

Les Mills Lab: Putting the “we” into workout: The Association of Identity Leadership with Class Attendance and Effort.



Introduction

Group fitness instructors have the ability to enhance participants' engagement in exercise via their leadership and coaching. Identifying the key elements that contribute to the effectiveness of this influence is of importance with regards to instructor training and development.

Hypothesis

Instructors who enhance member engagement by adopting a social identity leadership style (creating a sense of “us” and “we”) will positively influence attendance, levels of comfort in the class environment and effort.

Method

249 participants (220 female) attending a variety of group exercise classes were asked to indicate their perceptions of the identity leadership (e.g. “this instructor creates a sense of “we” and “us” in the group exercise class”) displayed by their group exercise instructor at two points over a four week period.

Levels of comfort in the environment, attendance and effort in class were also measured.

Results

Results demonstrated that the extent to which participants perceived their group exercise instructors to engage in identity leadership was positively associated with their own group identification and comfort in the exercise environment.

Results further showed that members' group identification and comfort were, in turn, positively associated with attendance over the four weeks and effort levels during class.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates the importance of instructors creating a sense of “we” and “us” in class. Instructors who are perceived as part of the “in-group”, rather than seen as separate, are more likely to create higher levels of comfort in the class environment and ultimately positively influence attendance and effort.

To access the journal article [here](#).