

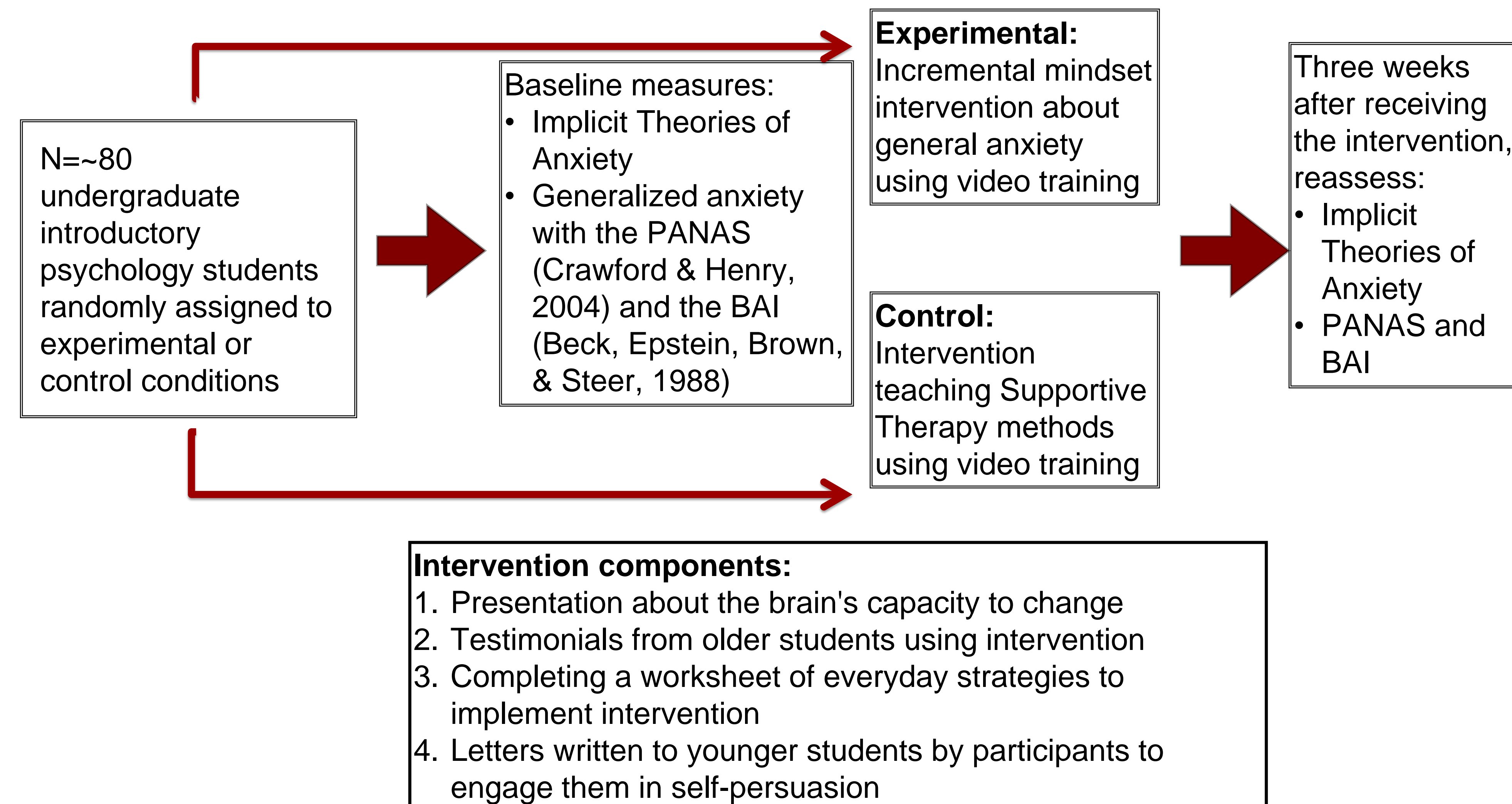
Introduction

Implicit theories are beliefs we hold about ourselves that are unarticulated but highly influential. An incremental mindset of personal attributes means a person believes that such attributes are malleable (Dweck & Legget, 1988). Incremental views can lead to benefits in emotional and mental health.

People with entity mindsets view personal attributes as fixed and unchangeable. Entity views often result in poorer emotional regulation skills and negative emotion (Dweck & Legget, 1988).

In past research, Schleider and Weisz (2016) cultivated an incremental mind-set about personality. Participants who were taught to have an incremental mindset were better buffered against social stressors and recovered faster than controls (Schleider & Weisz, 2016). However, no study has sought to cultivate an incremental mindsets of anxiety as an anxiety-reducing intervention.

Method



Implications

If the results support the hypothesis, this means that implicit theory training can be used as an intervention for student anxiety. As the intervention is so brief (under an hour), significant effects would suggest real-world value.

The intervention can be entirely computerized; therefore it can be run by a single interventionist and administered to a number of students. Anxiety is highly comorbid with depression making up two of the most common mental health struggles. Therefore, a brief intervention may buffer more people from being affected by anxiety and/or depression. This would warrant further research into incremental mindset interventions.

