

MIXED EMOTIONS AND AMBIVALENT MOTIVATION: WHERE TO FIND THEM, AND WHY WE HAVE NOT DISCOVERED THEM EARLIER



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For many decades, emotion researchers have argued whether —or under which circumstances—positive and negative emotions are negatively correlated or uncorrelated with each other. Only recently, we see an increasing number of studies suggesting that positive and negative emotions can, and are, experienced together in some situations and by some individuals. A new wave of intra-individual analyses and situation-specific assessments has helped discovering such mixed emotions. The same methods have revealed that intrinsic and enjoyable motivation does not always exclude aversive, negative experiences, but sometimes co-occurs with them, in what we call "ambivalent motivation".

This talk demonstrates examples for mixed emotions and ambivalent motivation, suggests methods that help detecting such ambivalent experiences, and discusses reasons why we might have overlooked these mixed feelings in the past.

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