following subscales:

- rivalry (R – no intensification of such attitudes),
- mastering (M – two such attitudes; statements 9, 12),
- diligence (D – three such attitudes, statements 6, 11, and 17).

a. Rivalry

Symptomatic for the examined group of students was the lack of attitudes showing an increase in rivalry. There was no increased frequency of the chosen answers in subscale R indicating that they are typical and manifested by over 50% of the responders.

b. Mastering

Two statements out of 9 in the M subscale could suggest that the examined group of students have such a feature. About 62% of the students chosen an answer “it does concern me greatly” to the statement “I feel satisfaction in improving my achievements, even if I am better than others”. An answer “it does not concern me at all” to the statement “Well done activities in classes was satisfactory” was chosen by every second student (50%).

c. Diligence

Data analysis for subscale diligence (D) enabled to distinguish 3 out of 5 statements characteristic for the physical education students. More than half of them (55.95%) “Feeling of the satisfaction executing assigned work best as possible” (answers: “does not concern me at all”). Every examined student (50%) thinks that “When he decides to do something, realizes it persistently” (answers: “it does concern me greatly”).

It should be stressed that every second examined student “takes some activity, which he consider difficult to effect” in small extent than those “he will complete for sure” (answers: “concerns me in small way”). Generally, frequency of data obtained for subscale D suggests that diligence of about 66% of responders is rather average. Scores for D subscale ranged between 13 and 16 (standard ten= 5-7).

An analysis of the physical education students' attitudes to learning showed that they do not show tendency to rivalry. The best execution of the assigned tasks is satisfactory and when they decided to do something, executes it persistently. They rather do not take tasks, they are not sure to execute. Percent distribution of the standard ten ratings of the attitudes (R – rivalry; M – mastering; D – diligence) is shown in Fig. 3.

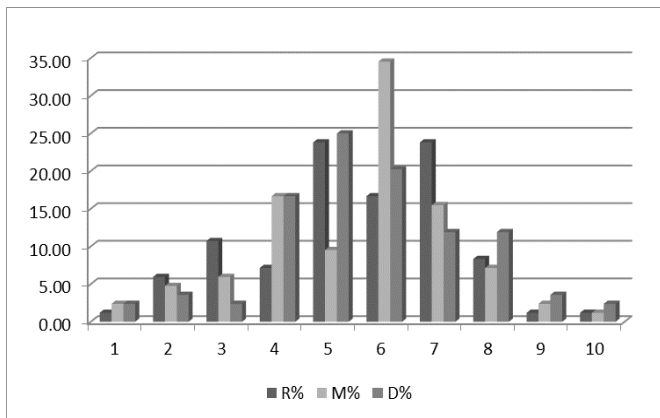


Fig 3: Percent distribution of the standard ten ratings of the attitudes (R – rivalry; M – mastering; D – diligence).

Internal motivation

Analysis of data concerning character of the motivation to learn (study) showed that it mainly comes from meeting the needs connected with the realization of the study curriculum. Internal motivation dominated in the distinguished motivation characteristics. Chosen statements describing this type of the motivation support such a conclusion. About 60% of responders “Like to learn new information” (answer “agree” marked 60.71% of responders). Every second student “Would like to know more about sports and physical education” (53.57% of the answers “strongly agree”). The same percentage declared a need to find answers concerning sports and physical education (53.57%) choosing the statement “I like to find the answer to the problems concerning these” (answers “strongly agree”). Every second student “Learn subjects contained in the curriculum to know more” (answer “agree”) Similarly, 52.38% of students “Willingly follow study curriculum to know more” (answer “agree”). The reason of such answers is the fact that about 55.95% of the physical education students are “very interested in this discipline” (answer “agree”).

It shows that internal motivation (MI) dominates in the physical education students during the study. However, significant dispersion of the maximum values of the results in this subscale should be stressed. Nevertheless, scores of MI ranged in 22 – 25 for 50% of the examined students (raw results). Recalculated to standard ten showed that MI to learn was average or lower in every second student (standard ten values 5 – 7).

