A PAPER FOLIO ON THE TOPIC OF LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

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A Paper Folio on the Topic of Learned Helplessness

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Folio Paper Two:	Teaching Style: An Interplay of Influencing Factors in Learned Helplessness
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Paper One

Learned Helplessness

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I. Introduction

The phenomenon of learned helplessness was proposed by Seligman (1975) and later reformulated by Abramson *et al.* (1978). One objective of the authors was to offer a model of depression. Learned helplessness occurs when the subject perceives a lack of contingency between behavior and outcome (uncontrollability). Confronted with future situations where outcomes are controllable, the individual maintains inappropriate expectations of uncontrollability or helplessness that produce three types of deficits: cognitive, motivational, and emotional. Such deficiencies are also found in some types of depression.

In the reformulated model by Abramson *et al.* (1978) two important inter-related factors were introduced: the decline in self-esteem and the attributional processes that take place in a situation of helplessness. When a person perceives the non-contingency between behavior and consequence, he/she will wonder about the cause. The nature of the attributional processes that are carried out will determine whether or not the person will maintain expectations of future non-contingency.

Learned helplessness has been well documented empirically during the past twenty-five years, and helplessness effects have been demonstrated across an impressive variety of tasks, settings, ages, and populations. Results have been consistent: groups trained to be in control of their situations routinely solved problems that they were presented with while groups trained so that they could not control events gave up trying to solve problems after a minimum of effort.

The purpose of this paper is to explain the theory of learned helplessness and to examine the research as it applies to academic learning.

II. Theory of Learned Helplessness

A theoretical construct that provides a way to understand how students react over time to failure and unsuccessful experiences is learned helplessness. The idea that one learns to be helpless was developed within the wider construct of attribution theory. Attribution theory focuses on how a person understands perceived causes of events, explains them, and predicts future behavior encountered in everyday life (Heider, 1958). This theory assumes that individuals judge why they succeed or fail at a task. Everyone attributes or explains the outcome of events to particular causes. Most often ability, effort, luck, or task difficulty are used to explain success or failure.

In failure situations, if an individual perceives a cause to be internal (i.e., having to do with self), uncontrollable (i.e., beyond personal influence), and stable (i.e., unchangeable over time), then expectancy for future failure is increased, and feelings of resignation and apathy tend to follow (Robinson, 1990).

Research has suggested that once into the learned-helplessness mode, students develop a passive orientation to learning (Torgeson, 1982). However, direct access to metacognitive strategies may help some students deal with the cognitive aspect of learned helplessness (Cullen & Boersma, 1982). Students who are at risk of academic failure need appropriate instruction in learning strategies that will enhance their ability, but just as important, they need techniques that focus on their affective needs to help them see themselves as capable learners and good thinkers (Coley & Hoffman, 1990).

The interactive effect of self-concept and school achievement has long been established (Coley & Hoffman, 1990). Past research by Dweck and her colleagues (Dweck, 1975; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Dweck & Reppucci, 1973) has established that repeated failure can disrupt academic performance, resulting in decreased persistence and achievement levels. Two possible explanations

for this effect are found in the reformulated learned-helplessness model (Abramson *et al.*, 1978) and the self-worth theory of achievement motivation (Covington, 1984).

According to Abramson *et al.*, a state of learned helplessness is reached when an individual perceives that he/she lacks control in obtaining a desired outcome. The type of attribution (explanation) the individual makes for lack of control, determines the features of his/her helplessness. For example, an internal, stable and global attribution will result in a depressed affect, diminished self-esteem, low expectancy for future success and deteriorated performance. If a student who has failed repeatedly at a particular task, and construes the failures as a consequence of his/her lack of ability, then that student will experience negative affect and a lowering of his/her self-esteem. He/she will not expect to perform well on a similar task in the future. He/she will perform more poorly after failure than before, on tasks of equal difficulty (Dweck & Reppucci, 1973; Diener & Dweck, 1978).

Students with poor academic self-concept appear to be particularly susceptible to learned helplessness (Butkowsky &Willows, 1980). With a low self-concept and attributions of lack of ability, reduced persistence and attainment levels are maintained. Some students may give up trying because they do not see themselves as capable of success. They conject: whether or not effort is applied, the outcome will be the same -- failure. The student then feels that there is little to be gained by trying, and nothing to be lost by not trying.

The self-worth theory is based on the idea that much of a student's behavior is designed to maintain a self-concept of high ability. To this end, it is important to avoid failure whenever possible since failure carries with it implications of low ability. On the occasions when failure is unavoidable, low ability can be attributed to stable, external factors (such as task difficulty) or to unstable elements (such as bad luck and insufficient effort). If a student tries hard but fails, then suspicions of low

ability are increased. A reduction in, or a withdrawal of, effort after a failure experience can be used by the student as a strategy to prevent further damage to his/her sense of self-worth. Consequences of the withdrawal of effort are decreased persistence and achievement levels. This direct and powerful causal relationship implies that unless individuals can become successful at some valued activity, they will be cut off from a major source of self-esteem. Perception of high ability can sometimes come to imply worthiness, even in the absence of solid accomplishments. Therefore, research points out that it is important for teachers to value a student's efforts, as they are under the learner's control. The most important task facing teachers is to instruct students in ways that keep a growing preoccupation with ability from interfering with students' willingness to learn.

Covington (1984) makes broad recommendations that may facilitate the goal of teaching students in ways that facilitate this willingness to learn. He stresses that emergence of ability valuation is an inevitable, normal process, and the most reasonable strategy would be to encourage additional sources of worth beyond the mere possession of ability. These sources of satisfaction would come from a job well done or from the pride that results in self improvement.

III. The Role of Self-Worth

Self-worth concerns people's appraisal of their own value. A fundamental assumption of Covington's self-worth theory is that humans naturally strive to protect their sense of self-worth when it is threatened (Covington, 1984; Covington & Beery, 1976). Consistent with this assumption, research indicates that individuals often take more responsibility for their successes than for their failures (Miller & Ross, 1975). Individuals also have a fundamental need to see themselves as being competent (Connell & Ryan, 1984; Deci & Ryan, 1985). As well, Covington (1992) claimed that in

our culture self-confidence in one's intellectual competence is fundamental to a sense of self-worth.

Self-worth theory assumes that a central part of all classroom achievement is the need for students to protect their sense of worth or personal value. Perceptions of ability are critical to the self-protective process. For many students the mere possession of high ability signifies worthiness; thus, students employ creative strategies to maintain a sense of worthiness when they face failure.

In a study by Heyman, Dweck and Cain (1992) there was evidence of helplessness in five- and six-year old children whose personal perceptions of self were undermined by teacher criticism. These children exhibited the affect, task choices, and nonconstructive problem-solving strategies characteristic of helplessness. They were also more likely to make global negative self-judgments following criticism, including negative judgments of their "goodness." A further study by Burhans and Dweck (1995) presented an expanded view of the bases of helpless reactions of young children to failure. They reviewed a series of studies documenting that key aspects of helplessness were present in preschool and early elementary school children (ages 4-7). They proposed a model in which a general conception of self and the notion of this self as an object of contingent worth were sufficient conditions for helplessness. They integrated this view with Dweck and Leggett's (1988) model of motivational helplessness in older children. These studies demonstrated that children between the ages of four and seven are not immune to a helpless pattern of behavior, cognition, and affect following failure. The primary difference between the helpless responses of the younger children and those of older children, they believed, was in the meaning these two groups of children gave for the reasons of poor performance. This study proposed that it is a sense of low contingent worth that is the earliest and most basic condition for helplessness to occur, and that beliefs of low contingent worth and self-valuation goals can continue into adulthood and generate the most serious

forms of helplessness.

Covington & Omelich (1981) believed that individuals' emotional reactions in achievement situations are influenced strongly by the implications that the outcomes have for their own and others' perceptions of their ability - whether outcomes make them look competent or incompetent. Results showed that failure engendered shame and distress the most when it appeared to reflect low ability, and least when it was attributed to some other cause. Weiner (1995 - as cited in Stipek, 1998) explained that although failure with high effort engendered more shame or humiliation for students, failure with low effort elicited more disapproval from teachers. This is why Covington and Omelich (1979a) referred to effort as a "double-edged sword." Teachers' and students' goals sometimes conflict with each other. Teachers want to maximize student effort and students want to maximize perceptions of their ability, which sometimes means that they do not try.

Stipek (1998) explained that self-worth theory has relevance to school because in most educational settings academic performance is the dominant criterion for evaluation. Students' judgments of their academic competence are associated strongly with assessments of their general self-esteem (Wigfield, Eccles, and Pintrich, 1996). The strong link between self-perceptions of ability and of self-worth can be problematic for students. Covington (1992) pointed out that competitive educational settings precludes success for many students. Because everyone cannot be a relatively high performer, some students' self-worth is inevitably threatened.

Typical classroom settings threaten students' self-worth. Rewards that symbolize success (e.g., good grades) are based on relative performance, guaranteeing failure for some students. Goals are often set too difficult for some students and genuine effort is not rewarded because of the competitive nature of most classrooms. The emphasis on ability as an important attribute in this

culture, the impossibility of all students succeeding, and the value placed on correct responses force students to develop strategies to protect themselves from the negative implications that failure usually has for one's ability. Covington and Beery (1976) described these strategies as self-defeating. Such strategies would include such things as avoiding failure by minimal participation, excuses, procrastination, absenteeism, and giving the impression that they did not try, even though they did (Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1990).

Nurmi, Onatsu, and Haavisto (1995) examined whether underachievers apply a self-defeating or learned-helplessness strategy in achievement contexts. In the two studies carried out, both suggested that underachievers applied more dysfunctional cognitive and behavioral strategies than other pupils: they showed lower self-esteem, higher levels of failure expectation, and more task-irrelevant behavior than pupils in the control groups. The function of this behavior was to create behavioral excuses for expected failure. Even though this strategy increased the likelihood of failure in the classroom context, it may have had some positive outcomes in defending the student against negative feedback toward the self-concept.

One strategy used by student to avoid the implications of failure on the self-evaluation of ability, and to preserve self-worth, is a paradoxical strategy to set unattainable performance. Failure is assured, but failure at an extremely difficult task usually does not imply low ability. Evidence from many studies demonstrated that simply labeling a task as "highly difficult" can improve the performance of those who are concerned about performance and chronically worry about failure. Miller (1985) provided a compelling demonstration of how describing a task as being difficult can alleviate student anxiety and enhance effort. He gave sixth-grade children a series of matching tasks that were constructed in such a way as to ensure failure. Following this experience, the children were

given an anagram task to work on while their behavior was monitored. Children who were told that the subsequent task was moderately difficult completed fewer anagrams than those who were told that the anagram task was very difficult. Concerns about competence that were created by experiencing failure on matching tasks, and performance deficits associated with such concerns, were alleviated by simply telling children that the next task was very difficult. Miller and Horn (1990) explained this by presuming that this message allowed children to try hard with no risk of demonstrating low competence. The effect was especially prominent for boys, suggesting that boys may be more concerned about their public images than girls.

Miller and Klein (1989) demonstrated that students scoring high in "ego value" were most persistent when told the task was very difficult, presumably because high difficulty minimizes ego threat. Students scoring low in ego value persisted less when told the task was very difficult. This was consistent with the prediction that these students would be more willing to accept low ability and helplessness. Results provided support for the role of ego value of academic performance in persistence after failure. Slaalvik (1997) also researched different dimensions of ego orientation (self-defeating and self-enhancing), and how they related differently to academic achievement, self-concept, self-efficacy, self-esteem, anxiety, and intrinsic motivation. Self-defeating ego orientation was associated with high anxiety and was negatively related to achievement and self-perceptions. Self-enhancing ego orientation was positively related to achievement, self-perceptions, and intrinsic motivation.

Some strategies used by students experiencing repeated failure such as procrastination, excuses or false effort, can reduce anxiety or humiliation for a short while. However, all of them inhibit real learning and, in the long run, make real success impossible (Stipek, 1998).

Although evidence is inconsistent, many studies find that girls rate their competencies lower than boys, even when their performance is just as good (Eccles *et al.*, 1993; Licht & Dweck, 1984; Meece and Courtney, 1992 - all as cited in Stipek, 1998), especially in math and science. Gender differences are found even among gifted and high-achieving females (Eccles *et al.*, in press - as cited in Stipek, 1998). Gender differences are embedded deeply in cultural stereotypes and in the messages teachers and parents subtly convey to boys and girls. In a study by Gilbert (1996) attributional patterns and perceptions of math and science among fifth-grade through seventh-grade girls and boys were explored. Inconsistent with earlier work, girls and boys reported similar perceptions. Attributional patterns for lack of success on math tests were also comparable. However, girls more than boys attributed success in math to effort, whereas boys more than girls tended to attribute success to ability.

Clark and Tollefson (1991) compared the beliefs and attributes regarding writing of gifted middle/junior high school students whom teachers described as either displaying mastery-oriented or as displaying helpless behaviors. Results of the study indicated that the mastery-oriented group had significantly higher mean scores than the helpless and control groups on the scales measuring ability to improve writing and overall confidence in writing. Mastery-oriented students agreed with statements that writing could be improved and creativity could be enhanced. These students perceived intelligence as malleable and as an entity that can be changed with effort. Students described as displaying helpless behavior tended to disagree with statements that ability to write could be improved. Underachievement among gifted students is an important issue in gifted education (Whitmore, 1980), but little has related the theory of learned helplessness to the achievement patterns of students in gifted programs. The theory of helplessness may also provide insights into the behavior

of gifted students who are perfectionists. Another area of concern in the field of gifted education is why many gifted girls achieve well in academic settings, but many fewer achieve well as adults (Silverman, 1986).

