The influence of spokesperson achievement on consumer goal pursuit : a dual-mechanism perspective

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**THE INFLUENCE OF SPOKESPERSON ACHIEVEMENT
ON CONSUMER GOAL PURSUIT:
A DUAL-MECHANISM PERSPECTIVE**

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NANYANG BUSINESS SCHOOL

2018

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ON CONSUMER GOAL PURSUIT:
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SUMMARY

While highly successful spokespersons are ubiquitous in the marketplace, ordinary ones with lower domain achievements are increasingly being featured in sports and fitness-related marketing communication campaigns. This research involves exploring this emerging trend by examining how the spokesperson's level of achievement influences consumers' motivation to pursue a goal in the same domain.

I propose that perceived inspiration and attainability of the spokesperson's domain achievement form two opposing forces predicting consumers' motivation for a same-domain goal pursuit. Specifically, a higher-achieving spokesperson is more inspiring, but his or her achievement is less attainable, compared to a lower-achieving one. The relative influences of these two assessments, subsequently, determine consumers' intention to pursue the goal. Moreover, the desirability versus feasibility focus shifts consumers' relative emphasis on perceived inspiration versus perceived attainability, which, in turn, affects their behavioral response towards the spokesperson with varying levels of achievement.

The results from five studies provide support for my proposition. In Studies 1A and 1B, perceived inspiration and attainability of the spokesperson's sporting achievement explained consumers' intention to pursue running (Study 1A) and their willingness to purchase a fitness device (Study 1B). Moreover, the findings of both studies suggest that these two forces work in opposite directions. In Studies 2 and 3, consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus of goal pursuit was found to moderate the effect of the spokesperson's running achievement on their intention to take up running. When consumers focused on the desirability aspect of the goal (i.e., under an abstract construal or an outcome focus), they showed a higher intention to run after

being exposed to the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson. On the other hand, when they focused on the feasibility aspect of the goal (i.e., under a concrete construal or a process focus), they were more motivated by the lower- (vs. higher-) achieving spokesperson to pursue running. Further, Study 3 also revealed a positive spillover effect of the spokesperson's running achievement on consumers' goal pursuit in a different yet related domain (i.e., healthy eating). Lastly, in Study 4, moderated mediation analysis showed that the influences of the two mediating forces (i.e., perceived inspiration and attainability) on consumers' motivation for running vary in strength across consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus. Compared to their counterparts focusing on the feasibility aspect of a goal, consumers who considered the desirability aspect were more influenced by perceived inspiration, and less affected by perceived attainability, of the spokesperson's running achievement when forming their intention for running.

My findings suggest that a higher-achieving spokesperson may not always be more effective than a lower-achieving one in encouraging consumers to take up a goal in the same domain. That is, the effectiveness of a higher- versus a lower-achieving spokesperson depends on consumers' relative focus on the desirability versus the feasibility aspect in the goal pursuit. This research offers implications for health authorities and businesses to develop effective spokesperson strategies for sports and fitness-related marketing communication campaigns.

INTRODUCTION

Health Promotion as a Response to Soaring Health Spending

Over the past few decades, global health spending has increased dramatically, posing a major challenge for the households, governments, and authorities (e.g., the World Health Organization; WHO) in funding or providing health care services. According to the World Bank Group (WBG; 2017a), global health expenditure grew from 8.51% of total GDP in 1995 to 9.92% in 2014. The growth in health cost is projected to continue over the next two decades, by 2.4% annually from 2013 to 2040 (Dieleman et al., 2016). Many factors contribute to the rising health cost. Some are related to population characteristics and lifestyle, for example, longer life expectancy and aging, increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases (e.g., heart disease, cancer, and diabetes), obesity, and sedentary lifestyles. Moreover, advancement in clinical technology and enhanced patient expectation also lead to increased spending on treatment (Bloom, 2014; Deloitte, 2017; WHO & U.S. National Institute on Aging, 2011).

As around 60% of the health spending is financed through public funding (WBG, 2017b), government health authorities constantly search for ways to control the spiraling health care costs. They increasingly focus on disease prevention and devote resources to health promotion (Deloitte, 2017), which is aimed at enabling people to increase control over their health. It involves efforts to protect individuals from ill health and to tackle social and environmental causes of health risks through a variety of policies and campaigns, such as health literacy education, public health governance, and health-enabling urban planning (Green & Tones, 2010; WHO, 2016).

Singapore's Healthy Living Master Plan is an example of such health promotion efforts. Singapore aims to make healthy living accessible and effortless for

all Singaporeans by 2020. Various government agencies, ranging from health, urban planning, public housing, education, sport, to labor, have come together to create a conducive and supportive environment that allows citizens to pursue their health aspirations. Amenities and programs are planned for neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools, for instance, the island-wide cycling path networks, health seminars for corporate organizations, the healthy meals program in the schools, and so on (Ministry of Health [MOH] & Health Promotion Board [HPB], Singapore, 2014).

