



**A STUDY ON ATTENTION, COGNITION, AND PERFORMANCE THROUGH MOTIVATION**

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**ABSTRACT:**

*This paper discuss about the perspective challenges this assumption and in doing so casts motivation in a much more interesting light. In place of the view of motivation as a simple amount of caring, it proposes that there are qualitatively different motivational frameworks, driven by people’s beliefs and goals, that affect basic attention and cognitive processes. By doing so, these motivational frameworks can substantially change intellectual performance even among individuals who care very much about succeeding. Interestingly, the incremental theorists’ grade advantage was mediated partially through their learning goals and partially through their greater belief in the efficacy of effort, both of which led to more vigorous, mastery oriented strategies in the face of difficulty.*

**KEYWORDS:** Motivation, intellectual performance, cognitive processes, cognitive creativity ,mastery oriented, divergent thinking ,etc.

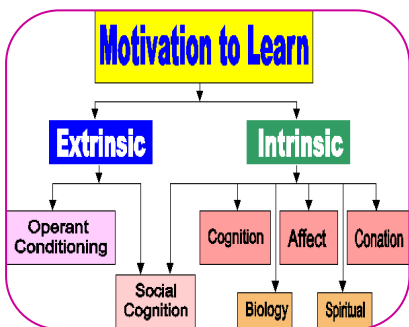
**INTRODUCTION**

*“Education is not preparation for life, education is life itself”*

Cognitive psychology formulation, motivation is not a theoretically interesting or important variable. The assumption typically made is that motivation simply involves caring about a task or wanting a successful task outcome and that once individuals care about the task they will display the cognitive processes (and hence the intellectual performance) of which they are capable. In this view, motivation is a quantity that people have in varying degrees and, if they have enough of it, their intellectual performance will fully reflect their cognitive abilities.

The motivational beliefs and goals people hold affect their attentional processes, cognitive strategies, and intellectual performance, particularly in the face of challenge and setbacks. The evidence from laboratory studies (including electrophysiological studies), field studies, and educational interventions, hope to demonstrate the powerful effects of these motivational variables, their dynamic and malleable nature, and the striking changes in performance that can result from brief, but targeted interventions.

**MOTIVATIONAL EFFECTS ON ATTENTION, COGNITION, AND PERFORMANCE BELIEFS AND GOALS THAT AFFECT PERFORMANCE**

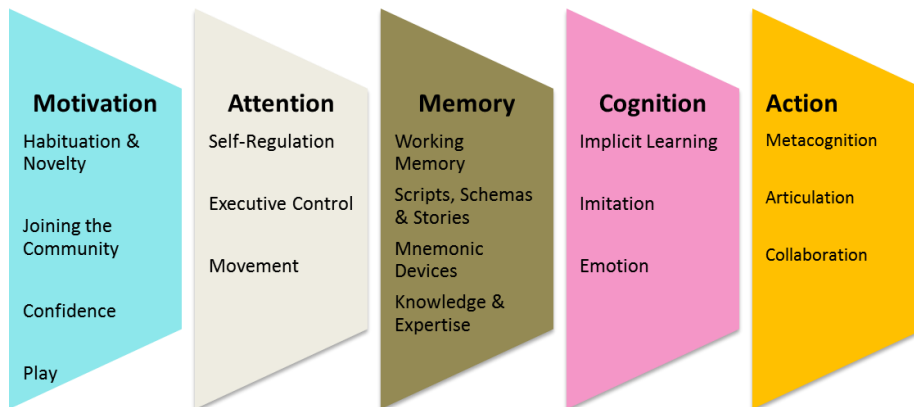


(Carol S. Dweck Jennifer A. Mangels Catherine) have examined the impact of two classes of goals (performance goals vs. learning goals) and of the beliefs that give rise examined the impact of two classes of goals.

A performance goal is the goal of validating one’s ability through one’s performance, that is, the goal of looking smart and not dumb. In contrast a learning goal is the goal of increasing one’s ability, that is, the goal of getting smarter. These goals create very different

mindsets, which have seen, many ramifications. Although both goals can be important in achievement settings, some students are overly concerned with performance goals, while others focus predominantly on learning goals. It might be have found that students’ theories about their intelligence orient them toward one class of goals or the other (see Dweck, 1999; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). When students believe that their intelligence is a fixed trait (an entity theory of intelligence), it becomes critical to for them to validate their fixed ability through their performance