The dynamics of self-worth, confidence, and acceptance are much more complicated than the simple self-esteem models allow. Harter, Waters, & Whitesell (1998) investigated the manner in which individuals evaluate their self-worth differently across relational contexts. Perceptions of self-worth among adolescents were examined in four such contexts: with parents, teachers, male classmates, and female classmates. Findings provided clear support that many adolescents judge their worth as a person differently across these four contexts and suggested that how an individual evaluates the self in each relationship context was critical to his or her overall sense of worth as a person.

IV: The Learned Helplessness and Learning Disabilities Connection

Learning-disabled students have been labeled "learned helpless." These students, in addition to deficient academic achievement, exhibit a variety of maladaptive affective and task-oriented responses in the classroom that can further hinder efforts to improve their academic performances. Ayres, Cooley, and Dunn (1990) examined students with learning disabilities for differences in self-concept, attributions, and teacher-rated persistence, from non-handicapped students. Results from this study reported that learning-disabled students have lower self-concepts on items related to academic achievement, and that they were rated by their teachers as less persistent than their normally-achieving peers. Students with learning disabilities also reported that failures were due to external factors or to stable (ability) factors, both of which were seen as beyond personal control.

These findings were consistent with a conceptualization of students with learning disabilities as inactive, or learned-helpless, learners. This pattern of self-concept and maladaptive attributions was consistent with the " learned-helplessness pattern" hypothesized by Dweck (Dweck and Reppucci, 1973; Diener & Dweck, 1978) and that of the "inactive learner" described by Torgeson and Licht (1983) who described learning-disabled students as being inactive learners because of their lack of efficiency with cognitive resources. Under circumstances of early and repeated failure, these students often attribute failure to insufficient ability and can become debilitated by that failure. This debilitation was expressed through decreased effort and concentration, lowered expectations for future success, and deterioration of problem-solving strategies. This study provided additional evidence that self-concept difference between groups of normally achieving students and learning-disabled students are specific to academic achievement, and that the focus of attempts to improve the self-concept of learning-disabled students should be the students' academic self-concept.

Mal, Jain, and Yadav (1990) investigated the effects and influence of prolonged deprivation on learned helplessness among 104 young Indian students. The students received an unsolvable block design task followed by an anagram solution test and an attribution questionnaire. Results showed that high-deprived students not only exhibited poor performance on the anagrams following negative uncontrollable outcome but also reported more internal (due to their own lack of ability), stable, and global (more generalized) attributions than did non-deprived students. Encountering more adverse conditions, such as insufficient satisfaction of basic needs, and inadequate emotional and motivational experiences in their day-to-day lives, was posited as an explanation. These circumstances would produce a sense of incompetence or inefficacy and a feeling of utter powerlessness and helplessness leading to the perception of loss of control over adverse outcomes and thus generate a sense of

resignation.

Gender differences were also exhibited. Female students exhibited greater helplessness and did not perform as well on the anagram task following the experience of uncontrollable negative outcome as did their male counterparts. These findings were reported to be the result of discrepant socialization practices in traditional societies in which girls are discouraged from taking the initiative and are encouraged to acquire dependence and conformity which predisposes them to the learned helplessness syndrome.

Kastner *et al.* (1995) observed incentive structures and explored their affect on interactions between teachers and three groups of students: (a) students with learning disabilities, (b) students with low academic achievement, and (c) students with average academic achievement. Incentive structures are defined as the means used by a teacher to motivate students. Teacher behaviors relevant to the incentive structure included methods of calling on students, providing feedback to students, and classroom behavior management. These behaviors are affected by student behaviors including requests for assistance, volunteering, and calling out. The continuing and sequential nature of classroom events result in teachers' actions influencing what children do in class; which in turn affect teachers' subsequent behavior. This investigation was carried out in 22 mainstream classes enrolling 31 triads of students comprising three groups labeled as (1) low achieving, (2) average achieving, and (3) learning disabled. These groups were observed on ten occasions.

Results indicated that incentive structures were composed of two components, which were labeled academic engagement and behavioral management. Observations indicated differences among children with learning disabilities, students with low achievement, and students with average achievement in their engagement in activities related to incentive structure. A most significant finding

was the separation among the groups in their involvement in academic engagement. Children with average achievement were most involved in academic engagement, whereas children with learning disabilities were involved less, but more than children with low achievement. Although the learning-disabled students engagement in tasks tended to be a mix between on- and off-task behavior, teachers helped these children by encouraging appropriate behavior. Teachers responded to the learning-disabled students while the low ability students were largely ignored. This data indicated that helplessness and despair was more consistent with low-academic achievement than with learning-disabled children.

Learning has been found to be enhanced by intrinsic motivation. Researchers have found that retention and generalization improve when learning is intrinsically motivated rather than extrinsically motivated. Academic intrinsic motivation has been found to be significantly related to achievement in students with and without learning disabilities. Dev (1998) reviewed reports that focus on intervention methods which enhance academic intrinsic motivation and the measures used to assess the academic intrinsic motivation in the school-age population with learning disabilities. This review demonstrated that intrinsic motivation is strongly associated with academic achievement in students with learning disabilities. It was also found that training students with learning disabilities to attribute performance outcomes to their own effort rather than to external factors, like luck, could make a significant difference to their level of academic intrinsic motivation. Thus, enhancing the intrinsic motivation of students with learning disabilities could result in improved learning.

V: Tackling the Problem of Learned Helplessness in the Schools: A Model of Motivated Learning

Motivational processes influence a child's acquisition, transfer, and use of knowledge and skills. Intrinsic motivation theorists claim that humans are born with a disposition to develop skills and engage in learning-related activities. They seek opportunities to develop competencies, and have an innate need to be autonomous and to engage in activities of their own volition. According to White (1959) and Piaget (1952), the increasing competence that results from practicing newly developing skills and mastering challenging tasks engenders a positive emotional experience. Positive feelings of competence enhance intrinsic motivation to engage in similar tasks, and feelings of incompetence undermine intrinsic motivation. Therefore, working on tasks without achieving success destroys enthusiasm for working on similar tasks.

Many studies have demonstrated that students who believe that they are academically competent are more intrinsically interested in school tasks than those who have low perceptions of their academic abilities. One study by Mac Iver, Stipek, and Daniels (1991) suggested a causal relationship between perceived competence and intrinsic motivation. Investigations at both the beginning and the end of the semester assessed junior and senior high school students' perceptions of their competencies and intrinsic interest with regard to one subject that they were studying. Analyses revealed that interest changed in the direction that perceived competence changed. Students whose perceptions of competence increased over the course of the semester rated the subject more interesting at the end of the semester than at the beginning. Conversely, those whose perceptions of competence decreased, rated the subject as being less interesting at the end of the semester.

Harter (1992) presented further evidence which suggested that perceptions of competence

develop from positive affective experiences, which in turn engender intrinsic motivation. She described a study in which the students' intrinsic motivation for academic work increased, remained the same, or decreased from elementary to junior high school, as a function of their perceptions of their academic competencies as increased, remaining the same, or decreased.

Intrinsic motivation stresses autonomy. Achievement motivation theorists propose that individuals naturally are disposed to wanting to believe that they are engaging in activities by their own volition - because they want to, rather than because they have to. This innate need is termed self-determination or autonomy. These theorists differentiate between situations in which individuals perceived themselves as being the cause of their own behaviors (internal locus of control), and situations in which individuals believe they are engaging in behavior to achieve rewards or please another person, or because of external constraints (external locus of control). Studies have shown that people are more likely to be motivated intrinsically to engage in an activity when their locus of control is internal than when it is external.

Bandura (1989) reviewed a sizeable literature demonstrating that an individual's belief in what he calls "self-efficacy" is a potent determinant of an individuals's mood, thinking, and performance. People who doubt their own coping abilities set low goals, abandon their goals earlier when faced with failure, and experience more depressive feelings than individuals who believe in their own abilities. Peterson and Seligman (1985) reviewed the phenomenon of learned helplessness, and demonstrated that individuals who have a high regard for their own abilities were resistant to giving up and becoming depressed when exposed to situations in which they were helpless. Individuals who viewed failures as evidence of their lack of ability tended to become helpless and hopeless under such conditions. Peterson and Seligman (1984) reviewed a number of research programs suggesting that

if people tend to view the cause of their failures as low personal ability, they are more at risk for depression after a failure than are those who attribute failure to inadequate effort or external factors.

A study by Brightman (1990) attempted to build on Peterson and Seligman's research by demonstrating a connection between depression and susceptibility to helplessness. Adolescents in the depressed group who were exposed to an unsolvable task showed a significant performance deficit on a subsequent solvable task when compared to their counterparts in other conditions. Subjects in the non-depressed group showed no such deficit, which suggested that as level of depressive symptoms increases, adolescents become more vulnerable to suffering a disruption of active coping (effort, persistence, problem-solving) when confronted with uncontrollable events.

These findings have direct implications for treatment and prevention. There is evidence that children's and adolescents' view of themselves and their abilities may be learned from parents' (Seligman *et al.*, 1984) and teachers' (Dweck & Licht, 1980) attitudes toward them, and educating parents and teachers concerning their potential impact on children's self-esteem can serve as a protective function.

Williams and Barber (1992) reviewed the research on these concepts in relations to the special education student. They examined the question of whether special education students exhibit more learned helpless behavior and a more external locus of control than regular students. The majority of research supports the idea that special education students have difficulty with establishing an internal locus of control and respond with learned helplessness. These studies vary somewhat in their findings, but confirm that this is an issue of concern in special education. Early intervention has been suggested.

In a descriptive study of 233 student profiles, Smith and Price (1996) investigated a

population of students enrolled in a developmental program at a commuter campus serving urban and suburban students. They were asked about their perceptions of high school including coursework, teachers, and descriptions of themselves when they were in high school. These students were described as highly motivated students, but who lacked adequate skills for academic success. Regarding academic pursuits, these students appeared to have an external locus of control, and attributed outcomes to stable factors such as task difficulty and uncontrollable factors such as luck. They seldom mentioned their own effort as a cause for academic success or failure. According to the attributional theory of motivation the authors concluded that it is logical that these students may also lack the ability to invest more of their "selves" in academic success, continuing to attribute poor performance to external causes in order to maintain a positive self-perception.

Attribution retraining has been successfully used with children who are learning disabled and with students who lack the skills necessary for academic success. Such students are often characterized as having low self-esteem, "learned helplessness," and a passive learning style resulting from repeated failure. Attribution retraining could be considered as a potential intervention with these populations. It is possible to encourage not only an internal sense of attribution connected to academic outcomes but also a belief that such outcomes are largely contingent on effort.

Perry, Hechter, Menec, and Weinberg (1993) have comprehensively reviewed attributional retraining studies in higher education. Studies with university students have frequently employed group interventions. One study by Noel, Forsyth, and Kelley (1987) showed failing psychology students a videotape of two college seniors who had initially blamed poor performance on external factors, but who learned that effort, help-seeking, and improved study habits could result in improvement. The intervention resulted in higher test performance and final grades for the course.

Attributional retraining can also be incorporated in effective teaching practices. Perry *et al.* (1993) suggested that university instructors may inadvertently undermine students' motivation and self-esteem by advocating undesirable attributions (e. g., by making statements that only the best students will pass the course) when instead they could encourage students to adopt productive attributions.

Recent research in motivation by Skaalvik (1997) has identified two main goal orientations: *task orientation* and *ego orientation*. Task orientation means that the focus of attention is on the task rather than on some extrinsic reward. Learning, understanding, solving problems, and developing new skills are ends in themselves, and are inherently valuable, meaningful, and satisfying. Task-oriented students tend to see mastery as dependent on effort, and perceptions of ability are self-referenced. Ego-oriented students are concerned with being judged able, and ability is judged by comparison with others. High ability is evidenced as doing better than others. The goal of ego-oriented students is described as that of establishing the superiority of one's ability relative to that of others, to do better than others, or to outperform others.

The purpose of this study was to explore two possible dimensions of ego orientation and how they relate to task orientation, avoidance orientation in learning situations, achievement, self-perception, and anxiety. Two studies of sixth- and seventh-grade Norwegian students tested the prediction that there are different dimensions of ego orientation (self-defeating and self-enhancing), and that they may be separated from other goal orientations (task and avoidance orientations), and that they relate differently to academic achievement, self-concept, self-efficacy, self-esteem, anxiety, and intrinsic motivation. Task orientation and ego orientation have previously been shown to be independent or to have a correlation close to zero (Ames & Archer, 1988; Duda et al., 1992; Meece

et al., 1988; Nicholls et al., 1989 - all studies as cited in Skaalvik, 1997).

Results indicate that self-defeating and self-enhancing ego orientation were weakly correlated and that both dimensions are independent of task orientation and avoidance orientation. Both studies indicated that one can discriminate between two independent and weakly-correlated dimensions of ego orientation. The common feature in the two dimensions of ego orientation was that ego-oriented students were preoccupied with themselves, compared their abilities to other students, and were preoccupied by how they were perceived by others. Self-enhancing ego orientation was defined by the goal of demonstrating superior abilities and outperforming other students. Self-defeating ego orientation was defined by the goal of avoiding looking "stupid" or being negatively judged by others.