Getting Everyone into Healthy Living

There is wide consensus that health promotion programs help to relieve the burden of disease, improve public health, and sustain the health care system (Bayarsaikhan & Muiser, 2007; Deloitte, 2017). Besides clinical preventive measures (e.g., vaccination, disease screening), several population-based interventions targeting major health risks have been shown to be cost-effective, including promoting physical activities, encouraging healthy eating, facilitating weight management, and reducing tobacco/alcohol use (Deloitte, 2017; WHO, 2014). These healthy lifestyle initiatives address the causes of non-communicable diseases and encourage health-improving lifestyle changes. In other words, the health authorities seek to motivate consumers to adopt health-enhancing behaviors through these campaigns.

The efforts to promote healthy living in the past few decades have enhanced public health awareness, which has also translated into new opportunities for the business sector. As more consumers set off on a quest for better health, businesses are tapping into this trend by building their brands and products around healthy living. Some of them have also joined forces with the health authorities to shape consumers' health behaviors (Huelten Schmidt, Olsen, & Vishwanath, 2013; Nielsen, 2015; Valle,

2015). For instance, insurance companies offer premium discounts and other rewards for policyholders who meet a set of health markers (e.g., BMI, blood pressure, etc.), engage in physical activity, go for preventive screening, and make healthy choices (Tan, 2017). Sports brands have also taken initiatives to support the agenda aiming at increasing physical activity. The Nike-led “Designed to Move” project has set the goal of fighting the issue of physical inactivity around the world. Many sports brands are encouraging consumers to embrace an active lifestyle through branding campaigns (e.g., Adidas’s “all in for #mygirls” campaign) and special events (e.g., Speedo’s “#Make1KWet Challenge”) (Hueltenschmidt et al., 2013). Indeed, it is not only the government but also the private sector that is playing a role in promoting healthy living among consumers.

Promoting Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors Using Spokespersons

To encourage purchase or behavior changes, marketers often engage spokespersons in the marketing communication campaigns to endorse their products, services or ideas. While celebrities and experts are the prevailing options, ordinary spokespersons are gaining in popularity for these campaigns (Biswas, Biswas, & Das, 2006; Munnukka, Uusitalo, & Toivonen, 2016). This trend is particularly prevalent when it comes to encouraging healthy and discouraging unhealthy lifestyle behaviors, such as increasing physical activity, making healthy food choices, quitting alcohol/tobacco, and so forth. Brands and government agencies are increasingly leaning on ordinary people to be the spokespersons in healthy lifestyle-related communications. With this development in marketing practices, spokespersons with varying levels of achievement are being employed to persuade the target audience to adopt similar behaviors in the advocated healthy lifestyle domain.

Both highly successful sports figures and average-performing amateurs are being seen in the marketplace promoting physical activities. On the one hand, it is widespread to use professional athletes as the ambassadors for sports and exercise participation. For example, Serena Williams was featured in the “*Let’s Move!* Active Schools” initiative to boost physical activity among children in the U.S. schools (The White House, Office of the First Lady, 2013). On the other hand, marketers also use ordinary people with few athletic accomplishments to urge people to be physically active. Nike showcases average runners, instead of elite ones, in their advertisements to encourage people to take up running and try out their Nike+ Run Club training clinic and mobile application. In Singapore, the Health Promotion Board (HPB) and the Sport Singapore present everyday Singaporeans, rather than national athletes, in their publicity materials for physical activity programs.

When fighting against health threats such as smoking or obesity, health authorities often put up exemplars to provide tips and reinforce the benefits of successful behavior changes. These cases tend to differ in their level of success in making healthy changes. While it is common to read success stories about people who manage to stay smoke-free for long years (e.g., “Tips from Former Smokers[®]”; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2017), HPB Singapore takes a different approach. It features quitters who have just finished their first “I Quit 28-Day Countdown” program (HPB Singapore, n.d.) under the spotlight and celebrates their first milestone in the quitting journey. Moreover, as part of their healthy weight loss campaign, CDC also provides personal stories and comments made by people with different amounts of weight loss and varying durations of weight loss maintenance, ranging from 24 pounds to 200 pounds and 2 to 14 years (“Healthy weight: Personal stories”; CDC, 2015).

Given that both outstanding and ordinary spokespersons, who vary in their healthy lifestyle-related achievement, can be used in the health communication campaigns, an interesting question is this: when is each type more effective in persuading consumers to make healthy lifestyle changes? This research involves exploring this emerging trend and addressing this question by examining the effect of a spokesperson's domain achievement on consumers' same-domain goal pursuit.

