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Active exercisers with a higher orientation toward task-approach goal might experience higher happiness: the mediating role of dispositional self-control

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Active exercisers engage in physical activity or training sessions with intentions that are inherently influenced by stable orientations toward achievement goals (i.e. self-regulatory representations about specific outcomes that influence one’s behaviour). Using the 3 × 2 achievement goals framework in the leisure-time physical activity (LTPA) setting, the purpose of this study was to examine the development of happiness (i.e. short-term and temporary contentment) in active exercisers by testing a model in which dispositional self-control (i.e. stable capability of the self to initiate goal-directed behaviours and inhibit goal-disruptive behaviours) played the role of mediator between goal orientations and happiness. Five hundred nine active exercisers (329 females and 180 males, M_age = 32.42, SD_age = 10.85, from 18 to 65 years old) answered questionnaires on LTPA amount, orientations toward achievement goals for LTPA, dispositional self-control, and happiness. We conducted correlation and structural equation model analyses. Results revealed that: (a) orientation toward task-approach goal (i.e. stable tendency to desire to perform well) positively predicted dispositional self-control and happiness; (b) orientation toward self-avoidance goal (i.e. stable tendency to desire to avoid performing worse than before) negatively predicted dispositional self-control and happiness; and (c) dispositional self-control partially mediated the positive effect of orientation toward task-approach goal on happiness. This study suggests that task-approach goal (or self-avoidance goal) can spark adaptive (or maladaptive) effects in terms of self-regulation and happiness. Theoretical and practical implications for the study of the relationships between achievement goals, self-regulation, and happiness are discussed.

Keywords: personality; task-approach goal; self-regulation; physical activity; well-being

What does make the present moment worth living? Of all times, human beings have been interested in exploring and creating the conditions of happiness. At the modern age, positive psychology has emerged as a psychological science of what makes people motivated, enthusiastic and happy, and has conveyed the view that human beings are naturally inclined to develop positively. Happiness, considered as part of a broader concept named subjective well-being (Diener, Scollon, & Lucas, 2004), can be regarded as a positive “immediate, short-term, temporary and retrospective mental state” (Chui & Wong, 2016, p. 1036). In other words, happiness is a temporary contentment, and this study investigates self-regulatory predictors of happiness.

A recent study of Briki (2018) showed that approach (or avoidance) temperament—defined as a neurobiological sensitivity to appetitive (or aversive) stimuli (Elliot & Thrash, 2010)—were
likely to promote (or harm) self-regulation and happiness, and the author suggested that happiness enhanced (or diminished) in response to adaptive (or maladaptive) self-regulatory mechanisms. More specifically, Briki (2018) suggested that “approach temperament would activate helpful means and override unhelpful ones [and that] approach-based regulations (e.g. BAS, promotion focus) and achievement goals (e.g. task-approach goals) would mediate such effects” (p. 115). He also suggested that “avoidance temperament would prioritise unhelpful means over appropriate ones [and that] avoidance-based regulations (e.g. BIS, prevention focus) and achievement goals (e.g. task-avoidance goals) could account for such an effect” (p. 115). In line with this, this study aims at examining the impact of achievement goals on happiness in the leisure-time physical activity (LTPA) setting. LTPA can be defined as “cumulative, acute bouts of physical activity that are planned, structured, and repeated and result in improvement or maintenance of one or more components of physical fitness, including cardiorespiratory capacity, muscle strength, body composition, and flexibility” (Puetz, O’Connor, & Dishman, 2006, p. 866).

Achievement goals and happiness

Achievement goals correspond to “self-regulatory representations focused on relatively specific outcomes or events” and to “direct (proximal) determinants of behaviour” (Elliot & Church, 1997, p. 172). The literature reports several achievement goal models that evolved over the three past decades through progressive refinements on the competence conception (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliot & Church, 1997; Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Elliot, Murayama, & Pekrun, 2011; Nicholls, 1984). The most recent framework, i.e. the $3 \times 2$ achievement goal model (Elliot et al., 2011), consists in combining three competence standards, i.e. task (task mastery), self (self-comparison over time), and other (social comparison), with two motivational motives, i.e. approach (“fighting”) vs. avoidance (“flying”). It then gives rise to six achievement goals, such as task-approach goal (i.e. desire to do well), self-approach goal (i.e. desire to do better than before), other-approach goal (i.e. desire to do better than others), task-avoidance goal (i.e. desire to avoid doing poorly), self-avoidance goal (i.e. desire to avoid doing worse than before), and other-avoidance goal (i.e. desire to avoid doing worse than others).