The correlation between self-defeating and self-enhancing ego orientation was small, and these constructs had different relations to other variables in the study. Self-defeating ego orientation was associated with high anxiety and was negatively related to achievement and self-perceptions. Self-enhancing ego orientation was positively related to achievement, self-perceptions, and intrinsic motivation. Results suggested that it is important to distinguish between the two dimensions of ego orientation and that educators should pay particular attention to the negative effects of self-defeating ego orientation.

Goldberg and Cornell (1998) examined the influence of intrinsic motivation and perceived competence on subsequent academic achievement among second- and third-grade students participating in a national study of students in gifted programs. Measures of intrinsic motivation, perceived competence, and academic achievement were administered near the beginning and end of one school year. Results support the view that perceived competence contributes to academic achievement, even after controlling for prior achievement and for the relation between prior

achievement and perceived competence. Children with more positive self-concepts of their academic and social competence made greater achievement gains than their peers. Findings also suggested the possibility of a feedback model of the relations among achievement, self-concept, and motivation. Children with positive conceptions of their abilities make greater achievements gains, in turn, successful achievement motivates them to develop more autonomous judgment; autonomous judgment further bolsters self-concept, completing the feedback loop.

Positive findings of this study imply that educators should be mindful that positive self-concept and intrinsic motivation are relevant factors even in the achievement of successful students. Educators should be sensitive to the presence of otherwise capable students who maintain a low opinion of their abilities or who refrain from making autonomous judgments.

Ames (1992) examined classroom learning environments in relation to achievement goal theory of motivation. Classroom goals were examined in terms of the design of tasks and learning activities, students' perceptions of tasks delivered by the teachers (sense of student control, variety and diversity, challenge), and how these tasks engaged the students. The ways in which students are evaluated and reinforced for their work were also reviewed. The examination suggested that evaluation practices should put less emphasis on social comparison as it appeared in all studies to have negative effects on achievement. Evaluation should focus on the efforts of the students - trying hard, improving performance, and participating. Finally, the locus of responsibility in the classroom and the degree to which teachers involve children in decision-making were discussed and reviewed.

The author concluded that classroom structures and instructional strategies supporting a mastery goal orientation should be adopted and encouraged. Based on this examination of classroom learning environments, one would conclude that an effective intervention program needs to be

developed to enhance students' motivation. This program would include involving the student in the learning process, responding positively to students, increasing competence through direct praise, promoting mastery learning, using stimulating and challenging activities, and evaluating the task rather than the student. These strategies for enhancing intrinsic motivation should be adaptable for a variety of student needs and abilities.

VI: Conclusion

Learned helplessness in achievement situations occurs when students - usually those who have experienced a great deal of failure - believe that there is nothing that they can do to avoid failure. When they do fail, helpless children typically attribute the failure to their low ability, which they believe they cannot control. These students exert little effort on school tasks and give up easily when they encounter difficulty. They are unresponsive to teachers' appeals to try harder, and they generally seem disengaged from classroom activities. Many studies have demonstrated the debilitating effects of low-ability attribution for failure on subsequent performance (Weiner, 1994). Much of the research on learned helplessness in achievement settings has been done by Dweck and her colleagues. Although learned helplessness is more common among low-achieving children, it can be seen in children who perform relatively well in school. Children identified as being gifted are not immune to maladaptive attributions and feelings of helplessness. Studies have shown that it is best to prevent children from developing an attribution pattern that results in helpless behaviors. Attribution retraining has been considered as a potential intervention with people who experience learned helplessness. It makes it possible to encourage not only an internal sense of attribution connected to academic outcomes, but also a belief that such outcomes are largely contingent on effort.

Gender differences were also commonly found in attribution research. Many studies have found that females are less likely than males to attribute success to their own high ability and more likely to attribute failure to low ability. Gender differences were found to be more prominent in domains such as math and science, which are stereotyped more often as "male domains." These attributions have been linked to low confidence in ability and to low expectations for success.

Research on learned helplessness needs to take socio-cultural differences into account in order to understand the nature and consequences of learned helplessness and to expand application of the concept to a wider range of real life experiences and social contexts. Determining the specific contribution of socio-cultural factors to the development of learned helplessness in the cognitive, motivational, and self-esteem domains requires detailed studies particularly in developing countries, where life conditions are characterized by a high degree of instability, unpredictability, and lack of control.

Social learning and cognitive theorists all consider beliefs, values, expectations, emotions, and all else that is not directly observable, as being important in the understanding of achievement behavior. Reinforcement theory focuses on the individual's environment, specifically the contingencies of reinforcement.

Enhancing intrinsic motivation in students has been found to be beneficial. Motivational orientation has been found to encompass numerous causation factors, some of the most important being perceived locus of control, level of self-esteem, and expectancy of success. Students with learning disabilities often have an external locus of control and lack motivation. Enhancing intrinsic motivation of students with learning disabilities may help improve their self-esteem and help them to overcome some of the disadvantages cause by their disability. Intrinsic motivation theorists suggest

that innate motives to develop competency, experience novelty, and become self-determining also promote learning-related behavior. Schools and teachers that provide students with opportunities to achieve these objectives are most likely to capitalize on these natural motives. Intrinsic motivation is worth promoting. It appears to foster creativity, conceptual learning, desire for challenge, and enjoyment.

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Paper Two

Teaching Style:
An Interplay of Influencing Factors in Learned Helplessness

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

Students' beliefs affect their behaviors irrespective of whether or not those beliefs are based on objective reality. Students who believe that rewards are based on good performance, and that they are able to perform well, usually approach academic tasks eagerly, exert effort to increase mastery, focus their attention on strategies to solve the present problem, persist with tasks when they do not succeed immediately, and have positive experiences in school.

Regardless of what the teacher does, by second grade or earlier, students become aware of differences between their own and their classmates' performance. Some students inevitably will perceive themselves as being less skillful than others in particular domains. Realistic appraisal of one's competencies may or may not result in the maladaptive avoidance, defensive and helpless behavior that some students experience.

Teachers may not be able to eliminate social comparison, but they have considerable impact on students' judgments about their competencies and on their expectations for success with particular tasks. One realistic and worthy goal is for all students to believe that they are efficacious - that they have the competence to learn and to complete the tasks they encounter in school. A second goal is for all students to believe that they have personal control over their academic outcomes and to take pride in their accomplishments. Teachers can play a part in determining this. A third goal, and maybe the one upon which the other two goals depend, is to foster in each child the belief that ability is something that can be improved through practice and effort.

Teachers' leadership styles significantly affect the way students feel about school and, to a

great extent, how students feel about themselves and one another (Eby, 1998). All teachers have styles unique to their own personalities, behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs (Dreikurs and Cassel, 1972). Dreikurs and Cassel identified three types of leadership styles of teachers: (1) Authoritarian -- teachers control and students obey; (2) Permissive -- teachers are inconsistent, set few limits, and are powerless (resulting in student confusion regarding expectations); and (3) Democratic -- teachers are firm, reasonable, and set consistent expectations for academic achievement and student behavior. Democratic teachers assert their power to make decisions but are willing to listen to their students' reactions, needs, and desires. The result is that a sense of power and ownership is created and shared among students and the teacher in a healthy way.

This paper focuses on teaching style as an influencing factor in learned helplessness. Such things as teacher efficacy, teachers' use of controlling/motivation strategies, development and maintenance of self-worth protection, and teaching style as it relates to fostering self-esteem will be explored.

II. Teacher Efficacy

Numerous studies have demonstrated teachers' sense of efficacy to be a powerful construct related to student outcomes such as achievement and motivation. It has also been related to teachers' behavior in the classroom. Teacher efficacy is the teacher's belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish specific teaching tasks in particular contexts. Research findings show that it affects the effort teachers put into teaching, the goals they set, and their level of aspiration. Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy are open to new ideas and more willing to experiment with new methods to better meet the needs of their students. They also

tend to exhibit greater levels of planning, organization, resilience in the face of setbacks, and greater enthusiasm for teaching (Allinder, 1994). Greater efficacy enables teachers to be less critical of students when they make errors (Ashton & Webb, 1986), to work longer with students who are struggling (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), and to be less inclined to refer "difficult" students to special education (Podell & Soodak, 1993).

Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, and Hoy (1998) explained that teacher efficacy has a powerful cyclical nature. The proficiency of a performance creates a new mastery experience for the teacher, which in turn provides new information that will be processed to shape future efficacy beliefs. Greater efficacy leads to greater effort and persistence, which leads to better performance, which in turn leads to greater efficacy on the part of the teacher. The reverse is also true. Lower teacher efficacy leads to less effort and giving up easily, which leads to poor teaching outcomes, which then produces decreased efficacy. Teaching performance that was accomplished with a level of effort and persistence influenced by the performer's sense of efficacy, when completed, becomes the past and a source of future efficacy beliefs. Over time, this process stabilizes into a relatively enduring set of efficacy beliefs.

Guskey and Passaro (1994) examined teacher efficacy with a sample of 342 prospective and experienced teachers. They were administered an efficacy questionnaire adapted from the research of Gibson and Dembo (1984). Results from this study added further support to the idea that teacher efficacy is a multidimensional construct. Consistent with earlier research (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; and Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990), analysis confirmed two relatively independent efficacy dimensions: (1) *Teaching Efficacy* – the belief that any teacher's ability to bring about change is constrained by external factors such as family background or a student's intelligence; and

(2) *Personal Teaching Efficacy* – an evaluation of one's personal ability to influence student learning. However, contrary to earlier studies, no evidence was found to indicate a distinction between teaching efficacy and personal teaching efficacy.

Results indicated that the earlier perceived difference might be attributable to be an internal versus external distinction, similar to the locus-of-control distinction found in measures of causal attribution. Both prospective and experienced teachers did not distinguish between their personal ability to affect students and the potential influence of teachers in general. Rather, the distinctions they drew related to beliefs about the influence they and all teachers have, or do not have, on the learning of students, even those who may be considered difficult or unmotivated.

These results further indicated that it is important to understand not only how the construct of teacher efficacy is measured, but also how such measures are interpreted. This investigation focused upon the validity of a two-factor model of teacher efficacy. Other studies have shown that additional factors may also be meaningful.

Research by Fritz *et al.* (1995) assessed the effectiveness of the DARE TO BE YOU (DTBY) teacher-training for enhancing feelings of personal teaching efficacy. A total of 241 teachers participated in the study. There were 130 teachers in the training (DTBY) group and 111 teachers from parallel school districts in the comparison group (these schools were matched in community, size, and demographics of school and resources available, and the teachers were well matched in terms of age, gender, ethnic background, subscriptions to educational journals, and number of years of teaching experience).

The DTBY training, along with a personal commitment by participating teachers to try different curriculum activities during the school year, appeared to foster confidence and commitment

in teachers. Even though these teachers had a strong sense of teaching competence, they continued to gain in perceived competence and satisfaction with their role as a teacher. At the start of the year, all the teachers (in both the research and comparison groups) started with fairly similar optimism. Those who had participated in the DTBY training gained or maintained a "can-do attitude" about teaching as the year progressed. At the same time, the comparison group showed a distressing decline over the year in both the perception of their teaching competence and in their satisfaction with teaching. This study provided support for the value of fostering personal teaching efficacy through staff development and classroom activities aimed at curricular innovation.

Soodak and Podell (1996) explored dimensions of teacher efficacy from the responses of 310 teachers to a modified version of the Gibson & Dembo questionnaire (1984). Scale results were factor analyzed yielding three factors: (1) *Personal Efficacy* -- teachers' beliefs about their personal ability to perform specific behaviors; (2) *Outcome Efficacy* -- teachers' beliefs concerning whether student outcomes were attributable to their (teachers') actions; and (3) *Teaching Efficacy* -- teachers' beliefs about the influence of external factors, including home, heredity, and television violence, on the impact of teaching.

Multidimensionality of teacher efficacy found in this study has implications for both theory and practice. The distinction between personal efficacy and outcome efficacy in this study suggested that efforts to enhance teacher efficacy must take into account whether low teacher efficacy is due to teachers' lack of confidence in their skills or a sense of futility regarding the impact of their work. Teachers' professional efficacy, in a more general sense, was placed within a developmental context, suggesting that, as teachers gain experience, their sense of personal efficacy becomes more salient.

A study by Ross, Cousins, and Gadalla (1996) supported the theoretical claim that teacher

efficacy is a specific rather than a generalized expectancy, demonstrating that teacher efficacy varies between teachers. This research suggested two directions for further research. The first suggested direction was to search for additional within-teacher factors that might affect the difficulty of particular teaching assignments, such as characteristics of students (special learning needs), resource levels (equipment, texts, disposables), and district or national policies that have a differential effect on particular courses.

The second suggested direction was to develop strategies for helping both new and experienced teachers take greater control of their personal teaching efficacy. Teacher efficacy has a powerful effect on the goals that teachers set for themselves and how they interpret the outcomes of their actions. An alternative approach may be to create school-university teams to help teachers acquire self-knowledge about their teaching efficacy, identifying the personal conditions under which it increases and declines. Such self-knowledge could be used proactively to restructure personal work spaces and to recognize when impending changes in their work lives (such as a new teaching assignment) could threaten their efficacy and require compensatory actions to renew it.

Middle grades' organizational patterns and their impact on teacher efficacy and perceptions of their working environment were examined by Warren and Payne (1997). Eighty-two eighth-grade teachers were surveyed about their teaching efficacy and perceptions of their working environment. This study showed that common planning time has the potential to make a profound difference in how teachers feel about the efficacy of their teaching. Common planning time holds potential as an important and needed time for teachers to come together to help each other work through day-to-day problems of teaching, and at the same time develop a sense of colleague support through collaboration.

