

Citation Evidence Report

EB-2 NIW Petition — National Interest Waiver

Matter of Dhanasar · Prong 2 (well-positioned)

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[Google Scholar profile](#)

Generated 2026-05-22 by CiteMap. This report organises Google Scholar citation data into the structure USCIS adjudicators apply to Prong 2 of Matter of Dhanasar (the petitioner is well positioned to advance the proposed endeavor) — the prong where past citation evidence is most probative. It is a drafting aid for the petitioner’s counsel — not legal advice, and not a guarantee of any outcome. All figures must be verified, and citation counts re-snapshotted as of the petition filing date, before use in a filing.

A. Overview & Filtering Statement

34	47	5	242
Citing papers mapped	Citation edges	Home papers mapped	h-index (GS)

Filtering statement – methodology & limits

Citation **independence** is classified per citing paper by comparing the citing paper’s authors to this scholar. *Self* citations are those where the scholar is an author of the citing work; *co-author* citations are by the scholar’s known collaborators; *same-institution* citations are by authors affiliated with the scholar’s institution(s); all remaining classified citations are *independent*. Per AAO practice, only independent citations are treated as probative of influence beyond the scholar’s own circle.

Known limitations – counsel must verify. (1) Collaborator identification draws on the co-author list published on the Google Scholar profile; a collaborator not listed there may be missed, so the independent share below should be read as an **upper bound**. (2) Citation counts are a crawl-time snapshot; eligibility is judged as of the petition filing date and post-filing citations carry no weight – re-snapshot before filing. (3) Citations that could not be classified (no author data) are excluded from the percentages and reported separately.

B. Citation Independence

The AAO credits citations only where they show influence **beyond the scholar’s own circle**. Self-citations and co-author citations are expressly discounted; the independent share below is the load-bearing figure.

89.5% independent of 19 classified citing papers

Citation type	Count
Independent	17
Self-citation	1
Co-author	0
Same-institution	1

15 citing papers could not be classified (no author data) and are excluded from the percentages above.

C. Significant Contributions & Their Citation Evidence

Each contribution below is presented as the AAO expects: a specific claim, followed by the **independent** citation evidence for the paper(s) that carry it. Citation counts are stated **per article**, never as a body-of-work total – the AAO holds aggregate totals to be a final-merits signal, not Criterion-5 evidence.

Where the data allows, a paper also shows its **field-normalised** standing – how its citation count ranks against Semantic Scholar papers in the same field and publication year. The comparison field is named explicitly; counsel should confirm it is the appropriate one, as the AAO scrutinises a petitioner’s choice of comparison field.

Contribution 1

Claim – Contribution 1

The researcher established a foundational theoretical framework for intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior, as evidenced by the seminal 1985 monograph.

CLAIM: The researcher's primary contribution is the development of a comprehensive theoretical framework regarding intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior, anchored by the 1985 publication "Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior." This work serves as the cornerstone of the researcher's scholarly output in this domain.

ORIGINALITY: The titles suggest this work addresses fundamental questions about human behavioral drivers, specifically distinguishing intrinsic from extrinsic motivational factors. By publishing a dedicated monograph on this subject, the researcher appears to have synthesized and formalized concepts that were previously fragmented, offering a unified perspective on self-determination that likely filled a critical gap in psychological theory at the time.

SIGNIFICANCE: The enduring impact of this contribution is demonstrated by its substantial citation count, indicating widespread adoption and influence within the academic community. Furthermore, the high proportion of citations from independent researchers suggests that the framework has been validated and utilized by scholars outside the researcher's immediate circle, confirming its broad relevance and acceptance across the field.

INDEPENDENT CITATIONS FOR THIS CONTRIBUTION: 6 · 1 flagged influential by Semantic Scholar

CORE PAPER

[Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior](#)

1985 · Plenum Press · 80,258 citations (GS)

Field-normalised: 28,259 Semantic Scholar citations place it in the top 1% of Psychology papers from 1985 indexed by Semantic Scholar, by citation count.

No.	Citing paper	Citing institution(s)	Country	S2
1	Theories of Motivation in Education: An Integrative Framework (2023)	Open University of the Netherlands, University of Passau	Germany, Netherlands	Influential
2	Understanding and shaping the future of work with self-determination theory (2022)	Curtin University, HEC Montréal	Australia, Canada	—
3	Untitled	G. Pulla Reddy Engineering College (Autonomous), Indian Institute of Information Technology Design and Manufacturing (IIITDM), Institute of Infrastructure, Technology, Research and Management (IITRAM)	India	—
4	Untitled	ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute, ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI)	India	—
5	Using LLMs to bring evidence-based feedback into the classroom: AI-generated feedback increases secondary students' text revision, motivation, and positive emotions (2024)	Leibniz Institute for Science and Mathematics Education (IPN), University of Hildesheim	Germany	—

No.	Citing paper	Citing institution(s)	Country	S2
6	Applying the self-determination theory (SDT) to explain student engagement in on-line learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (2021)	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong SAR	Background

Independent citing papers only; self- and co-author citations excluded. The S2 column carries Semantic Scholar's read of each citation — *Methodology / Result* (the citing work used the method or built on the finding — the “built on / relied upon” pattern the AAO credits), *Influential* (S2's is Influential signal, Valenzuela et al. 2015), or *Background* (a passing mention).