Based on this framework, Gillet, Lafreniere, and Huyghebaert, and Fouquereau (2015) examined the relationships between achievement goals and positive affect within educational and work settings. Gillet et al. (2015) observed that: (a) task-avoidance, self-approach, and other-based goals were either positively related or unrelated to positive affect, depending upon the setting; and (b) task-approach goal (or self-avoidance goal) consistently appeared to be positively related (or unrelated) to positive affect across the two settings. Finally, this study supports the view that task-approach goal “is optimal for phenomenological experience and the processing of competence-relevant information” (Elliot et al., 2011, p. 641) and thus can foster happiness.

The mediating role of dispositional self-control

Briki’s (2018) study showed that dispositional self-control mediated the relationships of approach and avoidance temperament with subjective well-being. Dispositional self-control corresponds to a stable capability of the self to initiate goal-facilitative behaviours and activities and override goal-destructive behaviours and activities (De Ridder & Gillebaart, 2016; Gillebaart & De Ridder, 2015; Hagger, 2013, 2014). Authors argued that dispositional self-control would foster the development of adaptive cognitions and behaviours that would promote goal attainment and positive feelings (e.g. Gillebaart & De Ridder, 2015). Why can dispositional self-control mediate the relationship between task-approach goal and happiness? The social investment principle (e.g. Roberts & Wood, 2006), assuming that people’s social and institutional engagements
(e.g. sport, work, family) can entail notable changes in their personalities via the modification of their representations, values, beliefs, goals and expectations, offers the view that attitudes that people endorse while performing institutional tasks can transform their personalities and life experiences. Using this perspective, we presume that exercisers with a high tendency to endorse task-approach goals while performing bouts of physical activity would experience more direct, immediate and pleasant competence evaluations (Elliot et al., 2011), which in turn would enhance dispositional self-control, positive experiences of goal attainment, and happiness.

Because dispositional self-control reflects the ability to select cognitive and behavioural means, we assume that this variable can influence reasoning. According to the dual-process theory of reasoning (e.g. Evans & Stanovich, 2013), reasoning encompasses two types of processing: Type 1 and Type 2. Type 1 processing is autonomous and independent of working memory, thus producing fast, intuitive, associative, and automatic thinking. Type 2 processing, by contrast, depends upon working memory and involves hypothetical thinking, thereby fostering slow, deliberative, and sequential thinking—then yielding higher levels of cognitive performance. The authors of the theory also argue that Type 1 processing comprises one mode of processing—the autonomous mind—, while Type 2 processing comprises two modes of processing—the reflective (the higher regulatory level) and algorithmic minds. They assume that Type 1 processing implements short-term goals, whereas the algorithmic mind either activates or overrides such goals according to the instructions sent out by the reflective mind. Following Evans and Stanovich’s framework, we can suggest that dispositional self-control would influence the reflective mind—corresponding to the “higher level goal states” (Evans et al., 2013, p. 230)—through the selection of goals to be pursued or overridden. Indeed, one of the most important mechanisms of dispositional self-control is goal selection (Briki, 2016; Gil de Ridder & De Ridder, 2015).

