

# A Study of Learner' Motivation Using the Social Cognitive Theory

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## ABSTRACT

Motivation is vital when it comes to an effective language learning. The continuous significant motivation can not only achieve excellent academic performance, but also creates the habit of continuous learning even after higher education. However, many researches looked into motivation not through the lens of self-regulation. This study aims to examine motivation through self-regulation by utilizing Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) by Bandura (1977) and Zimmerman's (2000) Three Phases of Self-Regulated Learning. Data was collected from 116 students of Japanese language course from a public university in Malaysia using a survey from SCT by Bandura (1977) and Three Phases of Self-Regulated Learning by Zimmerman (2000). The survey consisted of four parts; Part 1 – Demographic, Part 2 – Person, Part 3 – Environment and Part 4 – Behaviour. The finding shows that self-regulation has the highest mean which indicates that respondents putting effort in learning despite disliking the class. The research suggested that Japanese language instructors should take into consideration students' self-regulating learning strategies when designing lessons.

**Keywords:** Japanese language, language learning, motivation, self-regulation, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT).

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of Study

When it comes to an effective language learning, motivation is one significant variable vital to be discussed as it involved learners' continuous participation, engagement and achievement. For foreign language learning, motivation not only encourages learners' interactions and maintain focus, but also frames the strategies as well as behaviour they chose. However, motivation, despite its importance, is not a simple matter as it is multidimensional, influenced by personal, environmental and behavioural factors. To design and sustain an effective language learning, it is vital for these factors to be studied.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) by Bandura (1977), explained that personal factors, environmental factors and behavioural factors are linked together, impacting motivation as well as their performance. This concept is what Bandura (1977) called reciprocal determinism. It discussed how learners play an active role in language learning, which shaped motivation not only intrinsically but also extrinsically. Zimmerman's (2000), meanwhile, introduces the three phases of self-regulated learning (forethought, performance, and reflection). These phases describe the multi-layered process of how motivation works in class. The process involves goal-setting (forethought), participating in learning tasks (performance) and finally, self-evaluating (reflection). These phases show how self-regulation encourages continuous motivation by mediating the interaction of personal, environmental, and behavioural factors

Previous studies on motivation in Japanese language learning mainly applied other theoretical and conceptual framework, neglecting the insight SCT and the three phases of self-regulated learning could give in the field of language learning and pedagogy. De Burgh-Hirabe (2019) studied the motivation to learn Japanese as foreign language among English speaking students in New Zealand through the lens of L2 motivational self-system (L2MSS) by Dörnyei (2009) and discovered the students' motivation mainly come from Japanese cultural integration as well as intrinsically. Similarly, Singh et al. (2021), using survey consists of Gardner's (1985)

AMTB (Attitude/Motivation Test Battery) and Dornyei's (1994) Attitudinal Motivation, unveiled that students' motivation are integrative (understanding Japanese culture) and attitudinal (teacher's skills and feedback).

However, previous studies had yet to provide a more refined understanding through the concepts of the Bandura's SCT (1977) and Zimmerman's (2000) phases. Thus, this study aims to examine Japanese language learners' motivation through the lens of SCT and self-regulated learning.

### Statement of Problem

As briefly discussed, many studies on motivation in Japanese language learning did not utilized the models by Bandura (1977) and Zimmerman (2000). These studies did not view motivation via self-regulation, producing result that leans more towards external factors of motivation. De Burgh-Hirabe (2019), Singh et al. (2021) and Hong (2023), who investigates motivation in Japanese language learning quantitatively, agreed that integrative and attitudinal motivation are the main motivation for students. Researches that do studied through the perspective of self-regulation mainly focuses on English language learning. Anam and Stracke (2019), for instance, investigated motivation and self-efficacy among English as foreign language among young Indonesian students and argued that students who has self-efficacy utilized a larger number of learning strategies. This creates an incomplete understanding on motivation within Japanese language learning.

Anam and Stracke (2019) explained that students with low self-efficacy tend to put less effort in learning vocabulary and utilizes lesser learning strategies. They further explained, this is due to student with lower self-efficacy to be less confident in their English language ability. In every classroom, there will be students with lower self-efficacy, which subsequently have lower motivation in language learning. This issue need to be address to identify what learners need to achieve a successful learning experience.

Based on the issue discussed, there is a need to study how these three factors, via self-regulation, influenced motivations. By scrutinizing these dynamics, valuable insight can be obtained for the use of Japanese language instructors in designing curriculum and lessons that create, maintain and improve learners' motivations and learning experience.