External motivation

Over 50% of the examined students did not agree with the statements suggesting that “learn because parents give various prizes” (54.76%) or “learn because parents threaten with unpleasant consequences in case of bad notes” (75% of answer “not agree”). Generally, over 50% of responders drive by external motivation (ME) during studies. Percent distribution of the standard ten ratings in subscales MI and ME are shown in Fig. 4.

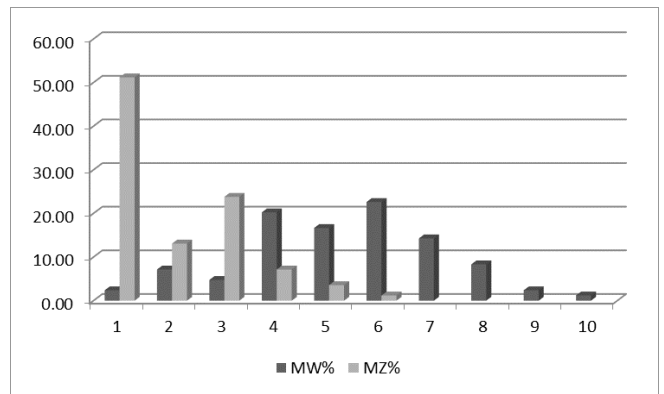


Fig 4: Percent distribution of the standard ten ratings in subscales MI and ME.

Significance of the data differences distribution and their correlation

Comparison of the data differences distribution (standard ten ratings) in groups differentiated by student’s gender and sport activity (SA) does not significantly differentiating their feeling of the basic hope, distinguished attitudes and characteristics of the motivation to learn. Statistically significant difference was seen in the distributions of the attitude “diligence”. Female students obtained significantly higher results in subscale D (t=2.005; p=0.048). Comparison of the differences distribution is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Comparison of the differences distribution (standard ten ratings)

Variable	\bar{x} G2	\bar{x} G1	SD G2	SD G1	t	df	p
BHI-12	6.703	6.511	1.412	1.473	0.604	82	0.547
R	5.703	5.319	1.762	1.901	0.948	82	0.346
M	5.703	5.340	1.697	1.903	0.908	82	0.367
D	5.189	6.000	1.913	1.782	-2.005	82	0.048*
IW	5.324	5.298	1.857	1.944	0.063	82	0.950
EM	5.973	6.064	1.166	1.325	-0.329	82	0.743

Legend:

Student’s t test

Variable grouping: gender

Group I: G2 – male students, n=37

Group 2:G1 – female students, n=47

To find relationship between basic hope level and motivation to learn (study) in the e students, Pearson correlation analysis for the distinguished variables was made (raw data). The obtained results enabled to see the following dependences: 1) basic hope (BH) level correlates with internal motivation (IM). The higher BH level, the higher IM values; 2) rivalry (R) positively correlates with other features of the motivation to learn, i.e. mastering (M), diligence (D), and internal motivation (IM). Similarly, mastering (M) positively correlates with diligence (P) and internal motivation (IM) Moreover, diligence (D) positively correlates with internal motivation (IM). The higher D value, the higher IM value, which may be an evidence of the students’ diligence and internal motivation to achieve their goal. Results of Pearson correlation analysis of the analyzed variables are shown in

Table 2: Results of Pearson correlation analysis of the analyzed variables (raw results)

Variable	R	M	D	IM	EM
BHI-12	0.063	0.153	0.141	0.243*	-0.191
R	–	0.459*	0.392*	0.303*	0.161
M		–	0.604*	0.549*	-0.074
D			–	0.474*	0.086
IW				–	0.066

* These correlation indices are significant at $p < .050$; $n = 54$.