Current Research

Achievement refers to the spokesperson's level of performance in a task domain, reflecting his or her acquired competence and accomplishments (Gaudreau, Nicholls, & Levy, 2010; Herling, 2000). The spokesperson's task-related performance can be evaluated according to a set of common standards to determine how his or her outcomes compare to those of others. Thus, in this research, the spokesperson's level of achievement pertains to his or her level of "*objective*" success in the goal domain that he or she is advocating (Bommer, Johnson, Rich, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 1995; Duckworth, Weir, Tsukayama, & Kwok, 2012; Gaudreau et al., 2010). Compared to amateurs playing sports recreationally, professional athletes, who play sports competitively, show a higher level of performance and competence. Losing 200 pounds is also a more significant success than losing 24. Hence, an outstanding spokesperson has a higher level of achievement than an ordinary one. Even though the ordinary spokesperson still attains some positive outcomes, his or her achievement is close to average and by no means comparable to that of the outstanding one.

Focusing on the sports and fitness domain, I examine how spokespersons with a higher versus a lower level of domain achievement influence consumers' motivation to pursue a goal in the same domain. Demonstrating some level of success, the

spokesperson exemplifies a desirable outcome towards which consumers can strive, thus serving as a positive role model in the specific goal domain (Aydinoğlu & Cian, 2014; Lockwood & Pinkus, 2008). Hence, building on the role model and goal setting theories, I argue that spokesperson achievement has two distinct influences on consumers' intention to pursue the same goal. More specifically, I propose a dual-mechanism model of inspiration and attainability to understand consumers' behavioral response towards spokespersons with varying levels of domain achievement. When exposed to a spokesperson in a sports and fitness-related marketing communication campaign, consumers will form two important assessments: perceived inspiration and perceived attainability of the spokesperson's domain achievement. A higher-achieving spokesperson is deemed as being more inspiring, but less attainable, whereas a lower-achieving one is less inspiring, but more attainable. These two assessments of the spokesperson's domain achievement drive consumers' likelihood to embark on a congruent goal, concurrently, but in opposite directions.

Moreover, as perceived inspiration is a more abstract motivating force, and perceived attainability a more concrete consideration, of spokesperson achievement, I posit that consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus of goal pursuit determines their behavioral response towards spokespersons with varying levels of domain achievement. When consumers focus on the desirability aspect of goal pursuit, they are more sensitive to the inspiration force than to the attainability consideration. Thus, they are likely to be more motivated by a higher-achieving spokesperson to pursue goals in the same domain. Conversely, when they focus on the feasibility aspect of goal pursuit, they are less affected by the inspiration force and more by the attainability consideration. Hence, they tend to show a higher intention to work on the same goal after being exposed to a lower-achieving spokesperson.

This research makes several contributions. While attainability of similar successes has been found to determine consumers' reactions towards successful others (models, peers, etc.; Lockwood & Kunda, 1997, 1999), past research has paid less attention to the impact of perceived inspiration of their successes on consumers' motivation, nor has it considered both mechanisms simultaneously. Hence, the dual-mechanism model of inspiration and attainability offers a more comprehensive picture of the motivating effect of a higher- versus a lower-achieving spokesperson on consumer's same-domain goal pursuit.

This research also offers practical implications. That is, my findings suggest an alternative tactical possibility by highlighting that a higher-achieving spokesperson is not always more effective in eliciting consumers' goal-directed behaviors in the same domain, and there are occasions where a lower-achieving one can be a more economical, yet similarly effective, option. I also discuss additional insights for designing effective spokesperson strategies to encourage sports and fitness-related healthy behaviors.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Spokesperson Expertise

Past research has identified three common types of spokespersons: celebrity, expert, and typical consumer (e.g., Friedman & Friedman, 1979). Celebrity spokespersons are public figures known for their achievements in areas “unrelated” to the endorsed product. Their popularity allows them to draw consumers’ attention towards the advertising messages and enhance the awareness of the brand and product (Biswas et al., 2006; Munnukka et al., 2016). In this research, a spokesperson’s achievement pertains to his or her level of success in the advocated goal domain (see p. 5). Hence, higher-achieving spokespersons do not fall under the celebrity category. On the other hand, expert and typical consumer spokespersons differ in the amount of expertise they possess about the endorsed subject. Expertise refers to a spokesperson’s competence, and it is often defined as the possession of superior knowledge or skill in the subject area (Braunsberger & Munch, 1998; Herling, 2000; Munnukka et al., 2016). A higher-achieving spokesperson produces better results than a lower-achieving one, suggesting that the former is more competent than the latter in the focal goal domain. Thus, analogous to the distinction between expert and typical consumer spokespersons, the difference between higher- and lower-achieving spokespersons also lies in their amount of expertise.

