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Payame Noor University Students' English Learning Motivational Factors – A Case Study from Iran

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Abstract

Learning English means its perception and understanding and the capability to use it properly in different situations. It is obvious that learners' motivation plays an important role in learning English. Therefore, recognizing English learning motivational factors and their influence on the learners is an important issue. The present paper tries to investigate learning motivational factors and their influence on the Markazi province Payame Noor University (PNU) students, to provide a base for the successive experimental studies in the field to provide for quality promotion of English learning motivational factors in these universities.

The results show that the most influential motivational factors on Markazi province PNU students' English learning are: Increasing the students confidence level, teacher's role, social support, providing a suitable teaching atmosphere, use of computer and internet, and creating positive competition among students.

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Key words: Motivational Factors, English learning, Positive Competition

Introduction

The necessity for learning English is felt more than ever. English learning is a multi-dimensional process which should be considered when teaching that. It is obvious that learners' motivation plays an important role in learning English. Therefore, recognizing English learning motivational factors and their influence on the learners is an important issue which deserves to be put under examination in different situations.

The present study tries to investigate learning motivational factors and their influence on the Markazi province PNU students.

The main goal of the project is to determine English motivational factors and their influence on the PNU students in order to increase their motivation for learning English.

The sub goals are determining the relationship between English learning motivational factors and the students' sex, the students' social class, and the students' age.

The research hypotheses are as follow:

- 1- There is a relationship between students' sex and English learning motivational factors in Markazi province PNUs.
- 2- The English learning motivational factors has a positive influence on the students of Markazi province PNUs.
- 3- The influence of The English learning motivational factors is higher on the students who belong to the high class of the society
- 4- There is a relationship between students' age and English learning motivational factors in Markazi province PNUs.

Literature Review

On the motivational factors of learning in general and English learning in particular, so many researches have been performed. For example Harris (2011) has pointed to the external factors such as Teacher's personality and behavior, Classroom atmosphere, and Teaching method as the influential motivating factors in students learning. Sheikholeslami (2006) has emphasized that students' internal motivation has a positive relationship with their English learning. In a study on Language in India www.languageinindia.com
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teacher's role and learners' gender, Babaie (2010) showed that there is a direct relationship between motivation, teacher's role and students' gender. Sanchez (2010) emphasizes on reminding the importance of English in order to motivate students, and Arani (2011) in his research has shown that using Internet and computers in the classroom motivates students to learn.

The Research Method

The research contains two stages the first one is a descriptive- analytical one which begins with cluster sampling. By the use of Morgan Statically Formula the sample size is estimated about 800 male and female students of different Markazi province PNUs.

The next step is preparation of questionnaires. The questionnaires include questions regarding the students bio data, and 17 motivational English learning factors which were extracted from the authentic sources whose influence degree - none, little, average, much and very much- on English learning are to be decided by the students. These factors are as follows:

- 1- Team work
- 2- Students sitting position in the classroom
- 3- Students' mistakes correction method
- 4- Role playing
- 5- Teaching by the use of teaching aids
- 6- Encouragement through gifts
- 7- Students participation in teaching
- 8- Increasing students' self confidence
- 9- Appropriate teaching atmosphere
- 10- The effect of social-economic factors
- 11- Social support
- 12- Teaching through play
- 13- Teacher's role
- 14- Illuminating learning styles
- 15- The advantages of English learning
- 16- Use of net and computer and
- 17- Creating positive competition among students.

The reliability of the method is estimated from Cronbach's alpha Formula and is 0.885 which shows a high reliability.

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The next step is distribution of the questionnaires among the students incidentally. After filling the questionnaires by the students and data collection the final step which is the statistical analysis of the data is done.

The second stage, which is the experimental stage in which the accepted hypotheses and results obtained from the first stage, was used in two control and experiment groups in order to prove the influence of English learning motivational factors experimentally. The sample group is determined about 80 male and female students and it is done in Shazand PNU at 10 sessions. Parallel pre test and post tests on general English proficiency and different skills were taken from students in the first and last sessions respectively.

The results obtained from the first stage were applied in the experimental class, and the teacher was asked to apply some approved techniques of cognitive processing theory and achievement goal theory.

For example, to increase students' self-confidence the following processes would help as Mosel (2010) suggested: providing positive feedback to the students when appropriate, giving only genuine praise, setting realistic goals for each student, using teaching strategies that provide an opportunity for equal participation, creating an open, positive environment for learning, and showing enthusiasm for the subject you are teaching.

Similarly to create positive competition among students, as noticed by Nichols and Sullivan (2012), the following techniques are useful:

Cooperative small group learning activities are largely successful for student learning and motivation whether individuals or small groups were involved, classroom structures that emphasize academic comparisons among students tend to be more maladaptive to student motivation than structures that emphasize academic progress or mastery, and competition should not mean diminishing the opponent's chances of getting any rewards.

Results

The data gathered from the first stage and 765 samples were analyzed statistically using SPSS software.

The results show the following charts for each factor:

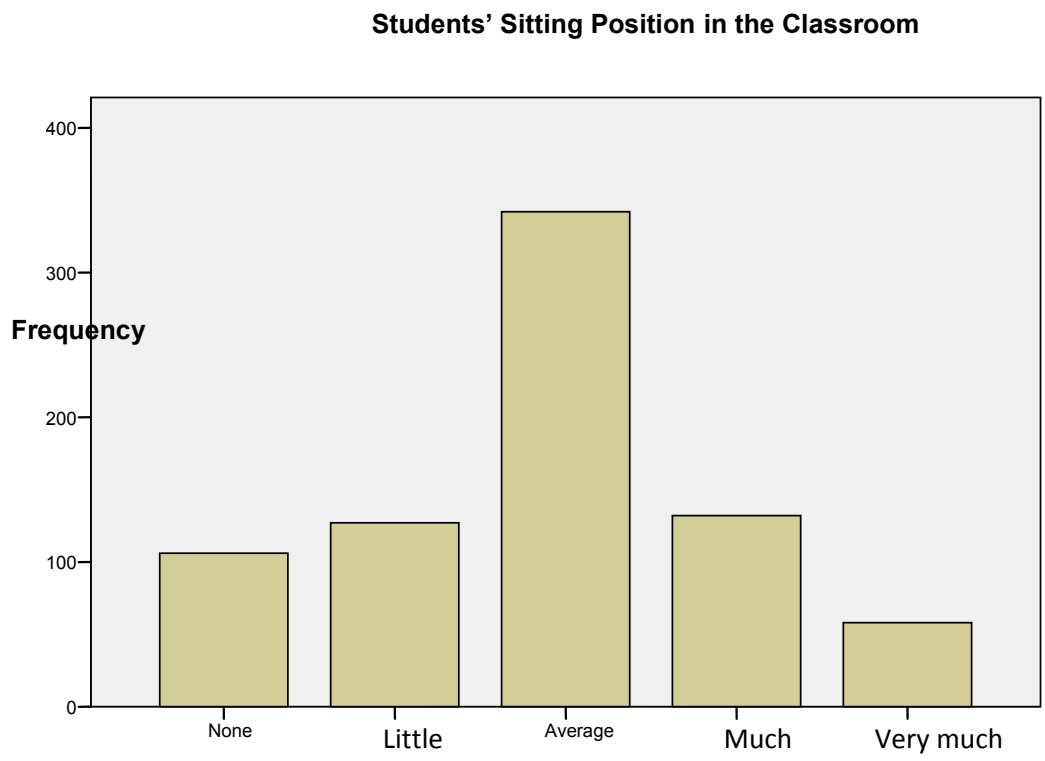
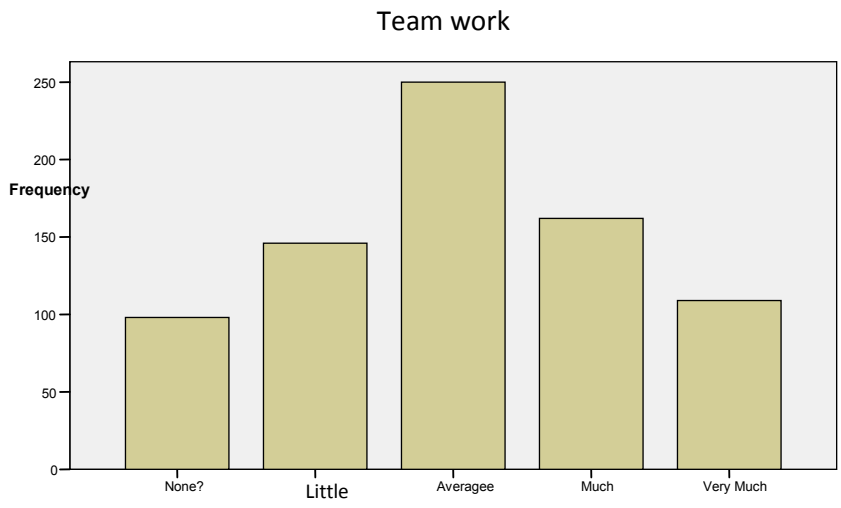
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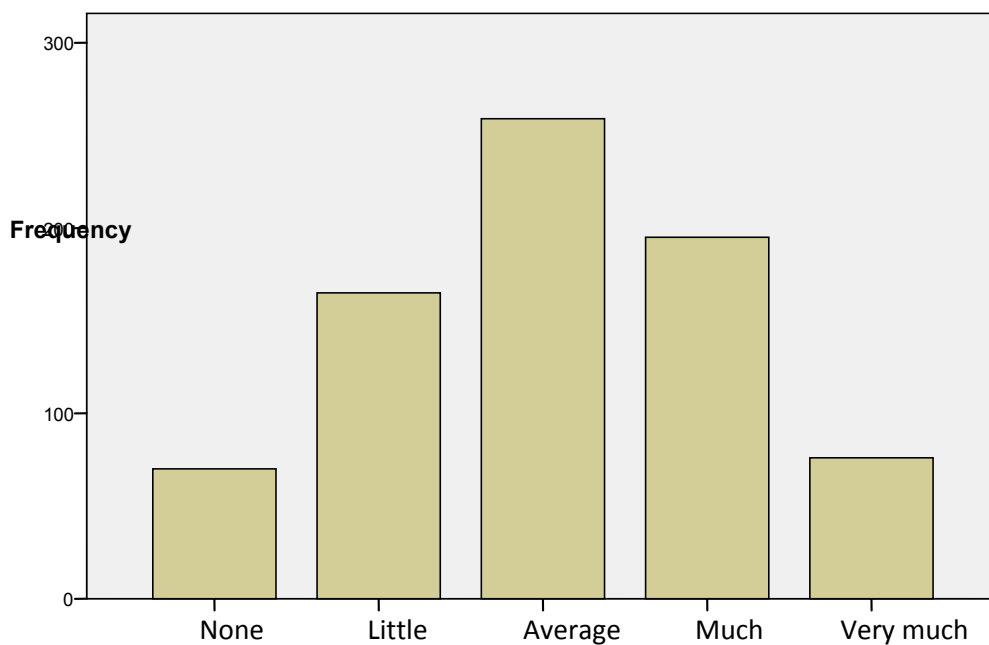
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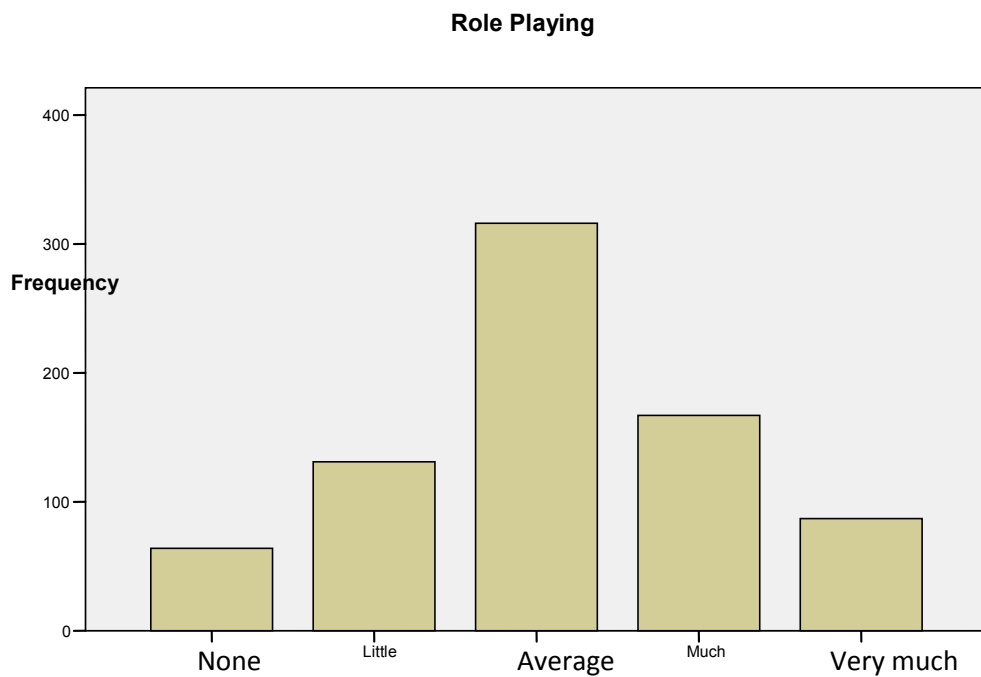
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Method of Mistake Correction





