

Goal Setting Practices Among Health and Physical Activity Professionals

1.0 Introduction



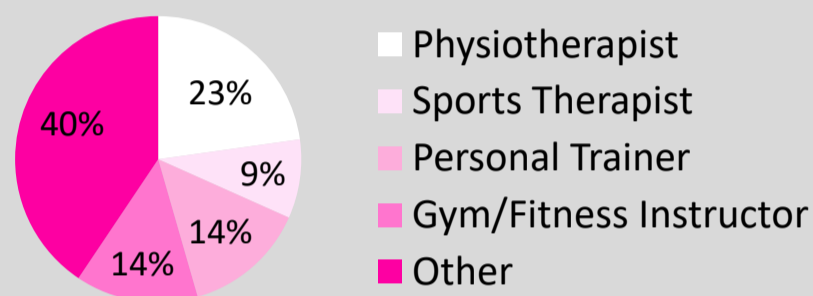
Goal setting is a commonly used strategy to promote increased levels of physical activity (Swann et al., 2020). There is currently a lack of research into the approaches utilised by health and physical activity professionals, but one strategy is the SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) framework (Doran, 1981). However, recent research has criticised the SMART acronym suggesting it is not appropriate to use with all individuals (Swann et al., 2022). The aim of this project was to analyse the current approaches to goal setting utilised in applied practice by professionals within a variety of health and physical activity settings.

2.0 Method



Participant Occupations

A total of 22 health and physical activity professionals (13 F, 9 M, aged 31 ± 13 years) were recruited via direct email.



Participants completed a 10-15 minute online survey regarding their goal setting practices.

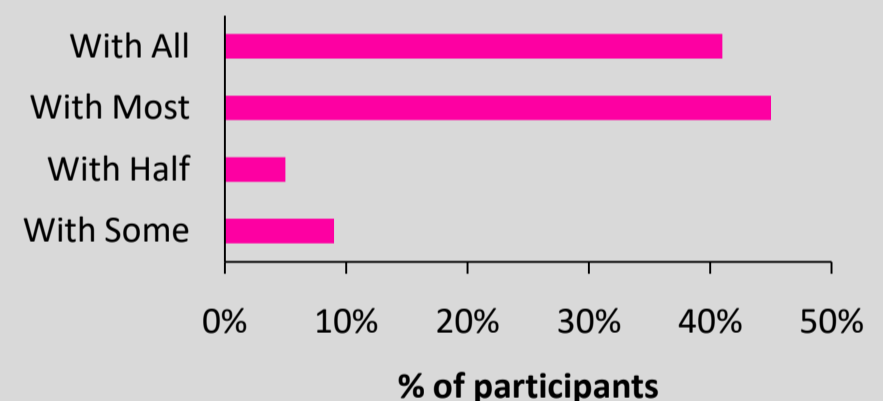
Data was analysed using content analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

3.0 Results



Participants identified several reasons for setting goals with their clients, including to manage expectations, provide motivation, track progress, allow personalised session planning and to give clients a sense of achievement. More than half of participants stated that the SMART framework is utilised/informs their goal setting approach, although there were inconsistencies in how it is applied amongst providers. Few other strategies were mentioned but those that were included the WOOP (wish, outcome, obstacle, plan) strategy and following guidelines from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

Frequency of Goal Setting Use



4.0 Conclusion



Health and physical activity professionals are reliant on the SMART approach for goal setting with clients, despite research suggesting this may not always be the optimal approach. Overall, completing a UROS project has been an extremely rewarding experience.

5.0 References



- Doran, G.T. (1981). There's a SMART way to write managements's goals and objectives. *Management review*, 70(11).
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