

# MOTIVATION AND EMOTION IN MULTICULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

Karoline Evans, Daisung Jang, and Hillary Anger Elfenbein

Motivation and emotion share a common theme: Both occur as a function of or in the presence of a valued object or goal. Investing attention, effort, and time into a particular goal implies value; emotion-eliciting stimuli imply that the appraiser is not indifferent to that object. In this chapter, we review implications for motivation and emotion for ethnic groups in the United States. Considering motivation and emotion is a matter of elucidating differences in how members of each ethnic group may perceive different goals, priorities, and judgments in their environments. We provide a summary of the dominant theoretical frameworks in each domain that draws on research conducted in the United States and elsewhere, with the belief that these frameworks shed light on universal processes that have unique manifestations in each ethnic group. Although the intent is to focus on ethnic groups in the United States, because we draw from universal processes, much of the discussion here may apply to other countries, especially those with a Western majority.

## ETHNICITY, RACE, AND CULTURE

An *ethnic group* is defined as a distinct social group in a multicultural society. Although culture is one of the reasons why diverse motivational and emotional processes exist for different ethnic groups (for a review, see Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010), ethnic groups are distinguished from cultural groups in that ethnicity implies differences across a diverse range of sociological as well as biological

and racial indicators. This distinction reflects the complex intergroup processes that can exist within a single society. Given the large and ever-growing population of members of various ethnic groups in the United States, it may not always be applicable to generalize from research conducted on European American samples—which is the vast majority of research across topic domains (McLoyd, 1998).

## MOTIVATION

*Motivation* is an internal set of processes allowing people to focus attention and effort on achieving specific issues, tasks, goals, and strategies (Mitchell & Daniels, 2003). Motivation is inherently personal; individuals have different priorities and different paths to obtain their goals. Because motivation is shaped by beliefs about what to pursue, the importance of these pursuits, and how to pursue them, it is possible for members of different ethnic groups to have radically different approaches. Differences in family values and social identities play a strong role in determining the pattern of cognition and behavior related to motivation.

Factors that shape contextual and cognitive differences across ethnic groups contribute to motivation and achievement outcomes and may differ from factors in existing motivation theories. Culture affects the beliefs and attitudes that individuals hold as well as the frame in which they view themselves. For example, in individualistic cultures, an independent self is promoted, whereas in collectivistic

Karoline Evans and Daisung Jang contributed equally to this chapter, and their names appear alphabetically.

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cultures an interdependent self is promoted (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). These beliefs and attitudes can affect an individual's criteria for success and prioritization of pursuits. Furthermore, the assignment of status by and treatment from other groups may serve broadly to regulate motivation across an ethnic group. The outcomes that are perceived by the group as achievable may influence individual attitudes, goals, and behaviors.

Following is a review of theories of motivation and their application across ethnic groups in the United States. Although much of the research on ethnic groups and motivation has taken place in applied settings, such as schools and the workplace, we attempt to the extent possible to generalize the findings' applicability across settings. Furthermore, motivation theories are often studied independently of each other and without integration; we chose the presented subset to reflect active research in multicultural settings, and it should not be considered an exhaustive review of the motivation literature.

### Goal-Setting Theory

Goal-setting theory is "easily the single most dominant theory in the field" of motivation (Mitchell & Daniels, 2003, p. 231). Human action is directed by goals and intentions; goals influence what people focus their efforts on and how much effort they will expend to satisfy that goal (Locke & Latham, 1990). "The focus of goal setting theory is on the core properties of an effective goal" (Locke & Latham, 2002, p. 714): Specific and challenging goals along with appropriate feedback contribute to task performance.

Although establishing specific and challenging goals leads to better performance across groups, the ways in which ethnic group members set and approach objectives vary considerably. Individualistic ethnic groups, who focus more on individual independence, tend to pursue goals driven by the desire to demonstrate competence and excellence (performance-approach goals) to gain satisfaction from personal pride. Collectivistic groups, who focus more on member interdependence, are more likely to pursue goals driven by the desire to avoid performing poorly (performance-avoidance goals)

to alleviate the fear of feeling shame (Elliot, Chirkov, Kim, & Sheldon, 2001).

However, these patterns are not always consistent, especially for immigrants who typically have strong family orientations (Fulgini & Tseng, 1999). High levels of family orientation have been shown to lead immigrant children to typically adopt performance-avoidance goals, regardless of whether their parents' culture is generally individualistic or collectivistic (Elliot et al., 2001). In contrast, Urdan (2004) found no differences between first- and third-generation students' preferences for performance-avoidance goals; in fact, he found that the first-generation students actually set higher performance-approach goals, despite being closer to a collectivistic culture than the later, more Americanized generations. One possible explanation for these conflicting outcomes is that strength of family orientation moderates goal type for ethnic groups, suggesting that family values and closeness may play a role in the adoption of the values of the parents' original culture (Urden, Kneisel, & Mason, 1999). These results also suggest that immigrant experience may itself also influence goal setting, with first-generation children attempting to avoid the embarrassment of being seen by others as underperforming.

In addition to type of goal pursued, cultural differences affect individuals' response to various goal sources. Cross-cultural differences in power distance—the extent to which members of groups accept and expect that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede, 1980)—moderate the relationship between the source of a goal (e.g., assigned, self-set, or participatively set goals) and performance as well as the relationship between the source of a goal and commitment (Erez & Earley, 1987; Sue-Chan & Ong, 2002). This is especially the case for difficult goals. In particular, participative goal setting increases individual performance over assigned goals, regardless of power-distance orientation (Erez & Earley, 1987). However, low power-distance individuals who participate in goal setting have significantly higher goal commitment and performance than high power-distance individuals who participate in goal setting. When goals are assigned, high power-distance individuals have greater goal commitment and outperform

low power-distance individuals on these assigned goals (Sue-Chan & Ong, 2002).