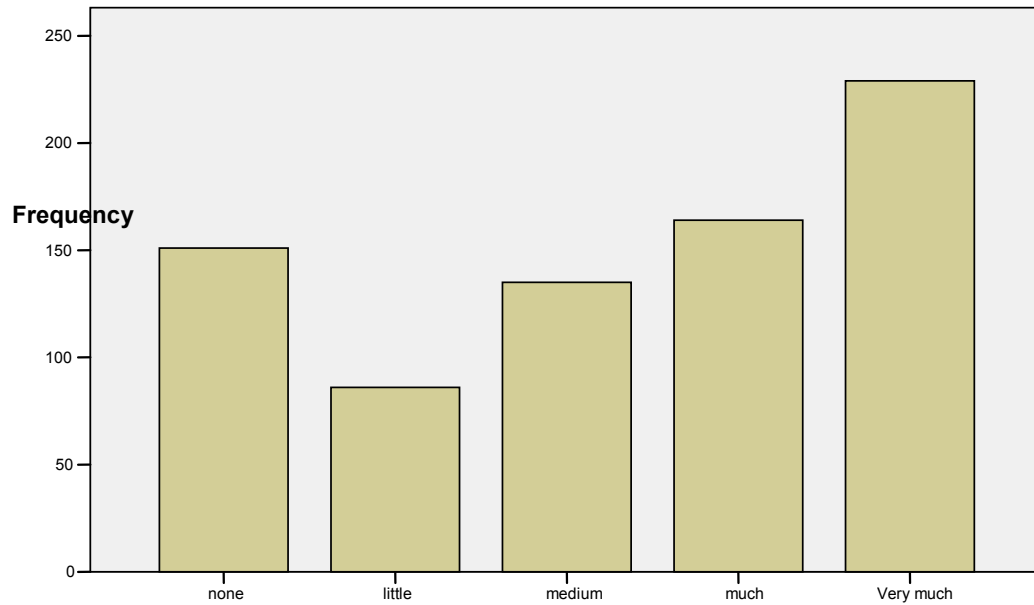
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Teaching by the use of teaching aids



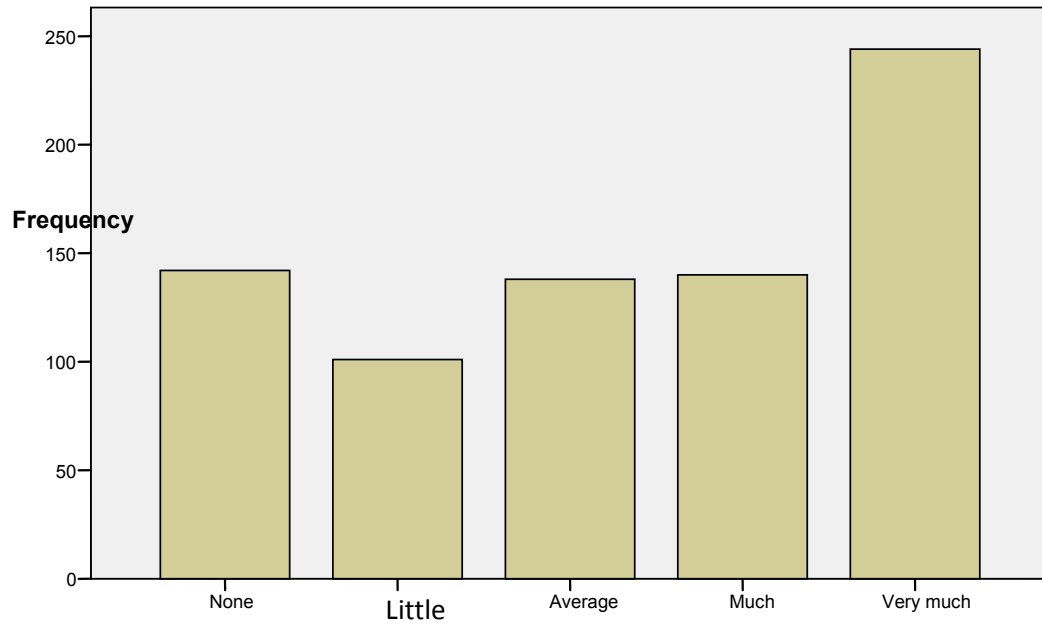
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Encouragement through Gifts