Goal selection enables the self to manage its own changes by embracing goals and sub-goals viewed as important and by eschewing goals and sub-goals viewed as trivial. In other words, goal selection aims at reorganising the complex hierarchy of goals within the self along temporal and abstraction-related scales. Hence, new values and ideals shape long-term and abstract goals, which in turn shape short-term and concrete ones. Based on findings exhibiting that autonomous regulation (i.e. based on a strong sense of personal volition) and approach regulation (i.e., concerned with gain and success) positively predicted dispositional self-control, Briki (2016, 2018) suggested that any personal and social incentives yielding such regulations could promote goal selection. Therefore, because task-approach goal combines approach orientation, immediacy and focus on the “here and now” of the task or activity, we can suggest that orientation toward task-approach goal is likely to foster goal selection, which in turn can allow the reflective mind to instruct the algorithmic one to activate short-term helpful means and inhibit short-term unhelpful (though gratifying) means. Indeed, we assume that the combination of the mechanisms of activation and inhibition can promote goal attainment process (e.g. De Ridder & Gil de Ridder, 2016; Hagger, 2014), thereby yielding higher sense of immediate happiness (e.g. Cheung, Gil de Ridder, Kroese, & De Ridder, 2014; De Ridder, Lensvelt-Mulders, Finkenauer, Stok, & Baumeister, 2012; Tangney, Baumeister, & Boone, 2004). In the present study, we attempted to examine whether active exercisers with a higher orientation toward task-approach goal would experience higher levels of happiness through experiencing higher levels of dispositional self-control (see Figure 1).

**Method**

**Participants**

Five hundred nine individuals, recruited from the United States (329 females, 64.6%, and 180 males; $M_{age} = 32.42, SD_{age} = 10.85$, from 18 to 65 years old), voluntarily participated in the
study. They were recruited from a crowdsourcing online platform (ClickWorker). On the average, the LTPA index (see the “Preliminary measure” subsection) of these participants was 73.2 ($SD = 57.1$), indicating that this sample could be considered as a sample of active exercisers (i.e. LTPA index > 23). Moreover, this sample was composed of African American (14.1%), Asian American (7.5%), Caucasian American (64.6%), Hispanic/Latino American (6.7%), and other (7.1%).

**Study design and procedure**

Conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki and the recommendations of the Institutional Review Board of the author’s university, the whole study was carried out through the online platform with the use of a survey form comprising general information about the study and demographic and psychological questions. The investigator of the study, who is also the author of the article, paid a global service including the recruitment of participants having specific characteristics (i.e. country, gender, age). The investigator of the survey had no direct contact with participants and had no personal information about them. The online platform was in charge of remunerating the participants after answering the questions.

Before being able to start the survey per se, participants were invited to read basic information about the study. Firstly, they read that the study aimed at investigating the relationships between...
goals for LTPA, self-perceptions and feelings, in order to allow us to advance our understanding of people’s daily life functioning. Secondly, they read that they had to perform regularly LTPA to partake in the study and read a definition of LTPA. Thirdly, they read that their responses to the questions would be anonymous, would stay confidential, and would be securely stored by the investigator of the study. Hence, they were encouraged to report their honest thoughts and feelings. Fourthly, they read that every participant would receive a compensation of 0.30$ after taking part in the study—participants were invited not to take part in the survey in case they perceived that this compensation was below their standards or expectations. When they accepted to partake in the study, they had to provide their informed consent. Lastly, participants read, once again, that their responses study would be completely anonymous and confidential and, thus, that they were encouraged to answer all the questions spontaneously and honestly. Participants started answering the questionnaires in the following order: (a) LTPA amount, (b) achievement goals for LTPA, (c) dispositional self-control, and (d) happiness. After completing the survey, participants were thanked for their valuable contribution.

**Measures**

**Preliminary measure**

The use of the LTPA Questionnaire (Godin & Shephard, 1985) aimed at assessing the quantity of performed LTPA per week (i.e. on the average the number of times a participant performs LTPA for more than 15 min during a typical week) in order to control the LTPA means score of the used sample. This assessment concerned three types of exercise: Strenuous, moderate, and mild/light. The LTPA index was calculated via this equation: $\text{LTPA amount} = (9 \times x \text{ strenuous LTPA unit}) + (5 \times x \text{ moderate LTPA unit}) + (3 \times x \text{ light LTPA unit})$, with $x$ the number of times the exerciser is used to performing a LTPA unit for more than 15 min per week. According to Godin and Shephard (1985), a score below 14, between 14 and 23, or above 23 indicates that the individual is “insufficiently active” (or “sedentary”), “moderately active”, or “active”, respectively.