Similar results have been demonstrated in ethnic groups within the United States. Ethnic groups can perceive power distributions differently, even in the same country. Both Anglo Americans and Asian Americans showed increased intrinsic motivation when they set their own goals rather than when goals were assigned to them (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999). However, only Asian Americans reacted differently depending on the assignment source. When a family or social group member made the goal choice, Asian Americans had the highest intrinsic motivation; Anglo Americans showed no change in motivation when assigned a goal, regardless of whether an experimenter or an ingroup member made the assignment.

Fairness perceptions have also been shown to influence goal commitment across groups. Belief in societal fairness was positively associated with long-term goal pursuit among group members with low socioeconomic status (SES) but not among those with high SES (Laurin, Fitzsimons, & Kay, 2011). As long as they believe the system is fair, members of low-SES groups are more willing to invest resources in a long-term goal than high-SES group members. Furthermore, students from low-SES backgrounds are more committed to improving performance after receiving negative results, as long as belief in procedural fairness is maintained (Laurin et al., 2011).

### Self-Regulation Theory

*Self-regulation* refers to the process by which people “initiate, adjust, interrupt, terminate or otherwise alter actions to promote attainment of personal goals, plans or standards” (Heatherton & Baumeister, 1996, p. 91). Self-regulation allows one to translate a set of goals into the behaviors necessary to complete the task—and, as such, is a means both to align behavior with achievement of a specific goal and also to evaluate progress (Latham & Locke, 1991).

Self-regulatory style and capacity are not just individual-level phenomena but are shaped by cultural

norms and environmental feedback; different cultures may endorse particular aspects of self-regulation (Oyserman, 2007). For example, Rodriguez, Ayduk, and Aber (2005) demonstrated between-culture differences in which behaviors might be viewed as worthy of control: In the United States, effortful control is negatively associated with experiencing negative affectivity (being fearful, angry, sad), whereas in China effortful control is negatively associated with outgoing behavior (extraversion, smiling, impulsivity). However, findings on whether ethnic differences are related to self-regulation have been inconsistent and inconclusive (Bembenutty, 2007b; Pintrich & Zusho, 2007). For example, Bembenutty (2007b) found no significant correlations between academic delay of gratification—which can be viewed as a self-regulation strategy—and other learning strategies with academic performance for minority students, leading him to suggest that self-regulation strategies may be positively associated with goal performance only for European Americans. However, other studies have found positive associations with delay of gratification and performance for Korean students (Bembenutty, 2007b). Despite the equivocal findings on the utility of these strategies, minority group members may believe in their effectiveness, as reflected in the greater number of regulatory strategies constructed by minority groups compared with majority groups (Elstad & Turmo, 2010). Moreover, regulatory strategies that are reinforced by external pressure, especially by those in positions of perceived prestige, improved performance more for minority students than for majority students (Elstad & Turmo, 2010).<sup>1</sup>

A heavily researched component of self-regulation is the construction of possible selves—that is, images of the self in a future state that can help lead to self-regulation behaviors across ethnic groups (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006, p. 19). Possible selves often reflect culturally shared stories, images, and symbols that may interface with U.S. society and carry messages about what is possible and how best to pursue these goals (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006; Oyserman, Kemmelmeier, Fryberg, Brosh, & Hart-Johnson, 2003).

<sup>1</sup>However, this study measured ethnicity through self-reported group identification among European descendants. These associations may not reflect similar cognitive processes in groups in which identification is assigned rather than felt and visible to outside observers, for example, through physical appearance.

Potential images for U.S. minorities are constructed by both the culture of origin and its interface with U.S. culture and the United States' views of that group (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). Differences in ethnic or social identity content seem to inform self-regulatory strategies to attain these positive selves (Oyserman, 2007).

Differences in the content of these possible selves among ethnic minorities may contribute to different motivational pursuits (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). The construction of possible selves can reinforce culturally valued behaviors and norms. For example, African Americans have rarely reported academic or occupational roles as their central possible self (Kerpelman, Shoffner, & Ross-Griffin, 2002), but both Native Americans and Asian Americans have had highly salient academic possible selves (Kao, 2000). However, the strategies created to attain these possible selves also play a role in determining their pursuit and effectiveness. Despite having fewer central possible selves focused on academic or job achievement, African American students had more strategies to attain these selves (Oyserman & Harrison, 1998). Latinos in these studies were more constrained in their pursuit of ambitious selves, potentially guided by the occupations most associated with their group (Kao, 2000; Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006).

The use of possible selves in self-regulation differs in effectiveness across settings and groups and has been shown to influence goal attainment behaviors in a number of applications (for a detailed review, see Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). These findings suggest the power of culturally held norms and images in shaping the goals that individuals set for themselves across ethnic groups, but future research could provide insight into how multicultural individuals choose which selves to pursue and how effective the possible selves and pursuit strategies are across groups.