The authors concluded that common planning time plays a critical role in making middle grade schools more responsive to the teaching needs of teachers. The opportunity to collaborate during common planning time appears to generate better working conditions that lead teachers to feel more positive about themselves and their abilities. Accordingly, this should be considered for implementation in both the elementary and secondary grades.

This finding was consistent with Ashton and Webb's (1986) conclusions. Warren and Payne suggested that the higher level of personal teacher efficacy identified in their research could be attributed to teachers being on teams and having the opportunity to collaborate and share their teaching concerns during common planning time. In summary, school organization may be instrumental in influencing personal fulfillment for teachers by providing opportunities that encourage high levels of teachers' sense of efficacy. As well, teacher collaboration has potential to improve teachers' perceptions of their working environment.

Ross's (1998) conceptualization of teacher efficacy suggests that, with experience, teachers develop a relatively stable set of core beliefs about their abilities. Beliefs about both the task of teaching and personal teaching competence are likely to remain unchanged unless compelling evidence caused them to be reevaluated (Bandura, 1997). Such things as having to teach a new grade, work in a new setting, adopt a restructured curriculum and other such challenges can elicit a reevaluation of efficacy.

For new teachers, efficacy beliefs have been linked to attitudes toward both children and class control (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). In their research, new teachers with a low sense of efficacy tended to have a stronger orientation toward high levels of class control. They took a pessimistic view of students' motivation and relied on strict classroom regulations, extrinsic rewards, and punishments

to make students study. Weinstein's (1998) study on student teachers suggested that they engaged in self-protective strategies, lowering their standards in order to reduce the gap between the requirements of excellent teaching and their self-perceptions of teaching competence. Thus, teacher preparation programs must provide teachers in training with more opportunities for actual experiences with instructing and managing children in a variety of contexts, while providing increasing levels of complexity and challenge to facilitate mastery experiences.

Efficacy beliefs of first-year teachers were related to stress and commitment to teaching, as well as satisfaction with support and preparation (Hall *et al.*, 1992). Among experienced teachers, efficacy beliefs appeared to be quite stable, even when the teachers were exposed to workshops and new teaching methods (Ross, 1994). When teachers attempt to implement new practices, their efficacy beliefs may be lowered initially but they usually rebound to a higher level when the new strategies are found to be effective. Encouragement and support were found to be particularly important as change is implemented -- a time when temporary dips in efficacy may occur. It was suggested that teachers need support and training to see them through the initial slumps in efficacy beliefs as they implement new methods. They also need assurance that increased student learning has occurred before new, higher efficacy beliefs take root (Ross, 1998).

Teacher efficacy has been shown to be an important influence that affects teachers' behaviors towards students - sometimes in appropriate ways that enhance learning, sometimes in ways that inhibit students' academic growth. Evidence has been shown that differential treatment of high and low achievers may occur more in teachers with relatively low self-efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Teachers with low self-efficacy called on low-achieving students less often, assigned them more busy work, and in general interacted and gave more appropriate praise and feedback to those who were

controlling technique is no longer used.

This theory holds that the child perceives the reason for performing the activity as the controlling technique rather than interest in the task itself or an attempt to achieve mastery. Because a controlling strategy shifts the focus of task engagement from an intrinsic to an extrinsic orientation, with feelings of low personal control, continued interest in task engagement decreases markedly in subsequent interactions with the activity. Over 50 experiments have demonstrated this (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Research described in Boggiano and Katz (1991) demonstrated that the presence of evaluative/controlling cues affect children with extrinsic orientation more than those with an intrinsic orientation, leaving them more vulnerable to developing helplessness deficits. In spite of the documented negative effects of these strategies on children's inclination toward helplessness deficits, Boggiano and Katz noted that other related research has shown that parents and educators seem to prefer controlling techniques over other methods which motivate students.

Flink, Boggiano, and Barrett (1990) presented a study which examined student performance when they were exposed to teachers who were pressured to maximize student performance level and who used controlling strategies. Fourth-grade teachers and their students participated in a field experiment in which teachers were pressured either to maximize student performance or were told simply to help their students learn. Sessions were videotaped to assess teachers' use of controlling strategies. Teaching sessions were rated by "blind" coders. Data indicated that students evidenced performance impairment during subsequent testing only when they had been exposed to "pressured" teachers who had used controlling strategies.

Surprisingly, controlling teachers were rated by blind coders as more competent, enthusiastic,

and helpful. In a subsequent experiment with college students (Boggiano *et al.*, 1991), these findings were replicated. Teachers who used non-controlling strategies were rated as less competent by their students in comparison to students exposed to teachers using controlling strategies. The tendency for controlling teachers to receive high ratings has important implications. Even though controlling strategies have been shown to produce performance decrements, administrators and parents may favorably evaluate teachers using such techniques because these teachers may be giving the appearance of optimal teaching.

These findings suggest that educational outcomes, assessment techniques, and policies must be carefully reviewed. Focus must be shifted from the short-term gains of compliance and rote learning to the potentially harmful long-term effects that excess control may have on students' achievement. It is important, therefore, that educational administrators develop creative new techniques apart from grades, surveillance, and social comparison to intrinsically motivate students to perform academic tasks.

Providing students with some control may be particularly important as children enter adolescence. Research suggests that at this developmental stage, when children are concerned most with issues of autonomy, school and classroom structures tend to become more teacher-controlled (Eccles, Wigfield, Midgley, *et al.*,1993). Sometimes students who are disaffected the most from school and would benefit most from practices that enhance motivation are given the least amount of autonomy.

When teachers use controlling techniques to increase children's achievement, the process very often backfires. Rote learning may improve, but children's responses to control-oriented feedback are often maladaptive with conceptual learning and the motivation to continue learning negatively

affected. Yet these effects seem to go unnoticed by teachers who frequently use controlling techniques which they deem to be most effective. Unfortunately, these students display more helplessness, have lower standardized test scores, have fewer mastery pursuits, and are more likely to attribute control to powerful others.

Research has demonstrated that by allowing some student choice, intrinsic interest is fostered in school tasks and students learn self-management skills that are needed for success in higher grades and in the workplace. Thus, students must be given the opportunity to develop a sense of personal responsibility and the ability to regulate their own learning behavior. Teachers need to experiment to find out how much autonomy their students can handle, and they need to teach students strategies for taking productive advantage of the choices they are given.

IV. Self-Worth and Teacher Praise

Self-worth theory (Covington, 1984) assumes that a central part of all classroom achievement is linked to the need for students to protect their sense of worth or personal value. Situations which threaten self-worth are those which are likely to reveal low ability. In brief, low ability is most evident when poor performance occurs despite expending effort. As a consequence, withdrawing effort offers an effective way of blurring the link between poor performance and low ability and protects the individual against feelings of humiliation (Covington & Omelich, 1985). Thereby, a sense of self-worth is preserved.

Thompson (1997) conducted research concerning the self-worth theory of achievement motivation. Self-worth protective students were found to perform poorly when a negative outcome was likely to reflect low ability, but perform well in situations in which poor performance could be

attributed to a factor which was unrelated to ability. These students used self-defeating strategies such as procrastination, last-minute study, selecting easily-achieved goals (thereby minimizing damage to self-esteem through low risk-taking), or selecting goals which were extremely difficult to attain. These students attributed their success outcomes to external factors (such as task ease or luck) to a greater extent than other performance groups identified in this study.

Thompson also examined the teachers' use of praise. Differences emerged in the percentage of praise given by individual teachers in relation to intellectual competence. Praise of this nature, related to cognitive proficiency, was far greater in the case of male students (over 90% of all positive feedback) than in the case of female students (approximately 80%). Almost 20% of the positive evaluation females received was for intellectually irrelevant aspects of their work (i.e., neatness, conforming to teacher requirements). When negative feedback from teachers was evaluated, gender differences were even greater. For male students, only 54.4% of their work-related criticism related to intellectual inadequacy, whereas for female students, 88.9% of criticism for poor performance was related to intellectual performance.

Differential teacher behavior may explain girls' lower perceptions of their competencies and lower expectations for success, especially in math and science, as well as their substantially lower participation rates in higher-level mathematics and science courses and careers. (Kahle, 1996a - as cited in Stipek, 1998). According to the self-worth theorists, individuals naturally are motivated to protect their self-esteem as much as possible. If doing poorly in valued domains threatens self-esteem, devaluing those domains in which one had low expectations for success would be an effective self-protective mechanism. Thus, results of Thompson's (1997) study indicated that evaluative feedback from teachers, if this feedback is counterproductive or condescending, has the potential to

create and perpetuate the achievement-limiting behaviors of self-worth protective students. Also, praise which is excessive, undeserved, or controlling was found to be counterproductive.

Thompson contended that attention must be focused upon the manner in which teachers deliver productive evaluative feedback. Productive feedback needs to focus on specific actions rather than on broad skills. Teacher feedback which is task-based, is likely to have positive consequences for self-worth protective students by minimizing performance pressure and evaluative threat, thereby preserving intrinsic motivation.

Heyman, Dweck, and Cain (1992) provided evidence that after receiving criticism, some kindergartners showed affective reactions and lowered self-evaluation associated with motivational helplessness. They were also more likely to make global negative self-judgments following criticism, including negative judgements of their "goodness."

Research in motivation conducted by Skaalvik (1997) on self-enhancing and self-defeating ego-orientation suggested that it is important to distinguish between the two dimensions of ego-orientation and that educators should pay particular attention to self-defeating ego-orientation as it is associated with high anxiety and is negatively related to achievement and self-perceptions.

Teacher communication and student interpretations were examined in a study by Butler (1994). This research looked at the way teachers respond to student failure either as attributed to low ability or to low effort, and on the ways in which grade-three and grade-six pupils interpreted and reacted to these responses. Teachers were more likely to respond to the *low-ability* pupil with sympathy and offer help, and to the *low-effort* student with anger and demands that he/she should have done better. Third- and sixth-grade children responded differently to the "low-effort" teacher response than they did to the" helpless low-ability" teacher response, while responding quite similarly

to constructive low-ability responses.

The responses of the older children were consistent with attributional analyses. Thus, low-effort and helpless low-ability teacher communications influenced both inferred emotion and causal attributions and perceptions of effort efficacy and future effort. The inferred emotion of the teachers' responses served as an attributional cue which affected judgments of future effort primarily by affecting the degree to which failure was attributed to low effort rather than to low ability. These findings suggest that teachers spontaneously provide a variety of attributional cues, which in turn provide direct and differentiated attributional feedback. The study also suggests that "teacher talk" incorporates attributionally relevant information, which sixth-grade children can decode appropriately.

In contrast, the younger children inferred greater anger in the low-effort condition, but attributed failure to effort in all conditions and inferred teacher anger was directly and *negatively* correlated with predictions of subsequent effort. These results suggest that young children are adept in identifying teacher emotions, but have difficulty in making differentiated accurate causal inferences which would help them to identify when they have more or less control over their own outcomes and over environmental responses to them. These findings imply that teachers can help young children by providing clear and specific attributional information rather than using indirect communications which young children find difficult to interpret.

Finally, this study indicates that the most adaptive way to address failure at both school ages is to offer an opportunity for a guided second attempt in instances of failure. This can be facilitated through a constructive low-ability response by the teacher. Such a response would imply a greater willingness on the part of the teacher to accept responsibility for modifying student failure – i.e., the

degree to which the teacher accepts responsibility for student difficulties, the degree to which lessons are planned, the degree to which the teacher values and rewards individual progress, the degree to which the teacher's behavior is modified according to student outcomes, and so on. Butler concludes that by encouraging teachers to accept responsibility for student outcomes, and through the use of constructive responses to specific failures, positive classroom effects can be promoted.

Bartholomew (1993) stated that students need positive verbal feedback, and went on to point out that praise is not always positive. It can cause feelings of embarrassment and can be a controlling, manipulative device to get students to behave in a particular way. It can cause feelings of inferiority if one does not receive any praise, or promote feelings of undue superiority if the praise makes one feel as if one has "done it all." Finally, praise can be habitual or overused and, as a consequence, lose its meaning. Praise should be used for a specific purpose and matched to that purpose -- to recognize or show interest, to encourage, to describe what teachers observe in students' behavior, and to evaluate performance.

V. Teaching Practices for Students with Learning Disabilities

In reviewing the literature on motivation, Dev (1998) found a limited number of studies which addressed issues specifically focused on academic intrinsic motivation of learning-disabled students. Researchers and educators have expressed the need to explore psycho-physiological interventions and to expand the variety of instructional practices to improve the efficacy of students with learning disabilities. It was suggested that teaching styles, curriculum content, and evaluation procedures/policies should be flexible enough to meet the needs of each child. Activities should be such that they stimulate interest and curiosity, especially in students with learning disabilities.

Activities should be selected which are likely to result in academic as well as social success for the learner.

Motivational orientation has been considered to be an important factor in determining the academic success of children with and without disabilities (Deci & Chandler, 1986; Schunk, 1991). Researchers have identified some of the variables that are used to measure intrinsic motivation. Academic intrinsic motivation has been found to be significantly correlated with academic achievement in students with learning disabilities (Gottfried, 1985). However, students with learning disabilities are less likely than their non-disabled peers to be intrinsically motivated (Adelman & Taylor, 1986; Smith, 1994). It follows that enhancing intrinsic motivation of these students can result in improved learning (Adelman & Taylor, 1986). Educators need to keep in mind that individual differences influence the efficacy and outcome of the strategies used to enhance academic intrinsic motivation. A student who has fear of failure or low self-esteem is less likely to develop positive motivation to learn (Adelman & Taylor, 1986; Smith, 1994).

