

Would I come back? The role of groupness and cohesion in intention to return

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Introduction

- Adherence to exercise has been identified as problematic (Oman & King, 1998)
- One strategy to address this issue involves group constructs, such as:
 - ✓ Task cohesion (Spink & Carron, 1994)
 - ✓ Groupness (Spink, Wilson & Priebe, 2010)
- Task cohesion and groupness have independently demonstrated positive relationships with either within-group (attendance) or out-of-group (intent to return) measures (Spink, 1998; Spink et al., 2010)
- To date, these constructs have never been examined in combination with out-of-group adherence measures (intent to return)
 - Further, these constructs have not been examined together across different settings (cf. Spink et al., 2012)

Purpose

- To examine the relationship between perceptions of task cohesion and groupness on intention to return across two exercise settings
 - Structured (sign up)
 - Unstructured (no sign up)

Methods

Participants:

- Adults (28.3 yrs, $SD = 12.0$; 67% female) who had exercised with others
 - Structured setting ($n = 203$)
 - Unstructured setting ($n = 179$)

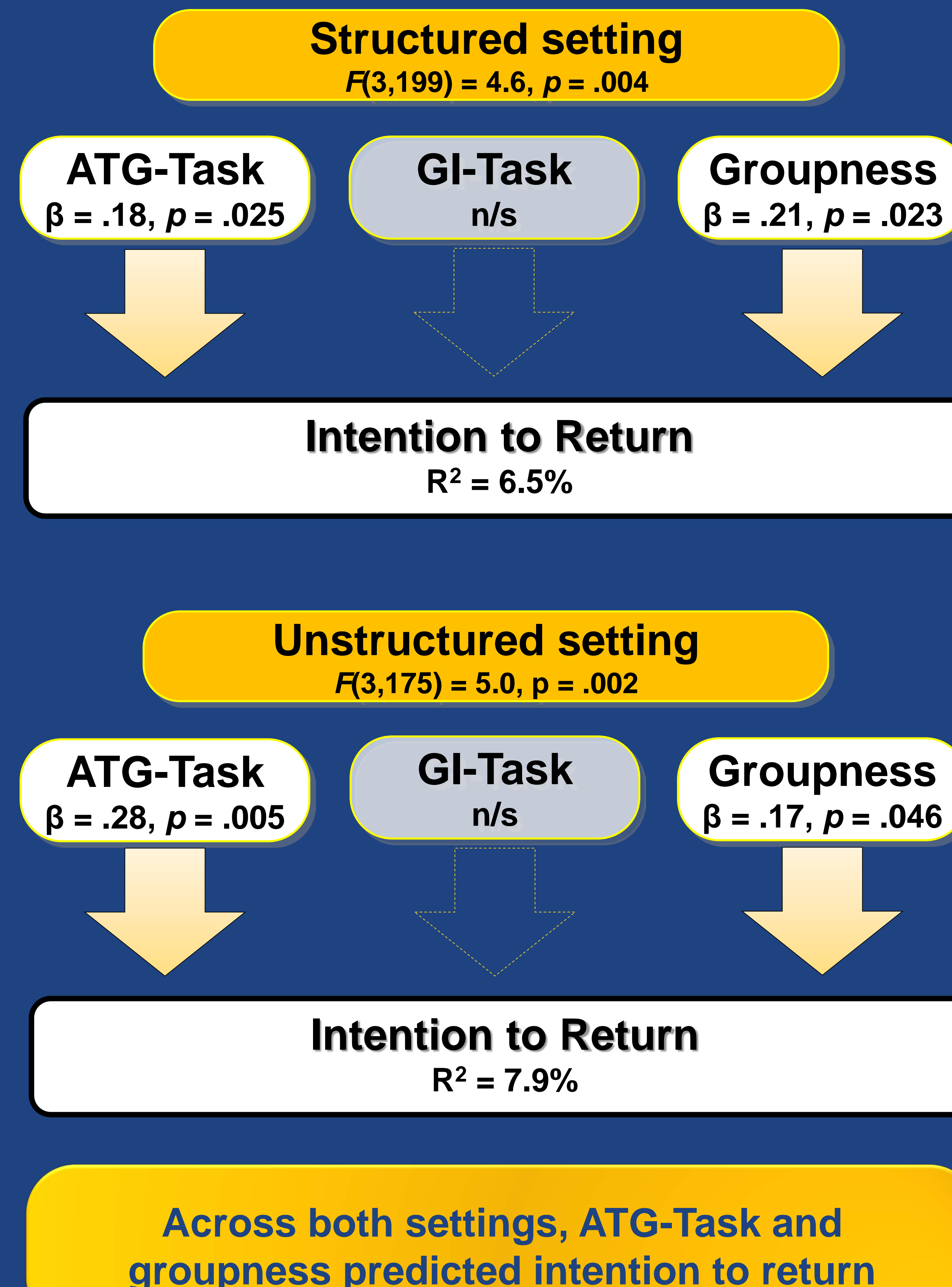
Measures:

- Participants completed an online survey including items assessing:
 - Groupness** (Spink, Wilson & Priebe, 2010) – 5 items
 - “Is it enjoyable and rewarding to be part of this activity setting?”
 - Task cohesion** (modified GEQ; Carron & Spink, 1992) – 9 items
 - “Members of our group would rather get together as a group than participate alone”
 - Intention to return** (Spink & Odnokon, 2001) – 3 items
 - “I would PLAN to return to this same setting if it was to resume again in the future”

Analysis

- Separate multiple regressions (structured and unstructured)
 - DV: Intention to return
 - IV's: ATG-Task, GI-Task, Groupness

Results



Discussion

- Both group constructs appeared to play a role in predicting intention to return across exercise settings
 - Together, ATG-Task and groupness were positively associated with intention to return
 - This extends previous research that has examined these constructs independently
- This is the first study to have examined multiple group constructs with respect to intention to return
 - This expands our view of adherence, which typically involves the examination of in-group measures such as attendance (e.g., Spink & Carron, 1994)
- Results provide preliminary evidence that the relationship between these two group constructs and intention to return are similar across structured and unstructured exercise settings



Future Directions

- As intention is not always linked to behavior, examination of actual return appears warranted (Weinstein, 2007)
- Given the assumed importance of these two group constructs with adherence, exploring variables (e.g., similarity) that may lead to the development of groupness and cohesion would be worthwhile
- Replication of these consistent findings across different exercise settings (structured vs. unstructured) is needed
- Examination of the unique and combined effects of task cohesion and groupness on adherence also would be of use



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