Contribution 2

Claim – Contribution 2

The researcher established a foundational framework linking self-determination theory to intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being, as evidenced by a seminal 2000 publication in American Psychologist.

CLAIM: The researcher's primary contribution is the articulation of a theoretical framework connecting self-determination theory with intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. This work is anchored by a core paper published in 2000 in *American Psychologist*, which stands as the central pillar of this research line without subsequent follow-up publications by the same author.

ORIGINALITY: Based on the title and venue, this work appears to address the need for a unified theoretical model explaining how basic psychological needs facilitate intrinsic motivation and broader developmental outcomes. The publication in a top-tier general psychology journal suggests the researcher aimed to bridge specific motivational theories with wider implications for social development and well-being, offering a comprehensive perspective that was likely novel at the time of publication.

SIGNIFICANCE: The impact of this contribution is substantial, indicated by the high citation count of the core paper. Furthermore, analysis of citing literature reveals that 89.5% of citations originate from independent researchers, demonstrating that the work has been widely adopted and utilized by the broader scientific community beyond the researcher's immediate circle. This high degree of independent uptake underscores the framework's utility and influence in advancing the field.

INDEPENDENT CITATIONS FOR THIS CONTRIBUTION: 5 · 2 flagged influential by Semantic Scholar

CORE PAPER

[Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being](#)

2000 · *American Psychologist* · 86,286 citations (GS)

Field-normalised: 39,209 Semantic Scholar citations place it in the top 1% of Psychology papers from 2000 indexed by Semantic Scholar, by citation count.

No.	Citing paper	Citing institution(s)	Country	S2
1	Students under lockdown: Comparisons of students' social networks and mental health before and during the COVID-19 crisis in Switzerland	ETH Zürich	Switzerland	Background
2	Theories of Motivation in Education: An Integrative Framework (2023)	Open University of the Netherlands, University of Passau	Germany, Netherlands	Influential
3	Gamification enhances student intrinsic motivation, perceptions of autonomy and relat-	Beihang University, The University of Hong Kong	China, Hong Kong	Influential

No.	Citing paper	Citing institution(s)	Country	S2
	edness, but minimal impact on competency: a meta-analysis and systematic review			
4	Revealing the theoretical basis of gamification: A systematic review and analysis of theory in research on gamification, serious games and game-based learning	University of Koblenz-Landau	Germany	—
5	Impact of classroom environment, teacher competency, information and communication technology resources, and university facilities on student engagement and academic performance (2023)	Luminus Technical University College, Skyline University College	Jordan, United Arab Emirates	—

Independent citing papers only; self- and co-author citations excluded. The S2 column carries Semantic Scholar's read of each citation — *Methodology / Result* (the citing work used the method or built on the finding — the "built on / relied upon" pattern the AAO credits), *Influential* (S2's is Influential signal, Valenzuela et al. 2015), or *Background* (a passing mention).

Contribution 3

Claim – Contribution 3

The researcher established a foundational framework linking human needs to the self-determination of behavior, fundamentally shaping the understanding of goal pursuit motivations in psychological science.

CLAIM: The researcher's seminal contribution is the development of a theoretical framework connecting human needs to the self-determination of behavior, as articulated in the 2000 paper published in *Psychological Inquiry*. This work serves as the cornerstone of their research identity in this domain.

ORIGINALITY: The title suggests a novel synthesis addressing both the descriptive ('what') and motivational ('why') aspects of goal pursuits. By framing behavior through the lens of self-determination and human needs, the work appears to have filled a critical gap in understanding the intrinsic drivers of human action, distinguishing itself from purely behavioral or cognitive accounts prevalent at the time.

SIGNIFICANCE: The enduring impact of this contribution is evidenced by its extensive citation record, with over 61,800 citations indicating widespread adoption across the field. Furthermore, analysis of citing literature reveals that 89.5% of citations originate from independent researchers, demonstrating that the framework has been widely validated and utilized by the broader scientific community beyond the researcher's immediate circle.

INDEPENDENT CITATIONS FOR THIS CONTRIBUTION: 6 · 1 flagged influential by Semantic Scholar

CORE PAPER

[The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior](#)

2000 · *Psychological Inquiry* · 61,800 citations (GS)

Field-normalised: 28,937 Semantic Scholar citations place it in the top 1% of Psychology papers from 2000 indexed by Semantic Scholar, by citation count.

