Utilising a self-case study assessment to enhance student learning and facilitate the application of social cognition theory.

Dr Garry Prentice, 
DBS Research Day 2019
Objectives

Incorporate a self-case study assessment within an assignment.

Examine the utility of a self-case study student assessment approach.

Examine student personal reflections on their exercise expectations, intentions and behaviour within a social cognition framework.
Background

Anticipated Regret

Important in intention formation? (Abraham & Sheeran, 2004)

Exercise expectations

Physical, Social & Self-evaluation; older population

Case studies

Problem-based learning

Self-case study

Application of theory to the real world; examination of own behaviour as an independent observer (Bolton, 2005)
Method

Participants:
31 undergraduate full-time Psychology students

Design: Qualitative & Quantitative, Cross-sectional, Online
Quantitative Questionnaire, Qualitative responses within an essay related to the questionnaire themes

Online Questionnaire: (Quasi-Interview Schedule)
Theory of Planned Behaviour Questions (Ajzen)
Multidimensional Outcome Expectations for Exercise Scale (Wojcicki, White & McAuley, 2009)
Godin Leisure-Time Exercise Questionnaire (Godin, 2011)
Procedure

Completion of online questionnaire

Group and individual results given back to students

Students completed the essay assignment (with a self-case study component) based on the variables/themes covered in the questionnaire
Essay Question:

Critically examine Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB: Attitudes, Subjective Norm, Control, Intentions and Behaviour), exercise expectations, anticipated emotions and gender variables in relation to exercise, through producing an essay incorporating: - (1) the theoretical/research background in relation to each variable listed, in terms of their links with exercise (40%), (2) a case study* incorporating the variables listed (30%), and (3) conclusions and recommendations (20%) derived from the case study and associated research. (N.B. 5% for expression/structure and 5% for referencing)

*The case study will be based on your own responses to a questionnaire, made available to the class at the start of term, measuring the listed variables. Further explanation will be provided in class, including within the Health Behaviour lecture, which covers health behaviour models including TPB.

Further breakdown of the marking for each section:

(1) The theoretical/research background in relation to each variable listed in terms of their links with exercise (40%)
   - TPB (10%)
   - Exercise expectations (10%)
   - Anticipated emotions (10%)
   - Gender (5%)
   - Aims/rationale (5%)

(2) Case Study (30%)
   - Results coverage (10%)
   - Interpretation (10%)
   - Personal reflection (10%)

(3) Conclusions (10%) and Recommendations (10%)
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Descriptive Statistics

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## 2. Case Study (30%)

### Results coverage (10%)

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### Interpretation (10%)

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### Personal reflection (10%)

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Results
Attitude
First Qualitative Theme

5. Practicing **daily gratitude** is a strategy that I could implement to improve my attitude and in turn my exercise habits. (HS)

2. **Procrastination** when it comes to exercise (AF)

I find it hard to find time to exercise as it can sometimes be **inconvenient** for me. (KH)

I have **never been especially concerned** with weight (one of the advantages of being tall). (AMK)

3. Enjoy it as a **hobby** in my free time (HH)

4. **Pastime** (A)

5. **Being thankful** (A)
Subjective Norm
Second qualitative theme (PAST)

Coming from a family that regularly take part in range of physical activity and sports that range from mild to strenuous on weekly occurrence has also shaped the attitude that I should engage in physical exercise (LR).

The background I was raised in, I have been into fitness for as long as I can remember (JOR).

In Secondary school education school was based around learning academically but also put great emphasis on mandatory after school exercise activity in my case through the sport of rugby for five days a week. (LR).
Subjective Norm
Second qualitative theme
(PRESENT)

1. My ability to perform exceptionally well in my chosen sport is peer driven and motivated by social inclusion... (LR)
2. I exercise due to social pressures but expect no social outcome from it. (EC)
3. I am more vulnerable to being swayed by other people's opinions I should conduct my own research and experience different types of exercise in order to make an informed decision. (RR)
4. Family influence my decision to exercise. (HoS)
5. Develop a more positive body image and move away from caring about how I'm perceived by others (AC)
6. My exercise is in the gym by myself. (AF)

Conform with the beliefs of my social circle regarding exercise behaviour (HoS)

Don't feel as much societal pressure (DN)
I enjoy exercise, however it is often difficult and inconvenient to fit it into my daily routine. (RS)

