

The Use of Social Cognitive Theory to Predict Strength Training Behavior



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Abstract/Summary

This study, based upon social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986, 1997), examined the relationships among self-efficacy, outcome expectancy, intention, and behavior. According to theory, self-efficacy is believed to directly influence one's intention to perform a specific behavior as well as exert influence indirectly through its effects on outcome expectancy. In turn, one's intention to perform a specific behavior is thought to be the best predictor of behavior. The results supported the hypothesis: self-efficacy had a direct effect on intention and indirectly effected intention through its influence on outcome expectancy. Also, intention was a very accurate predictor of behavior.

Background Information

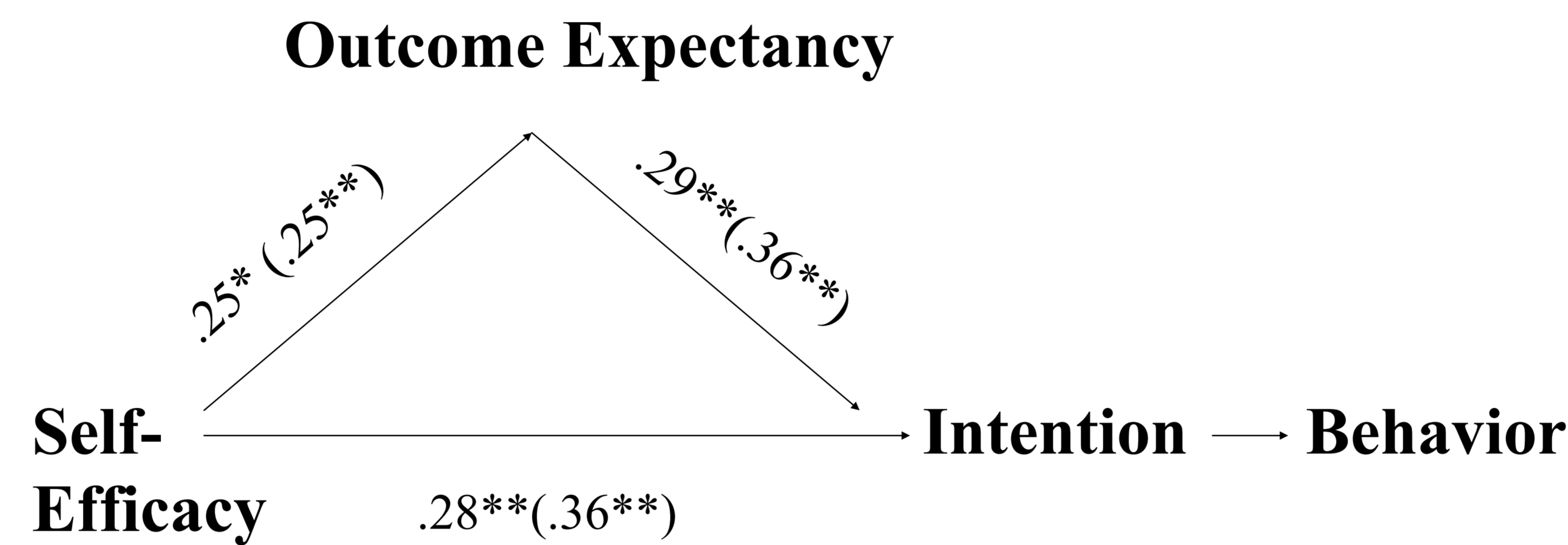
The question asked in this study was whether or not the proposed model held true for MSU students' behavior in regards to strength training for thirty minutes. The hypothesis was that Bandura's model would be accurate.

Methodology

Participants were 54 students who were enrolled in Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Service classes at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Participants were given instruments that asked them to rate their self-efficacy toward strength training for 30 consecutive minutes in spite of various constraints, possible outcomes resulting from strength training and the valence of those outcomes, and how likely they were to strength train for 30 minutes at least once during the following three days. Three days later participants were asked if they had strength trained since completing the instruments. The statistical technique of path analysis was used to test the proposed relationships among variables.

Social Cognitive Theory

By: Albert Bandura



* $p < .10$ ** $p < .05$

Recreation Activity Confidence Scale

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Certainly Cannot										Certainly Can
		Probably Cannot		Maybe (50/50 Chance)		Probably Can				
I can strength train (lift weights) for at least 30 consecutive minutes when										
1. I am feeling tired.										
2. I am feeling under pressure from school.										
3. I am sore.										
4. I am feeling depressed.										
5. I am feeling anxious.										
6. I am feeling sick.										
7. There are other interesting things to do.										
8. I feel pressured by my friends to do something else.										

Positiveness/Negativeness Scale

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very negative	moderately negative	slightly negative	neutral	slightly positive	moderately positive	very positive

Most likely outcomes of strength training for at least 30 consecutive minutes.

	Outcomes	Positiveness/Negativeness	Importance
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____

Results

The results supported the hypothesis: self-efficacy had a direct effect on intention and indirectly effected intention through its influence on outcome expectancy. Specifically, participants with stronger self-efficacy were surer they would strength train and believed outcomes associated with strength training were positive. In turn, those who were surer they would strength train were much more likely to strength train.

Discussions/Conclusions

One limitation of this study was that only 54 students were involved. According to a paper this student researcher read on calculating sample sizes for path analyses, the current study should have used at least 80 participants. In the future, the instruments should be administered to at least 80 students.

In terms of practical application, Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (TRS) could use this information to develop non pharmaceutical interventions to address issues such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, and mild depression. First, TRS could use the instruments to measure the relevant variables. Then they could implement interventions designed to strengthen self-efficacy and alter the expected outcomes and valence of those outcomes. Altering these two variables should make clients more sure of participating in physical activities.

Acknowledgements

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