European Fans in Training: a socio-psychological approach to the development of a healthy lifestyle programme to engage an at-risk group in sustained behaviour change

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Global pandemic of inactivity

Hallal et al, Lancet 2012
Addressing physical inactivity
“the rhetoric of health promotion is social, but the actions, the behavioural base, are at the individual level [...] the appropriate solution is to eat better, exercise more, drink less and give up smoking” (McQueen, 1989, Health Prom Int)

- Importance of socio-culturally informed health promotion programmes
AIM: To develop a *culturally-sensitized* programme that engages *inactive men* aged 30-65, with BMI ≥ 27 in becoming *more active, sitting less* and eating a healthier diet, and *sustaining these changes long term*
EuroFIT Programme development overview

**Sociological theory**

**Previous programmes e.g. FFIT**

**Psychological theory**

**Specification of function and form**

**Specification of logic model – theory of action**

Users in 4 countries – coaches, fans
Football Fans in Training
Exploiting the ‘draw’ of football to engage men in weight management
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What?</strong></th>
<th>12 week, weight-management programme for men through reducing portion size, healthy eating and physical activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free of charge, group-based programme</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Delivery</strong></th>
<th>Led by trained club community coaches at top professional football clubs in Scotland</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Weekly sessions of ‘classroom’ education and PA ‘training’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Incremental walking programme with pedometers “It's really good, ... it’s [an] amazing a wee device”</td>
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<td>Light touch ongoing maintenance to 12 months</td>
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| **BCTs** | Self-monitoring; Goal setting and review; Implementation intentions; Feedback on behaviour and outcomes |

*Gray et al BMC Public Health, 2013*
EuroFIT Programme development

- Sociological theory
- Psychological theory
- Previous programmes e.g. FFIT
- Specification of function and form
- Specification of logic model – theory of action
- Users in 4 countries – coaches, fans

Users in 4 countries – coaches, fans
P1: We’re all similar, old, fat gits.
P6: Yeah, exactly.
P1: You know? And that was it.
P6: All want to lose weight, all want to get fit.

[Club03_12wkFGD]
Doxa: the tacit, ‘take-for-granted’ assumptions found within cultural fields.

Men felt comfortable within FFIT groups because they were with men that shared some of their interests:
  • Football/specific club

And concerns:
  • Dissatisfaction with their bodies/desire to change
  • Desire to pursue fitness without feeling threatened by an ‘Adonis’

Bourdieu, 1977, Outline of a Theory of Practice
P1: But things like that was just, and like, wee bits of banter when we’re in the gym [at the club], or playing fitba or that – you’d have a wee craic with somebody. And the laughter [...] that was the environment we were working in [on the FFIT programme]  

[Club13_12wkFGD]
Durkheim’s collective effervescence

- A community coming together and simultaneously communicating the same thought and participating in the same action

- Fusion of self and collective symbols

- Repetitive practice of ‘collective rituals’ [e.g. banter and ‘training’] allows the individual [FFIT participant] to assimilate the symbolic power [of their association with the Football Club through FFIT] into internalised schemes of perception [new views of health behaviours]

(Durkheim, 1926, Elementary forms of the religious life)
P1: ... we were all encouraging each other. It’s not, you were no longer an individual. You were part of a team.

[Club07_12wkFG]

P4: Blokes don’t do it...until we get that support from each other and then we start looking at portion controls, and what you’ve said there, what’s on the labels – blokes would just go and look for the easy option. That’s what men do.

[Club12_12wkFG]
EuroFIT Programme development

- Sociological theory
- Previous programmes e.g. FFIT
- Psychological theory

- Specification of function and form
- Specification of logic model – theory of action

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<th>Form (example component)</th>
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<td>Access to resources and facilities (behind scenes, club ‘celebrities’) not normally available to fans</td>
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<td>2) Provide facilitated learning</td>
<td>Simple, relevant, practical messages ‘Science but not rocket science’</td>
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<td>3) Provide a personalised approach</td>
<td>Behavioural change based on individual preferences for PA and diet, and coherent with current lifestyles</td>
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<td>4) Create a relaxed and non-threatening environment</td>
<td>Promote group identification with ‘men -like-me’, banter (→ effervescence)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Support (re)negotiation of masculine identities in relation to health behaviours</td>
<td>Opportunities for vicarious (from ‘men-like-me’) and experiential learning</td>
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Self determination theory

