

Abstract

Considering the contradictory results within performance goals, many inspiring distinctions have been proposed. Among them, the distinctions of approach and avoidance performance goals, and normative and non-normative performance goals are the ones been widely studied and with consistently different outcomes. However, few studies have considered these two pairs of distinctions together. Since helplessness is an important component in achievement setting and is suggested to have different relationships with distinctive performance goals, this paper plans to focus on four performance goals' effects on helplessness. Implicit theory of intelligence will influence students' interpretations of challenges, which may then influence the responses of students with different performance goals when facing failures. The results show that non-normative performance approach goal and non-normative performance avoidance goal negatively correlate with helplessness in the presence of other performance goals. And the existence of the entity theory of intelligence enhances the persistent behaviors of students, which contradicts the hypotheses but inspiring.

Introduction

In the past couple of decades, achievement goal theory has emerged as an important theoretical perspective on studying students' motivational processes in achievement settings (Kaplan & Maehr, 2006). At first, achievement goal theory generally focuses on basic distinctions of two goal-oriented achievement strivings: mastery goal and performance goal. Mastery goal focuses on the development of task competence and refers to self, and is also called as task-oriented goal. Performance goal focuses on the