A spokesperson perceived to have higher expertise is usually more effective and persuasive (e.g., Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008, Wilson & Sherrell, 1993). If an expert spokesperson endorses a product, consumers tend to show more favorable attitudes towards the advertisement and the brand. They are also more willing to purchase the product (Ohanian, 1990). Moreover, the audience is more likely to agree

with an expert specializing in the topic of discussion than one specializing in an irrelevant domain (Maddux & Rogers, 1980).

In contrast to an expert spokesperson, a typical consumer spokesperson has limited expertise beyond the normal use of the product (Fireworker & Friedman, 1977). Despite the low expertise, this type of spokesperson has more in common with the potential consumers. He or she can provide useful information about how a product may satisfy ordinary people (Feick & Higie, 1992), and the similarity between the spokesperson and the consumer(s) may also make him or her more persuasive in that role.

Empirical evidence highlights that spokesperson expertise may not always have positive effects on consumer attitude and purchase behavior. Compared to a typical consumer spokesperson, an expert one is more influential only in certain product categories. Specifically, endorsement by an expert spokesperson is more persuasive for high-involvement products (e.g., electronics, computers, etc.; Biswas et al., 2006; Freiden, 1982). Endorsement by a typical consumer spokesperson is, however, more effective for low-involvement products (e.g., shampoo, snack, etc.; Friedman & Friedman, 1979). Besides, it has been shown that an expert spokesperson has a positive influence on decisions involving low preference heterogeneity products or services (e.g., plumber, automotive service, etc.), whereas a typical consumer spokesperson has a positive impact on decisions involving high preference heterogeneity products or services (e.g., movie, restaurant, hair stylist, etc.; Feick & Higie, 1992; Wang, 2005). Overall, even though they possess different degrees of expertise, an expert spokesperson and a typical consumer spokesperson have their respective advantages in persuasion.

Spokesperson Achievement and Consumer Goal Pursuit

As discussed, higher- and lower-achieving spokespersons vary in terms of their expertise. Scholars have identified two common elements of expertise: knowledge and skill. Compared to non-experts, experts either have a greater amount of understanding about the subject domain (i.e., knowledge) or have the ability to execute domain-specific tasks more effectively and efficiently (i.e., skill) (Herling, 2000; Stichter, 2015). Moreover, individuals have varying levels of knowledge and skill; that is, one's knowledge and skill may not always match (Herling, 2000; Thomas & Thomas, 1994). Taking running as an example, the coaches know a lot about running techniques, but they may not have the skill to translate their knowledge into actual running performance. Conversely, although the athletes can finish a race in good timing, they may not know the science of running that well.

In this research, spokesperson achievement is defined as the spokesperson's "goal-related performance." Compared to the lower-achieving spokespersons with mediocre accomplishments, the higher-achieving ones are capable of obtaining excellent results in the goal domain. That is, they have a greater level of skill to perform the goal-related tasks at a higher level. Essentially, the spokesperson's achievement reflects his or her acquired skill in the goal domain – a subset of expertise. While past research has suggested how spokespersons with vast amounts of product knowledge may influence consumers' attitudes and purchase decisions, it still requires more investigation to understand the effectiveness of spokesperson achievement (and skill) in persuasion (Amos et al., 2008).

Furthermore, this research focuses on the effect of spokesperson achievement on consumers' intentions to pursue a goal in the same domain. The decision to embark on a goal is different from a decision to buy a product, for when setting a goal,

consumers are choosing a preferred reference point, which represents the desired future self-state (Boldero & Francis, 2002). Committing to a goal thus involves behavior changes, and attaining a goal requires substantial effort (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2005). A decision to pursue a goal, in fact, brings many obligations to consumers; they need to carry out goal-related tasks to advance in the goal domain. Moreover, while a spokesperson could offer useful information facilitating attitude change and decision making (e.g., Feick & Higie, 1992), his or her higher performance and goal-related skill cannot be leveraged directly by consumers for goal attainment. As skill is developed through experience and repeated practice (Herling, 2000; Stichter, 2015), consumers can improve their skill, and thus performance, only by their practicing goal-specific activities. As goal pursuit involves consumers' performing goal-directed behaviors, new perspectives are, thus, needed to examine how the spokesperson with a higher versus a lower level of goal-related achievement influence their motivation for the advocated goal.

Determinants of Health Behavior Adoption

In the health psychology literature, theories and models are proposed to explain and predict people's intention to adopt health goals and enact health behaviors. The self-determination theory (SDT) describes a process through which individuals become autonomously motivated for health goals – a state crucial for the adoption of health behaviors. For individuals to obtain motivation and enact health behaviors more volitionally, they need to “internalize” the positive value (or underlying benefits) of the health behaviors; they need to identify the health goals as their own or even integrate them into their sense of self. Moreover, the internalization process can be facilitated by maximizing their experience of autonomy (being able to choose what to

act on), competence (being capable and confident), and relatedness (being supported and understood by important others) (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Niemiec, Ryan, & Deci, 2010; Patrick & Williams, 2012; Ryan, Patrick, Deci, & Williams, 2008).