Boggiano and Katz (1991) suggested that teachers can encourage and focus the student upon the more intrinsic aspects of the task, eliciting better performance, more persistence, and greater preference for challenge. The student should not feel that he or she is being controlled while the teacher is helping in the learning process. A student's perception of the amount of control he or she has over learning can be strongly influenced by the teacher. One way to enhance this is by allowing the students to monitor their own progress. Intrinsic motivation can be developed when students are encouraged to monitor and reinforce their own progress (Fulk & Montgomery-Grymes, 1994).

For learning-disabled students, who have experienced repeated failure, another important issue is whether they will persist during remedial efforts to improve their achievement. Ayres,

Cooley, and Dunn (1990) pointed out that these students are more likely to make attributions that are not conducive to sustained effort. The academic self-concept of these children may direct their attributions, further lessening their sense of efficacy and lack of persistence in the face of difficult academic tasks. Cohen and Beattie (1984) suggested that unique teaching strategies may be required to prevent (or decrease already existing) frustration, anger, and lack of motivation in the student with learning disabilities.

Research by Williams and Barber (1992) on learned helplessness and locus of control in relation to the special education student indicated that a more internal locus of control needs to be established in special education students. Research by Kastner *et al.* (1995) indicated that teacher interaction with learning-disabled students as compared to achieving students without special needs is more in terms of behavioral management than with teaching engagement on the task. Data from related studies suggested that educators designing interventions to improve the academic performance of learning-disabled students need to consider the students' attributions and self-concept.

Reviewed research indicated that intrinsic motivation has a strong relationship to academic achievement in students with learning disabilities. If students attributed successful outcomes to their own effort, they were more likely to be intrinsically motivated. Self-perception of competency has been strongly demonstrated as a significant element in academic intrinsic motivation (Grolnick & Ryan, 1990; Schunk, 1991). Research has also shown that students with learning disabilities are sometimes overly dependent on teachers as their source of motivation (Grolnick & Ryan, 1990). Empirical evidence of the effects of intrinsic motivation on academic achievement can be very useful for developing guidelines for effective intervention strategies for this population (Deci & Chandler,

1986; Switzky & Schulz, 1988).

Solutions proposed to alleviate helplessness, to increase motivation and to give students a sense of control over success and failure are many. Williams & Barber (1992) discussed several of these strategies: Attribution strategy, parent-training, group counseling, relaxation and feedback, rational-emotive education, responsibility training, and classroom activities. Knowledge of all factors which have potential to influence learning and the maturity process of the individual are considered important. This is a complex process in which learning ability and motivation are inextricably interrelated. Evaluating special education students for locus of control soon after their initial diagnosis might be helpful in educational planning.

The teacher's role is to provide a healthy learning environment. The degree of success that individuals with learning disabilities experience is always a function of the manner in which the characteristics of the individual interact with those of the learning environment. Because research supports the idea that special education students have difficulty with establishing an internal locus of control and respond with learned helplessness (Williams & Barber, 1992), strategies must be carefully selected and matched to meet individual needs in an effort to bolster intrinsic motivation. It is worth noting that many educators have advocated focusing on the strengths of individuals with disabilities rather than investing so much effort in remediating their deficits (Ellis, 1998).

According to Bandura (1986), a major source of motivation is the "active" setting of goals. The personal goals students set become their standards for evaluating performance. Teacher assistance is needed in helping students set short-term realistic goals to ensure that they experience a sense of internal control and feel confidence that they can have successful experiences. Martino (1993) suggested that the most powerful method of helping at-risk middle school students develop

an internal sense of control and responsibility is through a carefully structured system of goal-setting, attaining, and scoring. This has proven successful in specific dropout prevention programs as well as in regular classrooms (Conrath, 1986).

Fuhler (1991) stated that if teachers could shift the emphasis from the commonly employed and often ineffective extrinsic reinforcement, learners would gradually assume responsibility for their own behavior. They would be less likely to blame failures on others, something which is a very common occurrence among students with learning difficulties. Accomplishing realistic goals, set within personal limits, could facilitate a newly found pride in personal academic accomplishments.

VI: Teaching Style and Student Self-Esteem

Research examining the effects of the teacher on student self-esteem has been extensive, and the results have shown that teacher support of students and encouragement of student autonomy are associated with higher student self-esteem. Nelson (1984) studied seventh- and eighth-grade students and found that several teacher variables were positively associated with student self-esteem -- amount of teacher involvement, amount of teacher support, emphasis on order and organization, and encouragement of innovation. The degree of teacher control over students was inversely associated with student academic self-esteem. Ryan and Grolnick (1986), in a study of fourth through sixth graders in New York State, found a significant relationship between the feeling of self-worth and student perceptions regarding whether their teachers granted autonomy or controlled their learning.

A study by Skinner and Belmont (1993) revealed an important reciprocal effect between teachers' and students' behaviors. Teachers' levels of involvement with students was enhanced by high levels of student engagement at the beginning of the year, which in turn enhanced students'

feelings of relatedness to the teacher. This study demonstrated the bi-directional nature of student-teacher relationships, and the importance, for teachers, of recognizing the negative impact of maladaptive and non-reinforcing interactions with students.

Hoge, Smit, and Hanson (1990) examined the impact of school experience on self-esteem using a longitudinal study of sixth- and seventh-grade students in two public middle schools over a two-year period. Self-esteem was measured in the fall and spring of each year at three levels - at the global level, at the academic level, and at the discipline-specific level. For global and academic self-esteem, the most important aspects of the schooling experience were identified as school climate and teacher feedback. For self-esteem in specific disciplines, with the exception of language, ratings by teachers had a significant impact. In all dimensions of the study, school climate and evaluations by teachers had significant effects on self-esteem.

Caprio's (1993) descriptive article on learned helplessness looked at teaching as the art of facilitation – i.e., removing the psychological barriers to learning. When teachers construct environments that help students remove such barriers, they motivate learning. Motivation techniques that address the removal of barriers can stimulate learning and provide direction. Caprio deemed this to be essential to an effective teaching strategy. Zahorik (1997), in an article on constructivism, stated that the teacher's job is to encourage, and challenge, students' understandings. In productive constructivism, the teacher helps to fuse students' knowledge with that which experts present, not favoring one over the other. Constructing knowledge is a constant, naturally occurring process as students view new information -- such as experts' construction -- in terms of their own prior knowledge. Teachers can nurture this process by engaging students in group activities calling for problem-solving, decision-making, and invention.

A key to reaching the hard-to-reach is direct praise. In Glazer's (1997) article on teaching diverse learners, direct praise was suggested as a key component to increase student's self-confidence and guide them to build self-respect. One of the main responsibilities of teachers is to create an atmosphere where self-esteem can grow. Research has indicated that how and what students feel about themselves will affect their efforts and actions in all aspects of school. Teachers can help promote students' self-esteem by helping them feel capable, by helping them become involved and interact with others, and by promoting the feeling that they are worthy contributors to the class (Burden & Byrd, 1999).

VII: Conclusion

A great deal of research illustrates that the teacher is a critical element of children's education (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). Teachers have a great influence on the lives of their students and the importance of this influence must be acknowledged. Couchenour and Dimino (1999) suggested that teachers who have a sense of their ability to influence positively are more likely to view themselves as life-long learners. In their quest for effective teaching and learning strategies, these teachers realize the need to make the most of their own professional development. They accomplish this by reviewing and reflecting on each experience. Teachers who are aware of their potential to impact upon their students make an effort to stay abreast of current educational theories and applications.

The manner in which a teacher presents new information is a reflection of his/her own learning style. In the past, traditional teaching methods discouraged consideration of individual student styles and the development of independent thinking skills. Allowing students to interact with a variety of

learning styles permits them to think for themselves. Dreher (1997) stated that addressing each student's learning style appeals to multicultural sensibilities and backgrounds while reinforcing the need to assess the diversity of intelligences.

Within any given class, a teacher can expect to have a range of student learning styles represented. Learning styles research presents a range of suggestions for classroom teachers. Teachers must accommodate students' learning differences and value student individuality. If teachers believe that students learn (and have the right to learn) in a variety of ways, learning styles will be viewed as a comprehensive consideration guiding educational decision-making and practice.

Motivation theory and research have shown that teachers can use motivational systems to engage students' interest and academic effort. The teacher's task is to create an environment that readily takes advantage of motivational systems which enhance learning. As research on relationships suggest, this can be accomplished best within a social context in which all students are respected, valued, and securely connected to the teacher.

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Paper Three

Effective Structures and Strategies for Increasing Students' Motivation to Learn

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

The research on the spectrum of models of teaching supports the proposition that all students can learn how to learn and they can respond to a great variety of teaching and learning environments (Joyce & Weil, 1996). Research further indicates that the more skills students develop and the more they widen their repertoire, the greater their ability to master an even greater range of skills and strategies (Joyce & Weil, 1996). Finally, the teacher and the classroom have great influence on how students feel about themselves, how they interact, and how they learn (Joyce & Weil, 1996).

Teachers who want to enhance classroom learning have a variety of motivation systems to engage. Their first task is to reawaken a motivation system that may have waned. A second and related task for teachers is to refocus students' attention on understanding and developing their competencies and to diminish their concerns about external evaluation, especially grades. Grades are important; they have long-term implications for students' opportunities. But many students' concern with grades and social approval prevents them from taking advantage of offerings that might expand their future options (Stipek, 1998). Thus, with regard to intrinsic motivation and mastery goals, the teacher's task usually is to rekindle or prevent deterioration of a motivation system.

In summary, the goal is to create an instructional program that capitalizes on students' intrinsic desires to learn, that focuses their attention on understanding and mastery, and that fosters academic values. The practical task is how to create a context in which a focus on learning and understanding prevails, and in which extrinsic rewards and concerns about performance do not undermine intrinsic motivation and attention to understanding and mastery.

Critical to achieving this goal is engendering students' confidence in their academic competencies and high expectations for success with school tasks. Research has indicated that action needs to be taken to provide structures and strategies for increasing student motivation to learn. This paper deals with these interventions.

II. Psychological Needs of Students

Abraham Maslow (1954) contributed the theory of self-actualization which refers to peoples' constant striving to realize the potential within themselves and to develop their inherent talents and capabilities. In his *Hierarchy of Needs*, Maslow outlines eight levels or categories of needs, the first four of which are low-order, deficiency needs which must be satisfied before higher level, growth needs can be met. The first four levels are basic needs: Physiological - these include bodily needs such as hunger, thirst, sleep, and shelter; Safety – these include safeguards from physical and emotional harm; Social – these include affection, belongingness, acceptance, and friendship; and Esteem – these include factors such as self-confidence, prestige, power, autonomy, achievement, recognition, and attention. These first four levels are considered by Maslow as deficiency needs to emphasize that a deficiency in any one of them makes it difficult to move on to a higher level.

The second four levels, labeled by Maslow as higher level, growth needs, are: Intellectual – these includes needs for knowledge, understanding, exploration, achievement; Aesthetic – these include needs for order, beauty, truth, justice, goodness; Self-Actualization – these include needs to fulfill possibilities, to reach potential, to have meaningful goals; and Transcendence – these include spiritual needs for broader cosmic identification.

In this hierarchy, deficiency needs (physiological, safety, belongingness and love, and esteem)

must be satisfied before growth needs (self-actualization, knowing and understanding, aesthetic) can exert an influence. When individuals have satisfied their lower, or deficiency needs, they will then feel motivated to satisfy higher growth needs. Behavior at a particular moment is usually determined by the strongest need. When deficiency needs are not satisfied, students may make bad choices. Satisfying deficiency needs leads to a sense of relief and satiation; the satisfying of growth needs leads to pleasure and a desire for further fulfillment.

One limitation of this hierarchy is that teachers may have difficulty identifying which particular needs students are experiencing. Nevertheless, when trying to increase motivation to learn, teachers must have some understanding about their students' most significant needs.

Maslow's distinction between safety and growth choices is similar to the "level of aspiration" concept, which stresses that people tend to want to succeed at the highest possible level while at the same time avoiding the possibility of failure. When students are successful, they tend to set realistic goals for themselves, and successful experiences strengthen the need for achievement. When students are asked to explain why they did or did not do well on a particular task, the four most common reasons given are ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck (Weiner, 1979). Because students attribute success or failure to these factors, this is referred to as the attributional theory of student motivation.

Low achievers attribute failure to lack of ability, and success to luck. High achievers attribute failure to lack of effort, and success to effort and ability. To enhance motivation and achievement, teachers may need to include ways of altering perceived causes of performance. When teaching methods respond effectively to the student academic needs, learning is significantly increased and misbehavior is dramatically decreased (Jones & Jones, 1998). By addressing students' academic needs, teachers can focus on helping them feel safe and secure, and on developing a sense of

competence and success in their school environment. This sense of success can be developed by helping students better understand teachers' decisions about the purpose and meaning of instruction, giving students opportunities to make decisions and set goals, helping students monitor their own progress, and creating safe, supportive environments. Students have the following 13 academic needs that relate to motivation. Jones and Jones (1998) identified these needs in a review of the motivation literature. The student must:

1. Understand and value the learning goals.
2. Understand the learning process.
3. Be actively involved in the learning process and relate the subject matter to their own lives.
4. Take responsibility for their own learning by following their own interests and setting goals.
5. Experience success to increase feelings of self-worth and confidence.
6. Receive realistic and immediate feedback that enhances self-efficacy.
7. Receive appropriate rewards for performance gains.
8. See learning modeled by adults as an exciting and rewarding activity.
9. Experience a safe, well-organized learning environment.
10. Have time to integrate learning.
11. Have positive contact with peers.
12. Receive instruction matched to their learning style.
13. Be involved in self-evaluating one's learning and effort.

