

Importance of Perceived Competence and Intrinsic Motivation

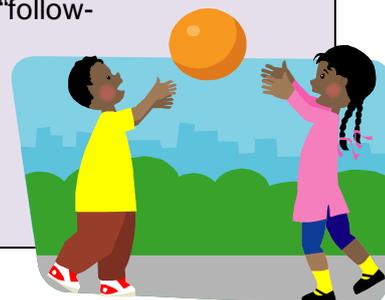


A survey study (Ntoumanis, 2001) of 424 British Physical Education (PE) students aged 14-16 revealed that **perceived competence** is the dominant psychological factor that mediates the relationship between social factors (cooperative learning, self-referenced improvement, and choice of tasks) and the **different types of motivation** (**intrinsic motivation, identification, introjections, external regulation, and amotivation**). **Intrinsic motivation**, as theorised leads to positive consequences, such as not feeling bored, putting in effort, and having future intention to exercise. **External regulation** and **amotivation**, on the other hand, leads to negative consequences, such as feeling bored, putting in less effort, and have no future intention to exercise.

This means that for PE students to be interested in the lessons, put in effort when engaging in the activities, and be inclined to exercising in the future, PE teachers need to **raise their sense of competence**. This will in turn, cause them to be intrinsically motivated in the lesson and subsequently lead to the positive consequences. The use of external contingencies, such as rewards and punishments, results in negative consequences.

Practical examples:

- 😊 Create **small successes**. Enable the student to be successful in easier tasks first before moving on to more challenging ones.
- 😊 Keep activities **moderately challenging** at all times.
- 😊 **Praise** students for the **effort** that they put in and not just their successful attempts.
- 😊 Design games that **reward points for attempts** to execute the shot properly even if the result is not playable.
- 😊 Create a **mastery-learning climate**. Encourage students or design activities for students to focus on mastering the skills and improving against their previous performance rather than always comparing and competing with others.
- 😊 Provide **informative and constructive feedback**. For example, instead of asking students to “hit or throw harder”, find out the root cause of their poor execution and correct their skill or movement e.g. “turn your shoulder” (create more backswing), “follow-through”, “snap your wrist” etc.
- 😊 Be careful when using too much rewards and punishment to get students to cooperate.



Key definitions:

Amotivation	Refers to a perception that no worthwhile reasons for pursuing an activity exist and hence a complete absence of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2002).
External Regulation	Doing an activity because of external pressures or incentives (Ryan & Deci, 2002).
Extrinsic motivation	Refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000).
Identified regulation	Involves identifying with the personal value of an activity so that the person can regulate the behaviour more willingly or volitionally (e.g. planning to attend college because of its personal relevance) (Niemic et al., 2006).
Integrated regulation	Occurs when the value of the activity has been assimilated with other aspects of self and is experienced as deeply internalised and autonomous.
Intrinsic motivation	refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable (Ryan & Deci, 2000).
Introjected regulation	Involves taking in a contingency or value or regulation but not accepting them as their own (e.g. planning to attend college to avoid feelings of guilt). Controlled motivation accompanied by feelings of inner compulsion, based on self-esteem being contingent upon approval and worth that had previously been applied by others (Niemic et al., 2006; Roth et al., 2009).
Perceived Competence	Experiencing one-self as capable and competent in controlling the environment of the activity. The need for competence (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Elliot & Thrash, 2002; Koestner & McClelland, 1990) is the need to experience satisfaction in exercising and extending one's capabilities. Naturally, people seem to seek out challenges that are optimal for their level of development (Harter, 1978; White, 1959).
Self-determination	Self-determination theory assumes that different motivational regulations exist, each reflecting varying levels of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Beginning with the most self-determined, intrinsic motivation involves pursuing an activity out of interest and enjoyment and without external contingencies (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Secondly, extrinsic motivation refers to partaking in an activity to attain an outcome separate from the activity itself. Extrinsic motivation can be further divided, in a descending order of self-determination, into integrated (pursuing an activity because it is congruent with other aspects of the self), identified (undertaking an activity because one accepts the value of the activity), introjected (partaking in an activity because of internal pressures such as guilt or shame), and external (doing an activity because of external pressures or incentives) regulations (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Finally, amotivation refers to a perception that no worthwhile reasons for pursuing an activity exist and hence a complete absence of self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

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