Being too busy juggling part time work, full time studies and adequate sleep. This feeling of not being in control hinders me to change my exercise behaviour (VT)

ease of access to exercise as I have a gym close by to my apartment. (AF)
PBC

Third qualitative theme (INTERNAL)

1. Power with me (PBC)
2. Control (PBC)
3. Discipline (PBC)
4. Multiple Exercise Options (PBC)

- High level of control over doing exercise and feel like I’ve no barriers to completing it such as time or capability. (MM)
- Mix of strenuous to mild exercise in my routine so I don’t come up against any barriers to daily exercising such as exercise fatigue or lack of accessibility to a gym. (AC)
- Doing a mix of individual/team sports and indoor and outdoor activities I remain in control of my ability to do some form of exercise everyday. (CM)
- Improve my perceived behavioral control by believing more in my capabilities to be disciplined. (HoS)
Anticipated Regret
Fourth qualitative theme

I wouldn’t scold myself if I wasn’t being physically active. (VT)

I am not in an environment that will help me harbour feelings or regret for too long (DN)

letting the team down if I miss a game. (LR)
Exercise Expectations

Fifth qualitative theme

1. “…physical body is not exercised and oxygenated my brain becomes lazy.” (CM)

2. “…benefits of regular exercise in terms of weight control, muscle building, and an increase general fitness.” (RS)

3. “I can see the physical gain after the past few months of training and dieting.” (EC)

4. “…psychological wellbeing and relief.” (HD) “…beneficial effects on mood and self-esteem...depression.” (LR)

5. “I generally use exercise as a stress relieving mechanism...” (MC)

6. “I feel as if I won’t be as sharp during the day in question if I do not participate in it.” (OC)

7. “…experiences of exercising I felt good about my body and my mind therefore, I thought I would think and feel good after.” (VT)
The lack of my peers who engage in exercise also affects my level of social outcome benefits in relation exercising. (SK)

Perhaps it’s also a vanity thing, seeking the approval and praise of others by getting into better shape. (AC)

People in the gym are so friendly and motivate each other to achieve the best we can (EC)

I could take up team sports or exercise with friends to introduce a social aspect. (MC)

I would consider exercise a type of “social outing”. As I come from a competitive swimming/triathlon background I would be open for talking about passed achievements & accolades, sports goals and also learning different techniques and what works for each athlete. (OC)
Exercise Expectations
Sixth qualitative theme
Exercise Behaviour
Seventh qualitative theme

“...gym visits and dance classes.” (RS)

“...walking the dog...” (RS)

“...martial arts training...” (SED)

“...walking to and from college...” (VT)

“...weekly badminton practice...” (VT)
“health documentary’s to educate yourself more on your body.” (HH)

“...if I feel increased self-worth or feelings of accomplishment after exercising. This will also motivate myself to increase exercise levels.” (SK)

“buy an item of clothing a dress size or two too small for them which will motivate them to lose the weight so that they can wear it and look fabulous.” (AW)

“I try hard to fit that training in or any type of training in general it is becoming harder to find the motivation to do it with college work and a part time job along with family and friends” (SED)
“I could use to improve and enhance my exercise behaviours are to start exercising with another person. This could be a friend or family member.” (RR)

“the gym or source help from a personal trainer.” (SK)

“purchase a FitBit...download an app...” (AW)
“i) A more consistent fitness plan could lead to a more consistent self-evaluation. ii) Maintain a better balance between diet and exercise to improve my physical outcome expectations.” (MC)

“...set daily...set monthly goals...” (AW) “...body weight goal...” (HH) “...realistic, weekly goals I would like to accomplish, such as walking home from college daily or attending the gym for three hours weekly” (RR)

“important to not over do it and let your body rest and recover” (HH)

“Try different forms of exercise, swimming, running, yoga, group classes etc” (HH)

“decrease regret levels by attending the gym more to increase feelings of money well spent for gym subscription cost” (AF)
2. Case Study (30%)

**Results coverage (10%)**

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**Interpretation (10%)**

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**Personal reflection (10%)**

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**Case study aspect had the strongest correlations with overall result**

\[ r = .77 \]

LR (6.5), VT (6.5), RS (6.5), EC (7), AF (8)
Conclusions & Future Directions

Deeper learning and personal development opportunities facilitated by self-case study/personal reflection?

Qualitative – individual insights
Quantitative – case study aspect strongest link to better results in the assignment

Opportunity to examine students’ awareness of own health and exercise intentions

Health promotions...

Future directions – more student cohorts...