The Effects of a Six-Week Boot Camp Program on Exercise-related Affects and Perceptions

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INTRODUCTION

- Inactivity is a major public health concern
- Lack of motivation and a low sense of self-efficacy for exercise contribute to the problem
- Effectiveness of physical activity (PA) interventions for long term PA behavior change is unknown

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- To investigate the effectiveness of a six-week boot camp program for increasing motivations for long-term PA behavior change
- To gauge participants’ motives for adhering to the program

METHODS & ANALYSES

- Participants: N= 27 sedentary adults (M_age=30.04, SD=10.33)
- A boot camp program
  - At least five days per week
  - Fifty minutes a day
  - For six-week period
- Pre-post measures:
  - Questionnaires measuring
    - Motivation for behavior change
    - Self-efficacy for exercise
    - Perceptions of general health

RESULTS

- Significant improvement in mean scores for self-efficacy for exercise
  - (M=7.21 ± 2.2 pre vs. 8 ± 1.65 post; t=-2.38, p < 0.05)
- Significant improvement in mean scores for perception of general health
  - (M=3.17 ± 1.01 pre vs. 3.92 ± 0.7 post; t=-4.21, p < 0.05)
- Three main qualitative themes for continued adherence:
  1. structured aspect of the program
  2. accountability between the participants and exercise leaders and
  3. the sense of community within the program

DISCUSSION & IMPLICATIONS

- Exercise and perceptions
  - Results supported the hypothesis that boot camp intervention would increase self-efficacy for exercise – consistent with previous research
  - Results supported the hypothesis that boot camp intervention would improve perception of general health – consistent with previous research
- Exercise and long term behavior change
  - Results did not suggest that boot camp intervention would initiate long term behavior change in forms of exercise maintenance
- Motives for adherence
  - Most participants adhered to the program because of its simple yet structured aspect, social support between participants and leaders, and the general sense of community and belongingness
- Conclusions
  - Alternative interventions such as boot camps can help improve important precursors of PA behaviors
  - Structured approaches that can provide a supportive community and a sense of accountability may help advance the problem of inactivity

REFERENCES