### **Achievement Motivation Theory**

Achievement motivation theory (McClelland, 1967) stems from the belief that motives are learned, developing from positive and negative feelings about actions that happen to them or around them. Individuals have unique motive

hierarchies that prioritize their pursuits and influence their behaviors. Notably, for a person with a strong achievement motivation, achievement is high in the motive hierarchy: "Minimal achievement cues will activate the expectation of pleasure and increase the likelihood of achievement striving" (Miner, 2005, p. 48).

Studies of individuals' tendencies to prioritize achievement motives across ethnic groups have indicated that families, community, and culture have an impact on individual motivation to achieve, through factors such as ethnic identity, SES, and familial support (Yu & Patterson, 2010). For example, Asian Americans hold motivational beliefs that depend greatly on the value of that skill in the larger social context (Stigler, Smith, & Mao, 1985), focusing less on their perceived capability to complete a task and more on the importance of excelling at the task (Reglin & Adams, 1990). This body of research has suggested that Asian Americans demonstrate a high need for success, and, accordingly, Asian American students set higher goals for themselves and evaluate their performance against more stringent criteria, motivating them to expend more effort to reach their goals (Eaton & Dembo, 1997).

Ethnic groups' achievement disparities were originally theorized to be explained by different prioritizations. For example, researchers proposed that African Americans' devaluing academic success potentially contributed to disengagement and lower strivings in related fields (Steele, 1997). However, later studies have contested these views and instead suggested that parental expectations and support for success are the most important influences in adolescent achievement orientation, values, and attainment strategies, regardless of race (Kerpelman et al., 2002). Hurdles faced by different ethnic groups may create the appearance that ethnicities systematically differ in achievement motives but, once these hurdles are removed, achievement theory may be broadly applicable across ethnic groups (Ibañez, Kuperminc, Jurkovic, & Perilla, 2004). These findings suggest the importance of examining the structural factors that contribute to differences in beliefs rather than focusing only on the beliefs themselves—which can be symptoms as much as causes.

Community and family influences appear to have different effects on individuals within their group. Peer support for achievement is credited with offsetting negative consequences (such as anxiety) among Asian Americans from typically authoritative families. By contrast, peers can undermine strong family influence among African Americans, and Hispanic Americans' achievement can be lower because of lack of peer support (Yu & Patterson, 2010).

### Needs and Identity-Based Motivation

Needs theories are some of the oldest motivational studies, and they focus on individual differences in perceived needs. However, after a shift to cognitive theories in psychology, most motivation theorists have instead focused on goal-related and efficacy theories (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Pittman & Zeigler, 2007), which focus on individual differences in one's confidence in any particular domain. One of the most studied, modern needs-based theories is self-determination theory. Self-determination theory defines needs as "innate psychological nutriment that are essential for ongoing psychological growth, integrity, and well-being" (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 229). Deci and Ryan (2000) proposed three basic human needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness, all of which must be satisfied without a set order in their importance.

The need for relatedness, also called *belongingness*, is frequently examined in multicultural studies of motivation because belonging mediates the relationship between motivation and achievement (Faircloth & Hamm, 2005). Minority group members appear to be more sensitive to issues of belonging when evaluating their efficacy and potential than majority group members (Walton & Cohen, 2007). This same work has shown that minority group members also demonstrate a greater awareness of the context of the situation and are more likely to attribute any failures and difficulties to globalized lack of fit resulting from ethnic categorization. Students who are majority group members tend to assume social belonging, even in challenging positions, and rarely cite lack of fit as a reason for adversity. As a result, perceived lack of fit in a position is a potential stressor and is associated with significant decreases in motivation for minority

students; however, perceived lack of fit is often not even reported as a consideration for Caucasian students and has no relationship to their motivation (Walton & Cohen, 2007).

Belonging to an ethnic group has also been shown to account for variance in how individuals assign, value, and prioritize goals (Goodenow, 1993). For example, Latino youths place higher value on education and are more driven to complete academic goals when they are more socially accepted in their communities (Perreira, Fuligni, & Potochnick, 2010). However, ethnic groups also differ in their need for affiliation, with Asian Americans reporting a higher need for affiliation than both African Americans and Caucasians, reflecting the interdependent, collectivist values of Asian societies (Pang & Schultheiss, 2005).

Despite many studies showing that autonomy and relatedness are universal human needs, individualistic cultures have been proposed to nourish the need for autonomy at the expense of relatedness; collectivistic societies have an opposite effect (Kagitcibasi, 2005). For example, North Americans of European descent are more intrinsically motivated by autonomy, whereas North Americans of Asian descent benefit from choices made with interrelated partners and are bolstered by feelings of closeness to and support from their communities (Walker, 2008).

A more recent motivational model suggests that psychological needs change priority dynamically, depending on whether personal goals (e.g., individual growth) or group aspirations (e.g., affiliated self-esteem, social identity alignment) are more prominent (Haslam, Powell, & Turner, 2000). Needs depend not only on individual prioritization but also on specific group membership. The identity-based motivation model delves further into how social identities can serve as organizing schemas that influence perceptions, goals, and behaviors (Oyserman, 2007; Oyserman, Fryberg, & Yoder, 2007). When cues about an individual's social identity become salient, individuals are more likely to choose behaviors and attitudes that increase their perceived similarities to the group as well as enhance the perceptions of group membership (see Oyserman, 2007, for an in-depth discussion of identity-based motivation).

