IB DP Psychology
Higher level
Paper 3 – resource booklet

The sources in this examination have been collated to assess the claim that motivation plays a role in the use of effective learning strategies

Source 2

A study investigated whether motivation to improve memory influenced engagement with and uptake of memory improvement strategies (e.g. rehearsal, elaboration, use of mnemonics). Participants completed:

- a Motivation to Learn Scale (1–7
- a Memory Strategy Engagement Scale measuring willingness to learn and apply memory strategies (0–100)

Participants were grouped according to their level of motivation, the findings of which are presented in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Mean engagement with memory improvement strategies by level of motivation

Level of motivation	Mean engagement score (0-100)	Standard deviation
Low motivation	42.6	8.9
Moderate motivation	61.3	9.5
High motivation	78.8	7.6

Source 3

A qualitative study explored how university students aged 18–21 experienced motivation when deciding whether to study or socialise in the weeks leading up to exams. Four focus group interviews were conducted. Discussions focused on study priorities, social pressures, and emotional factors influencing motivation.

The transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis. The following themes were identified:

- Students described a conflict between short-term social enjoyment and long-term academic goals
- Peer influence and fear of missing out affected motivation to revise
- Motivation increased when exams were seen as important for future outcomes
- Stress and anxiety influenced decisions about studying versus socialising
- Individual differences were noted, with some students reporting stronger self-discipline than others

Source 4

A correlational study investigated whether motivation to learn is associated with improvement in learning outcomes after using effective learning strategies. Participants completed:

- a Motivation to Learn Scale (1–7)
- a problem-solving task after being instructed to use learning strategies such as rehearsal and elaboration

Learning improvement was measured as the percentage increase in task performance after applying the strategies. A correlation coefficient was calculated to examine the relationship between motivation scores and learning improvement. The findings are shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Correlation between motivation to learn and learning improvement

Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)
Motivation to learn and learning improvement score	0.64

Source 5

A laboratory experiment investigated whether experimentally induced motivation affected learning performance during a memory-learning task. Participants were randomly allocated to one of two conditions:

- High-motivation condition: Participants were told they would receive a performance-linked reward for high scores
- Low-motivation condition: Participants completed the task with no reward or incentive

After studying a list of items, learning performance was measured as the number of correct items recalled out of 50. Mean learning scores and standard deviations were calculated for each condition. The findings are shown in **Table 3.**

Table 3: Mean learning performance scores by motivation condition

Level of motivation	Mean engagement score (0-50)	Standard deviation
Low motivation	31.2	6.4
High motivation	39.7	5.9