Satisfaction of basic psychological needs

Relatedness
- Belonging
  e.g., I am a member of a walking group

Competence
- Mastery
  e.g., I am good at football

Autonomy
- Internally (self-) regulated motivation
  e.g., I exercise because it is fun

MAINTENANCE OF BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Ryan & Deci, Am Psychol, 2000
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<td>6) Promote transferability and sustainability of new behaviours</td>
<td>Translation of new behaviours to different environments – e.g. post-programme activities</td>
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<td>7) Promoting relatedness</td>
<td>Encouraging social support through interaction with ‘men like me’ and family members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Promoting competence and mastery</td>
<td>SMART goals and personalised targets to provide optimal challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>9) Supporting self-regulation and autonomy</td>
<td>Provide choice around how to achieve change and promote recognition of personal benefits of change</td>
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EuroFIT Programme development

- Sociological theory
- Previous programmes e.g. FFIT
- Psychological theory

Specification of function and form

Specification of logic model – theory of action

Users in 4 countries – coaches, fans
### EuroFIT: Development of logic model

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Attract men</th>
<th>Get them hooked</th>
<th>Keep them hooked</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Relational</strong></td>
<td><strong>How?</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Club and coach commitment to engage with training, and organisation and preparation for each session</td>
<td>• <strong>Draw on multiple motivations:</strong> the desire to (re)gain fitness; the interest in their club</td>
<td>• Men welcomed and valued</td>
<td>• Continue to support develop. of peer relationships through interaction &amp; mutual learning</td>
<td>• Men take new behaviours from one social field (EuroFIT programme in the football club) to others (family, workplace, social)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Appeal to men in ways that support existing identities (e.g. club symbols)</td>
<td>• Make clear that they are with 'men like them': visibly and with similar interests</td>
<td>• Support deepening sense of symbolic closeness to club e.g. through becoming a team within club</td>
<td>• The new forms of behaviour have become integrated with who men are</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Reassure men they will not 'stand out'</td>
<td>• Provide early support in ways that do not challenge masculine identities (e.g. emphasising learning new skills based on evidence to take control)</td>
<td>• Building men's understanding of the 'science' to support autonomy and interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Why?</strong></td>
<td>• Encourage peer interaction, competence &amp; enjoyment</td>
<td>• Encourage celebrating success</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Men in FFIT had thought of changing behaviour for some time - ideal opportunity</td>
<td><strong>Why?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Why?</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>• The chance to have an insider view of club was a powerful draw</td>
<td>• Some men are anxious - increasing feelings of relatedness/value/being with others like them is important</td>
<td>• Peer interaction in familiar social field (fitness in FC) with ‘men like me’ allows changes in taken-for-granted behaviours</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Appearing concerned about diet/body shape is seen as NOT part of a masculinised identity whereas going to a football club is. The setting allows the possibility of transformation</td>
<td>• Supporting existing identities helps men feel secure in group and allows new identities to emerge</td>
<td>• Deepening sense of commit./enjoyment → formation of collective identities → new identities in health behaviours</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Relatedness/competence are essential to provide context for new identities</td>
<td>• Sense of ownership of new information supports autonomy; application of new competencies supports experience of success → embedding of health behaviours</td>
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Co-development – EuroFIT club coaches

1 day ‘brainstorming’ workshop with coaches from 14/15 EuroFIT clubs at EPL in London
Outcomes from coach workshop

- Clubs on board with programme
- Coaches recognised importance of rigorous evaluation
- Considered ‘cultural-sensitisation’ of EuroFIT to their club
- Vicarious learning around recruitment
- Collective group identity around EuroFIT
Summary

• FFIT
  – Culturally informed programme → development of sociological theory of behaviour change

• EuroFIT
  – Incorporates learning from FFIT, psychological theory of sustained behaviour change to map function and form, and develop a theory of action

• EuroFIT RCT in 15 clubs in England, the Netherlands, Portugal and Norway in 2015-17
  – Primary outcomes: objective physical activity and sedentary behaviour at 12 months