**Main measures**

The main measures of the study concerned orientation toward achievement goals for LTPA, dispositional self-control and happiness.

**Orientation toward achievement goals for LTPA**

The goals were assessed by an adapted version of the $3 \times 2$ Achievement Goal Questionnaire for Sport (Mascret, Elliot, & Cury, 2015) to the LTPA setting. The adaptation of the AGQS consisted in starting all the items by “In leisure-time physical activity, my goal is…” instead of starting all of them by “In sport, my goal is…” The questionnaire was composed of six subscales: The 3-item task-approach goal (e.g. “… my goal is to perform well”; $\alpha = 0.752$; eigenvalues = 2.207, 0.459, 0.334; factor loadings = 0.684–0.767), the 3-item self-approach goal (e.g. “… my goal is to do better than what I usually do”, $\alpha = 0.838$; eigenvalues = 2.266, 0.417, 0.317; factor loadings = 0.723–0.791), the 3-item other-approach goal (e.g. “… my goal is to do better than others”, $\alpha = 0.935$; eigenvalues = 2.654, 0.195, 0.151; factor loadings = 0.871–0.898), the 3-item task-avoidance goal (e.g. “… my goal is to avoid performing badly”, $\alpha = 0.797$; eigenvalues = 2.141, 0.474, 0.385; factor loadings = 0.699–0.750), the 3-item self-avoidance goal (e.g. “… my goal is to avoid doing worse than I usually do”, $\alpha = 0.787$; eigenvalues = 2.103, 0.541, 0.356; factor loadings = 0.627–0.765), and the 3-item other-avoidance goal (e.g. “… my goal is to avoid doing worse than others”, $\alpha = 0.925$; eigenvalues = 2.611, 0.220, 0.169; factor
loadings = 0.855–0.886). The participants answered every item on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from “1” (“strongly disagree”) to “7” (“strongly agree”).

**Dispositional self-control**

Dispositional self-control was assessed via Tangney et al.’s (2004) 13-item questionnaire (e.g. “I am able to work effectively toward long-term goals”). The items were answered on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from "1" ("not at all") to "7" ("very much so") (α = 0.867; eigenvalues = 5.059, 1.682, 1.105; factor loadings = 0.458–0.804).

**Happiness**

Happiness was assessed via the 8-item Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills & Argyle, 2002; e.g. “I feel fully mentally alert”). The participants answered the questions on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from “1” (“strongly disagree”) to “6” (“strongly agree”) (α = 0.744; eigenvalues = 3.010, 1.267, 1.044; factor loadings = 0.338–0.759). An item was excluded from the questionnaire because of its unsatisfactory factor loading score (“I find beauty in some things”, factor loading = 0.338 < 0.400). The final 7-item questionnaire exhibited satisfactory psychometric scores (α = 0.752; eigenvalues = 2.932, 1.069, 1.044; factor loadings = 0.483–0.754).

**Results**

**Descriptive statistics and correlations**

We performed descriptive statistics and correlation analyses with IBM SPSS 24. The results are described in Table 1. Dispositional self-control appeared to be unrelated to orientations toward task-based goals, other-based goals, and self-approach goal. It appeared to be negatively related to orientation toward self-avoidance goal. All achievement goal orientations appeared to be positively related to each other. Happiness appeared to be positively related to dispositional self-control and orientation toward task-approach goal.

**Paths and mediations**

We performed the analyses with IBM SPSS AMOS 24 software (bootstrap samples = 5,000; bias-corrected confidence intervals [CIs] = 95). The paths values presented in the results section are standardised coefficients (see Figure 2). The model yielded the following fit indexes: $\chi^2 (15, N = 509) = 2420.453, p < 0.001$; RMSEA = 0.562; CFI = 0.075; NFI = 0.079; AIC = 2478.453. The path analysis revealed that orientation toward task-approach goal positively predicted dispositional self-control ($\beta = 0.192, p = 0.000$) and happiness ($\beta = 0.151, p = 0.000$), and that dispositional self-control positively predicted happiness ($\beta = 0.530, p = 0.000$) (see Figure 2). The path analysis also showed that orientation toward self-avoidance goal negatively predicted dispositional self-control ($\beta = -0.121, p = 0.005$) and happiness ($\beta = -0.099, p = 0.006$) (see Figure 2). Furthermore, the mediation analysis exhibited only one mediating effect: Orientation toward task-approach goal significantly predicted happiness through enhanced dispositional self-control (indirect effect: 95% CIs = 0.013–0.187, $p = 0.025$).

