

# *mentor's introduction*

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This qualitative meta-analysis over twenty-seven experimental studies is similar in design to several other recent studies done under my direction. Although inferences that may be drawn from this research are limited in scope by the studies selected, the content and results of this study, treating intrinsic motivation and social constraints, may add significant and timely elements for consideration in discussions of educational program design and evaluation.

The linkages of negative effects on intrinsic motivation and task performance to contingent rewards, little or no learner choice and lack of descriptive feedback are of particular significance. A challenge for future research may be to design programs and evaluation that diminish these components while creating a context that supports self determination and a feeling of competency in the learner. These latter areas are linked to positive effects in this study.

This study also provides useful information for future research design of experimental studies in this area. It indicates the need for further studies that are designed to take into consideration a wider range of aspects of subject population (for example, demographics, socioeconomic background, personal history, personality) and research settings, (for example, environmental effects of laboratory versus more ecologically valid classroom settings). Lack of clarity in presentation of conditions and results was a major fault of many studies that were examined and resulted in their not being selected for analysis in this study. Some selected studies exhibited imprecision in the use of languages that may have had unintended effects on results, for example, naming a task "play" or "not play".