### Objective of the Study and Research Questions

Therefore, this study intends to examine learner' motivation using SCT. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions;

- To examine learners' perceptions of personal, environmental, and behavioural factors influencing motivation for Japanese language learning.
- To investigate the relationship among personal, environmental, and behavioural factors in motivation for Japanese language learning.
- To determine whether significant differences exist in personal, environmental, and behavioural factors across learner clusters and proficiency levels.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Framework of the Study: Zimmerman (2000)'s Phases of Self-Regulated Learning

As explained previously, Zimmerman (2000) has identified the three phases of self-regulated learning (forethought, performance, and reflection). Zimmerman (2002) explained that self-regulation refers to the process of self-directive that changes the learners' mental abilities into academic skills, rather than just mental ability or academic performance skill itself. A major function of education is the development of lifelong learning, which shows how vital self-regulation is (Zimmerman, 2002). Thus, to clarify what self-regulation is, Zimmerman (2002) had introduced that the cycle process of Structure and Function of Self-Regulatory Processes which consist of three phases as can be seen below:

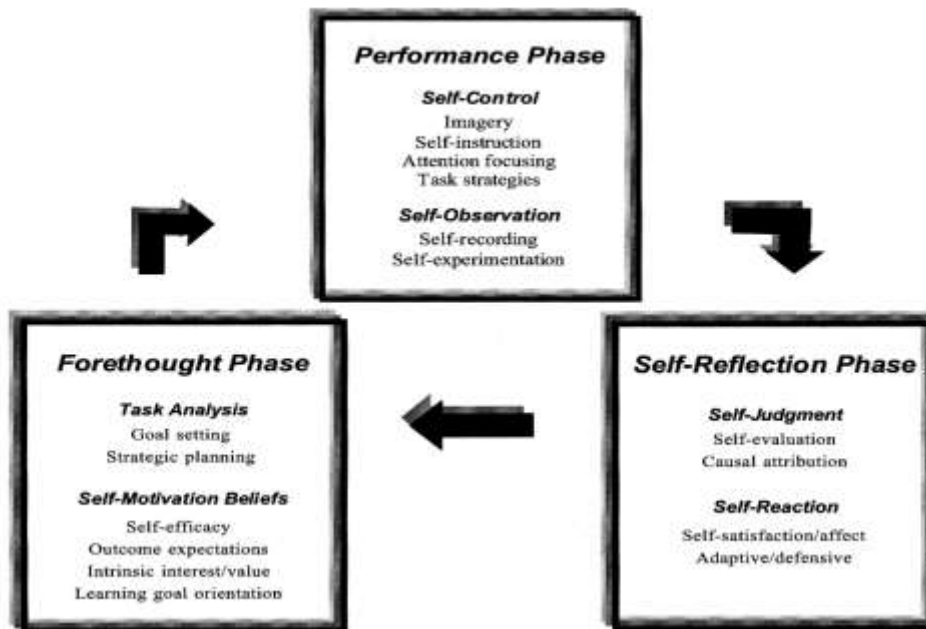


Figure 1 Phases and Subprocesses of Self-Regulation.

Zimmerman (2002) explained that the forethought phase refers to processes and belief of the pre-learning efforts and involved two major classes; task analysis and self-motivation. The next phase is performance phase which represents the processes when the behaviours related are implemented (Zimmerman, 2002). The performance phase contains self-control, i.e. the execution of certain methods and strategies that were chosen in forethought phase, and self-observation which is the self-recording of personal occurrences or self-experimentation to investigate their reasons (Zimmerman, 2002). In final phase, Zimmerman (2002) argued that it called self-reflection phase. Self-reflection phase is the processes of post-learning efforts. It contains two major classes, which are self-judgement (self-evaluation and causal attribution) and self-reaction (self-satisfaction, positive affect defensive reaction and adaptive reaction).

Theoretical Framework of the Study: Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (1977)

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) by Bandura (1977), which evolved from the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), supported the idea of reciprocal determinism, i.e. learning is the process where personal factors, behaviour and environment interact. Due to the three core components of the theory, it is also known as the triadic reciprocal determinism. Bandura (1977) had explained SCT through diagram below:

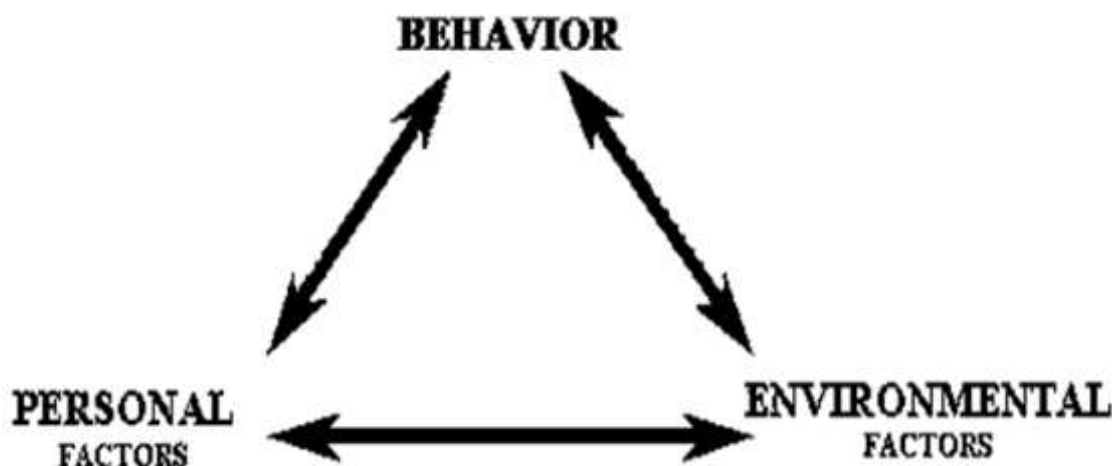


Figure 2 Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (1986)

Using the figure, Govindaraju (2021) explained that SCT highlights behaviour, environment, and cognition as crucial development elements through the lens of psychology. Govindaraju (2021) further discussed that environment can be influenced by human cognitive, as well as environment can also alter a person's perceptions. Similarly, environment can affect a person's behaviour and a person's behaviour controls the environment which he/she is subjected to (Govindaraju, 2021).