The health belief model (HBM; Rosenstock, Strecher, & Becker, 1988) and the social cognitive theory (SCT; Bandura, 1986) identify a series of cognitive factors predicting people's likelihood to engage in health behaviors. Based on the HBM, for individuals to carry out health behaviors, they must be convinced of their vulnerability to severe health problems (i.e., perceived threat). Meanwhile, they need to believe that the benefits of performing the health behaviors outweigh the costs of performing them; that is, there should be a positive value in pursuing the health outcomes. Similar to the HBM, the SCT also suggests that an overall positive outcome expectation is one antecedent of health behaviors; they should bring more positive than negative outcomes. Further, the SCT highlights that self-efficacy decides whether individuals enact health behaviors. When people are confident in executing the required tasks, they are more inclined to work towards the health outcomes (Fishbein & Yzer, 2003; Rosenstock et al., 1988).

Two themes – self-efficacy and value of the health behaviors – are recurring in the classic theoretical frameworks. These two factors shed light on why people do or do not undertake health behaviors and offer directions to address the low inclination to act on health goals (Hardcastle et al., 2015). First, individuals may not have the capacity to perform the health behaviors (i.e., low self-efficacy). Second, individuals may not see the value of performing health behaviors either because they do not appreciate the benefits of the outcomes (i.e., low perceived benefits) or because it requires too much effort or energy to attain the desired ones (i.e., high perceived costs). When the cons outweigh the pros, health behaviors become not worthwhile pursuing.

In other words, favorable evaluations of health outcomes as well as sufficient abilities to obtain them are needed for consumers to initiate health behaviors (Rothman, Hertel, Baldwin, & Bartels, 2008).

Modern theories of health behavior also maintain that self-efficacy and positive outcome expectation determine people's intention to embark on health behaviors (Gibbons, Houlihan, & Gerrard, 2009). The theory of planned behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991), an expanded version of the theory of reasoned action (TRA; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), posits that the formation of a behavioral intention precedes the actual health behavior. A behavioral intention captures an individual's commitment or motivation to act on the health goal, and the strength of this commitment subsequently predict one's volitional effort to attain the health outcome (Gollwitzer & Oettingen, 1998; Schwarzer, 2011). Moreover, a person's intention to enact a health behavior is decided by his or her attitude towards the behavior, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control. Specifically, the person forms the attitude based on a careful assessment of positive and negative outcomes of performing the behavior. Subjective norm refers to the social expectations of engaging or not engaging in the behavior. Lastly, conceptually comparable to self-efficacy in the SCT, perceived behavioral control reflects how easy or difficult for the person to perform the behavior and is a belief affected by external constraints (e.g., amount of time) and individual capabilities (e.g., skill) (Ajzen, 1991; Biddle & Mutrie, 2008; Godin & Kok, 1996; Gollwitzer & Oettingen, 1998; Netemeyer, Burton, & Johnston, 1991). Similar theorization about the development of health behavioral intention is also seen in the health action process approach model (HAPA; Schwarzer, 2008). According to the HAPA, when an individual decides whether to perform a health behavior, he or she considers whether he or she would be at risk of health problems (i.e., risk perception), whether he or she

would benefit from performing the behavior (i.e., positive outcome expectation), and whether he or she has the ability to carry out the behavior (i.e., self-efficacy). Overall, researchers concur that the higher the self-efficacy and the outcome expectation are, the more likely a person would develop intentions for health behaviors. Empirically, self-efficacy and outcome expectation have been found to predict people's intention for various health behaviors, including dieting (e.g., Conner, Norman, & Bell, 2002), physical activity (e.g., Hagger, Chatzisarantis, & Biddle, 2002), weight loss (e.g., Netemeyer et al., 1991), and smoking cessation (e.g., Schwarzer & Luszczynska, 2008).

To summarize, based on the health behavior theories, consumers' decision to adopt health behaviors is subject to two essential evaluations: how desirable these behaviors are and how feasible it is for them to execute these behaviors. That is, consumers are more inclined to perform health behaviors that are desirable and feasible.

Desirability and Feasibility Considerations in A Goal Pursuit

Extant research suggests that when setting up goals or forming goal intentions, consumers consider two questions: "what are the goals I can pursue?" and "why do I want to pursue them?" In other words, consumers deliberate over desirability and feasibility aspects of available goal alternatives as part of goal pursuit (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Gollwitzer, 1990; Trope, Liberman, & Wakslak, 2007).