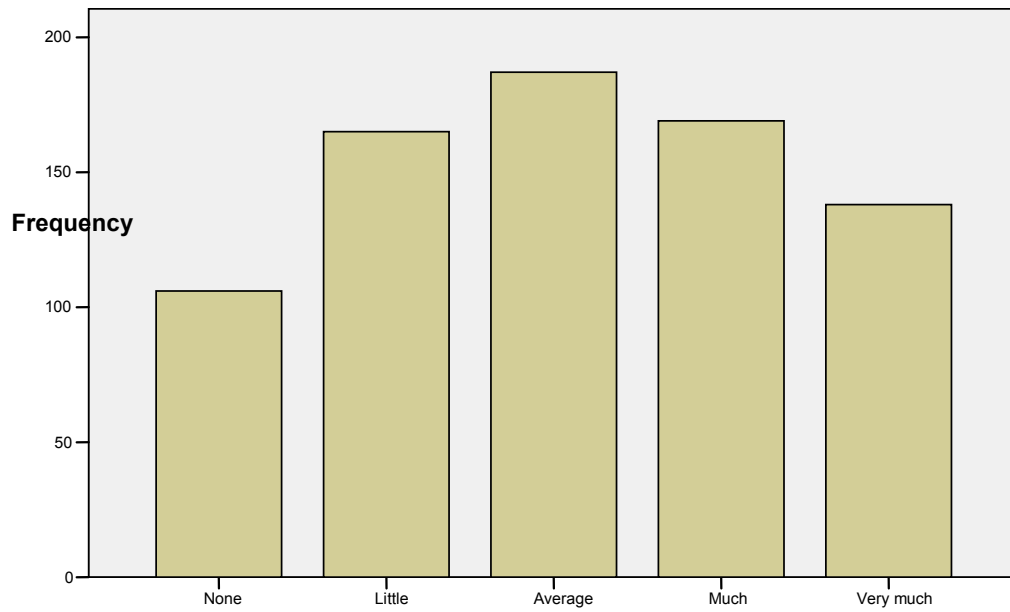
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Students' Participation in Teaching



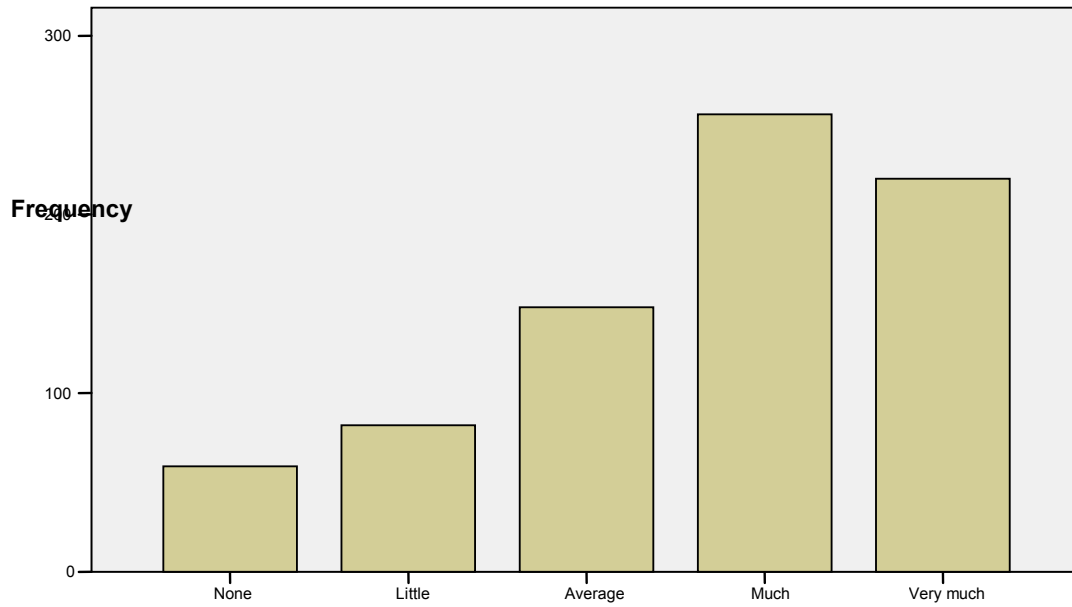
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Increasing Student's Self confidence



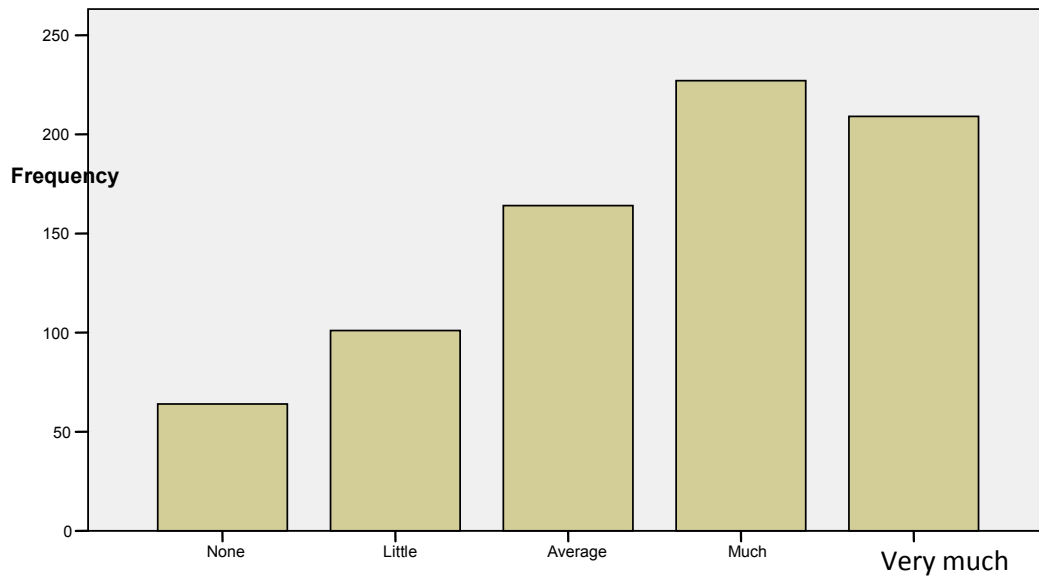
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Appropriate Teaching Atmosphere