Ethnic identity, an individual's perceived self-identification with an ethnic group, influences motivation to take on group goals and adhere to social norms for the ethnic group to which people perceive themselves as belonging (Phinney, 1992). When racial/ethnic identities become salient, group members adjust their values and goal pursuit strategies to align with the racial/ethnic group characteristics, even if those strategies undermine behaviors to achieve the goals (Oyserman et al., 2007). Having strong, specific racial/ethnic self-schemas can protect motivation, especially in the face of stereotyping (Oyserman, 2008; Oyserman et al., 2003). Examinations of multilevel race/ethnicity schemas have shown that considering the connections between the self, the group, and broader society not only helped to protect against negative effects such as antieffort group norms but were also associated with higher goal outcomes and task engagement (Oyserman, 2008).

### Self-Efficacy

*Self-efficacy*, the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations, has an influence on goal choices, commitment, and response to feedback (Locke & Latham, 1990) and—beyond driving the behaviors used to achieve goals—can affect the choice of activities and effort exerted to accomplish them (Bandura, 1986, 1997). In some cases, motivation may be based more on subjective beliefs about one's efficacy than on objective performance indicators (Bandura, 1997). Highly self-efficacious individuals tend to engage in more difficult tasks, expend greater effort to accomplish these tasks, and are more comfortable performing tasks than those with low self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). As such, these subjective beliefs have a powerful influence on subsequent reality.

However, several studies have found that these relationships may be opposite or nonsignificant for different cultures (Awang-Hashim, O'Neil, & Hocevar, 2002). Factors such as economic conditions, SES, and family structure—which can vary greatly between ethnic groups—moderate the impact of self-efficacy, aspirations, and self-regulation on behaviors (see Bandura, 2002, for a review of studies investigating these claims). Asian Americans may rate significantly lower in self-efficacy beliefs but may set higher goals, demonstrate higher perfor-

mance, and report more motivation to excel at a task than other U.S. ethnic groups (Reglin & Adams, 1990). Other researchers have found that different ethnic groups reported no significant differences in self-efficacy, self-regulatory strategies, or performance; instead, prior achievement was a more significant factor than ethnic identification (Bembenutty, 2007a).

Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986) asserts that people with higher self-efficacy are more likely to have higher expectations for future events and to set more difficult and specific goals, an effect that generalizes across ethnic groups (Saunders, Davis, Williams, & Williams, 2004; Skinner, Zimmerman-Gembeck, Connell, Eccles, & Wellborn, 1998). However, for ethnic minorities, negative feedback from perceived social and economic barriers may outweigh individual beliefs about ability, lowering performance despite maintaining consistent self-efficacy beliefs (Paslay, 1996). Minority group members, especially males, may not attempt difficult goals because of these perceived barriers, regardless of prior performance and ability (Kerpelman et al., 2008).

States of physiological activation also inform self-efficacy, and physiological responses to situations may vary with cultural experiences and expectations. For example, African American women have been found to feel more anxiety when ethnic differences become apparent, which may negatively influence self-efficacy (Hackett & Byars, 1996). Chronic stressors such as mild racism may also decrease efficacy beliefs in ethnic groups (Hackett & Byars, 1996). Ethnic groups also use different indicators to inform their beliefs about their ability to regulate goal behaviors. One study found African Americans' self-regulatory self-efficacy was primarily determined by previously mastering a skill; by contrast, for Caucasians this self-efficacy explained only a small portion of their beliefs, and only in conjunction with several other factors such as vicarious experiences, social feedback, and physiological states (Usher & Pajares, 2006).

### Limitations and Future Directions

The motivation field has numerous openings for illuminating differences within and between cultures.

First, the potential for investigation outside of strictly relying on self-report survey methodology is considerable. Although several notable studies have used creative experiments (e.g., Laurin et al., 2011) to illustrate how ethnic or SES differences cause differences in motivation attributes, most have primarily relied on surveys and have not attempted to infer causality of these factors. Second, several studies have noted that within cultures, gender may play an important role in defining these frameworks. For example, Walker (2008) found that despite having similar individualistic backgrounds to male European North Americans, female European North Americans exhibited behaviors more closely aligned with predictions for collectivistic ethnicities such as the Chinese North American participants. The intrinsic motivations of the female European North Americans in this study were facilitated by need for relatedness more than by need for autonomy; this relationship was also exhibited in both male and female Chinese North Americans. Future research should elucidate how gender moderates motivational differences across these cultural dimensions.

Third, as previously noted, several of these studies looked at models of motivation in a specific setting, such as academic motivation, limiting generalizability across contexts and samples. Despite investigators' attempt to generalize to broader theories and groups, research is needed to understand how specific measurements of motivation and specific settings affect motivational outcomes. One attempt, social cognitive career theory, a derivation of Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, is often used as a framework to discuss the interplay among goals, self-efficacy, and outcomes in the self-regulation of behaviors, specifically in job pursuit and occupational performance (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2002). Although we did not provide a detailed review of this very specifically applied framework, it is important to acknowledge this burgeoning stream of research within social cognitive multicultural literature that has started to address features that are specific to particular settings. Previous reviews have provided more information about social cognitive career theory (S. D. Brown & Lent, 1996) and specific social cognitive career theory differences between ethnicities (Byars & Hackett, 1998).

Finally, in this chapter we have primarily been concerned with differences across specific ethnic groups. Within groups that contain many cultures, the same contextual, cognitive, and cultural influences can exist, but their prioritization and effects on cultural groups depend on many values and beliefs that may be in direct conflict. Moving forward, it will be important to understand individuals who operate in mixed cultural environments—in particular, how these individuals draw from their diverse backgrounds, with subsequent effects on their motivation.