**Discussion**

Based on the $3 \times 2$ achievement goal framework, this study aimed at advancing knowledge of the happiness development by examining the mediating role of dispositional self-control between achievement goal orientations and happiness.
Table 1. Correlations for all the manifest variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent variable</th>
<th>Skew</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Dispositional self-control</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>4.382</td>
<td>1.067</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Task-approach goal</td>
<td>−1.253</td>
<td>5.875</td>
<td>1.068</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Self-approach goal</td>
<td>−1.081</td>
<td>5.772</td>
<td>1.131</td>
<td>−0.042</td>
<td>0.752***</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Other-approach goal</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>3.661</td>
<td>1.836</td>
<td>−0.063</td>
<td>0.296***</td>
<td>0.307***</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Task-avoidance goal</td>
<td>−0.570</td>
<td>5.170</td>
<td>1.425</td>
<td>−0.052</td>
<td>0.707***</td>
<td>0.585**</td>
<td>0.441***</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Self-avoidance goal</td>
<td>−0.543</td>
<td>5.281</td>
<td>1.346</td>
<td>−0.091*</td>
<td>0.647***</td>
<td>0.720***</td>
<td>0.363***</td>
<td>0.778***</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Other-avoidance goal</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>3.597</td>
<td>1.829</td>
<td>−0.084</td>
<td>0.316***</td>
<td>0.321***</td>
<td>0.893***</td>
<td>0.524***</td>
<td>0.444***</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Happiness</td>
<td>−0.087</td>
<td>3.922</td>
<td>0.928</td>
<td>0.550***</td>
<td>0.106*</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>−0.048</td>
<td>−0.010</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, and *** $p < .001$ for a two-tailed test.
Adaptive effects of orientation toward task-approach goal

The correlation analyses revealed that, among all the goal orientations, orientation toward task-approach goal was the only one that appeared to be positively associated with happiness. In addition, the structural analyses revealed that: (a) orientation toward task-approach goal positively predicted dispositional self-control and happiness; (b) dispositional self-control positively predicted happiness; and (c) dispositional self-control partially mediated the positive effect of orientation toward task-approach goal on happiness. These results support previous studies that showed that mastery-approach goal (i.e., an achievement goal combining task-related and self-related conceptions of competence with an approach motivational motive) positively predicted positive affect, enjoyment, intrinsic motivation, task absorption, and goal attainment (e.g., Elliot & Church, 1997; Gaudreau & Braaten, 2016; Lee, Sheldon, & Turban, 2003), and that task-approach goal positively predicted positive affect (Gillett et al., 2015). They also support empirical and theoretical works positively linking dispositional self-control to happiness-related constructs (e.g., Briki, 2016; De Ridder et al., 2012; De Ridder & Gillebaart, 2016). In sum, these results support our initial view that task-approach goal can foster self-regulation, goal-directed process, and happiness.

Figure 2. Structural equation model. All coefficients are standardized and solid and bold lines indicate statistical significance. For a two-tailed test, the significance thresholds are ** $p < .01$ and *** $p < .001$. 