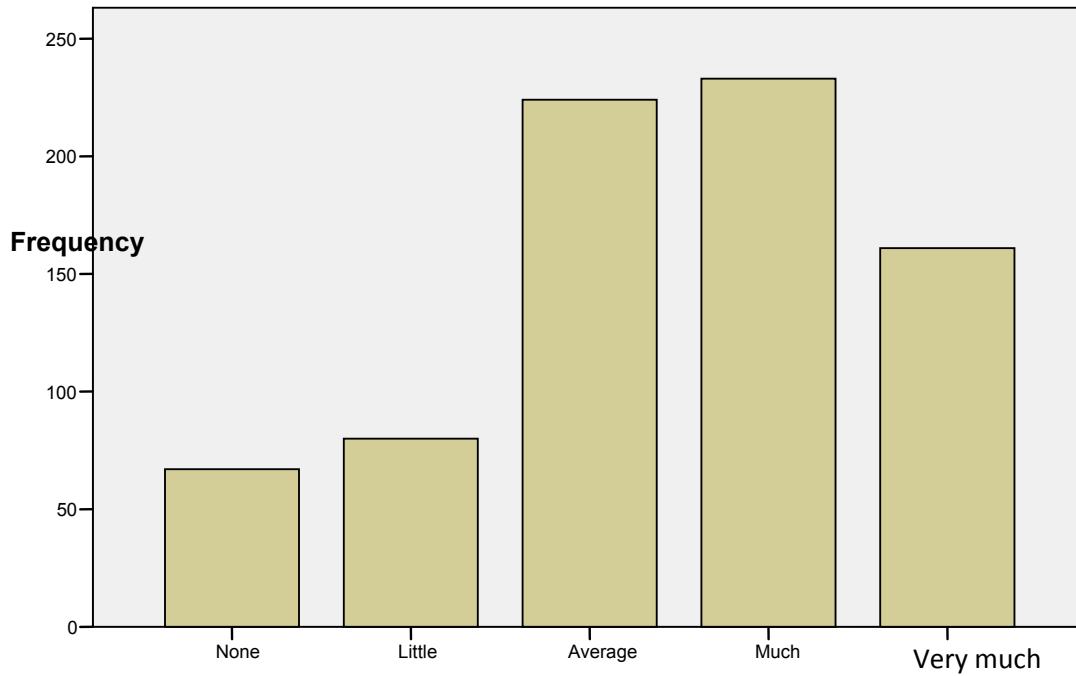
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Social Support



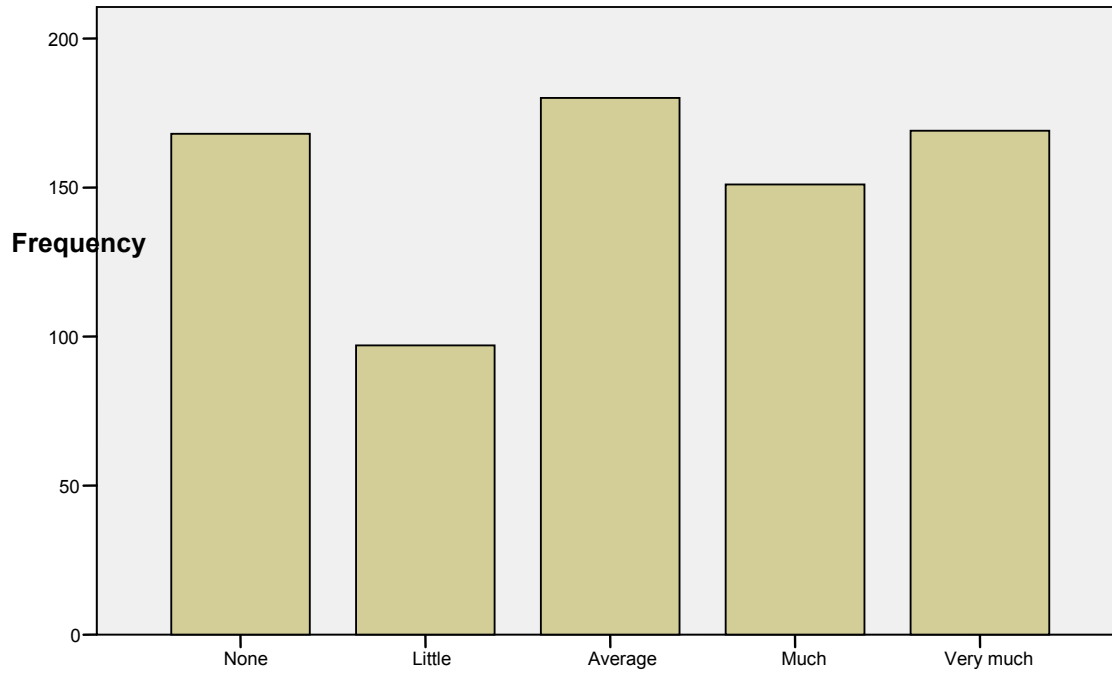
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Teaching Through play