## EMOTION

As we mentioned in the opening paragraph of this chapter, motivation and emotion both share a common theme in that they relate to valued objects and goals. Whereas motivation is the state of desiring and attempting to achieve such goals, emotion is the process by which people judge and respond to valued—and nonvalued—stimuli in their environments.

### Emotion Process

The first step to understanding emotions in the context of ethnic groups should be to provide a clear definition of the term *emotion*. Although commonly conceptualized as a short-lived affective experience, substantial evidence has suggested that sequentially ordered processes lead up to that experience and follow it (Frijda, 1986; Keltner & Lerner, 2010; Scherer, 1982). Accordingly, when we refer to *emotion* in this chapter, we refer to this ordered process as a whole. Although a comprehensive overview of the emotion process is outside the scope of this chapter, we present a brief outline of a framework proposed by Elfenbein (2007) that integrates the work of many theorists working in the emotions area to serve as a basis for interpreting the literature that we review.

**Antecedents of emotional experiences: Stimuli, appraisal processes, and feeling rules.** The emotion process begins with the presence and attention to stimuli perceived to be of some value to the individual (Frijda, 1988; James, 1884). That is, to elicit emotion an individual needs to interpret a stimulus as representing some value, and the individual must be at least minimally aware of its presence. At

that point, the individual assigns meaning to the stimuli via the emotional appraisal process, which involves evaluating stimuli along a series of cognitive dimensions (Scherer, 1982). Although no clear consensus exists regarding these dimensions, the dimensions proposed by emotion theorists appear to reflect five broad dimensions, consisting of novelty (i.e., how new or predictable the stimulus is), pleasantness (i.e., the positive or negative valence of a stimulus), goal relatedness (i.e., how the stimulus relates to personal goals), coping potential (i.e., the amount of control over the stimulus the person has), and compatibility with internal and external standards (i.e., whether the stimulus is consistent with social or personal standards; Scherer, 1988). Specific emotions are the result of a particular profile of appraisal. For example, the cancellation of a big project could lead to a wide range of different feelings—including guilt, anger, sadness, relief, or fear—depending on how the situation is appraised along these dimensions. A variety of factors can modulate the appraisal process. Because the appraisal process is subjective, meaning of stimuli can be subject to idiosyncratic effects (Frijda, 1986) and cultural norms about how to interpret the meaning of stimuli (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Although the appraisal process is presumed to operate continuously, with or without conscious awareness (Frijda, 1986), it can be suspended for relevant but pending information—for example, not knowing whether to laugh or cry when someone falls down, until one can find out whether the person is badly hurt (Elfenbein, 2007). The concept of *feeling rules* represents the emotional states that people tend to prefer, which lead them to regulate their emotions accordingly (Frijda, 1988).

**Emotional experience and expression.** The term *emotional experience* implies that people have conscious awareness of an emotional state, such as knowing when one feels angry, which is not always the case (James, 1884; Keltner & Lerner, 2010; Levenson, Soto, & Pole, 2007). In addition to the subjective feeling that one is experiencing an emotion, tell-tale physiological reactions also occur at the same time as well as tell-tale signals that one expresses to others (Keltner & Lerner, 2010).

Whether intentional or not, emotional expressions signal the evaluations of objects, events, interactions, and experiences to other people—that is, just as people appraise events along the five dimensions listed earlier, their expressions of emotions reveal to others the results of that appraisal. People strive to express their emotions, and this expressive urge is so strong that when communication forms restrict the normal capacity for emotional expression—such as in computerized, text-based communication—communicators find creative ways to infuse emotional content into this text (Elfenbein, 2007).

**Emotion regulation.** Individuals are not merely passive vehicles for their emotions; they also exercise at least partial control over the emotional process (Frijda, 1988). Conscious effort allows people to surround themselves with stimuli that produce the emotions they most desire to experience (Buss, 1987). Furthermore, individuals can reappraise stimuli to alter their emotions and also regulate their feelings by attempting to suppress them (Gross, 1998). Emotion expression is also subject to regulation, via agreed on or imposed social norms (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), which is a ripe area for differences across groups in a multicultural environment, as we discuss later. Indeed, idiosyncratic preferences, social norms, and situational pressures can potentially intervene at every stage of the emotion process we have outlined, potentially resulting in the same objective situation, evoking a vast array of emotional responses across individuals and groups.

This brief review outlines the emotion process for individuals, but this body of literature does not always capture how the emotion process is moderated by specific cultural and environmental factors within ethnic groups or the intergroup processes between ethnic groups in a multicultural society. In the next sections, we review cultural theories that address some of the within-group phenomena that can contribute to the emotion process, and social identity and stereotype content theories that address intergroup considerations.

## Cultural Perspectives

When members of different ethnic groups respond differently to emotion-eliciting stimuli, the preponderance

of research has suggested that cultural factors—rather than biological or genetic differences—are responsible (Levenson et al., 2007). Specifically, more reliable differences have been found in the pattern of subjective experience than in the pattern of objective autonomic activation, which indicates that culture may be a significant factor in how people subjectively experience emotion and subsequently regulate such experiences.

Even before an encounter with emotion-eliciting stimuli, culture can influence the emotion process by influencing one's environment and thereby effectively regulating the social and physical environment in terms of the types of emotion-eliciting stimuli with which one comes into contact (Mesquita & Albert, 2007; Triandis, 2000). Moreover, emotions are elicited only by stimuli that are deemed important enough—in that these stimuli must be distinguished from the background environment so that what constitutes valid stimuli for emotions may differ as a function of each culture's values and concerns (Triandis, 2000).

