

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Personality, Motivation, Barrier Perception, and Arousal Preferences in Physical Activity

STUDENT: Sarah Ciosek

DEGREE: Master of Science in Sport and Exercise Psychology

COLLEGE: Health

DATE: May 2021

PAGES: 89

Abstract

Despite efforts to improve physical activity (PA) engagement among the public, many people remain inactive. This suggests the presences of factors contributing to PA participation that have not been adequately explored. Among these factors are individual differences in personality and their possible contributions to PA preferences, motivation, and detection of PA barriers. Therefore, the present study aimed to examine the possible relationships between personality traits (namely extraversion and neuroticism), motivation type, barrier perception, and arousal preferences in PA. To achieve this, online questionnaires pertaining to the study variables were administered to Amazon MTurk workers and a general population sample. Hypotheses for this study included extraversion being a predictor of intrinsic motivation to be physically active as well as high arousal preferences in PA, and neuroticism being a predictor of extrinsic or motivation to be physically active and high perception of barriers to PA. Linear regressions revealed extraversion to be a small significant predictor of PA arousal preferences

but not of intrinsic motivation. Neuroticism emerged as a significant predictor of PA barrier perception and amotivation and extrinsic motivation as well as other types. Limitations and implications of these results are discussed. Results of this study could provide insight into factors (i.e., personality) that contribute to the widespread reluctance to be physically active (Rhodes, 2006) as well as what may motivate otherwise unmotivated individuals within the PA context.