In most of Bandura's work, personal factors are also known as cognitive. Bandura (1986) discussed personal factors as the self-efficacy beliefs, attitudes and experiences. Bandura (2002) explained that self-efficacy involved the efficacy of regulating one's learning tasks and mastering academic activities. Meanwhile, behaviour refers to noticeable goal-oriented action (Bandura, 1986). Bandura (2002) clarify the connection between personal factors and behaviour through the example of psychology where he stated that aggressive behaviours are the result of one's moral disengagement which originated from a weak self-regulatory efficacy. Finally, Bandura (1986) stated that environment, commonly discussed together with agency, refers to the context which provides models, resources and feedbacks. Bandura (2002) argued that a person's action can influence his/her life, yet they have little autonomous over their social and institutional conditions.

### **Past Studies on Motivation and Self-Regulated Learning**

Regarding motivation and language learning, previous studies tend to investigate other foreign language learning and utilizes the concepts as well as model from other theories.

Anam and Stracke (2019) had investigate how self-efficacy beliefs plays a role in learning English as a foreign language among young Indonesian students. Their research was done using quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative method involved questionnaire and test administrations while qualitative method consists of interview. The data is collected from sixth grader of 12 primary schools in East Java, Indonesia. Anam and Stracke (2019) discovered that statistically students who had stronger self-efficacy in English language task tend to be more fluent in English. Meanwhile, the qualitative data demonstrates that students with higher self-efficacy utilize a larger number of learning strategies to aid them with their task compared to students with lesser self-efficacy. Anam and Stracke (2019) argued that according to these findings, teachers can train students to identify their perceived ability to tackle tasks and assign reasonable level tasks which aligned with students' zone of proximal development.

Zakaria et. al (2024), on the other hand, studied the social learning strategies (SLS) used by undergraduate students of foreign language learning. The data was collected from 122 students in a public university in Malaysia using, Bandura's (1977) social learning, scaffolded by Wenden and Runin's (1987) learning strategies. Zakaria et. al (2024) discovered student utilized all the four components in SLS: attention, retention, reproduction and motivation when learning a foreign language. They also discovered that there is a significant positive connection between attention and reproduction, attention and retention and also attention and motivation. Similar connection can be seen in the correlation between motivation and reproduction, and also motivation and retention. Zakaria et. al (2024) suggested for instructors to identify the most suitable SLS for their student for an effective learning. They also recommended that future studies looked into teachers' awareness and readiness in language learning strategies to gain insight into the instructors' perspective.

The discussed researches looked into motivation, language learning strategies and self-regulation separately. However, both research agreed that self-efficacy and language learning strategies to be vital in student's motivation. In addition, these researches argued the interaction of components within self-efficacy and language learning encourage students' motivation for a better performance, even though examined separately. This study hypothesizes a similar conclusion but with both variables involved.

### **Conceptual Framework of the Study**

Successful learners depend on their motivational beliefs to keep going. According to Rahmat and Thasrabiab (2024), this motivation triggers the cognitive capacity of the learners. In doing so, the learners need to use their self-regulated learning strategies. This study is anchored from Bandura's (1977) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). The factors in SCT are used as variables in this study (figure 1) and the variables are supported by constructs by

Martin et. al. (2022). To begin with, learning motivation starts with the learner (person) and this is supported by the learner's (i) consistency of interest and (ii) perseverance.

Next, the environment plays a role to encourage learners' motivation. This is supported by the learners' (i) self-efficacy, (ii) intrinsic value and (iii) test anxiety. Finally, motivated learners are identified by their behaviour and this is supported by (i) cognitive strategy uses and (ii) self-regulation. Additionally, this study also explores if there is a relationship between all factors for learning motivation to conform Bandura's (1977) claim that the factors are reciprocally related to one another.

