

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

June 24, 2015

Medical Research Archives

Title of Manuscript: Partner Weight as a Moderator of Exercise Motivation in an Obese Sample

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To the Editors:

This study sought to uniquely explore whether or not partner weight characteristics moderate an exercise motivation gain effect with adult obese participants. The answer to this question is important because obese individuals have reported feelings of being too overweight, feeling self-conscious, and experiencing high levels of distress when exercising among others (i.e., social physique anxiety). Along with understanding the factors in this motivation partner relationship, the study's use of virtually-presented exercise partners could potentially add powerful sources of motivation to exergame design and other healthy lifestyle modalities to increase exercise intensity and duration for obese populations and move these findings closer to practical application outside the lab. The findings may be clinically important to obese and overweight adults who want to increase short but intense bouts of physical activity, weight or circuit-type training and/or control disability or disease states susceptible to such activity.

The material in this manuscript is original research, has not been previously published and has not been submitted for publication elsewhere while under consideration with Medical Research Archives. The authors declare no conflict of interest.

This cover letter is also to explain the circumstances related to the approval process for the two Institutional Review Boards utilized with this project.

The original proposal for this project was submitted to the Michigan State University (MSU) IRB, receiving approval March 20, 2013. The staff at the nearby Sparrow Weight Management Clinic agreed to allow the MSU study staff to utilize space for project interaction with participants and also to assist with recruitment by directing potential participants to the MSU staff. The Clinic arrangement facilitated enrollment because the primary participant inclusion criteria is a Body Mass Index of greater than 30. The Clinic Manager signed the Impact Statement and a Reliance Agreement was obtained, signed, and submitted to the MSU IRB. The IRB Reliance is



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an agreement between MSU and Sparrow Hospital which allows an investigator to have a research protocol undergo IRB review through MSU's IRB and Sparrow will accept the review of the lead institution. In essence, there is only one IRB review instead of two and thus the investigators save time.

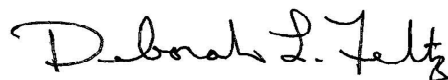
While full MSU IRB approval for this project was obtained, along with the Sparrow Hospital Reliance Agreement, the study staff failed to submit a separate application to the Sparrow IRB. A misunderstanding occurred regarding the scope of the Reliance Agreement and how the relationship between the two IRBs was such that only one application was thought to be necessary. Staff interaction with the MSU IRB, during the application process reflects this misunderstanding, including a note in the initial application that we would not be submitting to the second IRB.

Only after approval of the MSU IRB and the signed Reliance Agreement, study staff recruited and enrolled 24 participants through the Sparrow Weight Management Clinic. No Sparrow staff, materials, or resources were used except for the space they permitted us. Upon submitting new materials to the MSU IRB, it was noted that a complete Sparrow IRB approval had not been obtained originally. Further more, the MSU IRB monitoring for this process did not note the deficiency. All study activities were immediately halted at Sparrow, the Sparrow staff was notified, and discussions began between the MSU study staff, Sparrow IRB, and MSU IRB.

No participant was exposed to additional risk at any time and all activities were briefly paused until we worked to complete the required process between MSU and Sparrow, including attending a full Sparrow IRB review (which typically would not be required). Afterward, we continued our relationship with Sparrow and completed the project. Again, MSU IRB approval and a facility Reliance Agreement were in place at all times during this project.

As these circumstances describe a time when the Sparrow Clinic's mutual agreement with MSU was signed but not technically fulfilled, we are compelled to declare this temporary deficiency. We are happy to answer any further questions or submit any relevant documentation to facilitate the submission of our manuscript.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah L. Feltz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'D' and 'F'.

Deborah L. Feltz, PhD
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