Discussion

Analyses of the obtained results concerning the feeling of basic hope in the physical education students indicated that the basic hope level was higher than the average in every second student. Characteristic for the examined students was a belief that “It is not this bad, what would not work out for the worse”, noted in 90% cases.

Basic hope level may determine specific attitudes to learning (studying). Analyzed attitudes of the examined students to learning with RMD questionnaire revealed that over 50% of responders showed 5 out of 19 attitudes, which might be treated as typical for them. Three of them related “diligence” and two – “drive to mastering”. It should be stressed that the physical education students did not expressed typical attitude to “rivalry”. The majority of the chosen answers in subscales M and D showed “drive to mastering” and “diligence” at an average and high levels. Typical attitude of the examined students was “satisfaction of the best completion of the assigned work” as well as “persistent realization of the undertaken task” and “taking some activity, which might be difficult to effect”. Similar research in USA revealed that high values of diligence and drive to mastering (subscales D and M) enable to foresee possibility to achieve the goals in the examined students in contrary to rivalry, which makes it difficult (Franken, 2005, p. 188) [26]. Another study with use of RMD scale which involved 21 students (14 female and 7 male students) of the third class of pedagogy carried out by Szejnberg and Jasiński (2015) [24] showed that the average value of diligence (D), drive to mastering (M), and rivalry (R) were equal.

Studies on the motivation to learn (study) are concentrating on such problems as: motivation of the achievements, external and internal motivation, and drive for success (Szejnberg, Jasiński, 2015) [24]. Researches are also interested in the similar effects of the teachers’ activities, influencing students’ proper attitude to the motivation. Results of the studies reveal among other that failure does not motivate the students to learn. The students wait that their teachers will prize their efforts (Boekaerts, 2002) [27].

Results of this study enabled to find that motivation declared by the physical education students’ results mainly from the need to satisfy needs related to the curriculum of the study. Internal motivation prevails in this research.

Comparison of the data differences significance (standard ten results) in the examined groups differentiated by the gender and participation in sports activities does not show any significant differences in the basic hope levels, attitudes, and motivation. Basic hope level was higher than the average in every second student and approximated the results obtained by Trzebiński and Zięba (2003) [1], and Łaguna (2006) [28].

Pearson correlation for the selected variables showed the following correlations: 1) BH correlated positively with IM. The higher BH level, the higher MI values; 2) R correlates positively with motivation and diligence as well as IM. Similarly, motivation correlates with diligence and internal

motivation. Diligence correlates positively with internal motivation, i.e. the higher value of diligence level, the higher internal motivation.

Number of similar research studies is scarce. Therefore, it is difficult to relate these results to other authors. Prominent scientists like Snyder carry out rather theoretical problems. Snyder (2000) [29] is convinced that the basic hope is a type of thinking directed to the achievement of the success. He defines hope as a kind of positive motivation state. In his theory of the hope, he distinguished two interrelated types of the attitude: thinking oriented to search of different solutions and pathways thinking. Snyder tried to find a source of hopeful thinking. He and other authors, for instance Sękowska (2000) [30], Snyder *et al.*, 2002 [31], Stefańska-Klar (2002) [32], Ciecuch (2010) [33], stressed an importance of the positive thinking. According to Snyder (2000) [29], individuals with strong hope for success generate more tasks and more easily find a new task in case of failure. Probably, Łaguna, Trzebiński and Zięba (2005) [34] define this theoretical construct and hope for success.

Erikson was also interested in the theory of the hope. According his theory, basic hope is a general, early forming conviction that the surrounding reality is sensible and supportive. Strength of this conviction influences our reactions and decides about personality development.

This is a reason of studies on the basic hope, attitudes and motivation of the human activities.

Conclusions

1. Physical education students are characterized by the higher than the average level of the basic hope.
2. Typical attitudes of the examined students to the classes relate mainly to diligence and drive for mastering.
3. Internal motivation is typical for the physical education students during their studies.
4. Gender and participation in the sports does not differentiate significantly their basic hope level, attitudes, and motivation.

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