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Interestingly, and contrary to self-approach goal that involves pleasant personal trajectory, task-approach goal involves pleasant immediacy, characterised by a pleasant focus on the here and now of the pursued activity. Such immediacy resembles the concept of positivity, corresponding to a state of being aware, attentive, and receptive in the here and now, and research showed that immediacy practice yielded higher sense of positive affect and lower sense of depressive symptoms (e.g. Howells, Ivtzan, & Eiroa-Orosa, 2016). Moreover, happiness represents a state of “immediate contentment” and, thus, stands in contrast to the other form of subjective well-being, i.e. life satisfaction, which constitutes a deeper and more continuous contentment (e.g. Chui & Wong, 2016). Therefore, the positive link between task-approach goal and happiness may be due to the capability of task-approach goal to immerse the achiever into the ongoing task, thereby yielding immediate enjoyment. Finally, this study supports the importance of distinguishing task-based from self-based competence conceptions, suggesting that the 3 × 2 achievement goal framework (Elliot et al., 2011) would help advance the understanding of cognitive processes underlying human achievement and happiness.

Maladaptive effects of orientation toward self-avoidance goal

The correlation analyses showed that orientation toward self-avoidance goal was negatively associated with dispositional self-control, while the path analyses revealed that it negatively predicted dispositional self-control. These results suggest that this orientation would entail poor self-regulatory processes. Furthermore, the correlation analyses indicated that orientation toward self-avoidance goal was unrelated to happiness—supporting Gillet et al.’s (2015) analyses showing no relationships between self-avoidance goal and positive affect—, whereas it negatively predicted happiness. This last finding echoed previous studies showing that self-avoidance goal negatively predicted exam performance and energy in class (Elliot et al., 2011; Mascr et et al., 2015). Why would orientation toward self-avoidance goal be a maladaptive variable? The reflection and evaluation model (REM) of comparative thinking (Markman & McMullen, 2003) may help understand the effects of self-avoidance goal on psychological outcomes. According to this model, negative emotion can be elicited by upward comparisons that occur within an evaluative mode of thinking. Evaluation takes place when social or temporal comparative thinking involves a reference point against which the individual evaluates his or her present standing. Therefore, as guided by the REM (Markman & McMullen, 2003), we can presume that self-avoidance goal can yield negative states of mind because the upward temporal comparison that this orientation involves would occur within an evaluative mode of thinking (e.g. “Hmm, I’m getting old… Doing this task was easier before. If only it were possible to come back to the past!... The goal is to avoid doing worse than before!”). An empirical support of this suggestion is given by Gernigon, Pereira Dias, Riou, Briki, and Ninot’s (2015) study on people suffering from recent spinal cord injury. Gernigon et al. (2015) revealed that relative to LTPA-participants, non-LTPA-participants reported to: (a) be more oriented toward mastery-avoidance goal (i.e. an achievement goal combining task-related and self-related conceptions of competence with an avoidance motivational motive); and (b) experience lower sense of self-worth. Interestingly, the authors attributed the negative link between orientation toward mastery-avoidance goal and self-worth to the disagreeable effect of a descending personal trajectory, which would involve an upward temporal comparison carried out on the evaluative mode—in the sense that the present situation is viewed as worse than the past situation—, thus yielding deleterious self-perceptions and feelings.
Conclusion and perspectives

The most provocative result of the present study is that dispositional self-control partially mediated the positive effect of orientation toward task-approach goal on happiness, thus highlighting the adaptive nature of task-approach goal in terms of self-regulation and happiness. Our study however contains some limitations. A first limitation concerns the predictive weakness of the cross-sectional design of the study, given the fact that the predictors and outcomes of the study were assessed simultaneously. A second limitation concerns the fact that we examined only one sample of participants, thus not offering the chance to confirm our results in the LTPA setting. A third limitation has to do with the fact that we recruited participants online and we did not control the way and the conditions under which they answered the questionnaires. As a result, further studies should employ a longitudinal design — allowing the investigators to take into account the temporal relationship between predictors and outcomes — with active exercisers who would be recruited from LTPA-related areas or institutions. From an applied standpoint, our results highlight and support the importance of pursuing task-approach goals in the LTPA setting for sparking and maintaining efficient self-regulatory processes (Elliot et al., 2011; Gillet et al., 2015). In addition, our results suggest the necessity of avoiding the endorsement of self-avoidance goals because they may activate upward and evaluative self-comparative reasoning, which may yield harmful cognitions, feelings and behaviours.

References