On encountering stimuli that elicit emotions, differences in the antecedent knowledge, values, practices, and beliefs that are used to make sense of one's environment themselves represent cultural factors with potentially wide-ranging impact. Specifically, because elements of culture are chronically available and serve to shape social reality, they can lead to reappraisal of events to be in line with culturally consistent norms (Mesquita & Leu, 2007; Scherer, 1997). Moreover, different ethnic groups may have different access to resources that lead to distinct patterns of appraisal—notably, the appraisal dimension around coping potential can vary on the basis of the objective resources at one's disposal. Ethnic groups differ in the kind and level of instrumental, religious, and social support that are typically used, leading to different group members appraising the same life event in different ways (Adams, Aranda, Kemp, & Takagi, 2002). For example, despite the lower SES of African Americans serving as caregivers for elderly individuals, Pinquart and Sörensen (2005) found that they had greater resilience to stress relative to European Americans because of the internalized expectation to care for elders. This finding makes sense in that compatibility with

internal and external standards is one of the dimensions for emotional appraisal. Asian and Hispanic American caregivers experienced more stress relative to European American caregivers, which has been attributed to strong filial care obligations and poorer relationships with the care receiver. Also, the style of interaction within ethnic groups can influence the kind of emotions that are typically experienced in social situations. D. R. Miller (1987) reported that for adolescents, the tendency to attack the self-concept in Irish families leads to feelings of shame, but the open discussion of problems in Jewish families leads to feelings of guilt as a result of pointing out deviance from norms.

The preceding review suggests that appraisal of life events may differ across ethnic groups, but at the same time highly salient life events may override ethnic group differences because some life events may present the individual with demands that transcend socioeconomic, cultural, or other factors that influence differences in how people—as individuals and as members of cultural groups—appraise life events. For example, older adults, who share common concerns about interpersonal conflict, death, and illness, showed evidence of considerable similarities in appraising life events regardless of ethnic group membership, as evidenced by similarities in coping responses (Conway, Magai, McPherson-Salandy, & Milano, 2010).

As mentioned earlier, people's cultural backgrounds can shape which emotions they most want to feel—based in part on the instrumental goals of emotional experiences (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Notably, among groups with cultures that stress interpersonal harmony over individual agency (e.g., East Asian cultures), emotions that maintain interpersonal relations (e.g., calm) may be the appropriate way to express positive affect, whereas among groups with cultures that stress individual agency (e.g., Western cultures), emotions that differentiate the self from others (e.g., excitement) may be more appropriate (Tsai, Knutson, & Fung, 2006). These feeling rules are a matter of differences in goals and priorities across cultural groups leading to differences in the typical emotional states that are most functional and socially rewarding.

## Social Identity and Intergroup Emotion Perspectives

Social identity theory was developed with the goal of explaining intergroup conflict, in particular the kinds of situations in which individuals interact with each other not merely as individuals but also as members of groups that have specific group identities (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Social identity theory proposes that individuals hold social identities from which they derive some of their self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Furthermore, individuals engage in cognitive processes that distinguish people on the basis of group membership—either belonging to one’s own group (i.e., the ingroup) or to a group to which one does not belong (i.e., the outgroup; Garcia-Prieto & Scherer, 2006; E. R. Smith, 1993). Social identity can have important effects because membership in ethnic groups provides a basis for differentiating between the ingroup and outgroups and, in turn, these judgments about group membership can influence the appraisal of other people’s behavior.

On the basis of social identity theory, the intergroup emotions theory framework (E. R. Smith, 1993) posits that emotions can be evoked by an “enduring affective reaction to a social group” (E. R. Smith & Mackie, 2002, p. 286). Specifically, emotional reactions to outgroups may be rooted in competition over scarce resources or status (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Thus, whenever contact between ingroups and outgroups take place, intergroup processes potentially influence the emotion processes. Particular patterns of intergroup contact should result in predictable patterns of emotions because intergroup relations are defined by the structure of power, past relations, social norms, and trends (Garcia-Prieto & Scherer, 2006; E. R. Smith, 1993)—all of which can feed into the emotional appraisal process that we described earlier. For example, threats to the ingroup may lead to an angry response if the ingroup enjoys relative power, but it may lead to fear if the ingroup is relatively weak (Devos, Silver, Mackie, & Smith, 2002). Thus, intergroup processes influence appraisal of intergroup contact and the emotions they evoke as a result.

In the case of ethnic groups, physical cues, such as style of dress and physical appearance, serve

to heighten the salience of group boundaries—and can thus facilitate the social categorization processes that lead to differential treatment of social groups (King & Ahmad, 2010). Actual intergroup contact may not even be required to evoke intergroup emotions. Indeed, merely the possibility of having intergroup contact, including cues of ethnic group membership such as names (Fryer & Levitt, 2004), vicarious contact (E. R. Smith, 1993), or the history of ingroup and outgroup interactions (Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998) appear to be antecedents of intergroup emotions. Despite this, features of the context change the salience of intergroup contact, rendering intergroup processes more or less relevant to appraisal (Dumont, Yzerbyt, Wigboldus, & Gordijn, 2003). When intergroup processes are highly salient, they can leave room for inaccuracies and misunderstandings. Notably, an outgroup member’s actions may be appraised in the light of the stereotypes and expectations formed about that group rather than being appraised in terms of individual actions. This effect may be intensified by findings that individuals tend to judge members of outgroups as more homogeneous than members of ingroups—that is, people different from oneself can all seem alike (E. R. Smith, 1993). The emotions from intergroup processes are no less real or intense than emotions experienced outside of intergroup contexts because intergroup emotions are easily recalled, are frequently experienced, are no less intense than emotions experienced as an individual, and are encountered in everyday life (Devos et al., 2002).