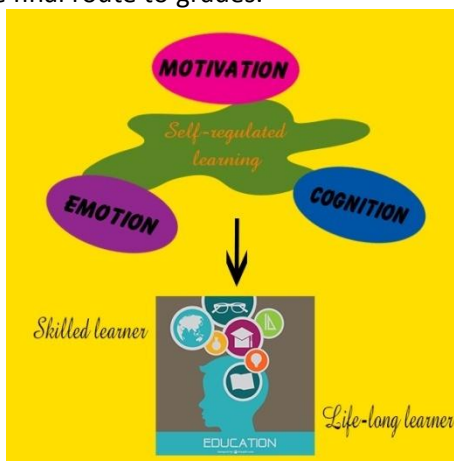
Performance goals are sometimes defined as competitive goals (wanting to outdo others) or as simply seeking successful outcomes (such as high grades). Have not found these other goals to create the same vulnerabilities as the performance goal of validating ability (Grant & Dweck, 2003; Harackiewicz & Elliot, 1993; Kanfer & Ackerman, 2000). The term performance goals to refer to the goal of validating ability through performance.



**MOTIVATIONAL EFFECTS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

In studies, the students making the often-difficult transition to junior high school were followed (Dweck & Sorich, 1999; Henderson & Dweck, 1990). In studies, measured their theories about their intelligence and their academic (learning or performance) goals at the beginning of seventh grade and then tracked the grades they received. In both studies, the motivational variables were significant predictors, over and above prior achievement, of the grades students earned. For example, in the Dweck and Sorich (1999) study, students with an incremental theory earned steadily increasing math grades over seventh and eighth grades, while those with an entity theory earned.

Steadily decreasing math grades, even though they entered with equivalent math achievement test scores. These strategies constituted the final route to grades.



## MOTIVATIONAL EFFECTS ON ATTENTION AND COGNITIVE PROCESSING: EVIDENCE FROM AN ELECTROPHYSIOLOGICAL APPROACH

Thus far, we have described a model in which different motivational goals, guided by beliefs in fixed or malleable ability, influence how information is processed in challenging learning situations. Recently, in an attempt to understand more precisely how underlying attentional and cognitive processes are affected by these goals we have incorporated electrophysiological measurements into studies. These goals guide attentional and cognitive processes. The cognitive mechanism that ensures goals are met can be seen as an executive control network responsible for directing attention toward goal-relevant information and away from goal-irrelevant information (e.g., Botvinick, Braver, Barch, Carter, & Cohen, 2001; Posner & DiGirolamo, 1998; Shallice & Burgess, 1996). Selective attention toward goal-relevant information is typically evidenced as an increase in the speed, accuracy, or depth of information processing of that information. Given that entity and incremental theorists hold contrasting goals, it would be expected that the executive control network would direct their attention to different information and this difference might have consequences for how quickly, accurately or deeply different types of information are processed.

### MOTIVATION AND COGNITION

More equally across ability-relevant and learning-relevant information because both types of information are consistent with their learning goal of increasing their knowledge. Recently, we conducted an exploratory study in which we used electroencephalography (EEG) to noninvasively monitor brain activity associated with students' attention to ability-relevant and learning-relevant feedback during a general knowledge retrieval task.



### EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS

The implications of the motivational findings for educational intervention. For example, by changing students' beliefs, can one change their academic performance? Three recent studies have addressed this question directly (Aronson, Fried, & Good, 2002; Aronson & Good, 2002; Blackwell, Dweck, & Trzesniewski, 2003). The first study (Aronson et al., 2002) was conducted with students from an elite university (Stanford), and was concerned with: (a) the issue of why African-American students with strong academic skills nonetheless underperform in such settings (see Steele & Aronson, 1995), and (b) whether providing these students with an incremental theory about their intelligence would prove beneficial.

Although the incremental theory was predicted to prove beneficial to White students as well, there was reason to believe that it could provide an extra boost to African-American students, who are often the object of negative stereotypes concerning their intellectual abilities. There is a wealth of recent research on stereotype threat showing the degree to which being the object of a negative ability stereotype can undermine performance on intellectual tasks. Moreover, the incremental theory, by giving students control over their intellectual growth, may make them value, enjoy, and pursue their studies more. In the Aronson et al. (2002) study, both African-American and White participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups. The first group received training in the incremental theory. They saw a highly compelling film depicting the way in which the brain forms new connections and literally changes every time you learn something new.

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## CONCLUSION

In this article, demonstrated the important effects that motivation can have on attentional and cognitive processes, on the effective use of cognitive strategies, and on intellectual performance, both on laboratory tasks and in educational environments. These effects are apparent even across students with equivalent cognitive skills. As many of the findings now emerging from cognitive neuroscience (Ochsner & Lieberman, 2001), speak to the ways in which motivation, emotion, and cognition work together to produce intellectual performance and to the idea that studying cognition in isolation from its sister processes cannot yield a full or valid picture of the workings of the mind.

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