Desirability refers to the valence or expected value of the goal's end-state. This expected value is higher when attaining the goal is of importance to the consumer (i.e., attainment value), brings enjoyment or fun (intrinsic value), and helps future goal

pursuit (i.e., utility value). Moreover, the positive value is offset by any cost incurred during goal pursuit. Thus, the desirability of a goal is an overall assessment of positive and negative consequences of pursuing this goal. On the other hand, feasibility refers to the ease or difficulty of attaining the focal goal. It reflects whether the consumer is confident in performing the necessary tasks to reach the desired end-state (i.e., the subjective likelihood of success). Feasibility beliefs are closely related to the consumer's capability in the focal goal domain and are also affected by any external barrier encountered during goal pursuit (Gollwitzer & Oettingen, 1998, 2012; Liberman & Trope, 1998; Morgenroth, Ryan, & Peters, 2015; Wigfield & Cambria, 2010). Both goal desirability and goal feasibility positively influence consumers' goal pursuit (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002).

Empirical evidence supports the view that whether consumers form the intention to pursue a goal is guided by perceived goal desirability and feasibility. For example, Segal, Borgia, and Schoenfeld (2005) found that both perceived desirability and perceived feasibility of self-employment positively predict college students' aspiration to become an entrepreneur. Perceived importance of contributing to the society (i.e., desirability) and likelihood to making a positive change (i.e., feasibility) are also positively associated with employees' motivation to join a corporate volunteer group (e.g., Forster & Grichnik, 2013).

In sum, when consumers decide which goal to strive for, they consider both desirability and feasibility aspects of the goals, and these two goal evaluations determine consumers' motivation to pursue the chosen goal.

Effects of Spokesperson Achievement on Consumers' Motivation: A Dual-Mechanism Model of Inspiration and Attainability

Morgenroth, Ryan, and Peters (2015) suggest that consumers' evaluations of goal desirability and feasibility can be influenced by role models who have achieved in the same goal domain. For a role model to have a positive influence on a consumer's goal evaluations, his or her achievement must be attainable and inspiring to the consumer. When the consumer believes that it is possible to catch up with the role model, perceived feasibility of the goal increases. On the other hand, when the role model possesses enviable attributes, the consumer finds him or her inspiring and thus, forms higher perceived desirability of the goal. As desirability and feasibility are two determinants of a person's motivation to pursue a goal, it implies that consumers' goal choice and motivation may be affected by their perceptions of the role model's achievement.

When the spokesperson depicted in the marketing communication campaigns highlights the pleasing outcomes that consumers can attempt to obtain in a goal pursuit, he or she may function as a positive role model (Aydinoğlu & Cian, 2014; Lockwood & Pinkus, 2008). Drawing on role model and goal setting theories, I propose that spokesperson achievement influences consumers' motivation for a same-domain goal through two distinct influences – perceived inspiration and perceived attainability. The perceived inspiration of spokesperson achievement enhances goal desirability, while perceived attainability of this achievement increases goal feasibility. Consumers' intention to pursue the goal in the same domain thus depends on the overall effect of these two influences of spokesperson achievement. I will discuss these two mechanisms in detail in the next two sections.

Perceived Inspiration of Spokesperson Achievement

Inspiration is defined as a motivational state where individuals feel compelled to reach a higher level or a better status. It involves two components. First, individuals are inspired by someone possessing sought-after qualities, such as creativity, warmth, virtue, skills, and superiority. This admirable external figure awakens individuals to new possibilities, allowing them to identify potential goals and better appreciate the value of those goals. Second, individuals are inspired to reproduce those qualities in the future selves. In other words, the individuals are motivated to actualize those new possibilities or attain those new goals (Thrash & Elliot, 2003; Thrash, Elliot, Maruskin, & Cassidy, 2010; Thrash, Moldovan, Oleynick, & Maruskin, 2014).

A spokesperson's inspiring qualities can be classified into three categories: sociability, morality, and competence (Morgenroth et al., 2015). This research focuses on spokesperson achievement, a factor related to competence and performance. Competent or successful people are perceived to be inspiring and admirable. For instance, a highly competent math tutor is inspiring to the students (Marx & Ko, 2012), while an alumnus succeeding in his or her career is motivating to the graduating cohort (Buunk, Peiró, & Griffioen, 2007). Thrash and colleagues (2010) also found that Michael Jordan, an extremely successful basketball legend, is inspiring. Lastly, Smith (2000) noted that individuals feel admiration when another person does something praiseworthy (i.e., remarkable achievement). These empirical results indicate that spokesperson achievement can be a source of inspiration.

When a higher-achieving spokesperson is regarded as inspiring and admirable, he or she allows consumers to see the focal goal in a more positive light, thereby enhancing their perceived goal desirability. A higher-achieving spokesperson is thus able to encourage consumers to pursue the goal. On the other hand, a lower-achieving

spokesperson, who demonstrates an average level of success in the goal domain, is not able to increase consumers' perceived goal desirability and goal motivation (Smith, 2000; Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004; Morgenroth et al., 2015). Further, admiration is also closely related to emulation, an action tendency to wish and strive for similar accomplishments in any important area to the individuals concerned (Schindler, Paech, & Löwenbrück, 2015). An empirical study by Algoe and Haidt (2009) showed that after watching a documentary clip of Michael Jordan (vs. charity or comedy clip), people report higher admiration, which subsequently accounts for their motivation to obtain success in physical activity or their professional/academic domains. In brief, a spokesperson's inspiring achievement enhances goal desirability, which subsequently heightens consumers' motivation for goal pursuit.

