Investigating Effectiveness of Gain- and Loss-Framed Physical Activity Messages In Relation to Stress Management: A Cross-Cultural Study

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Background

• Physical inactivity accounts for approx. 6% of mortality from non-communicable diseases worldwide (WHO, 2017).

• Message framing interventions have been used to persuade people by providing information on the positive consequences of physical activity or negative consequences of inactivity (Rothman et al., 2006).

• Evidence shows that messages are more persuasive when there is a match between the message recipient’s characteristics and the content or framing of the message (Uskul et al., 2009).

• Majority of the studies have been conducted in Western countries.

• There is no studies comparing Turkey (an Eastern-oriented country) and the UK.
Aim

To investigate effectiveness of gain- and loss-framed messages on intentions and attitudes towards physical activity (PA) university students living in the UK and Turkey.
METHOD

Study Design

3 (Message) x 3 (Time) x 2 (Country)

Gain-framed  
Loss-framed  
Control  
Baseline  
Immediate FU  
2-week FU  
Turkey  
UK

Participants: 309 university students (Turkey: 200, UK: 109) 
(51% female; Mean age=21.68, SD=1.80)
The **loss-framed** message \((M = 11.89, SD = 4.77)\) was more effective than the **gain-framed** \((M = 10.51, SD = 5.18)\) and **control** \((M = 10.48, SD = 4.64)\) messages after 2 weeks of message exposure \((\chi^2(2) = 22.17, p<.001)\).
The loss-framed message ($M = 20.11, SD = 1.95$) was significantly more effective than the gain-framed ($M = 18.97, SD = 3.39$) and control ($M = 19.19, SD = 2.43$) messages after 2 weeks of message exposure ($\chi^2(2) = 15.40, p < .001$).
“I think the positive one is just a bit... it’s just too positive, too ‘clappy-happy’ because it’s like, all the government ones are like that. I resist those because it’s just like... it doesn’t connect with me.”

Female, 21
Take home message:

In message framing intervention development, detailed investigation of the characteristics and needs of the target group through both qualitative and quantitative studies is crucial.
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References


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THANK YOU!

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