Several educators have proposed strategies to motivate students to learn. When making instructional plans, Keller (1983 - as cited in Burden and Byrd, 1999) suggested four dimensions of motivation should be considered: (a) interest, the extent to which the learner's curiosity is aroused and sustained over time; (b) relevance, the learner's perception that instruction is related to personal needs or goals; (c) expectancy, the learner's perceived likelihood of success through personal control; and (d) satisfaction, the learner's intrinsic motivations and responses to extrinsic rewards.

Wlodkowski (1984) outlined three critical periods of a learning event - beginning, during, and ending - when particular motivational strategies will have a maximum impact on the learner's

motivation. Attitudes and needs are motivational factors to be considered at the beginning of a lesson; stimulation and affect during the lesson; and competence and reinforcement ending the lesson.

Self-actualization is a state that not only enables people to venture and take risks, but also to endure the inevitable discomfort felt when attempting unfamiliar tasks. Maslow's influential work has been used to guide programs to build self-esteem and self-actualizing capability for over 40 years. Exploring the principles can guide teachers actions as they work with students to ensure that their personal image functions as well as possible.

III. Threat to Self-Worth: Forced Competition

Most students believe that in school their personal worth depends largely on their academic accomplishments (Covington & Beery, 1976). This is evident in the very language used to identify or categorize achievements: "good" students get high grades; "poor" students get low grades. Furthermore, comparative evaluation makes it quite clear that being a successful student is directly related to peer rank; success requires that one ranks above the average. An exception is when many students experience feelings of success when they earn an average grade in an exceptionally difficult course.

Empirical evidence has been accumulated which compares cooperatively structured classrooms to competitive and individualistic ones. Reviews conclude that cooperative learning is generally superior in promoting student learning and positive affective and attitudinal outcomes (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Slavin, 1990). Cooperative learning has been lauded as a viable instructional alternative to competition that is beneficial for all students, not just high performers (Slavin, 1990). Cooperative goals or rewards provides an incentive for students to put forth effort,

share ideas, and achieve (Ames & Ames, 1984). Unlike competition, which accentuates ability differences and can threaten self-worth, a team relationship has been assumed to enhance self-worth by de-emphasizing ability differences and fostering a sense that everyone is "in this together" (Ames & Ames, 1984).

Harris and Covington (1993) investigated the role of cooperative reward interdependency in success and failure situations. The self-worth consequences of success and failure for low and high performers under two reward structures (cooperative and competitive) and two reward standards (achievement and improvement) were compared. Participants were 282 middle school children who solved puzzles independently, but side-by-side in same-sex, same-grade pairs. Performance was experimentally manipulated to produce high and low performers in each pair and successful and unsuccessful pairs. Students worked under competitive or cooperative reward conditions.

Results indicated that (a) regardless of reward contingencies, success or failure played a critical role in perceptions of individual differences: Failure depressed perceptions of the other student's ability in each pair and decreased reward allocations for both low and high performers, and (b) cooperative reward interdependency accentuated perceptions of ability differences.

This study implied that under both cooperative and competitive conditions, outcome - success or failure - proved to be the critical factor in reducing or magnifying the impact of individual performance differences. These results raise the question of whether past findings on the positive effects of using a cooperative reward structure were a consequence of the reward structure per se or of the higher probability of success for low performers typically associated with these techniques. However, this study focused on reward interdependence, and individual contribution to team success. The authors stated that this might not have been the case if the cooperative learning tasks were based

on team interdependency. Therefore, educators need to understand what makes cooperation and competition structures work the way they do and to understand that cooperative teams are not always successful.

One way to use competitiveness constructively is to create group competition that rivals groups of students of equal ability levels against each other. Educational researchers have developed and tested instructional programs that involve cooperative group learning and team competition.

Johnson and Johnson (1989) identified four basic elements that characterize cooperative group learning and distinguish it from traditional group learning. First, there must be positive interdependence among group members – students need to be concerned about the performance of other students. Second, there must be individual accountability – every student's mastery of the material is assessed and "counts". Third, there is face-to-face interaction among students, and fourth, students learn the social skills (e.g., communication, managing conflicts) needed to work collaboratively.

Slavin (1987a) pointed out that cooperative learning programs vary in terms of two principle aspects of classroom organization: task structure and reward structure. All cooperative learning programs use cooperative task structures, in which students work collaboratively with classmates, usually in small groups. Not all programs reward students on the basis of their group (referred to as a cooperative incentive structure) as opposed to their individual performance. Slavin's (1984) reviews of research on cooperative learning strongly suggested that the cooperative incentive structure resulted in the highest level of motivation and learning.

The defining feature of a cooperative incentive structure is that group reward is contingent on the performance of all group members. By combining high- and low-performing students in

groups, and by making rewards contingent on the group's performance, cooperative incentive structures can equalize opportunities for rewards. A group reward structure, therefore, can relieve motivation problems that many low-ability students have in individual competition situations in which they have no hope of "winning."

Evidence suggests that when rewards are based on the sum of the group members' performance, simply being a member of a successful group provides all students with some of the advantages of success, such as high self-perceptions of ability, satisfaction, and peer-esteem. Because cooperative incentive structures give all students an equal chance at being a member of the winning team, they also focus students' attention on effort as a cause of outcomes, rather than on ability (Ames & Ames, 1984).

Johnson and Johnson (1985b) also stressed the importance of individual accountability, suggesting that positive interdependence can be achieved by dividing roles, materials, resources, or information among group members in a way that requires all students to contribute. Group size is an important consideration. As the size of the group increases, it becomes more difficult to identify individual members' contributions. Groups of two to six children are suggested. It is also important for all students to realize that their individual efforts are required for the group to succeed.

The benefits of peer collaboration on cognitive strategy use and effectiveness, and on metacognitive understanding of strategy use, were examined in a study by Manion and Alexander (1997). Students' knowledge about the effectiveness of a "sorting strategy" grouped them into low and higher metacognitive understanding. Treatment group triads, consisting of students with low and higher levels of metacognitive understanding, were given a collaborative recall task.

Results indicated that interaction with students working at a higher level of metacognitive

knowledge, in conjunction with directions to explicitly discuss strategies, increased strategy use and induced higher levels of metacognitive thinking in students who had been operating at lower levels of metacognitive thinking. Overall, student's use of the sorting strategy and recall performance improved as a function of treatment group membership. These findings illustrated the multiple benefits of the use of peer collaboration on memory tasks. Students working alone spent significantly less time on task than the students working collaboratively, whereas students were more likely to attend to tasks and stayed busy when working collaboratively with peers.

For teachers to replicate the results of these findings in the classroom, they would need to assess the class to determine which students are operating at higher and which at lower levels of metacognitive sophistication. Students operating at a higher level of metacognitive sophistication could be identified through teacher observation, teacher interviews, and checklists, ranking them according to the students' degree of memory awareness and metacognitive understanding. The teacher would then need to mix the students according to their metacognitive understanding, mixing the more sophisticated with the less sophisticated . Once these groups were formed, and appropriate incentives were in place to ensure on-task activity and discussion of strategies, the teacher could then be reasonably sure that the collaborative activity would benefit the group members, particularly those operating at the lower levels of metacognitive sophistication.

Research has suggested that once into the learned-helplessness mode students develop a passive orientation. Direct access to metacognitive strategies may help such students deal with the cognitive aspect of learned helplessness. Using cooperative/collaborative approaches has been suggested as a method that these students need to enhance their ability and to focus on their affective needs -- to help them see themselves as capable learners and good thinkers.

Three programs using cooperative incentive structures are positively recognized for their systematic development and research: *Teams–Games–Tournaments, Student Teams and Achievement Divisions*, and *Jigsaw*. These cooperative programs illustrate how cooperative incentive structures can be implemented in the classroom to make productive use of students' competitiveness and to maximize effort and performance.

In *Teams-Games-Tournaments* students are assigned to four- or five-member teams. Each team is diverse in terms of its members' levels of achievement, race, gender, and other important variables. Teams are matched equally on initial skill level. Students practice with teammates for game sessions in a tournament that is held once or twice a week. In the tournament each student is assigned to a tournament table where he competes individually against students from other teams. The students at each table have similar achievement levels. At each three-person game table, students answer questions posed on card sets or game sheets to demonstrate mastery of specific skills. Team scores are the sum of the points won by each team member. Team standings, based on the cumulative scores of each team for all the games in the tournament are publicized in a weekly classroom newsletter.

Student Teams and Achievement Divisions programs do not include games and tournaments. With this program, students are assigned to four- or five-member teams that are heterogeneous in terms of past performance levels, gender, and ethnicity. Teammates are assigned adjacent seats and are encouraged to work together. The function of the team is to prepare its members to take individual quizzes twice a week. Students' scores on the quizzes are compared to the scores of others in their "division"– composed of students who are roughly equal in terms of past performance. The highest ranking score among that group of equals earns the maximum number of points regardless

of the relative level of achievement for the division. Rewards, therefore, are contingent on performance within a group of students performing at about the same level, rather than on relative performance in a classroom of students achieving at very different levels. Thus, every student has an equal chance of attaining a high score.

The *Jigsaw* method originally was developed to foster peer cooperation and race relations by creating interdependence among students. A different portion of a learning task is assigned to each of five or six members on a team, and task completion requires contingent and mutual cooperation. The material to be learned is divided into as many parts as there are group members. All groups in the classroom study identical material that is subdivided identically among members. After receiving the task on cards, the jigsaw group disbands and new groups of students with the same task are formed. These new groups help each other learn the material and prepare presentations for the original jigsaw group. Students then return to the original jigsaw group and teach their parts to group mates. All group members are ultimately responsible for learning all the curriculum material. Teachers move among the groups, offering assistance, encouragement, or direction where it is needed. In the original Jigsaw model, students received individual grades based on their own test scores. In an adaptation, Jigsaw II, students' grades are based partly on their team scores.

Although cooperative learning approaches have the potential to increase motivation and learning, this potential is not always realized. Careful preparation and training of students to engage in cooperative learning is required. In a study by Abrami *et al.* (1992), group learning outcome was investigated. Six classes of grade seven students participated in field research which explored the consequences of group outcome (successful, unsuccessful) for individuals learning mathematics cooperatively using *Student Teams and Achievement Divisions*. The effects of within-class prior

mathematics achievement (low, low-medium, high-medium, high) were explored, as well as attributional style (learned-helpless, mastery-oriented). There were two interactions: Group Outcome X Attributional Style on achievement, and Within-Class Prior Mathematics Achievement X Group Outcome on achievement and self-concept.

Results showed that learned-helpless students from unsuccessful groups learned significantly less than learned-helpless students from successful groups. Low prior achievement students from unsuccessful groups learned significantly less than low prior achievers from successful groups. In contrast, there was no significant relationship between group outcome and individual post-test achievement for mastery-oriented students or for students high in prior within-class achievement. Significant relationships were small but they occurred during brief exposure to cooperative learning.

These findings did not completely support the findings of Chambers and Abrami (1991) who employed *Teams-Games-Tournaments*. They suggested that the effects of group outcome are strongest when there is a diversity of group results and when between group competition is salient. In this study, face-to-face competition and between group competition were not employed and the effects of group outcome may have been reduced. These findings suggest that cooperative learning methods should be improved to avoid the potential negative effects of being a member of an unsuccessful group. To minimize such negative outcomes, strategies should be used which incorporate supervising and rewarding of group work. These group support skills need to be taught and mastered by individual group members in order to facilitate group improvement. Also, teacher as well as student acceptance and understanding of group learning appear to play an important role in the effectiveness of group learning.

Individual competition for excellence, in itself, is not debilitating. Many students thrive on

the competitive evaluative structure in schools, and because they have a reasonable chance of winning, the competition often produces their best efforts. Competition becomes debilitating, however, when it forces slower-learning students who have little hope of winning to compete with faster-learning students, who are far more likely to succeed (Raffini, 1993).

IV: Enhancing Self-Esteem and Autonomy

Deci & Ryan (1985) proposed a theory of human motivation based on the belief that all human beings have an innate need to feel autonomous and to have power over their own lives. This desire for self-determination is realized when individuals have the capacity to choose and to have choices as they interact with their environment. Schooling at its finest empowers students to meet their need for self-determination as they engage in behaviors that support the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The motivation behind the engagement is also important in understanding and predicting subsequent engagement and learning (Connell & Wellborn, 1991).

Self-determination theory and the motivational model of engagement posit that children who believe that effort is an important cause of success, and that they are capable of exerting effort, believe that they have ability, believe that they have access to powerful others, believe that they are lucky, and tend to be actively engaged in classroom activities. By contrast, children who believe that they are incapable of exerting effort, believe that they are not smart. They further believe that they have no access to powerful others or luck, both of which they believe are necessary to succeed. Often they do not know what it takes to do well in school, and frequently show disengagement in the classroom (Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990).