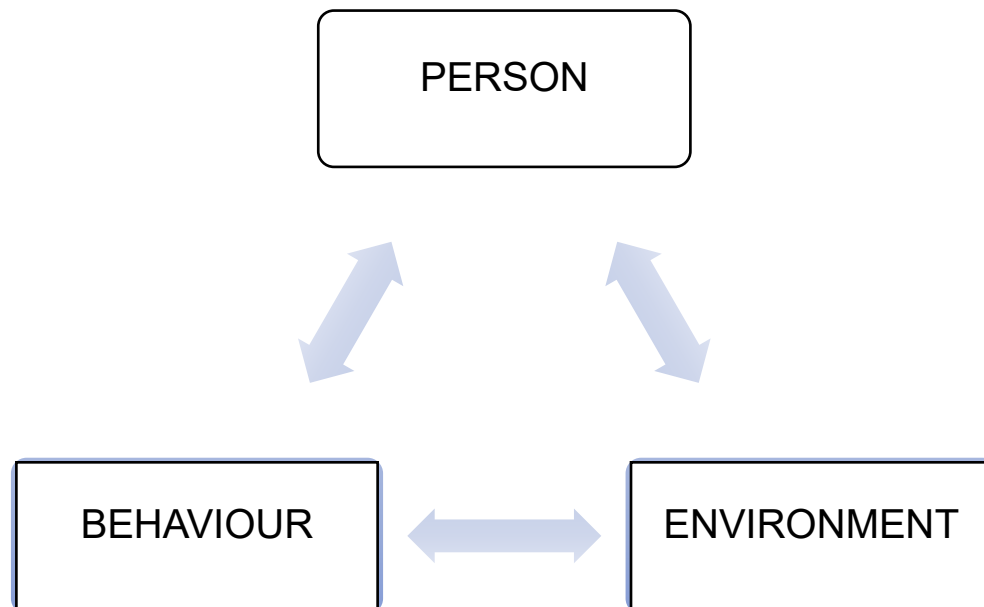


Figure 3 Conceptual Framework of Learner' Motivation using the Social Cognitive Theory

## METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study is done to explore learner' motivation using social cognitive theory. A convenient sample of 116 participants responded to the survey. The instrument used is a 5 Likert-scale survey and is rooted from Martin, et.al (2022) to reveal the variables in table 3 below. Table 1 below shows the categories used for the Likert scale; 1 is for Never, 2 is for Rarely, 3 is for Sometimes, 4 is for Very Often and 5 is for Always.

Table 1- Likert Scale Use

| Scale |            |
|-------|------------|
| 1     | Never      |
| 2     | Rarely     |
| 3     | Sometimes  |
| 4     | Very Often |
| 5     | Always     |

Table 2- Distribution of Items in the Survey

| PART  | VARIABLE    | VARIBALE             |    | CONSTRUCT               | NO OF ITEMS | TOTAL ITEMS |
|-------|-------------|----------------------|----|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Two   | Person      | Grit                 | i  | Consistency of Interest | 6           | 12          |
|       |             |                      | ii | Perseverance            | 6           |             |
| Three | Environment | Motivational Beliefs | i  | Self-Efficacy           | 6           | 17          |
|       |             |                      | ii | Intrinsic Value         | 7           |             |
|       |             |                      | ii | Test Anxiety            | 4           |             |



|                   |           |                                    |    |                        |   |    |
|-------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|----|------------------------|---|----|
| Four              | Behaviour | Self-Regulated Learning Strategies | i  | Cognitive Strategy Use | 7 | 14 |
|                   |           |                                    | ii | Self-Regulation        | 7 |    |
| TOTAL NO OF ITEMS |           |                                    |    |                        |   | 43 |

Table 2 represents the distribution of items in the survey. This survey consists of four sections. Part One involves demographic profiles, Part Two contains 11 items on Person, Part Three refers 17 items Environment and Part Four has 14 items on Behaviour or Self-Regulated Learning Strategies.

Table 3- Reliability Levels, Cronbach's Alpha Ranges, and Their Interpretations

| RELIABILITY LEVEL | CRONBACH'S ALPHA RANGE | INTERPRETATION                             |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Excellent         | 0.9 and above          | Indicates very high internal consistency   |
| Good              | 0.80-0.89              | Reflects strong internal consistency       |
| Acceptable        | 0.70-0.79              | Indicates acceptable internal consistency  |
| Questionable      | 0.60-0.69              | Reflects questionable internal consistency |
| Poor              | Below 0.6              | Indicates poor internal consistency        |

Table 4-Relability Analysis for Instrument

## Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .862             | 43         |

A reliability analysis was carried out to identify the internal reliability of the instrument. Table 3 above shows the distribution and interpretation of Cronbach Alpha range. According to Ahmad et.al. (2024), Cronbach Alpha scores between 0.7 to 0.9 is considered acceptable to excellent. Table 4 also shows the reliability of the survey. The analysis shows a Cronbach Alpha of .862; thus, revealing a good reliability of the instrument chosen/used. Further analysis using SPSS is done to present findings to answer the research questions for this study.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Demographic Analysis

To establish sample representatives and allow for generalizability to a larger population, researchers report demographic data in percentages (Zienefuss, et.al, 2021). Through the reporting, an overview of participants' characteristics can be determined. The reporting through percentages provides a clear and understandable picture of the sample makeup.

Table 5- Percentage for Demographic Profile

| QUESTION | DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE | CATEGORIES                             | PERCENTAGE (%) |
|----------|---------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1        | Gender              | Male                                   | 39%            |
|          |                     | Female                                 | 61%            |
| 2        | Cluster             | Science & Technology                   | 25%            |
|          |                     | Social Sciences, Humanities & Business | 75%            |

|   |                       |         |     |
|---|-----------------------|---------|-----|
| 3 | Japanese Course Level | Level 1 | 70% |
|   |                       | Level 2 | 30% |

Table 5 shows the percentage of demographic for this study. 61% of the respondents are female while 39% is male. 75% of the respondents are from the science and technology cluster and the rest (25%) are from social science, humanities and business cluster. When it comes to Japanese course level, 70% of the respondents are from Japanese level 1 course, meanwhile, just 30% of them are from level 2.

## Descriptive Statistics

Why is there a need to report the mean and standard deviation? According to Vetter (2017), Mean (M) represents the average, or centre of a data set. Standard deviation (SD) indicates the typical distance of individual observations from the mean which shows the data's variability or spread. A low SD means the data points are clustered close to the mean while a high SD indicates they are more spread out. It is good to have a high SD.