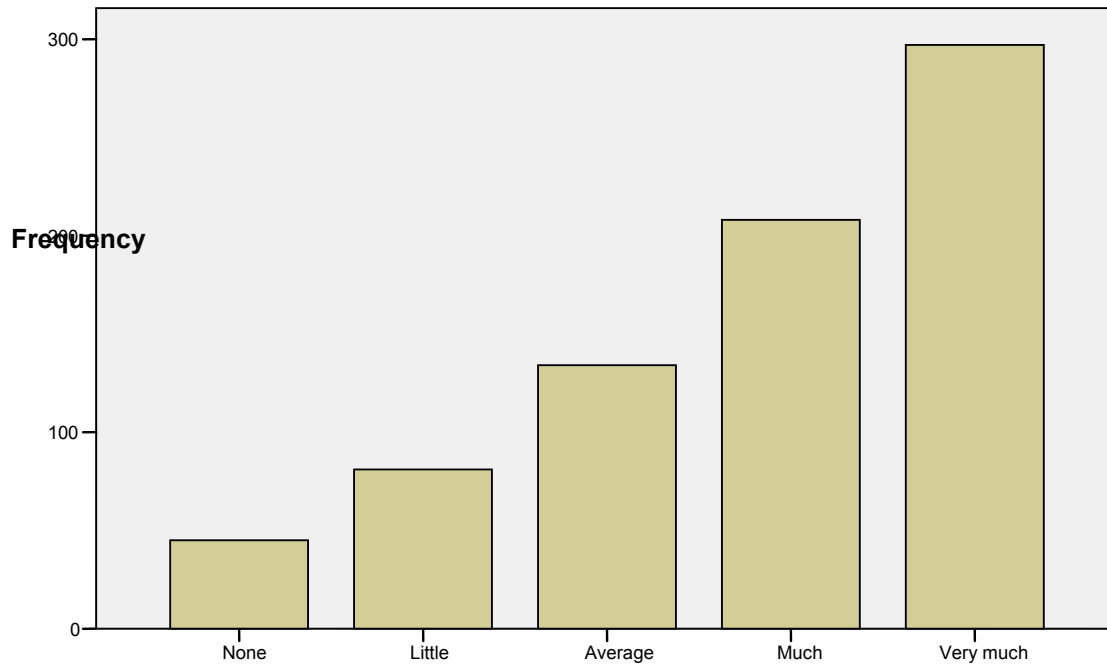
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Teacher's Role



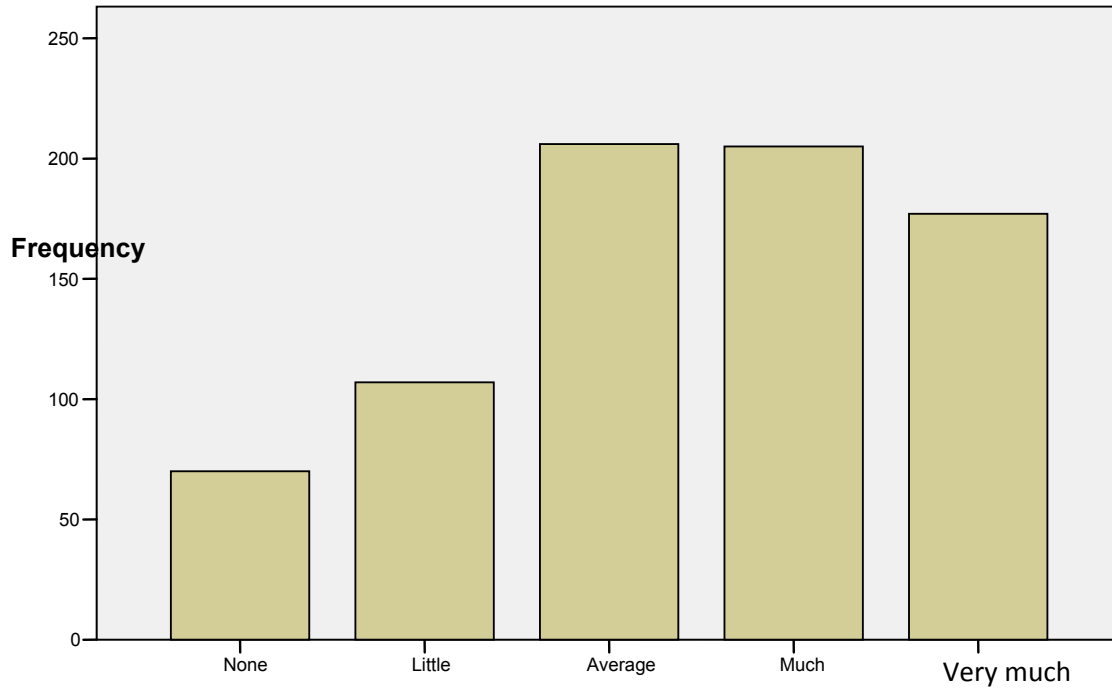
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Illuminating Learning Styles



