

# Approach-Avoidance Motivation in Lifelong Learning: A New Framework for Understanding the Decision-Making Process behind Voluntary Learning

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## Abstract

The decision to engage in lifelong learning often entails a motivational conflict, requiring individuals to balance potential benefits against the costs of engagement. Approach-avoidance motivation occurs when an action involves simultaneous positive and negative outcomes, necessitating a choice. This concept has primarily been studied in emotionally charged decisions linked to fear or anxiety, relevant for clinical settings. Our aim is to shift the focus to the cost of engagement in learning and educational settings. In a society marked by high demands and numerous tools for knowledge updating, lifelong learning may be beneficial for continuous individual development and societal contribution. We introduce a new framework that intricately connects motivation and learning processes with cognition, highlighting the pivotal roles of executive functions and decision-making processes. This article delves into the confluence of lifelong learning, cognitive conflict, and approach-avoidance motivation within the context of education and learning processes.