## Stereotype Content Perspectives

In contrast to the social identity approaches to intergroup emotions, the stereotype content model (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002) stresses that specific kinds of threats to an ingroup result in differentiated emotions toward other social groups in society. Although the stereotypes considered in this research were from the viewpoint of the most prominent group in society, those stereotypes might still be held by members of other ethnic groups, even if they actively oppose these stereotypes (Devine, 1989), react negatively to the stereotypes (Czopp, 2008), or hold contrasting beliefs (Yzerbyt, Judd, & Muller, 2009).

The stereotype content model proposes that social groups are represented by stereotypes along the dimensions of warmth and competence. Warmth evaluations are primary because they relate to the intentions behind an outgroup's behaviors—notably, whether outgroup members can be trusted to treat the ingroup well. Evaluations of another group's competence relate to the ability of a social group to compete for resources when these groups might be in competition (Wojciszke, 2005).

Specific emotions are associated with different profiles of warmth and competence (Fiske et al., 2002). Favored ingroups are portrayed as having high warmth and competence, leading to admiration. A group that is able to compete with the ingroup for valuable resources is stereotypically low in warmth and high in competence, leading to envy. A group that is not a competitive threat is seen as high in warmth but low in competence, leading to pity. A group that is neither stereotypically warm nor competent is treated with contempt or disgust. As such, the majority of intergroup stereotypes are ambivalent in that they consist of low warmth yet high competence or high warmth yet low competence (Fiske et al., 2007). Furthermore, the emotions generated by these stereotypes can serve as the basis for behavior toward that other social group, and presumably these internal justifications serve to preserve the existing status hierarchy (Fiske et al., 2002).

Emotions directed at the low warmth and low-competence group may be qualitatively different those directed at other groups in that they are not exclusively social emotions: Viewing members of such groups fails to activate a region of the brain associated with social cognition (Harris & Fiske, 2007). This finding supports the chilling notion that people may see members of these other cultural groups as not quite human. Fortunately, stereotypes are not static. Stereotype content frequently changes over time, such that previously negative aspects of stereotypes get replaced with positive aspects, via exposure to counterstereotype information (Fiske, Bergsieker, Russell, & Williams, 2009; King & Ahmad, 2010). Thus, stereotype content model perspectives take into account intergroup relations highlighted by situational factors and longer term relations between ethnic groups.

A multicultural society offers many opportunities for interethnic interaction in settings such as schools and workplaces. When two members of different ethnic groups interact, a lack of experience in seeing other ethnic group members express emotion may leave considerable room for misunderstanding—on the basis of subtle differences in the appearance of nonverbal cues communicating these emotions (Effenbein & Ambady, 2002a) as well as the stereotypes discussed earlier that influence beliefs about others' likely emotions. This problem may be magnified if the differences between the cultures are large (Triandis, 2000). Specifically, misunderstandings may arise because people have a tendency to project their views on another's actions (Yzerbyt et al., 2009), potentially leading to incorrect appraisal of the other person's actions. On a related note, the relative familiarity with emotional displays of another ethnic group may also interact with one's own cultural tendencies. Lau, Fung, Wang, and Kang (2009) have shown that although Asian American students cultivate concerns about the emotional needs of others because of the characteristics inherent in East Asian culture, the East Asian tendency to suppress negative emotions leads to unfamiliarity with the negative emotions typically expressed by European American students—which can lead to social anxiety when facing these unfamiliar and uncomfortable negative displays.

The status of an ethnic group may also influence interethnic perception of emotion. Certain ethnic groups may be associated with high power, such that perceivers may infer the intent of an ethnic group member by taking into account both the emotion he or she displays and the level of power with which the ethnic group is stereotypically associated (Hess, Blairy, & Kleck, 2000). Power can also shape how people perceive others' emotions. Schmid Mast, Jonas, and Hall (2009) reported that a person imbued with power may be more attentive to a counterpart's emotional display, but only if the source of that power is derived from positive regard by others. If, by contrast, that power is derived from fulfillment of egoistic concerns, then the powerful person may be less attentive to others' display of emotion. In sum, the status of each ethnic group and the way in which culture influences individuals' experience with power may

be influential in leading to interethnic perception of emotions.

### Methodological Issues and Future Directions

In reviewing the body of research literature on ethnic groups and emotion, we noted issues that warrant greater attention. First, what is meant by *ethnic group differences* needs to be clarified. For example, focusing on group differences places a premium on intergroup difference while at the same time overlooking variety within groups (Okazaki & Sue, 1995). Group differences attributed to ethnicity also require further scrutiny, given that ethnicity is often conflated with demographic factors such as SES. Similarly, whereas group differences are often attributed to culture, cultural processes or concepts need to be specified clearly, given that culture is a multifaceted, multilevel construct (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Okazaki & Sue, 1995). Second, one cannot always assume that research measures are understood equivalently across ethnic groups, and differences in reliability may also be observed across ethnic groups (Hui & Triandis, 1985; Youngstrom & Green, 2003). Finally, the act of responding to the research questionnaires itself raises cultural differences. Notably, reporting on internal states, such as emotion, may be culturally acceptable to members of Western cultures, but it may be unsettling to members of other cultures, which can result in response bias (Okazaki & Sue, 1995).