## Findings for Person

This section presents data to answer research question 1- How do learners perceive their personal factors in motivation for Japanese language learning? In the context of this study, this is measured by (i) consistency of interest and (ii) perseverance.

Table 6 - Mean for Consistency of Interest

| ITEM  |                                                                                                  | MEAN | SD   |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| GCIQ1 | I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one.                                   | 3.09 | 0.99 |
| GCIQ2 | New ideas and new projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.                             | 0.28 | 0.90 |
| GCIQ3 | I become interested in new pursuits every few months.                                            | 3.42 | 1.06 |
| GCIQ4 | My interests change from year to year.                                                           | 3.45 | 1.16 |
| GCIQ5 | I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time but later lost interest.    | 3.20 | 1.07 |
| GCIQ6 | I have difficulty maintaining my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete. | 3.18 | 1.15 |

Table 6 shows the mean for consistency of interest for Japanese language courses. GCIQ4 has the highest mean of 3.45 which represents the changes of interest annually. The second highest goes to GCIQ3 with the mean of 3.42, representing respondent's new interest monthly. GCIQ5 has the third highest mean of 3.2, demonstrating the short span of focus on an idea or project in short duration of time. The fourth place is GCIQ6 (3.18) that indicates the difficulty of focusing on project that is longer than a few months. The second lowest is GCIQ1 (3.09) representing the changes of goal after a duration of time, followed by GCIQ2 (0.28) indicating the distraction of new ideas and projects from the previous ones.

Table 7 - Mean for Perseverance of Effort

| ITEM  |                                                             | MEAN | SD   |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| GCPQ1 | I have achieved a goal that took years of work.             | 3.52 | 1.11 |
| GCPQ2 | I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge. | 3.74 | 0.84 |
| GCPQ3 | Setbacks don't discourage me.                               | 3.56 | 0.84 |
| GCPQ4 | I finish whatever I begin.                                  | 4.14 | 0.72 |
| GCPQ5 | I am a hard worker.                                         | 3.98 | 0.84 |
| GCPQ6 | I am diligent.                                              | 3.91 | 0.80 |

Table 7 represents the mean for perseverance of effort for Japanese language courses. GCPQ4 has the highest mean of 4.14 which represents the effort of completing tasks. GCPQ5 has the second highest mean of 3.98,

demonstrating respondents' view on themselves being hardworking. The third highest goes to GCPQ6 with the mean of 3.91, representing the view of respondent about themselves being diligent. The fourth place is GCPQ2 (3.74) that indicates the respondents find themselves persevering despite challenges. The second lowest is GCPQ3 (3.56) representing no discouragement even though there is hindrance, followed by GCPQ1 (3.52) indicating the ability to achieve a long-term goal.

## Findings for Environment

This section presents data to answer research question 2- How do learners perceive their environment in motivation for Japanese language learning? In the context of this study, this is measured by (i) self-efficacy, (ii) intrinsic value and (iii) test anxiety.

Table 8 - Mean for Self-Efficacy

| ITEM   |                                                                                        | MEAN | SD   |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| MBSEQ1 | Compared with others in this class, I think I'm a good student                         | 3.43 | 0.93 |
| MBSEQ2 | I'm certain I can understand the ideas taught in this course.                          | 4.11 | 0.68 |
| MBSEQ3 | I expect to do very well in this class.                                                | 4.13 | 0.73 |
| MBSEQ4 | I am sure I can do an excellent job on the problems and tasks assigned for this class. | 4.00 | 0.66 |
| MBSEQ5 | I know that I will be able to learn the material for this class                        | 4.31 | 0.61 |

Table 8 shows the mean for self-efficacy for Japanese language courses. MBSEQ5 has the highest mean of 4.31 which indicates the respondents' ability to learn the material in the class. MBSEQ3 has the second highest mean of 4.13, showing respondents' optimistic view on their performance in class. The third highest falls to MBSEQ2 with the mean of 4.11, representing the respondents' comprehension of the lessons. The fourth place is MBSEQ4 (4.00) that indicates the respondents' confidence in completing task effectively. The lowest is MBSEQ1 (3.43) representing respondents' confidence in being better than others.

Table 9 - Mean for Intrinsic Value

| ITEM   |                                                                            | MEAN | SD   |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| MBIVQ1 | I prefer class work that is challenging so I can learn new things.         | 3.78 | 0.78 |
| MBIVQ2 | It is important for me to learn what is being taught in this class.        | 4.34 | 0.65 |
| MBIVQ3 | I like what I am learning in this class.                                   | 4.60 | 0.59 |
| MBIVQ4 | I think I will be able to use what I learn in this class in other classes. | 4.14 | 0.83 |
| MBIVQ5 | Even when I do poorly on a test I try to learn from my mistakes.           | 4.51 | 0.63 |
| MBIVQ6 | I think that what I am learning in this class is useful for me to know.    | 4.59 | 0.58 |
| MBIVQ7 | I think that what we are learning in this class is interesting.            | 4.74 | 0.48 |

Table 9 indicates the mean for intrinsic value for Japanese language courses. MBIVQ7 has the highest mean of 4.74 which shows the respondents' interest on the lessons. MBIVQ3 has the second highest mean of 4.60, representing respondents' interest on the class. The third highest goes to MBIVQ6 with the mean of 4.59, representing the view of respondent about the class being useful. The fourth place is MBIVQ5 (4.51) that indicates the respondents' positive view on learning from mistakes in tests. The second lowest is MBIVQ2 (4.34) representing the importance of learning the lessons, followed by MBIVQ4 (4.14) demonstrating able to use the lessons in other classes and MBIVQ1 (3.78) indicating preferring challenges to gain new knowledge.