Expected Results

- Results will be analyzed using a mixed factorial ANOVA comparing pre-post intervention changes across the two conditions.
- An interaction effect is expected in that experimental participants will show more change in anxiety scores than controls.
- We will also analyze whether a change in implicit theories mediates the impact of the incremental mindset cultivation.



Hypothesis: It is predicted that participants in the incremental mindset group will experience lower anxiety over time than those in the control group.

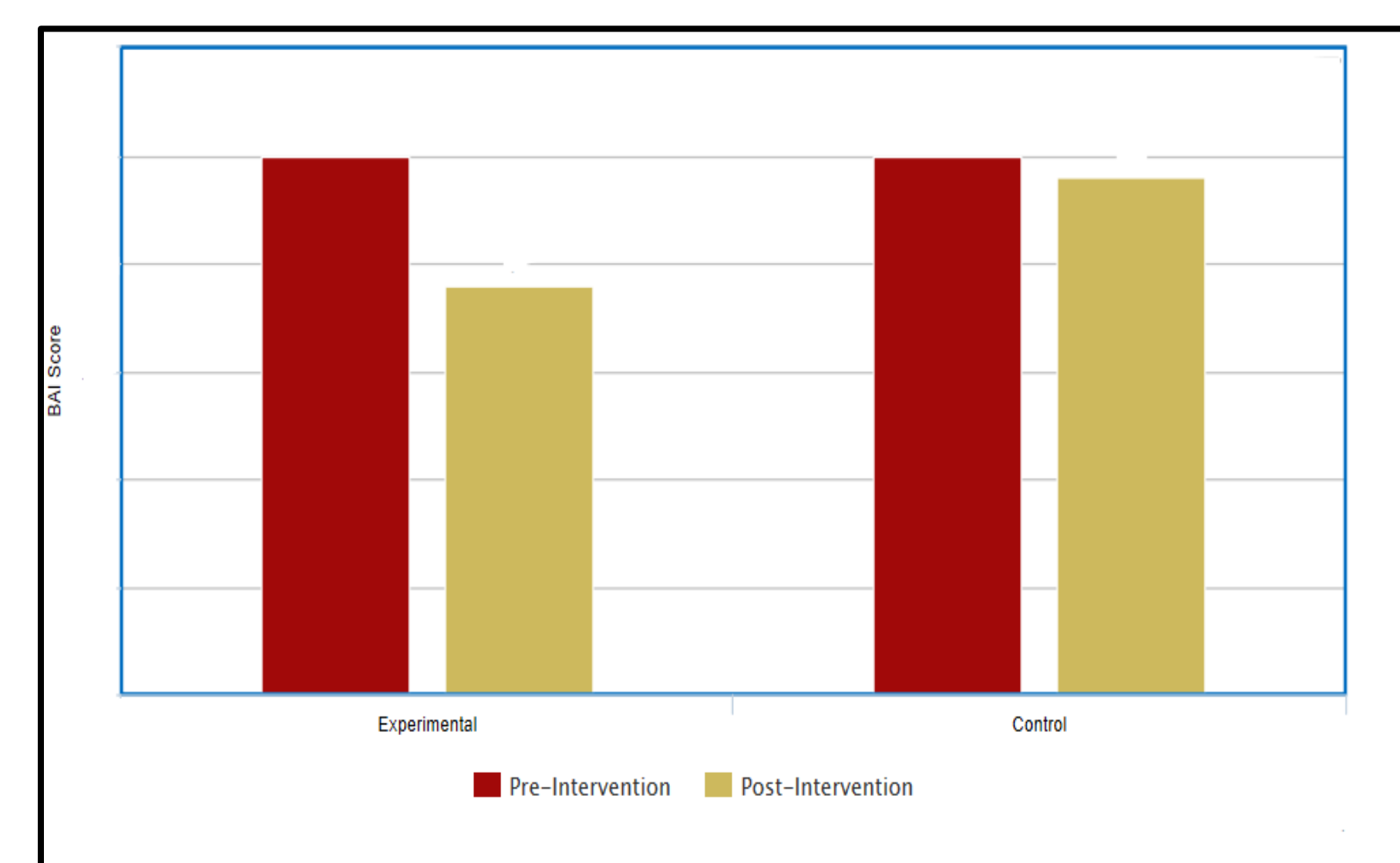


Figure 1. Hypothetical representation of findings that support the hypothesis. The experimental group (left) has a larger overall decrease between pre- (red) and post-PANAS (gold) scores than the control group (right).

References

- Crawford, J.R., & Henry, J.D. (2004). The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS): Construct validity, measurement properties, and normative data in a large non-clinical sample. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 43, 245-265. doi: 10.1348/0144665031752934
- Beck, A.T, Epstein, N., Brown, G., & Steer, R.A. (1988) An inventory for measuring clinical anxiety: psychometric properties. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 56, 893-897
- Dweck, C.S., & Legget, E.L. (1988). A social cognitive-approach to motivation and personality. *Psychological Review*, 95, 256-273. doi: 10.1037/0033-295X.95.256
- Schleider, J.L., & Weisz, J.R. (2016). Reducing risk for anxiety and depression in adolescents: effects of a single-session intervention teaching that personality can change. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 87, 170-181. doi: 10.1016/j.brat.2016.09.11