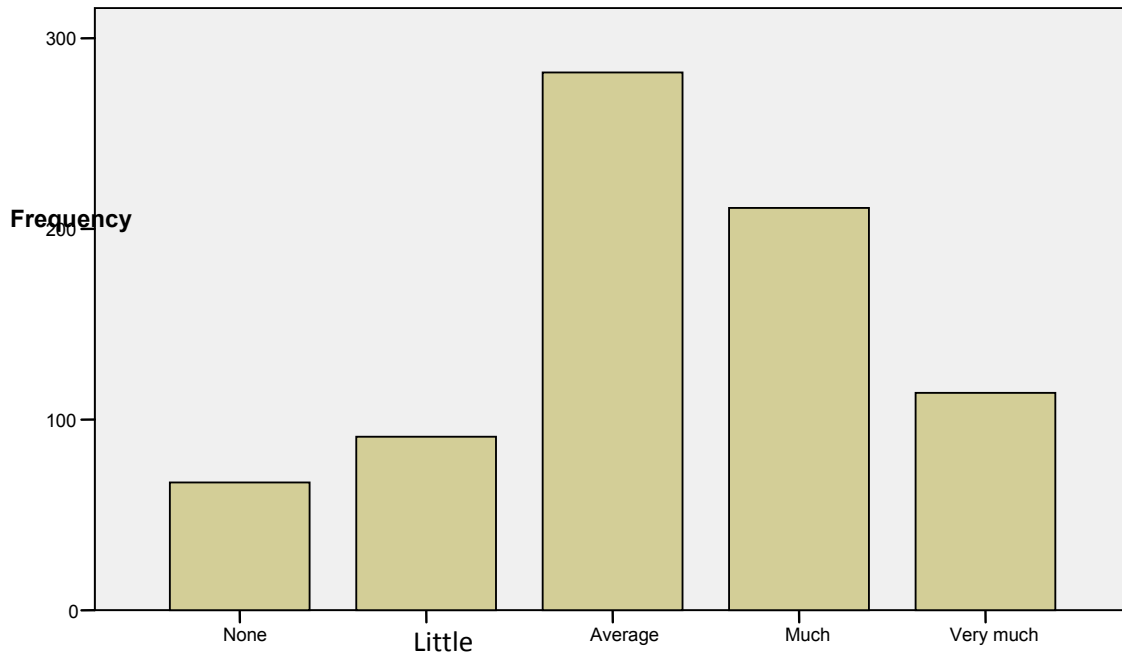
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Explaining English Learning Advantages



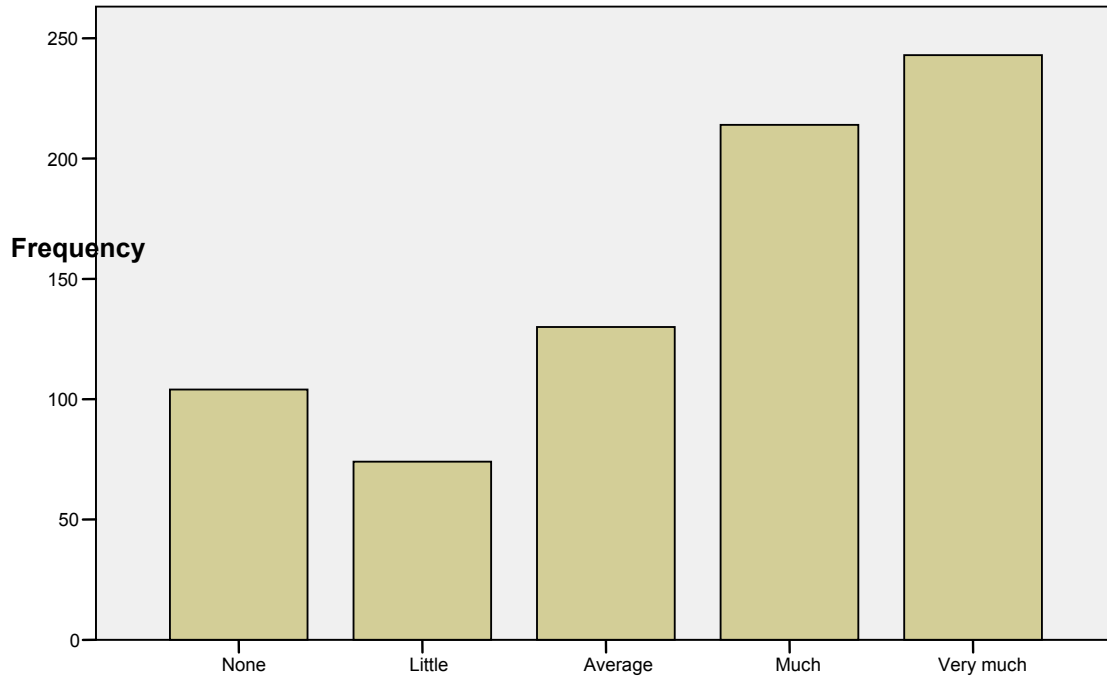
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The Use of Computer and Net



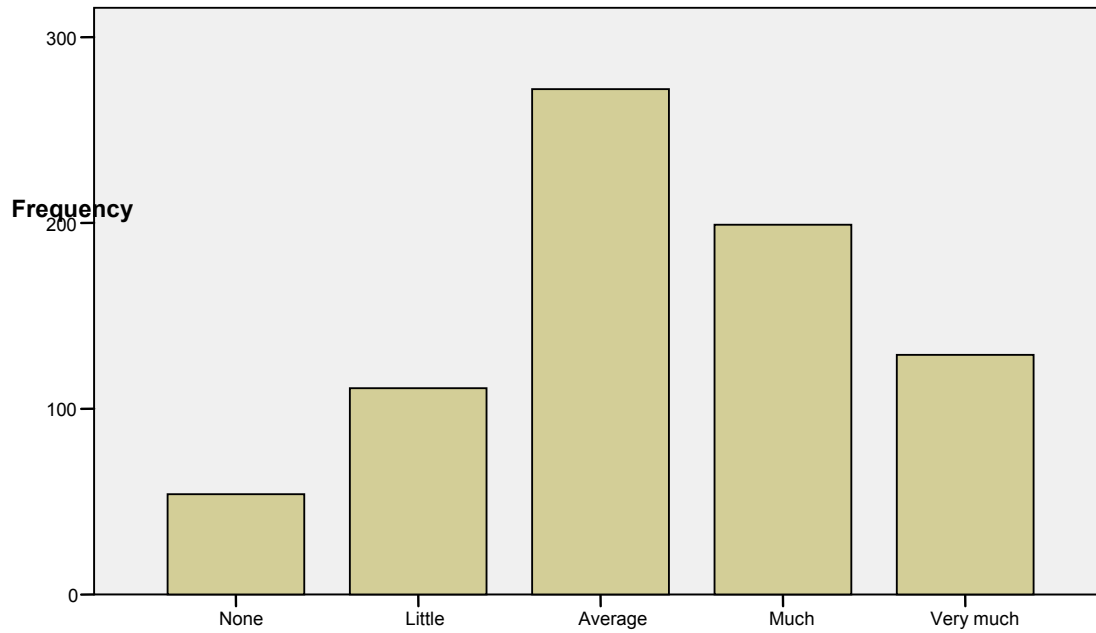
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The Effect of Social- economic Factors