Table 10 - Mean for Test Anxiety

| ITEM   |                                                                            | MEAN | SD   |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| MBTAQ1 | I am so nervous during a test that I cannot remember facts I have learned. | 3.13 | 1.09 |
| MBTAQ2 | I have an uneasy, upset feeling when I take a test.                        | 3.26 | 1.05 |



|        |                                                          |      |      |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| MBTAQ3 | I worry a great deal about tests.                        | 3.69 | 1.05 |
| MBTAQ4 | When I take a test, I think about how poorly I am doing. | 3.56 | 1.14 |

Table 10 represents the mean for test anxiety for Japanese language courses. MBTAQ3 has the highest mean of 3.69 which shows the respondents' anxiety on test. MBTAQ4 has the second highest mean of 3.56, representing respondents' worry about their test performance. The third highest goes to MBTAQ2 with the mean of 3.26, indicating respondents' uneasy feeling when taking test. The fourth place is MBTAQ1 (3.13) that shows the respondents' nervousness during test until forgetting facts.

## Findings for Behaviour

This section presents data to answer research question 3- How do learners perceive behaviour in motivation for Japanese language learning? In the context of this study, this is measured by (i) cognitive strategy use, and (ii) self-regulation.

Table 11- Mean for Cognitive Strategy Use

| ITEM      |                                                                                         | MEAN | SD   |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| SRLSCSUQ1 | When I study, I put important ideas into my own words.                                  | 4.11 | 0.72 |
| SRLSCSUQ2 | I always try to understand what the teacher is saying even if it doesn't make sense.    | 4.18 | 0.68 |
| SRLSCSUQ3 | When I study for a test, I try to remember as many facts as I can.                      | 4.26 | 0.74 |
| SRLSCSUQ4 | When studying, I copy my notes over to help me remember material.                       | 3.97 | 0.98 |
| SRLSCSUQ5 | When I study for a test, I practice saying the important facts over and over to myself. | 4.28 | 0.77 |
| SRLSCSUQ6 | When I am studying a topic, I try to make everything fit together.                      | 4.28 | 0.70 |
| SRLSCSUQ7 | When reading I try to connect the things I am reading about with what I already know.   | 4.10 | 0.73 |

Table 11 demonstrates the mean for intrinsic value for Japanese language courses. SRLSCSUQ5 and SRLSCSUQ6 have the highest mean of 4.28 which shows the respondents practice saying important information repeatedly and arrange the fact to fit together. SRLSCSUQ3 has the second highest mean of 4.26, representing respondents memorizing for tests. The third highest goes to SRLSCSUQ2 with the mean of 4.18, representing the respondents trying to comprehend lesson taught despite making no sense. The fourth place is SRLSCSUQ1 (4.11) that demonstrates respondents studying by putting main points in their own words. The lowest is SRLSCSUQ4 (3.97) representing the act of copying notes to memorize lesson.

Table 12 - Mean for Self-Regulation

| ITEM     |                                                                                      | MEAN | SD   |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| SRLSSRQ1 | I ask myself questions to make sure I know the material I have been studying.        | 4.10 | 0.73 |
| SRLSSRQ2 | When work is hard I either give up or study only the easy parts.                     | 2.97 | 1.03 |
| SRLSSRQ3 | Even when study materials are dull and uninteresting, I keep working until I finish. | 3.93 | 0.81 |
| SRLSSRQ4 | Before I begin studying, I think about the things I will need to do to learn.        | 4.16 | 0.79 |
| SRLSSRQ5 | I often find that I have been reading for class but don't know what it is all about. | 4.42 | 0.87 |
| SRLSSRQ6 | When I'm reading, I stop once in a while and go over what I have read.               | 4.00 | 0.79 |
| SRLSSRQ7 | I work hard to get a good grade even when I don't like a class.                      | 4.33 | 0.77 |

Table 11 displayed the mean for self-regulation for Japanese language courses. SRLSSRQ5 has the highest mean of 4.42 which shows the respondents not understanding what they read for the lesson. SRLSSRQ7 has the second highest mean of 4.33, demonstrating respondents' effort in getting good grades even though they are dislike the class. The third highest goes to SRLSSRQ4 with the mean of 4.16, representing the respondents planning when studying. The fourth place is SRLSSRQ1 (4.10) that indicates respondents questioning themselves to gauge their knowledge. The second lowest is SRLSSRQ3 (3.97) representing the act of keep studying despite uninteresting materials, followed by SRLSSRQ2 (2.97), showing respondents give up or keep studying until it is easier.

## Exploratory Statistics

According to He (2024), correlation is a statistical technique that shows how strongly two variables are related to each other or the degree of association between the two. It's a common tool for describing simple relationships without making a statement about cause and effect. This section presents data to answer research questions on correlation. To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between all factors in motivation for learning, data is analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in table 13 below.

