

Motivation in bereavement – from a cross-cultural perspective



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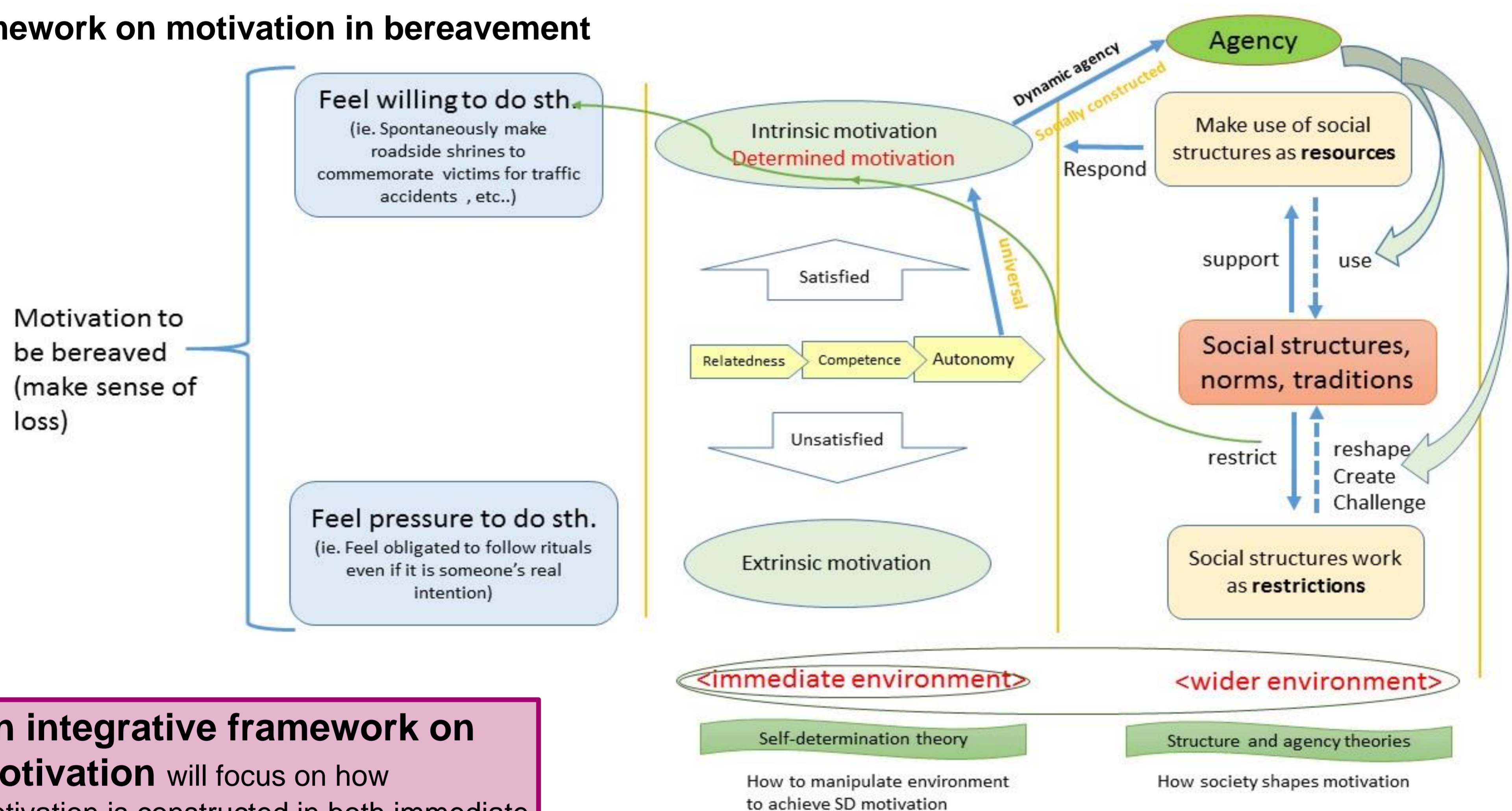
Introduction

Motivation is not a concept that is normally used for bereavement. However, drawing on “motivation” in relation to bereavement can contribute a more explicit picture of how these bereaved people deal with and make sense of such a traumatic loss in order to survive in their everyday life. More importantly, motivation is not only a subjective drive for individual behaviour, but also a cultural construction shaped by culture and society. Therefore, my research is to explore how motivation in bereavement is constructed in a certain society by integrating both psychological and sociological theories of motivation.

Research Questions

1. How might an integrative framework of psychological and sociological theories of motivation further inform our understanding of bereavement?
2. How can the above framework be applied in different socio-cultural contexts?
 - 2.1 How are bereaved people motivated to respond to loss in a certain society?
 - 2.2 How do socio-cultural structures support or undermine motivation in bereavement?
 - 2.3 How do bereaved people respond to and negotiate these structures when dealing with bereavement?

Framework on motivation in bereavement



An integrative framework on motivation

will focus on how motivation is constructed in both immediate and wider social environments, in which autonomy can be referred to the capability that people interact with society through self-determined motivation. Furthermore, since motivation is always constructed in particular environments, it can be assumed that individuals from different cultures and societies are motivated in different ways and have different kinds of agency to deal with particular situations, such as bereavement. Therefore, a cross-cultural study would better illustrate how motivation is a cultural object.

Method:

In order to apply the integrative framework to explore a general picture of bereavement in social environments, this research will conduct a comparative study of qualitative interviews of bereaved people between:

- **UK** (Secondary data)
- **Japan** (Secondary data)
- **China (Primary data)**
 - **Location:** urban areas in mainland China
 - **Objectives:** elderly widows and widowers, university students, bereaved parents and bereaved families from various self-help groups.
 - **Tool:** in-depth and open-ended interviews
 - **Approach:** Build up a trust relationship with potential participants prior to conducting interviews (due to the extreme sensitivity of bereavement in China).