

Is Pride a Barometer of Success?

Informational Influence of Authentic Pride on Achievement

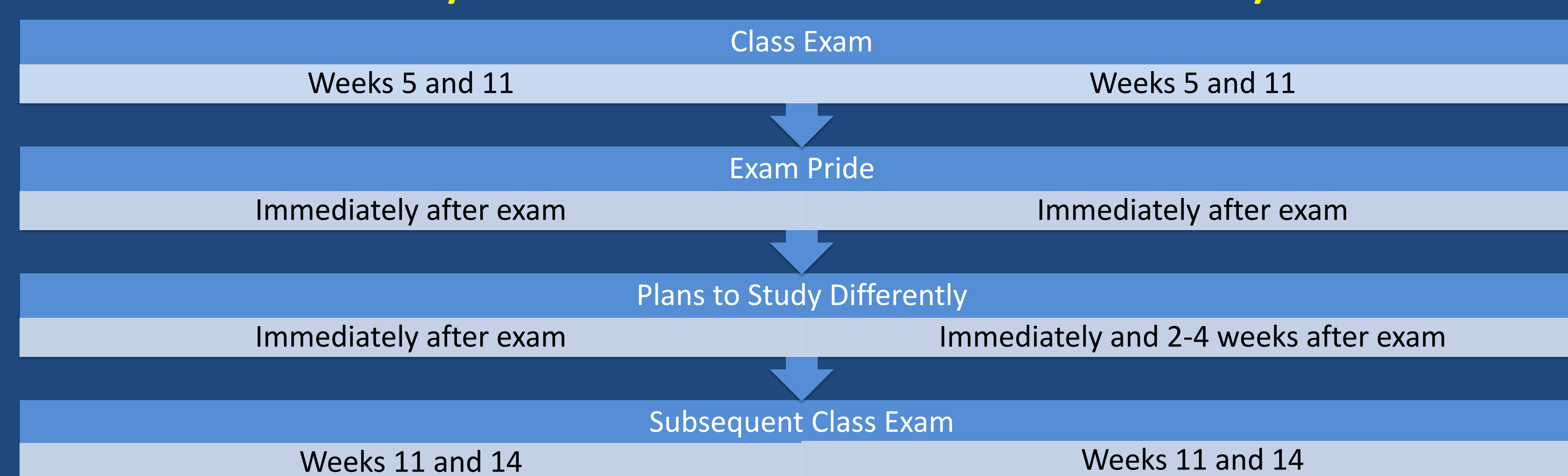
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Does Pride Function to Promote Achievement?

- Authentic pride (i.e., pride in one's accomplishments) may function to promote achievement (Cheng, Tracy, & Henrich, 2010; Tracy & Robins, 2007; Tracy, Weidman, Cheng, & Martens, 2013)
- Supporting this account, studies show that:
 - Pride motivates effort and persistence at achievement tasks (Williams & DeSteno, 2008)
 - Pride motivates people to pursue mastery and performance-approach achievement goals (Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2009), which in turn promote academic success and intrinsic achievement motivation, respectively (Elliot & Church, 1997)
- How does this work?
- The Affect-as-Information (or barometer) account (cf., Leary et al., 1995; Schwarz & Clore, 1983)
 - Pride informs individuals of their current level of success, thereby facilitating behaviors oriented toward future success
 - Knowing one's current success level allows individuals to: a) pursue similar behaviors to maintain success, or b) pursue different behaviors to adjust for failure
- The present research tested this account by examining whether pride in response to a class exam: a) informs individuals about their current level of success, b) influences their study habits for the subsequent exam, and c) thereby influences future exam performance

Study 1*

Study 2



*The data for Study 1 were collected in the context of a multi-study project (Elliot, McGregor, & Gable, 1999, Study 1; Elliot & Thrash, 2002, Study 4; Fryer & Elliot, 2007). None of the results reported in the present research have been reported in prior work.

- Participants: Undergraduates enrolled in an introductory psychology course
 - Study 1: $N = 188$ (64% female)
 - Study 2: $N = 277$ (64% female)
- Procedure: Participants reported feelings of pride immediately following two class exams. Next, either immediately (in Study 1) or 2-4 weeks later (in Study 2) they reported their intention to study differently for the subsequent exam
- Measures
 - Exam Performance: Participants' scores on 3 class exams that occurred throughout a semester
 - Exam Pride
 - Study 1: Single item ("To what extent do you feel proud regarding your exam performance?"; 1 = not at all; 7 = very much)
 - Study 2: 7-item Authentic Pride Scale ($\alpha_s = .96$; Tracy & Robins, 2007)
 - Plans to Study Differently
 - Studies 1 and 2: Average of two items ($r_s = .77$ to $.92$; 1 = not at all true of me; 7 = very true of me)
 - "My preparation for exam 2 will be different than my preparation for exam 1."
 - "I plan to study for exam 2 differently than I studied for exam 1."

References

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Pride is a Barometer of Success

Exam Score \rightarrow Exam Pride $rs = .61$ to $.68, ps < .001$

- Exam score positively predicted post-exam pride

Low Pride Indicates a Need to Study Differently

Exam Pride \rightarrow Plans to Study Differently $\beta_s = -.14$ to $-.42, ps < .002$
Path "a"

- Post-exam pride negatively predicted the extent to which individuals planned to study differently for subsequent exams, controlling for prior exam score

Studying Differently Leads to Improved Performance for Individuals who Scored Poorly

Plans to Study Differently \rightarrow Improved Subsequent Exam Score $\beta_s = .18$ to $.35, ps = <.001$ to $.12$
Path "b"

- Prior exam score moderated the effect of plans to study differently on subsequent exam performance ($\beta_s = -.10$ to $-.19, ps = <.001$ to $.13$), controlling for both prior exam score and post exam pride
 - Plans to study differently predicted improved exam performance for low-scoring individuals, defined as students scoring 1 SD below the mean. This relation did not hold for high-scoring individuals ($\beta_s = -.03$ to $.04, ps = .57$ to $.78$)
- Note: Results for these analyses are from Study 2 only

Low Pride Leads to Improved Performance for Individuals who Scored Poorly

Exam Pride \rightarrow Plans to Study Differently \rightarrow Improved Subsequent Exam Score
Path "a": $\beta_s = -.14$ to $-.33, ps < .002$
Path "b": $\beta_s = .18$ to $.35, ps = <.001$ to $.12$

- Path "a": Post-exam pride negatively predicts the extent to which individuals plan to study differently for subsequent exams, controlling for prior exam score
- Path "b": Plans to study differently predicts improved exam performance for low-scoring individuals, controlling for both prior exam score and post-exam pride
- Indirect effect: Post-exam pride negatively predicts subsequent exam score for individuals who performed poorly ($\beta_s = -.03$ to $-.10$)
 - Corresponds to a .41% to 1.11% increase in subsequent exam performance
- Note: Results for these analyses are from Study 2 only

Conclusions

- Authentic pride is a functional barometer that individuals use to gauge their current level of achievement
 - Experiencing low authentic pride in response to an exam informs individuals that they have performed poorly, and need to adjust their future studying behaviors
 - Low pride following poor performance leads to improved performance by stimulating changes in study habits
 - Experiencing authentic pride in response to an exam informs individuals that they have performed well, and thus should maintain consistent studying behaviors in the future
 - For successful students, there was no effect of studying behaviors on subsequent exam score, possibly because high scorers have little room to improve their exam performance
- These findings provide the first evidence that pride promotes achievement, using a concrete, behavioral outcome (i.e., exam grade) that is directly linked to academic success