# Motivation Theory

In the International Handbook of Psychology, motivation is defined as the study of the processes that cause animals and humans to exhibit varying sets of behavior at different times \_\_\_\_\_. Since it is one of the most important factors guiding human behaviors, several theories have been proposed to explain motivations in various settings. Among them, self-determination theory (SDT) by \_\_\_\_\_ receives the greatest amount of empirical support.

## Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

SDT is a theory of human motivation and personality developed to understand conditions that foster or undermine positive human potentials. Its focus is “the investigation of people's inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs that are the basis for their self-motivation and personality integration, as well as for the conditions that foster those positive processes” \_\_\_\_\_. According to SDT, an individual’s behaviors are the result of intrinsic or extrinsic motivations. Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity for pure satisfaction of the activity itself while extrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity in order to obtain some separable outcome, or an external goal \_\_\_\_\_.

SDT theorizes that intrinsic motivations are influenced by an individual’s two innate psychological needs: the need for competence and the need for self-determination (autonomy), which is again affected by social and environmental factors (relatedness). The concept of “competence” was first conceived by \_\_\_\_\_ and it generally refers to “the capacity for effective interactions with the environment that ensure the organism's maintenance.” \_\_\_\_\_.