

Ashlyn E. Smeltzer

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LSU Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA

Mentor's name: Michelle Moore, Psy.D

Mentor's affiliation: LSUHSC Department of Psychiatry and Orthopaedic Surgery

“Assessing Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivators in a Structured Wellness Program”

Physical wellness encompasses an individual's physical health and health-related behaviors, such as physical activity, nutrition, and medication adherence (Williams et al., 2011). Most individuals are intrinsically motivated toward physical wellness (Sebire et al., 2009), and a positive correlation between physical wellness and personal autonomy has been identified (Williams et al., 2011). Studies have also found extrinsic motivation, such as incentives or competition, can increase gym attendance (Courtemanche et al., 2021). Furthermore, individuals' perceived physical wellness has been positively correlated with a sense of community and empowerment provided by gyms and group fitness classes (Carter & Alexander, 2019; Pickett et al., 2016). Structured programs can provide both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators for improving wellness by cultivating community and support, encouraging competition, and allowing the opportunity to experience satisfaction with individual performance (Carter & Alexander, 2019; Courtemanche Hopson, & Groskreutz, 2021; Pickett et al., 2016; Sebire, Standage, & Vansteenkiste, 2009). The Wellness Challenge provided both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators for improving wellness; however, in our last poster (Smeltzer et al.) in April 2025, we only specifically asked participants about the external motivators, such as social support, teamwork, and competition.

Based on the results of our prior study (Smeltzer et al., 2025), we are including additional questions to understand participants' intrinsic motivators, current exercise behaviors, and continued wellness behaviors after the challenge has ended. This survey-based study aims to examine whether intrinsic factors motivated participants to join the structured three-week wellness program at LSUHSC and continue participation in wellness activities following completion of the challenge, more than extrinsic factors. Pre-participation, we measured six dimensions of perceived wellness using the Perceived Wellness Scale (PWS) and motivations of exercise behavior using the Behavioral Regulation in Exercise Questionnaire-2 (BREQ-2). Participants tracked their progress across five wellness activities. Post-participation, perceived wellness using the PWS and participant satisfaction using the Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) were assessed. The second post-program survey is a longitudinal survey to be completed four weeks after the Wellness challenge has ended to evaluate continued wellness activity. Based on responses to the last PWS, we theorized that people who participate in the wellness challenge are already engaged in physical wellness activities and are more intrinsically motivated towards wellness in general. Therefore for the current study, we are including the BREQ-2 to quantify the amount of physical activity participants engage in before the wellness program begins. Data will be collected during the Spring 2026 Wellness Challenge. The authors hypothesize that the participants will have high scores of physical wellness from the BREQ-2. We further hypothesize that participants motivated by intrinsic factors will demonstrate greater participation in wellness activities during the three-week wellness program and will continue to participate in wellness activities once the program has been completed.