In this research, I predict that a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson will motivate consumers to strive harder in the same domain through perceived inspiration. The higher-achieving spokesperson will be perceived as more inspiring for his or her outstanding domain achievement, whereas the lower-achieving one will be viewed as less inspiring (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Thrash et al., 2010). The higher perceived inspiration towards the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson will raise consumers' anticipated value gained from goal attainment, and this estimation will translate into a higher intention to pursue the goal. Overall, there will be a positive effect of spokesperson achievement on consumers' motivation to pursue a same-domain goal through perceived inspiration.

H1A: The spokesperson's higher (vs. lower) level of domain achievement will create a higher (lower) perceived inspiration, which, in turn, results in consumers' stronger (weaker) motivation to pursue a same-domain goal.

Perceived Attainability of Spokesperson Achievement

Exposure to a spokesperson with outstanding achievement could either motivate or demoralize a consumer, depending on the perceived attainability of the spokesperson's success (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). If the consumer believes it is possible for him or her to obtain a comparable level of accomplishments, the spokesperson reflects a "better future self" and thus, encourages the consumer to work towards a similar success. Otherwise, the consumer is reminded of his or her weaknesses and hence, discouraged from striving in the same domain. Attainability can be defined as the perceived likelihood of attaining the spokesperson's exemplary performance in the future, and it is a subjective assessment reflecting the ability discrepancy between the consumer and the spokesperson (Han, Kim, Jeong, & Cohen, 2017; Lockwood & Kunda, 1997; Rogers & Feller, 2016). Accordingly, both consumer characteristics and spokesperson attributes matter in the attainability judgment (Morgenroth et al., 2015). Whether a spokesperson's achievement is attainable or not is subject to his or her level of achievement, the consumer's self-concepts or lay theories, the perceived similarity between the two parties, and so on (see Asgari, Dasgupta, & Stout, 2012; Hoyt, 2013; Hoyt, Burnette, & Innella, 2012; Hoyt & Simon, 2011; Lockwood & Kunda, 1997; Wentzel, Henkel, & Tomczak, 2010).

Perceived attainability of the spokesperson's achievement adjusts consumers' perceived feasibility of goal attainment, and this feasibility evaluation subsequently determines their motivation to embark on a similar goal pursuit (Morgenroth et al., 2015). If the spokesperson's success is perceived to be unreachable, consumers are less keen to pursue the same goal, because they see it as less feasible that they will reach it. To the contrary, when being exposed to a spokesperson of attainable accomplishments, consumers are likely to believe that "it can be done" and thus, report stronger motivation for the advocated goal. Rogers and Feller (2016) found that students who reviewed excellent peer essays are less confident in producing essays of comparable quality, and this perceived unattainability subsequently leads to lower willingness to attempt another essay. Moreover, after exposure to highly successful female leaders, female students feel inferior and report lower aspiration for leadership roles (Hoyt & Simon, 2011). Further, an extraordinary moral exemplar is less effective in encouraging voluntary service engagement than an attainable one (Han et al., 2017). When exercising with a fit person (vs. no companion) in a gym, women spend significantly less time in the workout session (Wasilenko, Kulik, & Wanic, 2007). The above empirical evidence suggests that a spokesperson's unattainable achievement is likely to lower goal feasibility, which subsequently causes a negative impact on consumers' motivation.

In this research, I manipulate the spokesperson's levels of achievement. Similar to what has been done in the earlier studies (e.g., Hoyt, 2013; Hoyt & Simon, 2011; Wentzel et al., 2010), the higher-achieving spokesperson is set to exhibit an outstanding domain performance, and his or her level of performance will be perceived as being less attainable. On the other hand, the lower-achieving spokesperson is set to show some positive but not exceptional results, and thus he or

she will be viewed as having more attainable accomplishments. The lower perceived attainability of the spokesperson's higher (vs. lower) achievement will decrease consumers' predicted chance of succeeding in the same goal. Their lowered subjective likelihood of success will manifest itself in a lower intention to pursue the goal. Altogether, there will be a negative impact of spokesperson achievement on consumers' motivation to pursue a same-domain goal through perceived attainability.

H1B: The spokesperson's higher (vs. lower) level of domain achievement will generate a lower (higher) perceived attainability, which, in turn, leads to consumers' weaker (stronger) motivation to pursue a same-domain goal.