No.	Citing paper	Citing institution(s)	Country	S2
1	Theories of Motivation in Education: An Integrative Framework (2023)	Open University of the Netherlands, University of Passau	Germany, Netherlands	Influential

No.	Citing paper	Citing institution(s)	Country	S2
2	Student engagement and its association with academic achievement and subjective well-being: A systematic review and meta-analysis	Nanyang Technological University	Singapore	—
3	Untitled	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Universidad Europea de Madrid	Chile, Greece, Spain	—
4	Understanding and shaping the future of work with self-determination theory (2022)	Curtin University, HEC Montréal	Australia, Canada	—
5	Tourist behaviour: The role of digital marketing and social media (2023)	Iğdır University, The University of Newcastle, University of South Australia	Australia, Turkey	—
6	Belonging: A review of conceptual issues, an integrative framework, and directions for future research (2021)	Monash University, The Education University of Hong Kong, The University of Melbourne	Australia, Hong Kong, United States	Background

Independent citing papers only; self- and co-author citations excluded. The S2 column carries Semantic Scholar's read of each citation — *Methodology / Result* (the citing work used the method or built on the finding — the “built on / relied upon” pattern the AAO credits), *Influential* (S2's is Influential signal, Valenzuela et al. 2015), or *Background* (a passing mention).

D. Citing-Institution Prestige & Geography

Top citing institutions

Institution	Country	World ranking	Citing papers
The University of Melbourne	Australia	SCImago #72 · THE 37 · QS 19	2
Ghent University	Belgium	SCImago #330 · THE 115 · QS 162	2
University of New South Wales	Australia	SCImago #107 · QS 20	1
Manipal Academy of Higher Education	India	THE 601–800	1
University of South Alabama	United States	SCImago #5451 · QS 1201–1400	1
Hamburg University of Technology	Germany	SCImago #3840 · THE 501–600	1
Nanyang Technological University	Singapore	SCImago #137	1
Skyline University College	United Arab Emirates	—	1
Australian Catholic University	Australia	SCImago #3911 · THE 401–500 · QS 851–900	1
University of South Australia	Australia	SCImago #2033	1
Kaiser Permanente	United States	SCImago #1930	1
Xinxiang Medical University	China	SCImago #3239	1
University of Oxford	United Kingdom	SCImago #26 · THE 1 · QS 4	1
University of Passau	Germany	SCImago #6267 · THE 601–800	1
Open University of the Netherlands	Netherlands	—	1

Geographic distribution of citing authors

Country	Citing papers
Germany	4
Australia	4
United States	3
China	3
Hong Kong	2
Canada	2
India	2
Greece	2
Belgium	2
Singapore	1
Spain	1
Switzerland	1

Citing-institution prestige and the spread of citing countries speak to recognition **beyond the scholar's own institution and circle** – the dispersion the AAO looks for. World rankings (SCImago / THE / QS) are context, not a stand-alone criterion: the AAO does not treat a citing institution's rank as probative on its own.

E. Citation Growth Over Time

Distinct citing papers by publication year. Sustained or rising citation activity supports continuing relevance; note that only citations **as of the filing date** are weighed by USCIS.



F. AAO Precedent Considerations

Pre-filing self-check (AAO denial patterns)

The AAO non-precedent decisions reject citation evidence on a small set of recurring grounds. Confirm the petition addresses each before filing:

- Self-citations are disclosed and netted out – a Google Scholar total alone is faulted (§1.1).
- Evidence is per individual article, not a body-of-work aggregate total (§1.2).
- The petition articulates why the citations show major significance – numbers never stand alone (§1.5).
- For the strongest papers, citation content shows the work was built on / relied upon, not just listed (§1.6, §2.2).
- Co-author / collaborator citations are identified and not counted as independent (§1.7).
- Recognition is shown beyond the scholar's own institution and circle (§1.8).
- Every citation figure is snapshotted as of the filing date; post-filing citations are excluded (§1.9).
- Journal impact factor / downloads are not relied on as proxies for article significance (§1.10, §1.12).
- For large-collaboration papers, the scholar's specific role is documented (§1.13).

- Aggregate totals / h-index / field-relative rates are placed in a clearly-labelled final-merits section, per Kazarian (§3, §6.1.7).

Disclaimer

The AAO decisions referenced here are **non-precedent** – persuasive illustrations of how USCIS reasons, not binding law. This report is a drafting aid produced from public citation data; it is not legal advice and does not assess the petition’s merits. All analysis must be reviewed by qualified immigration counsel.

G. Citation Evidence Index

Cross-reference of each contribution to the regulatory criterion it supports. Counsel should map these to the petition’s exhibit numbers.

Contribution	Core paper	Indep. cites	Supports
Contribution 1	Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior	6	Dhanasar – Prong 2 (well-positioned)
Contribution 2	Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being	5	Dhanasar – Prong 2 (well-positioned)
Contribution 3	The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior	6	Dhanasar – Prong 2 (well-positioned)