## Findings for Relationship Between All Factors in Motivation for Japanese Language Learning

This section presents data to answer research question 4- Is there a relationship between all factors in motivation for Japanese language learning? (H1- There is no relationship between all factors in motivation for Japanese language learning)

Table 13- Correlation Between All Factors in Motivation for Japanese Language Learning

|             |                      | PERSON | ENVIRONMENT | BEHAVIOUR |
|-------------|----------------------|--------|-------------|-----------|
| PERSON      | Pearson (Correlation | 1      | .467**      | .419**    |
|             | Sig (2-tailed)       |        | <.001       | <.001     |
|             | N                    | 116    | 116         | 116       |
| ENVIRONMENT | Pearson (Correlation | .467** | 1           | .532**    |
|             | Sig (2-tailed)       | <.001  |             | <.001     |
|             | N                    | 116    | 116         | 116       |
| BEHAVIOUR   | Pearson (Correlation | .419** | .532**      |           |
|             | Sig (2-tailed)       | <.001  | <.001       |           |
|             | N                    | 116    | 116         | 116       |

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 13 shows there is an association between person and environment. Correlation analysis shows that there is a moderate significant association between social person and environment. ( $r=.467^{**}$ ) and ( $p=.000$ ). According to He (2024), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a moderate positive relationship between person and environment. Null hypothesis is rejected.

Next, there is an association between environment and behaviour. Correlation analysis shows that there is a high significant association between environment and behaviour( $r=.532^{**}$ ) and ( $p=.000$ ). According to He (2024), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a strong positive relationship between environment and behaviour. Null hypothesis is rejected.

Lastly, there is an association between behaviour and person. Correlation analysis shows that there is a moderate significant association between social behaviour and person ( $r=.419^{**}$ ) and ( $p=.000$ ). According to He (2024), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and moderate

positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a strong positive relationship between behaviour and person. Null hypothesis is rejected.

### Inferential Statistics (Significant Difference)

According to He (2024), there are three main functions of a T-test and ANOVA. Firstly, both are done to compare means. This test is also done to determine if the average scores (mean) or values of two groups, or one group against a known value, are different enough to be considered statistically meaningful and are not just due to random chance. Secondly, T-test and ANOVA are done to test hypotheses. Researchers use t-tests and ANOVA to test hypotheses about means, such as whether a new treatment significantly impacts a variable or if there's a difference in performance between two distinct groups. Lastly, T-test and ANOVA are done to identify significant differences. The output of a t-test provides a p-value (significance value). If this p-value is below a predetermined threshold (often 0.05), it indicates a statistically significant difference, allowing researchers to draw conclusions about the populations from which their samples were drawn.

### Findings for Significant Difference for All Factors Across Levels

This section presents data to answer research question 5- Is there a significant difference for all factors across levels? (H3-There is no significant difference for all factors across levels)

Table 14- ANOVA for All Factors Across Levels

|             |                | ANOVA          |     |             |       |      |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
|             |                | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
| PERSON      | Between Groups | .891           | 1   | .891        | 4.474 | .037 |
|             | Within Groups  | 22.698         | 114 | .199        |       |      |
|             | Total          | 23.589         | 115 |             |       |      |
| ENVIRONMENT | Between Groups | .049           | 1   | .049        | .329  | .567 |
|             | Within Groups  | 16.810         | 114 | .147        |       |      |
|             | Total          | 16.859         | 115 |             |       |      |
| BEHAVIOUR   | Between Groups | .380           | 1   | .380        | 2.468 | .119 |
|             | Within Groups  | 17.563         | 114 | .154        |       |      |
|             | Total          | 17.943         | 115 |             |       |      |

With reference to table 14, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the effects of person, environment and behaviour across levels. The analysis shows there is no significant difference between environment ( $F=0.329$ ,  $p=0.567$ ) and behaviour ( $F=2.468$ ,  $p=0.119$ ) across levels. Null hypothesis is accepted for environment and behaviour across levels. However, there is a significant difference between person ( $F=4.474$ ,  $p=0.037$ ) across levels. Null hypothesis is rejected.

## CONCLUSION

### How Do Learners Perceive Their Personal Factors in Motivation for Japanese Language Learning?

The findings demonstrate that the respondents perceived their motivation for Japanese language learning as affected significantly by their perseverance of effort, consistent with findings of Kutuk (2023). Large number of respondents highlighted that they would complete the task they have begun. In addition, respondents also stated that they viewed themselves to be hardworking and diligent which aligned with Zakaria et. al. (2024). The respondents also had tackle obstructions in order to complete an important task. This aligned with Anam and Stracke (2019) who discovered students with high self-efficacy display have higher persistence when facing challenges.

## How Do Learners Perceive Their Environment in Motivation for Japanese Language Learning?

The findings discovered that the respondents perceived their Japanese language learning environment as vital factor impacting their motivation. The majority of the respondents described intrinsic value to be their main environment factor in motivation. Respondents viewed learning challenging new task as well as interesting classes to be supporting influences in their motivation. In addition, liking the lessons and finding the knowledge useful are also environment factors that impacted the respondents' motivation. This in line with Anam and Stracke (2019) who stated that students are interested to learn when they are aware of the advantages of the language they learn.