The need for autonomy as a key element in self-esteem theory was developed from previous

work in the area of intrinsic motivation. Self-determination theory proposes that there are four styles of self-regulation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). These four styles are conceptualized as a continuum of autonomy from external to internal. The most external of these styles is *external regulation*, the most basic form of extrinsic motivation: behaving in order to attain a reward or avoid a punishment administered by others, such as parents or teachers. Once the child has internalized such a regulation and applies approval or disapproval to his or her own actions, the child experiences *introjected regulation*. Essentially, the child is still acting in a controlled manner, even thought the source of that control is an internal representation of the (original) external agent of control. Once a child has accepted a regulation as his or her own and behaves in order to achieve a desired outcome, he or she is acting in a more autonomous manner and is described as experiencing *identified* regulation. In the final style of self-regulation, *intrinsic motivation*, the child is involved with an activity because of the inherent pleasure derived from the task itself. The behavior is freely chosen and totally autonomous.

An alternative and complementary view of children's motivation and behavior in the classroom comes from the literature on achievement goals. According to Dweck and Elliott (1983), children may pursue "learning-oriented" or "performance-oriented" goals. Children with a learning goal seek mastery and competency at the task they are engaged in. Failure, or a negative performance under these conditions, provides valuable feedback to the child indicating that more effort or a different strategy is needed. By contrast, children with a performance-oriented goal seek to demonstrate their high ability to gain favorable judgments of their ability by their task performance. For them, failure or a negative evaluation undermines their motivation to sustain effort or to re-engage at the task.

Meece, Blumenfeld, and Hoyle (1988) found that fifth- and sixth-grade children showed

different engagement strategies depending on the kind of achievement goals they held. Children with learning goals showed more engagement in their schoolwork, as evidenced by the application of more active learning strategies. By contrast, children who strove to impress the teacher or to do better than their peers were less actively engaged in their schoolwork and instead applied effort-minimizing strategies. The results of this study provided evidence that children function better and learn more effectively when they are oriented toward mastery.

Ames (1992) reviewed evidence demonstrating that the classroom environment can foster either mastery (learning) or performance goals in children as a function of the instructor's teaching style and classroom structures. Task design and structure, performance evaluation, comparison among students, and teacher authority all affect a child's goal and hence motivation in the classroom.

Meece (1991) reported an intensive study of 15 lessons of each of five different elementary school science teachers that identified specific classroom structures that fostered motivation. In all five classes, the students had comparable ability and all assignments were of similar difficulty levels. However, teachers whose students were characterized by high task-mastery goals rather than ego-oriented or work-avoidant goals demonstrated great differences in their classroom teaching behaviors. These teachers provided students with many opportunities to demonstrate their competence beyond traditional reading and writing assignments, adapted learning materials to the students' level of knowledge and understanding, provided opportunities to direct or to assume responsibility for their own learning, stressed the value of science in their lives, downplayed the significance of grades and evaluation, and de-emphasized competition with others by fostering an environment of cooperation and collaboration.

Miserandino (1996) used the self-determination theory and a motivational model of

engagement to determine the impact of perceived competence and autonomy on engagement and performance in school. Seventy-seven third- and fourth-graders, identified as above average in ability by scoring above the median on the Stanford Achievement Tests, were tested. Despite this high ability, children who reported experiencing a lack of competence (less certain of their abilities) or a lack of autonomy (being externally motivated) reported more negative affect and withdrawal behaviors than did those who perceived themselves as having ability and/or who perceived themselves to be autonomous.

These results have important implications for helping all students, regardless of their ability, to reach their fullest potential. An important factor that determines which achievement goals students will hold is the attitude and behavior of the teacher and the structure of the classroom. As demonstrated in all of the above-mentioned studies, students come to hold achievement goals on the basis of their perceptions of the teacher's ability to provide clear expectations, structure, support, and feedback. This leads students to develop competence at classroom tasks and relatedness with an adult who cares about their welfare. All students need to believe in their own ability, have their competence fostered, and regulate their talent and potential in an autonomous way.

Students' self-esteem as well as beliefs regarding their abilities and competencies play an important role in determining educational outcomes. Evaluations of the "self-as-student" are composed of feelings of general self worth (self-esteem), one's identity (self-concept), and beliefs about competency (self-efficacy). Self-concept variables have been shown to be positively related to academic achievement (Marsh, 1992 - as cited in Geisler-Brenstein *et al.*, 1996), with a moderate-to-strong relation between academic achievement and motivation (Skaalvik & Rankin, 1995b - as cited in Skaalvik and Valas, 1999). In her article on self-esteem, Katz (1994) explained that self-

esteem is most likely to be fostered in young children when they have opportunities to build self-confidence through effort, persistence, and the gradual accrual of skills, knowledge, and appropriate behavior. Self-esteem is conveyed to children when they are treated with respect, asked for their views and preferences, and provided with opportunities for real decisions and choices about the things that matter like opinions, suggestions, and preferences.

The power of positive feedback is important, but praise and rewards are not the only methods of reinforcement. Having the child create a special portfolio of his or her work in which one item can be the focus each week is an additional way of doing this. The weekly item can be assessed and compared to earlier work for accuracy and improvement. Another way is to work on projects that can be constructively evaluated, so as to learn from both failure and success. It is well established that learning to deal with setbacks while maintaining persistence and optimism is necessary for mastery. Katz stated that such experiences are the real foundations of lasting self-esteem.

A British research article on student autonomy by Quicke and Winter (1996) focused on the development and evaluation of strategies for enhancing students' self-regulated learning in a secondary school. The research team worked with teachers of one class of grade 8 students, many of whom were considered to be low achievers. The intervention consisted of an innovative teaching approach designed to enhance self-regulated learning strategies. However, the positive outcomes of the instruction were limited by the National Curriculum with its demands, work overload (which affected teaching stress and decision-making) and its rigid standards of evaluation. These restraints undermined the work that the teachers were trying to do with their classes and highlighted the need to revive the idea of the curriculum as a way of representing knowledge for the purposes of enhancing the capacities of students as autonomous learners. In conclusion, the research suggested that if pupil

autonomy is the aim of education, then the British National Curriculum in its present form appears to be doing very little to increase the likelihood of schools realizing this.

Raffini (1993) offered the following recommendations designed to help teachers at all grade levels find opportunities to foster student autonomy:

1. When several learning activities meet the same objective, allow students to choose from among them.

2. When classroom procedures are not critical, allow students options in determining how to implement them.

3. When possible, provide opportunities for students to determine when, where, and in what order to complete assignments.

4. Try to create a psychologically safe environment in which students are willing to risk choices.

5. When student behavior must be restricted or limited, take time to provide clear and logical explanations of the reasoning behind the limits.

6. When behavior must be restricted, acknowledge students' conflicting feelings.

7. When behavior must be required or restricted, use minimally sufficient controls.

8. Use logical consequences rather than punishment when a student's behavior makes it difficult for you to teach others.

9. When possible, encourage students to use the skills of individual goal setting to define, monitor, and achieve self-determined objectives.

10. Try to avoid making students feel right, wrong, good, or bad for their actions. Rather, hold them accountable for the consequences of their choices. (pp. 167-169)

V. Strategies for Intrinsic Motivation for All Students

In a research project, Strong, Silver and Robinson (1995), asked both teachers and students two simple questions: What kind of work do you find totally engaging? And, What kind of work do you hate to do? Distinct patterns in their responses described engaging work as work that stimulated their curiosity, permitted them to express their creativity, and fostered positive relationships with others. It was also depicted as work at which they were good. As for activities they hated, both teachers and students cited work that was repetitive, that required little or no thought, and that was forced on them by others.

Responses to the questions showed that people who are engaged in their work are driven by four essential goals, each of which satisfies a particular human need:

1. Success (the need for mastery),
2. Curiosity (the need for understanding),
3. Originality (the need for self-expression),
4. Relationships (the need for involvement with others).

These four goals form the acronym for a model of student engagement – SCORE. Under the right classroom conditions and at the right level for each student, they can build the motivation and *Energy* (completing the acronym) that is essential for a complete and productive life. These goals can provide students with the energy to deal constructively with the complexity, confusion, repetition, and ambiguities of life (the drive toward completion).

These authors explain that the concept of "score" is a metaphor about performance, but one that also suggests a work or art, as in a musical score. By aiming to combine achievement and artistry, the SCORE model can reach beyond strict dichotomies of right/wrong and pass/fail, and even bypass the controversy about intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Sternberg and Lubart, in their work

Defying the Crowd (1995), asserted that any in-depth examination of the work of highly creative people reveals a blend of both types of motivation.

The SCORE model of engagement can help teachers discover what they are already doing right, and in addition, encourage the cultivation of everyday classroom conditions that foster student motivation and success by convincing them that they can succeed. The authors state that this can be accomplished by teachers clearly stating objectives, providing clear, immediate, and constructive feedback, modeling, and helping each student to see themselves as valuable. Teachers can encourage originality by connecting creative projects to students' personal ideas and concerns and by giving students more choice as well as challenge. Teachers can foster peer relations using cooperative learning strategies such as *Jigsaw* and *Team-Games-Tournaments*. In addition, teachers need to "score" their own performance through examining themselves and their classroom structure, through staff development, and by breaking down the barriers between teacher and teacher, teacher and student, and student and the learning process.

A number of studies have indicated that the early adolescent years are characterized by a negative change in motivational orientation and a decline in academic performance for a number of children. Researchers have linked those changes to the transition from elementary to middle level school (Eccles & Midgley, 1989 - as cited in Midgley, Anderman, & Hicks, 1995). In particular, some goal theorists have suggested that middle level schools stress performance goals more and task goals less than do elementary schools. Ames (1990) used the acronym TARGET (Task, Authority, Recognition, Grouping, Evaluation, and Time) to portray classroom processes that can contribute to a task- focused or a performance-focused learning environment.

Ames worked with teachers to develop specific classroom strategies within each of these areas

in the acronym to emphasize task goals. At the end of one year, at-risk students exposed to the strategies perceived that their learning environment stressed task goals more than did their peers in control classrooms. Students exposed to the strategies also showed a stronger preference for challenging work, had more positive attitudes toward math and school, had higher self-concepts of ability, were more intrinsically motivated, and used more effective learning strategies than did the students who served as controls.

Midgley, Ackerman, and Hicks (1995) studied survey data which described middle school teachers' and students' perceptions of the school culture as being more performance-focused and less task-focused than elementary teachers and students. Elementary school teachers used instructional practices that emphasized task goals, and endorsed task-focused achievement goals for their students, more than did middle school teachers. This perceived emphasis on task goals by elementary teachers was positively and significantly related to self-efficacy both for teacher and students, whereas a perceived emphasis on performance goals by middle school teachers did not enhance feelings of self-efficacy for either teachers or students.

Boggiano, Main, and Katz (1991) studied motivational orientations of 213 boys and girls in grades four to six, and how the use of controlling strategies affected them. Results indicated that girls at grade school level are more likely to be extrinsically motivated, and therefore, they are likely to be more adversely affected by controlling teacher feedback and to show low mastery strivings. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) suggests that extrinsic motivational orientation may develop as a result of the frequent use of controlling strategies.

Results clearly pointed out the complexity of the interaction between adult treatment and the motivational orientation of the child. In looking at children's willingness to deal with varying levels

of a task after being exposed to highly controlling adult feedback, the study demonstrated that a child's motivational orientation is indeed sensitive to such feedback. However, such feedback impacted somewhat differently for boys and girls. Boys seemed little affected by controlling feedback. Girls who were described as intrinsically motivated, were able to deal with more difficult tasks. In contrast, girls who were extrinsically motivated, gave up much more quickly.

The "high controlling feedback" used in this study was not too dissimilar from remarks many teachers might make, i.e., "You should do your best." Traditional controlling techniques may have very pronounced negative effects, particularly upon extrinsicly motivated girls. Such remarks, gestures and methods of assessing children may be construed by students as critical or punitive. Feedback needs to be unambiguous, immediate, and constructive, even if it is also corrective.

Csikszentmihalyi (1978 - as cited in Raffini, 1993) proposed that almost any activity can become intrinsically rewarding if it takes place in a context that: (a) is structured so that each person can adjust the level of challenge to match his or her skills; (2) makes it easy to isolate the activity in question from other stimuli that might interfere with involvement in it; and (3) has clear criteria for providing concrete feedback about one's performance.

Research also indicates that teachers can foster students' self-control and internal motivation by an *informational* approach to setting limits which is based on the teacher's responsibility to support the social order and logical reality of the classroom. In this environment, students understand the purpose for and necessity of restricting behavior that interferes with the social and personal process of learning (which is different from a *controlling* approach to setting limits). In addition to this, the teacher can illuminate choices and logical consequences to students, and acknowledge conflicting feelings in students which enables them to know that their thoughts and emotions are

being understood.

VI: Strategies for At-Risk and Learning-Disabled Students

Miller (1996) hypothesizes that "children and adults with learning disabilities typically lack specific cognitive prerequisites that other people have, and therefore are especially vulnerable to the effects of failure." (p. 3). Learned helplessness is a likely consequence of repeated failure. Research has shown that students with learning disabilities frequently attribute their successes to the assistance of others or to chance factors, while they attribute their failures to themselves (Lerner, 1997). Before many students with learning disabilities reach eighteen, their files are filled with psychoeducational reports from authoritative professionals expressing opinions about the deficiencies and aptitudes that these students have internalized. Although it has been the responsibility of educators to teach academics as prescribed by the mandated curriculum, the environments teachers create for students may ultimately have a considerably more substantial impact on their lives than the academics they master (Bat-Hayim, 1997). Educational environments can be designed to allow and encourage academic skills to develop. These environments emphasize such factors as intrinsic motivation, internal locus of control, academic and social self-concept, self-esteem, a sense of competence and confidence, an appropriate attitude toward challenging tasks, willingness to take risks, and a sense of personal potency.