In recommending directions for future research, we note that the preponderance of work on negative emotions reviewed in this chapter reflects attempts by scientists to understand social issues such as discrimination. However, we speculate that the corresponding lack of research in positive emotions is because these positive emotions are less related to pressing social issues. As such, room exists for further exploration of positive functioning and emotion in the context of interactions within ethnic groups and across ethnic groups, especially in important applied settings such as schools and workplaces.

### Conclusion

The study of emotion is an important substantive area of psychology in which relatively little focus

has been placed thus far on differences across ethnic groups. Although the emotion process is a universal one that plays out differently within each group, reflecting cultural inputs specific to that group, the complex interrelations between ethnic groups, majority groups, and legal and social norms necessitate research on this topic to look beyond examining simple group differences. Rich perspectives that take into account interactions between groups, cultures, and sociological perspectives will be required to fully understand the phenomena.

### DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVES, ACCULTURATION, AND SOCIALIZATION

Throughout the chapter, we have made reference to studies that represent the dominant theoretical approaches with respect to motivation and emotion, but a general lack of focus exists on how ethnic group membership influences differences in motivation and emotion over time. Except where noted, research has typically drawn from student populations (high school and university) and has not provided a developmental account of how peers, parents, and significant others influence motivation and emotion; for a fuller account of the impact of ethnicity on motivation and emotion, a developmental perspective needs to be considered. In U.S. ethnic groups, child-rearing practices and socialization activities instill socially acceptable and normative behaviors, strategies to navigate the social world unique to that group (Bowman & Howard, 1985; T. N. Brown, Tanner-Smith, Lesane-Brown, & Ezell, 2007), and culture-specific values, beliefs, and cultural practices (Ogbu, 1981). In this section, we briefly review the influence of socialization and acculturation on motivation and emotion.

Socialization influences motivation both directly and indirectly, principally through the development of ethnic identity and self-esteem. Ethnic identity development is an important outcome of parental socialization efforts (Hughes et al., 2006), with socialization practices leading to ethnic identity development (Demo & Hughes, 1990). For Chinese American and Mexican American adolescents, socialization focused on instilling ethnic culture has been linked to increased achievement motivation

compared with European American adolescents (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Huynh & Fuligni, 2008). For African American youths, socialization focused on intergroup relations significantly influences academic motivation (Bowman & Howard, 1985). However, despite ethnic identities being strongly correlated with ethnic socialization and achievement motivation, the causal mechanism among the three concepts has not been clearly delineated (Huynh & Fuligni, 2008). Effects of socialization on self-esteem and self-efficacy also vary, particularly in adolescent, student-based groups that are representative of many motivation studies. In general, socialization and self-esteem are positively related when parents are the main source of socialization, but effects are uncertain when the process is community or society driven (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002).

The relationship between socialization and motivation may vary over time (Hughes et al., 2006). Although a general relationship exists between socialization and motivation in youths and early adolescents and adults, the domains of achievement differ across time. For example, the relationship between socialization and academic motivation is evident in youths, but not in adults (D. B. Miller & MacIntosh, 1999); however, the relationship between socialization and identity development across age groups is generally positive (Demo & Hughes, 1990).

Another aspect of socialization specific to migrant groups is acculturation. Many ethnic groups within the United States consist of immigrants or descendants of immigrants, whose culture has changed as a result of continuous, first-hand contact with other groups (Berry, 2003; Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Over time, increased interaction between the immigrant and host groups should lead to increased similarities in their emotional response, which is magnified if the migrant group holds positive attitudes toward interaction with host culture members (De Leersnyder, Mesquita, & Kim, 2011). Indeed, Elfenbein and Ambady (2002b) found that the gap in recognizing outgroup emotional expressions faded over the generations when examining Chinese Americans who were born in China, whose parents were born in China, and whose grandparents were born in

China. Immigrants are also likely to internalize the host culture while still maintaining a connection to their culture of origin, resulting in biculturalism (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martínez, 2000), which may lead such individuals to switch how they access cultural values and norms, consistent with the context of the situation. Biculturalism is not without problems for the individual—given that acculturation is a multigenerational process, differences in the level of acculturation across generations of a migrant group raises the potential for intergenerational conflict (Jang & Kim, 2011).

In general, we have found a lack of literature that addresses the developmental and socialization processes critical to ethnic group differences that ultimately give rise to differences in motivation and emotion. Moreover, research addressing these topics together is lacking, given that events such as discrimination can influence both; using a longitudinal design, Benner and Kim (2009) showed that experience of discrimination in adolescence has negative influences on both psychosocial and academic achievement. However, comparisons across studies have been limited by lack of consensus in terms, concepts, and measurements around racial and ethnic socialization (Bennett, 2006). In short, we see opportunities for scholars in this area to elaborate on the developmental and socialization processes on motivation and emotion across the developmental trajectory.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

We have reviewed the evidence on how ethnic group members in the United States direct thoughts and action toward or affectively respond to objects of value—through the two interrelated but distinct psychological constructs of motivation and emotion. To a large extent, the determinants of motivational and affective processes are universal processes that derive their inputs from cultural influences that can vary in ways that are often subtle but that can at times be quite dramatic and consequential. Moreover, the multicultural experience itself—involving sociological phenomena and intergroup contact—shapes people's motivations and emotions and requires a broad research perspective to be understood.

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