## How Do Learners Perceive Behaviour in Motivation for Japanese Language Learning?

The data shows that the respondents perceived behaviour aspects as vital to their motivation. The main factor is self-regulation as many respondents reported that they proceed studying for class despite not knowing what it is. According to Anam and Stracke (2019), student with high-efficacy display the behaviour of excreting more effort when analysing unknown vocabulary. Furthermore, respondents also diligently study despite disliking the class. The respondents also equally agree that fitting facts together for a test and, in accordance to Zakaria et. al (2024) and, Anam and Stracke (2019).

## Is There A Relationship Between All Factors in Motivation for Japanese Language Learning?

(Hypothesis 01- There is no relationship between all factors in motivation for Japanese Language learning.)

The correlation analysis discovered that there are significant positive connections between personal, environmental, and behavioural factors in motivation for learning. There is a moderate positive relationship between personal and environment ( $r = .467, p < .001$ ), and between personal and behaviour ( $r = .419, p < .001$ ). Meanwhile, there is a strong positive relationship between environment and behaviour ( $r = .532, p < .001$ ). This data proposes that the association between personal, environment and learning factors shaped the respondents' motivation. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, showing there is relationship between all factors in motivation for Japanese language learning.

## Is There A Significant Difference for All Factors Across Clusters?

(Hypothesis 02-There is no significant difference for all factors across clusters.)

According to the analysis, there is no significant difference for environment ( $p = .567$ ) and behaviour ( $p = .119$ ) across clusters, indicating the respondents' perceptions on Japanese learning environment and behaviour remained consistent. Thus, the null hypothesis for environment and behaviour is not rejected. However, the analysis on personal factors shows significant difference ( $p = .037$ ) which reveals the respondents' intrinsic motivation to be varied according to background. Hence, the null hypothesis for personal is rejected.

## Is There A Significant Difference for All Factors Across Japanese Language Levels?

(Hypothesis 03-There is no significant difference for all factors across Japanese Language levels.)

Similarly, there is no significant differences found across level for environment and behaviour. This is seen in the p-value of both environment ( $p = .567$ ) and behaviour ( $p = .119$ ) to be over 0.05, therefore, the null hypothesis for these factors to be not rejected. However, statically, personal factors have significant difference as it has the p-value of 0.037 which is lower than 0.05, rejecting the null hypothesis.

## Implications and Suggestions of Future Research for Theoretical and Conceptual Implications

This study supports the implementation of Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (1977) and Self-Regulated Learning Phases by Zimmer (2000) for language learning. Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (1977) clarifies how personal, environment and behavioural factors influences language learners' motivation. This theory, aligned with this finding of this study, confirms motivation is the result of interaction between learners' beliefs,



surroundings, and actions, thus, reveals the significant connection between personal, environmental, and behavioural factors. This suggests that learners play an active role in language learning, as well as being influenced by their own thoughts and environments.

Zimmerman's (2020) three phases of self-regulated learning (forethought phase, performance phase and reflection phase), on the other hand, highlights motivation in language learning as a dynamic and continuous cycle by revealing how self-regulation link personal, environmental, and behavioural factors. This process involved learners' goals and beliefs (forethought) as a guide to their actions (performance) which later, measured through self-assessment (reflection). In short, this model demonstrates the connection between motivation and behaviour.

The combination of these models reveals how multidimensional motivation in language learning is. Personal, environmental and behavioural factors influence not only learners but also each other which indicates the need to look into motivation intrinsically and extrinsically. Future studies can refine these theories by combining other motivational concepts, for example, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation by Deci and Ryan (2000), to investigate the multidimension of motivation in diverse context. In addition, it is suggested that when venturing into second language learning field, these models can also be integrated with Dörnyei (2005)'s Second Language Motivational Self System which discuss the increase of motivation through the future self-image of successful language users within learners.

### **Implications and Suggestions of Future Research for Pedagogical Implications**

This study discovered that Japanese language learners perceived that personal, environment and behaviour have prominent influence in their motivation, which aligned with SCT by Bandura (1977). Based on that, Japanese language instructors should design their lessons to support the learners' personal, environment and behaviour aspects, mainly catering to self-regulating strategies. In addition, instructors also need to create an interesting yet challenging learning environment in class by encouraging observational learning and feedback sessions for an effective learning. Finally, creating a learning that sustain the learners' focus is also crucial. Instructors need to design lessons allow learners to be involved in the learning process itself by tasking students to goal-setting, self-observing and reflection. Overall, Japanese language classes need to highlight personal, environment and behaviour factors for an effective teaching and learning.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Future studies could involve learners from other language, different higher tertiary institutions, other educational level as well as multicultural background as it will provide an insight into other variables that influence motivation. Future studies also can delve into longitudinal studies (for example, from Japanese level 1 to Japanese level 3) or combining quantitative and qualitative methods for a richer understanding of motivation in language learning. Intervention-based studies or technology-enhanced learning studies are also recommended as future studies as they provide understanding on how specific variables influence motivation in language learning. Finally, it is also highly recommended for future study to do a comparison between two distinct languages to investigate whether there is a relationship between their motivation and language learned.

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