

**EXPLANATION OF SELF-DETERMINATION CONTINUUM'S
MOTIVATIONAL REGULATIONS USING THE CONSTRUCT
OF MULTI-DIMENSIONAL PERFECTIONISM**



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Explanation of Self-Determination Continuum's Motivational Regulations using the Construct of Multi-Dimensional Perfectionism

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Abstract

Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000a) brings out the process of internalization and holistic processing of various values and contextual inputs resulting in motivational regulations using the self-determination continuum viz. amotivation, extrinsic motivation (which includes external, introjected, identified and integrated regulations), or intrinsic motivation with the increased levels of self-determination and satisfaction of basic psychological needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness which must be satisfied across the life span for an individual in order for the individual to experience an ongoing sense of integrity and well-being. At one extreme of the self-determination continuum is the classic state of intrinsic motivation, which means doing of an activity for its inherent satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Thus, intrinsic motivation is the prototype of self-determination wherein maximum internalization and alignment to the valued responses takes place to satisfy these three basic psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). However, when intrinsic motivation is such a coveted state for satisfaction, happiness and well-being, the question arises as to why do majority of people not strive for reaching this state of being intrinsically motivated, especially for job or work related activities? Why do people who are talented and intrinsically motivated become amotivated at times and even reflect depressive, anxious or neurotic behaviour? Deci and Ryan acknowledge this gap by stating that “Our theory of intrinsic motivation does not concern what causes intrinsic motivation rather it examines the conditions that elicit and sustain, versus subdue and diminish, this innate propensity” (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p. 70). Thus there is a need to explain various factors and processes of development of self-determination continuum's motivational regulations.

In search of underlying integrating factors for various motivational regulations of the continuum, the social cognitive theory of self-regulation (Bandura, 1991) was studied, which brings out the cognitive based sources of self-motivation, originated due to involvement of one's personal standards and

corresponding evaluation of behaviours and performance against these standards. The initial exploratory interviews and further literature review in this line of inquiry brought out the importance of standards of performance as an important concept, which is plausible to provide further explanation of self-determination continuum's various types of motivational regulations.

The construct of perfectionism has been described as a personality disposition characterized by striving for flawlessness and setting excessively high standards for performance, accompanied by tendencies for overly critical evaluations of one's behaviour (Hewitt & Flett, 1991). Thus, in this thesis, the concept of multi-dimensional facets of perfectionism viz. self-oriented perfectionism, socially prescribed perfectionism and other-oriented perfectionism are hypothesized as antecedents and mediating factors to explain various motivational regulations of self-determination continuum.

Based on the concept of perfectionism as well as social cognitive and self-determination theories, a set of hypotheses are conceptualized and empirically tested viz. self-oriented perfectionism is expected to be an antecedent to intrinsic motivation; self-oriented perfectionism is expected to mediate the relationship between socially prescribed perfectionism and integrated, identified as well as introjected motivational regulations; socially prescribed perfectionism is expected to be an antecedent to external motivational regulation; and other-oriented perfectionism is expected to mediate the relationship between socially prescribed perfectionism and amotivation. These hypotheses were developed based on review of existing literature and exploratory interviews of 13 working professionals (Study 1), wherein their multi-dimensional perfectionism types and self-determination motivational regulations were analyzed as experienced by them in their career. To test these hypotheses multi-dimensional perfectionism and self-determination motivational regulation's data was collected for 86 participants with a time gap (Study 2), in line with recommendations by Podsakoff Philip, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff Nathan (2003) regarding adoption of temporal separation of respondents as a remedy for preventing common method bias, which is likely to occur in a cross-sectional study. The adequacy of sample size was ensured with a cross-sectional data collection of 326 participants (Study 3) which was analyzed for measurement invariance with Study 2 data, collected with time gap (Henseler, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2016). Based on the

result of measurement invariance analysis, the data sets of these studies (Study 2 and Study 3) were combined and analyzed using structure equation modeling methodology based on partial least squares algorithm. All the hypotheses were supported during this analysis. Further, an additional study was planned and conducted, with 57 dyads of participants and their respective supervisors (Study 4), wherein the multi-dimensional perfectionism types and levels were self-reported and self-determination continuum's motivational regulations were supervisor reported, to validate the hypothesized relationships in line with recommendations of Podsakoff et al. (2003), to use different source of data as an strategy for circumventing social desirability in cross-sectional studies. Again, all the hypotheses were supported, in spite of a small sample size (except one of mediation paths i.e. introjected regulation could not be supported). Finally, multi-group analyses were also conducted to study the hypothesized relationships under the conditions of demographic data differences viz. gender and experience of the respondents.

The results of these studies indicate that our understanding of phenomenon of development of self-determination continuum's motivational regulations can be improved using the construct of multi-dimensional perfectionism. This thesis has brought forward a unique contribution to the body of knowledge, by adding more clarity and alternate explanation, using the lens of perfectionism, towards various dispositions and mechanisms responsible for the development of self-determination continuum's motivational regulations. These contributions as well as the limitations and the future research directions for perfectionism and self-determination research are discussed along with practice implications of using these hypothesized relationships for employees and work culture development initiatives in organizational settings. This thesis can therefore be considered as a positivistic research attempt to bring out an alternative, original, parsimonious, useful and interesting explanation of the self-determination continuum's motivational regulations using the construct of multi-dimensional perfectionism.

Key Words: Self-Determination Motivation, Intrinsic, Integrated, Identified, Introjected, External, Amotivation, Multi-Dimensional Perfectionism, Self-Oriented Perfectionism, Socially Prescribed Perfectionism, Other-Oriented Perfectionism and Social Cognitive Processing.

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Abbreviations:

AMO	Amotivation
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
EXT	External regulation
HMPS	Hewitt & Flett's Multi-Dimensional Perfectionism Scale
IDEN	Identified regulation
IM	Intrinsic Motivation
INTEG	Integrated regulation
INTRO	Introjected regulation
MGA	Multi-Group Analysis
MICOM	Measurement Invariance of Composite Models
OLS	Ordinary Least Square
OOP	Other-Oriented Perfectionism
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling
SOP	Self-Oriented Perfectionism
SPP	Socially Prescribed Perfectionism
VAF	Variance Accounted For
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
WEIMS	Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale
WNSDM	Work Non Self-Determination Motivation
WSDM	Work Self-Determination Motivation

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