A descriptive article by Ellis (1998) outlines goals, principles, and techniques for "watering up" curriculum and instructional techniques to address the needs of learning-disabled adolescents. These goals include:

1. More student reflection, risk-taking, and active participation – The teacher places less

emphasis on evaluation and greater emphasis on understandings and the student actively participates.

2. More emphasis on developing social responsibility and collaboration skills among students – The teacher emphasizes and teaches effective cooperative learning activities (learning to do one's share, listening without interrupting, turn taking, complimenting and encouraging others, offering/providing assistance, recognizing differences in others, celebrating successes/talents in others, providing positive and critical feedback, avoiding insulting statements, building consensus, resolving conflicts, resisting peer pressure).

3. More emphasis on fostering a sense of personal potency and academic and social self-concept – The teacher teaches learning-disabled students strategies to enhance self-advocacy; in this way the student does not over-react to pain of failure and embarrassment caused by their disability.

4. More social support and student achievement – Achievement is valued and made possible, and the class is oriented to success (tasks are challenging, expectations are high and appropriate for all students, instruction is success oriented, goals are set, students are frequently evaluated and meaningful feedback is provided, achievement is communicated and celebrated, and the atmosphere is conducive to learning).

5. More intensive and extensive instruction – Learning-disabled students respond positively to instruction that causes them to elaborate on the information being learned, and the elaboration is mediated by the teacher who gradually increases the expectations (teachers use open-ended questions, give cues and hints for recall, and guide students by structural cues). They also respond to interactive modeling and coaching, frequent and immediate feedback, and interesting and meaningful experiences. (pp.92-104)

Ellis states that settings in which these five critical goals are present are likely to be healthy learning environments for students with learning disabilities, and the degree of success that these students experience is always a function of the manner in which the characteristics of the individual interact with those of the environment.

In describing a goal-setting model for young adolescent at-risk students, Martino (1993) explained that teacher help is needed in assisting students set short-term realistic goals so that they can experience some sense of internal locus of control and acquire confidence that they can

accomplish tasks. He states that the most powerful method of helping at-risk middle school students develop an internal sense of control and responsibility is through a carefully structured system of goal-setting, attaining, and scoring. This has proven successful in specific dropout prevention programs and in regular classrooms when used on a smaller scale. The model is one in which the goal-setting process is central in keeping students in school. Therefore, it is important for goals to have the following parameters:

1. They must be specific and measurable in quantity of achievement.
2. They must be attainable - not too easy, but also within the student's control.
3. It must be something the student wants to improve and set by the student in negotiation with the teacher.
4. They must have starting and finishing dates.
6. They must be in writing, for discipline and clarity (this makes them concrete, and allows the student to plan, organize, and develop internal responsibility (control) in developing pride in effort.
7. They must be stated in terms of expected levels of attainment (results) - focusing on clear expectations and objectives.
8. They must be displayed on a "scoresheet" (progress). (pp. 20-21)

Goals should be set for the school term or another specified period and changed only if they are too easily attained or out of the student's control. They should be scored weekly with the group of students who are working on the goals so as to provide mutual support and feedback. Martino (1993) concluded that goal-setting strategies appeared to be the determining factor in producing consistently higher student achievement.

Stevens, Van Werkhoven, and Castelijns (1997) demonstrated the use of an "attunement strategy." When teachers use responsive instruction and attunement, they become attuned to students' perceptions and motivations. They can then enhance students' faith in their own competence and control. For example, if a student has a history of failure, he or she may be

hampered by feelings of incompetence and the expectation of further failure. A teacher who understands this can encourage the student to recognize his/her unproductive perception of the task at hand. The teacher challenges the students to regain control of the problem-solving process. To facilitate this, the teacher must propose specific goals and achievement expectations as well as consider the time and support needed.

Sitting next to the child and maintaining eye-contact shows the student that the teacher has high expectations and supports his growing competence. Giving positive feedback confirms that his or her ability and effort contributed to success. Inviting students to make concerns explicit challenges them to set their own achievement goals. By doing this, the teacher has tuned into the student's perception of the problem and made him/her responsible for solving it, reclaiming the student's autonomy, and encouraging conjoint decision-making with the teacher.

In a series of studies from 1988 to 1994, several groups of teachers implemented the attunement strategy under different conditions. The studies included students from white middle-class and lower-class families. Results from both quantitative and qualitative inquiry methods yielded two basic findings: First, these studies showed a significant statistical connection between responsive instruction and on-task behavior, as well as a positive change in teacher perception of their students. Second, based on video observations or their expressed desire to succeed with the strategy - or both - many teachers altered their teaching styles (for example, the length and intensity of their statements) and the way in which they managed and organized their classrooms.

Dev (1998) reviewed reports that focused on intervention methods practiced to enhance academic motivation, and measures used to assess the academic intrinsic motivation in the school-age population with learning disabilities. In this review, intrinsic motivation was found to be strongly

associated with academic achievement in students with learning disabilities. It was demonstrated that training students with learning disabilities to attribute performance outcomes to their own effort rather than to external factors, like luck, could make a significant difference in their level of academic motivation.

In a 1997 study, Dev made recommendations, based on empirical evidence, to enhance intrinsic motivation in all learners, irrespective of their ability level:

1. Involve the student in the learning process – Teachers should guide and help, but the student should not feel that he or she is being controlled. One way to achieve this is by allowing the student to monitor his or her own progress. Another way is to give the student the opportunity to feel competent by learning through discovery. This requires some planning on the part of the teacher. Encourage activity and interaction.

2. Respond positively – Teachers should respond positively, but at the same time guide the student; this will help the student to maintain high self-esteem.

3. Praise students – This helps the student to develop a feeling of competence. However, praise given indiscriminately loses its value, therefore, encouragement should be used in its place.

4. Promote mastery learning – When a student completes an assignment that does not fit the expected criteria, the teacher should give him or her an opportunity to tackle the task again, with guidelines on how to achieve the desired result. Breaking up the task into manageable components and setting goals for completing each step will give the student a feeling of success as each goal is achieved.

5. Challenge and stimulate – School learning should be interesting, stimulating, and challenging. Tasks should be designed to provide some level of success initially, leading the student to progressively difficult levels. Tasks which are too easy, result in boredom for students.

6. Evaluate the task, not the student – Provide students with feedback about the task accomplished, helping and encouraging the student to attribute successful outcomes to his or her own effort. The teacher should model and share his or her own enthusiasm for what is being taught. (pp.16-17).

Dev (1997) concluded that these strategies for enhancing intrinsic motivation are adaptable for a

variety of student needs and abilities. Teachers concerned with the academic achievement of their students are capable of developing an effective intervention program keeping these suggestions in mind.

As well, active learning, or "metacognitive" strategies, can be used to regulate one's learning. Hattie, Biggs, & Purdie (1996) and Schunk & Zimmerman (1994) have investigated many kinds of self-regulated learning strategies – including planning and goal-setting, asking questions and testing for understanding, reflecting on new material, searching for main ideas, making connections to what one already knows, making inferences and predictions and checking to see whether they are correct, taking and organizing notes, keeping records, practicing problems, rehearsing, and creating mnemonics for memory.

Students who use such strategies in educational contexts learn more, but not everyone uses them. Research by Meece (1996) and Schunk & Zimmerman (1994) indicates that individuals are most likely to use such active learning strategies when they believe that the task is interesting or important, and when they believe that they are capable of mastering it. However, metacognitive strategies that support self-regulated learning often need to be taught. Instruction on metacognition should be integrated with regular instruction, rather than presented as a separate curriculum (Hattie, Biggs, & Purdie, 1996). Students need to be taught how to apply new metacognitive skills to material that is different from the material used to train the skills (Hattie, Biggs, & Purdie, 1996), and they need to understand how specific strategies work and when it is appropriate to use each. The role that the teacher assumes has been compared to that of an expert providing the support necessary to guide the novice to eventual mastery. Initially, the teacher assumes responsibility for leading the instruction, modeling and providing explicit and concrete explanations of the strategies.

Responsibility for learning is gradually shifted to the student by providing guided practice. Teacher involvement then becomes focused on evaluation and encouragement. Teachers assist students with reminders, directions, hints, and then slowly withdraw their assistance. This gives students the opportunities to apply and practice these strategies independently.

VII: Teacher Personality and Classroom Climate

Both the teacher and the instructional setting can offer students the opportunity to meet another fundamental human need – being socially connected. School provides a setting in which students can develop relationships that support their sense of well-being and feelings of belongingness, as well as their learning efforts. Some classrooms offer more opportunities for humiliation and social rejection than for social support and a feeling of being valued as a human.

A strong self-concept may emerge as one experiences frequent success, or it may be weakened by repeated failures. One of a teacher's main responsibilities is to create an atmosphere where self-esteem can grow. What students feel about themselves will affect their efforts and their actions in all aspects of school. Teachers can help promote students' self-esteem by helping them to feel capable, to become involved and interact with others, and to contribute to the class.

A positive classroom climate affects student achievement. Students and teachers are empowered when encouraged to take risks. Taking risks ensures increased production, but it also fosters an essential critical thinking skill: problem-solving. Payne, Conroy, and Racine (1998) stated that in creating positive school climates, important key areas must be addressed:

1. The environment must promote creativity, responsible risk-taking, cooperation, and mutual trust and respect.
2. Staff and students must be safe at school and in work related activities.

3. Staff, students, and parents must consider the learning environment to be academically stimulating. (p.65)

Good communication is vital in maintaining positive interactions within a school community. An excellent way to evaluate this is through a questionnaire or survey. Evidence of a positive school climate includes, but is not limited to, community involvement, high daily attendance, positive attitudes of teachers, students, and parents, a sense of ownership and pride in one's school, and school-wide participation.

Teachers who work in a positive environment and are personally involved feel good about themselves, thereby creating a positive environment for their students (Vatterott, 1991). Increased student achievement is the ultimate goal of schools and the establishment and maintenance of a positive school climate is a crucial element. School staffs and communities have a major responsibility for seeing that the right atmosphere exists to carry out this goal.

Pierce (1994) conducted a case study to examine how one effective teacher, teaching primarily at-risk learners, created a classroom climate that enhanced learner outcomes. Data, collected through participant observation and interviews, were categorized, analyzed, and interpreted using an analytic induction approach.

Conclusions drawn from this study indicated that the positive classroom climate was created primarily through the teacher's exhibited behaviors, which nurtured the emotional needs of her students. Showing care, respect, and physical closeness demonstrated these qualities. The classroom organization that she developed diminished the possibility of failure and developed within each student a sense of safety and security. This increased the students' level of academic achievement and their formation of more positive attitudes toward school and self. These outcomes were

demonstrated both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Raffini (1993) denoted that teachers' beliefs can strongly influence the classroom's goal orientation; some beliefs support the development of content mastery for all, while others tend to support the sorting and ranking of students so as to reward only those who excel. These beliefs are reflected in the structure and organization of the specific learning activities selected by the teacher. Thus, a teacher's beliefs regarding learners, learning, and teaching create the classroom's personality. The character and temperament of this personality are shaped by the teacher's leadership style and by the goal-orientation he or she fosters in students.

Burden and Byrd (1999) recommended that to develop a cooperative, responsible classroom, teachers need to take actions that (a) promote students' self-esteem; (b) promote student involvement and interaction; (c) promote success; (d) promote positive interactions; and (e) develop a non-threatening, comfortable environment.

Studies have show that teachers' support affects students' values. Eccles (1993 - as cited in Stipek, 1998) reported that the value of math increased for those students who moved from an elementary school teacher who they perceived to be minimally supportive, to a junior high school teacher who they perceived to be highly supportive. Conversely, the value of math decreased for students who moved from a highly supportive to a relatively supportive to a relatively unsupportive teacher.

Teachers who have developed positive, secure relationships with students foster students who are more engaged in classroom learning activities. This positive relationship may cause students to want to please their teacher by doing what she expects of them, or they may internalize her values more readily if they like and respect her (Connell & Wellborn, 1991 - as cited in Stipek, 1998).

Harter (1987) suggested that the sense of self-worth fostered by belonging and being supported socially engenders a generally positive affective and motivational state.

When teachers provide environments in which students have adequate information about the environment on which to base decisions, and in which students do not feel that their sense of competence is personally threatened by competition, students' motivation beliefs will more likely develop in a direction that supports self-regulation and enhanced learning outcomes.

VIII: Conclusion

Most children arrive at school self-confident, eager to learn, and enthusiastic about schoolwork. Maintaining this high level of motivation is a challenging task. However, there is convincing evidence that a high level of student motivation and pleasure in learning can be achieved in any classroom.

Research has shown that the strategies that work effectively for one teacher and with one group of students can fail in another classroom with another teacher and a different group of students. The principles of effective teaching and the suggestions made in this paper, therefore, need to be adapted to each teacher's style and skills and to the specific characteristics of each student. If teachers work directly with the students, in a direct, open and caring manner, this will contribute to a climate of trust, convey the teacher's genuine interest in students' views, and provide valuable information on students' perspectives on particular instructional practices. This process of reflection and self-evaluation, modification, and observation of effects should be monitored continually to improve classroom management, increase motivation, and enhance learning.

By addressing students' academic needs, the teacher can focus on helping students to feel safe

and secure, and on developing a sense of competence and success. This sense of success can be developed by helping students better understand decisions about the purpose and meaning of instruction, giving students opportunities to make decisions and set goals, helping students monitor their own progress, and creating safe, supportive environments.

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