

## **In the Brain's Playground. Unravelling Conation's Role in the Development of Meaningful Learning Experiences in the Primary Classroom**

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### **Abstract**

In our endeavours as educators to provide the best education to our students, understanding the intricate concept of conation becomes crucial. Defined as the innate drive that fuels task engagement, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation, conation stands as a pivotal factor in child development, shaping not only academic success but also fostering resilience, perseverance, and lifelong learning competences. The interplay between student conation and teacher practices serves as a crucial determinant of meaningful learning experiences. At the heart of this interaction lies the fusion of student-driven motivation, including task engagement, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation, guided by insights from educational neuroscience, with the pedagogical strategies and approaches employed by teachers. Understanding how these elements harmonise or conflict within the classroom environment is paramount for educators seeking to cultivate environments that align with the principles of educational neuroscience, fostering students' intrinsic drive, persistence, and goal-directed behaviours towards learning. This small-scale research study aims to investigate the relationship between student conation, encompassing task engagement, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation, and teacher practices within three Year 3 primary classrooms. By employing a structured Observation Protocol, the study seeks to systematically observe and quantify student behaviours related to task engagement, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation, as well as teacher presentation and pedagogical strategies. Through this comprehensive approach, the research aims to identify patterns, trends, and interactions within the classroom environment that influence students' motivation, drive, persistence, and goal-directed behaviours. By elucidating the dynamic relationship between student and teacher behaviours, the research endeavours to provide insights that inform pedagogical practices, curriculum development, and educational interventions aimed at fostering positive and meaningful learning experiences in primary education settings.



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