
BOOK AND RESOURCE REVIEWS

The Sport Psychologist, 2008, 22, 507-509
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The Psychology of Teaching Physical Education

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Bonnie Blankenship presents a text designed to help physical educators enhance student learning and enjoyment via the application of sport and exercise psychology principles. She takes a theory to practice approach leading the reader through relevant theory and research before introducing the practical implications. The majority of topics included in the text can be found in most other introductory, undergraduate sport and exercise psychology texts written from the perspective that sport and exercise psychology is a subdiscipline of kinesiology. This text offers a unique perspective by emphasizing social-psychological aspects related to social learning/behavior and motivation. There are chapters on reinforcement, modeling, character development, self-perception, achievement motivation, intrinsic motivation, and values. Theories such as social learning theory, competence motivation, self-efficacy theory, attribution achievement goal theory, attribution theory, and self-determination theory are most prominent. The author is clear in her purpose, to help physical educators be better teachers by learning about and applying a meaningful selection of sport and exercise psychology principles. Thus, anyone seeking a book with a comprehensive view of sport and exercise psychology (e.g., groups processes, performance enhancement, and health/wellness enhancement) will want to look elsewhere.

Among its strengths is this book's exclusive application of sport and exercise psychology to the context of physical education. For example, the author deliberately chose theories she believed most applicable to teaching physical education and discussed sport and educational research with school-age children only when research in physical education was insufficient. Clearly, the authors' goal is to help readers apply these theories and research to situations relevant to physical education teachers. The application to the physical education setting is evident by the opening chapter scenarios, "real world" examples, and application exercises included throughout the text that reflect situations experienced by physical education teachers. The emphasis on the physical education setting is further punctuated by the use of the words "teacher" and "student" throughout the text.

Individuals teaching sport and exercise psychology specifically to a class of physical education majors will want to consider adopting this text. This is particularly true for those interested in the psycho-social aspects of sport and exercise psychology. The author's explanation of theory and research is straight forward and easy to follow. I found the topics and order of the chapters logical, moving from issues related to social learning to motivation, and the space given to the primary topic covered in

each chapter was adequate. With this text it would be easy to introduce social learning theory, followed by a detailed discussion of behavioral theory and reinforcement (Chapter 2), and then cognitive mediation theory and modeling (Chapter 3). The introduction of structural developmental theory and its application (Chapter 4) could then be introduced as a complementary approach to social learning theory for character development. Throughout the text, information is delivered in a way that facilitates students' application of sport and exercise psychology principles to physical education, which could serve as an excellent resource for years to come.

With some colleges and universities offering sport and exercise psychology courses for physical education majors only, a niche for this type of specialty text and the desire for both physical education teacher education specialists and their students to have such a text is understandable. The value of this book is that it may help students to see the professional significance of sport and exercise psychology. The practical implications sections of each chapter go beyond a laundry list of generic suggestions to include explanations of why a particular strategy may be effective, which may encourage students to integrate theory-based reasoning into decision-making process and behavior as teachers.

While the practical application of the content to a specific physical activity context is a clear strength of the book, it is also the aspect of the text that is most concerning. By highlighting the relevance of sport and exercise psychology to one context, the relevance of this information to other such as rehabilitation, athletics, and exercise/fitness is ignored. Clearly, this was the author's intention. If not careful, though, failure to acknowledge the professional relevance of our common exercise and sport science knowledge base can lead to greater fractionalization of the discipline.

Given the application of sport and exercise psychology to a variety of human movement specialists, is there such a thing as the psychology *of* teaching physical education as the text's title implies? The author defines the psychology of teaching physical education as ". . . the study of human behavior in physical education, and the application of that knowledge in physical education settings" (pp. 2-3). Or, is there more simply the application of sport and exercise psychology to the context of physical education? Hopefully, it is the latter.

While discussing concepts relative to a particular context may help students more readily apply the information to their future profession, it also can send the message that sport and exercise psychology principles are unique to their profession. This message can lead to unnecessary divisions among people with common interests, and has the potential to create artificial separations and gaps in the knowledge base. For example, a physical educator may develop the belief that sport and exercise psychology topics related to performance enhancement do not apply to them, and ignore the fact that principles of motivation apply to all human movement professionals. By its nature, sport and exercise psychology is applicable to a variety of contexts in which human movement occurs. Because of this sport and exercise psychology is for the coach, the personal trainer, the athletic trainer, the physical therapist . . . as much as it is for the physical educator.

In the final analysis and while I question the "psychology of teaching physical education," there is a place for a sport and exercise psychology *for* the physical educator text just as there may be a niche for other human movement-related professions. A