
BOOK AND RESOURCE REVIEWS

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Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Exercise and Sport

Edited by Martin S. Hagger and Nikos L.D. Chatzisarantis. Copyright 2007 by Human Kinetics, P.O. Box 5076, Champaign, IL 61825-5076. (\$67, 392 pp.)

Reviewed by Barbara Walker, Center for Human Performance, Inc., Cincinnati, OH.

The book, *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Exercise and Sport*, is a comprehensive overview of multiple theories of motivation in exercise and sport, including self-determination, organismic integration, cognitive evaluation, causality orientations, and basic needs theory. As the editors state, the aim of this book was “to bring together contributions from leading authors responsible for the development and application of the theory in the domains of exercise and sport over the last two decades” (p. xii).

The book is organized succinctly. In each chapter, the authors present key theoretical and applied topics in exercise (Part 1) and sport (Part 2). They provide an overview of previous research, outline future directions, and offer recommendations for practitioners and professionals in exercise and sport. The final chapter of the book, written by the editors, summarizes the research findings from the experts included in the book under five subheadings: methodological issues, antecedents of motivation, psychological outcomes, exercise and sport behavior, and theoretical integration and advancement.

The text is comprehensive. It would be valuable for varying higher level audiences. I am a licensed clinical sport psychologist in private practice and work with a variety of clients to improve their performance in sport and exercise, including parents, coaches, and exercisers. In this capacity, I am continually searching for sound ways to improve service delivery. With that said, I found the detail of theory-to-practice especially intriguing. At the Association for Applied Sport Psychology conference held in Louisville, Kentucky, in 2007, there was an inaugural symposium sponsored by the Performance Enhancement/Intervention Committee for selected individuals to present their theory-to-practice signature techniques. I found the book to bridge the gap in much the same way. At the end of each chapter, after the authors presented their research, theory, and future recommendations, a gray box contains suggestions for working with different types of athletes or exercise participants including sport psychologists, exercise professionals, coaches, and physical educators. Such suggestions were recommendations for motivational interviewers adopting a self-determination theory approach (p. 98), recommendations for coaches on the use of feedback (p. 139), recommendations for practitioners for enhancing perceived competence (p. 225), and practical considerations to minimize dropout from sport (p. 240). All too often, theories and research remain on campus and do not get applied to real-life situations. In addition, practitioners sometimes find

a technique that might work with clients and continue to use it regardless of its theoretical origins. Connecting theory to practice is obviously important, and this book accomplishes just that.

This text is clearly written for an academic audience. If it were to be used in an academic setting, I would recommend it as a graduate text in a course on motivation, which could be used by several different academic departments, including psychology, physical education, sport science, physical therapy, medicine, dietetics, and nursing, to name a few. Self-determination theory crosses many areas of thought and human motivation, extending beyond the sport and exercise setting. This book covers all one would need to know about the topic of intrinsic motivation, including a beautiful schematic representation of self-determination theory illustrating the components that underlie the theory (p. 8). Because of its comprehensiveness, I would also recommend the book for any practitioner interested in the area of intrinsic motivation. For researchers, this book offers many recommendations for additional research in varied arenas.

I find it unlikely that this book would be read by a general audience because it is not an easy read. Although the reading flows well, it is technical at times, difficult to comprehend, and takes time to assimilate the information. Although this is not considered a negative because all books are not intended for general audiences, the next step will have to be the responsibility of another set of researchers, practitioners, or authors to disseminate this information to the people who will most directly benefit from the vast amount of information presented.

In conclusion, Hagger and Chatzisarantis attempt “to bring together contributions from leading authors responsible for the development and application of the theory in the domains of exercise and sport over the last two decades” (p. xii). They have accomplished this huge task succinctly, creatively, and expertly. As an athlete, performance psychologist, and professor, I have a personal interest in the topic of motivation for myself as well as for my clients and students. Thus, I am always looking for new ways to help them understand the research to practice connection. Although I maintain that some audiences will have a difficult time grasping some of the concepts presented in this book, it provides a comprehensive understanding of the literature and application to practice.

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