



How do people who are active, intend to be active, or do not intend to be active differ in their thoughts about physical activity?

Purpose

To compare the physical activity social cognitions among people with SCI that were physically active (*actors*), those that planned to be active in the next 6 months (*intenders*), and those that had no intention to be physically active (*nonintenders*).

Summary

- *Actors* scored higher than *intenders* and *intenders* in turn scored higher than *nonintenders* on all social cognitive variables.
 - This means that people that participate in regular physical activity have greater intentions to exercise, self-efficacy to exercise, outcome expectations, and planning ability than the *intenders* and *intenders* scored higher on these variables than *nonintenders*.

Possible Applications

- People pass through different mindsets on their way to physical activity behaviour change
- Interventions should consider where a person is on this physical activity continuum and target key social cognitions to bolster physical activity participation

Research Abstract

Developing physical activity interventions for adults with spinal cord injury. Part 1: A comparison of social cognitions across actors, intenders and non-intenders

Objective: This article is the first in a three-part series focused on designing theory-based interventions to increase leisure time physical activity (LTPA) in persons with spinal cord injury (SCI). The purpose of this first study was to compare social cognitions for leisure time physical activity (LTPA) between people classified as LTPA actors, intenders, and nonintenders, as per Schwarzer's Health Action Process Approach (HAPA) model.

Method: Participants were 238 men and women living with a spinal cord injury (M age = 44.14, SD = 12.74; 44.5% paraplegic) who were subsequently classified as LTPA actors (n = 105), intenders (n = 73), or nonintenders (n = 60). Participants

completed a questionnaire that assessed the following HAPA constructs: LTPA outcome expectancies, self-efficacy, intentions, planning, and action control.

Results: A MANCOVA revealed significant between-groups differences for all variables ($ps < .001$). For all of the measures, actors scored significantly higher than intenders who, in turn, scored significantly higher than nonintenders.

Conclusion/Implications: It is both theoretically and practically important to distinguish between LTPA nonintenders, intenders, and actors when developing LTPA-enhancing interventions for people with SCI. These distinctions inform the design and testing of the interventions reported in the two accompanying articles.

Impact and Implications

- The strength of social cognitions for leisure time physical activity (LTPA) differs across individuals who do not intend to be active (i.e., nonintenders), who intend to be active but are not yet engaging in activity (i.e., intenders), and those are currently active (i.e., actors). Although this relationship has been previously examined among orthopaedic outpatients, cardiac rehabilitation patients, and Chinese college students, this is the first study to explore whether social cognitions for LTPA vary systematically across actors, intenders, and nonintenders among individuals with spinal cord injury (SCI).
- The study confirms that among individuals with SCI, actors have stronger LTPA-related social cognitions than intenders and nonintenders, and intenders have stronger LTPA-related cognitions than nonintenders.
- It is theoretically and practically meaningful to target key social cognitions when developing LTPA-enhancing interventions for moving people with SCI through the behavior change process.

Martin Ginis KA, Tomasone JR, Latimer-Cheung AE, Arbour-Nicitopoulos KP, Bassett RL, Wolfe DM. (in press). Developing physical activity interventions for adults with spinal cord injury. Part 1: A comparison of social cognitions across actors, intenders and non-intenders. *Rehabilitation Psychology*.