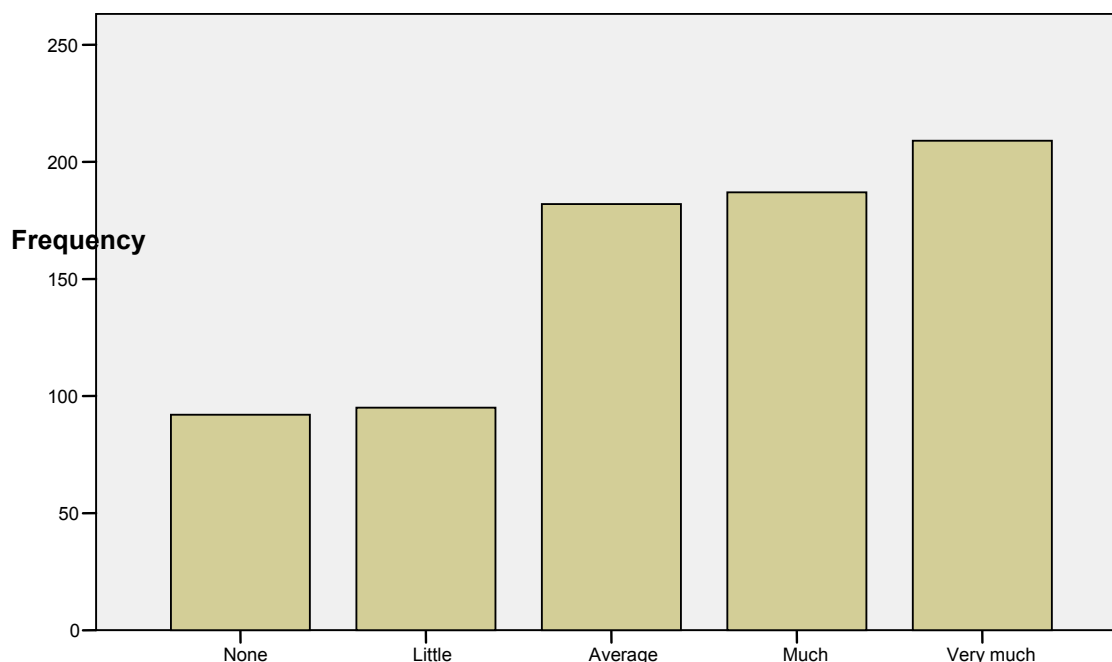
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Creating Positive Competition among Students



The obtained results show that 1- increasing students' self confidence 2- appropriate teaching atmosphere 3- the effects of social-economic factors 4- social support 5-Teacher's role 6- illuminating different learning styles 7- explaining the advantages of English learning, and 8- creating a positive competition among the students were regarded as influential motivational English learning factors among the students of Markazi province PNUs.

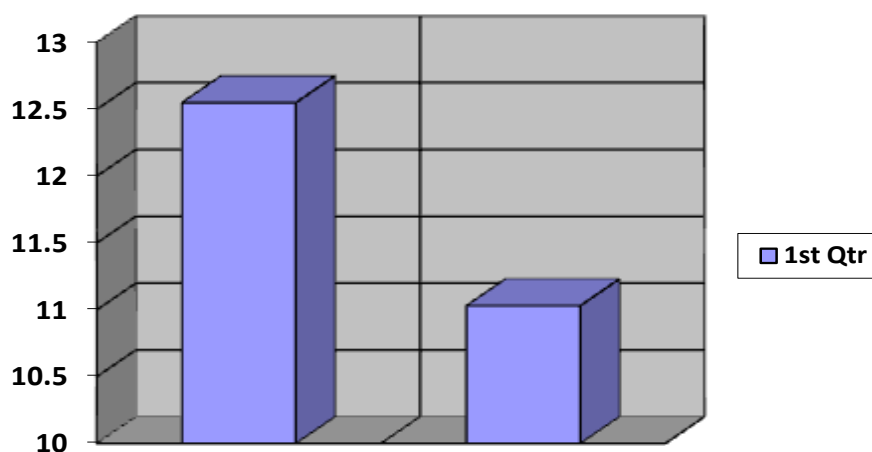
The obtained results from the first stage were put under examination in the experiment group of the second stage. The obtained results of this stage were obtained by the use of SPSS and explained through descriptive and referential statistics.

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For analyzing the influence of English learning motivational factors on educational development ANCOVA analysis is used. The figure shows that the average of educational development in experiment group is considerably higher than in control group.

For analyzing the effect of students' social-economic situation a one way variance analysis is used, which showed no considerable difference between low and average social class regarding English learning motivational factors. However a considerable difference is seen between lower and higher classes.

Pierson Correlation is used for analyzing the relationship between the students' age and the influence of English learning motivational factors, and it is shown that there is no such a relationship.

For analyzing the relationship between the students' sex and the influence of English learning motivational factors the one way variance analysis is used and it is shown that there is such a relationship in favor of male students.

Conclusions

1- There is a relationship between students' gender and English learning motivational factors in Markazi province PNUs.

2- The English learning motivational factors has positive influence on the students of Markazi province PNUs.

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- 3- The influence of The English learning motivational factors is higher on the students who belong to the high class of the society
- 4- There is a relationship between students' age and English learning motivational factors in Markazi province PNUs.

The first two are accepted totally, the third one partially, and the fourth one is rejected.

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