Figure 1 summarizes the dual-mechanism model of inspiration and attainability for predicting the effect of spokesperson achievement on consumers' intention to pursue a goal in the same domain. As hypothesized, when exposed to a spokesperson, consumers will form two important assessments of his or her domain achievement: perceived inspiration and perceived attainability. A higher-achieving spokesperson is deemed as more inspiring, but his or her performance is less attainable, while that of a lower-achieving spokesperson is more within reach but less motivating. These two assessments of spokesperson achievement, in turn, determine consumers' intention to embark on a similar goal.

Figure 1. The dual-mechanism model of inspiration and attainability.

Moderating Role of Desirability versus Feasibility Focus of Goal Pursuit

Perceived inspiration and attainability of spokesperson achievement are two proposed determinants of consumers' motivation to pursue a same-domain goal. The positive influence of perceived inspiration and the negative impact of perceived attainability operate concurrently, but in opposite directions. Thus, the overall effect of spokesperson achievement on consumers' goal pursuit in the same domain will be subject to the relative strength of these two forces. If they are of similar strength, they will cancel each other out, resulting in a null effect of spokesperson achievement. It follows that in situations where consumers pay more attention towards one force over the other, there should be a more effective type of spokesperson to encourage consumers to exert themselves in the advocated goal domain. The relative focus on desirability versus feasibility in a goal pursuit is one such factor that shifts consumers' attention between the inspiration and attainability forces.

As theorized, inspiration is a motivational state triggered by the spokesperson's impressive achievement. An inspiring spokesperson allows consumers to appreciate the value of a goal, motivating them to strive for better outcomes. Concerning the

superordinate desirability aspect of a goal, perceived inspiration would be a more abstract motivating force of spokesperson achievement. On the other hand, when judging the attainability of a spokesperson's achievement, consumers consider whether they can reach a comparable success by analyzing whether they can complete the necessary steps to succeed in the goal domain. These considerations touch on the subordinate feasibility aspect of a goal. Thus, attainability is likely to be a more concrete influencing force of spokesperson achievement (Lieberman & Trope, 1998; Trope et al., 2007). Consequently, when focusing on desirability in goal pursuit, consumers will be more sensitive to the perceived inspiration of spokesperson achievement and hence, respond more favorably towards the higher-achieving spokesperson. In contrast, when focusing on the feasibility aspect of a goal, consumers will be more attuned to the perceived attainability of spokesperson achievement and thus, more motivated by the lower-achieving one. In short, consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus of goal pursuit will moderate the effect of a spokesperson's domain achievement on consumers' motivation to pursue a goal in the same domain.

Past research has identified two psychological constructs that alter individuals' relative focus on desirability versus feasibility. First, the construal levels adjust consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus. According to the construal level theory, an abstract construal consists of superordinate information, whereas a concrete construal tends to include subordinate details. As desirability indicates the superordinate why aspects, and feasibility reflects the subordinate how aspects, of an action, consumers are likely to pay more attention to desirability than to feasibility when they adopt an abstract construal, and vice versa is true when they adopt a concrete construal. (Lieberman & Trope, 1998; Trope & Liberman, 2003). Second, the process versus outcome focus also changes consumers' emphasis on desirability

versus feasibility. A process focus facilitates consumers to attend to the steps to perform an action, while an outcome focus directs their attention towards the consequences of performing it (e.g., Escalas & Luce, 2003; Freund & Hennecke, 2015). Highlighting the subordinate how features, a process activates a concrete construal and shifts consumer focus towards feasibility. Conversely, underscoring the superordinate why features, an outcome focus leads to an abstract construal and shifts consumer focus towards desirability (Zhao, Hoeffler, & Zauberan, 2007).

To summarize, I propose a moderating effect of consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus of goal pursuit on the relationship between the spokesperson's domain achievement and their motivation to pursue a same-domain goal. Further, consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus can be primed by the construal levels or the process versus outcome focus. Specifically, under an abstract construal or an outcome focus, consumers will focus on desirability and thus, report a higher intention to pursue a goal in the same domain after being exposed to a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson. On the other hand, under a concrete construal or a process focus, consumers will focus on feasibility and hence, be more motivated by a lower- (vs. higher-) achieving spokesperson to pursue a same-domain goal.

H2: The spokesperson's higher (vs. lower) level of domain achievement will trigger stronger motivation to pursue a same-domain goal among desirability-focused consumers. On the other hand, the spokesperson's higher (vs. lower) level of domain achievement will result in weaker motivation to pursue a same-domain goal among feasibility-focused consumers.

I test the proposed hypotheses across five studies in the context of sports and fitness. First two studies will examine the mediating effects of perceived inspiration and attainability of the spokesperson's sporting and fitness achievement on consumers' motivation to pursue running (Study 1A) and their willingness to purchase a fitness device (Study 1B) (i.e., H1A & H1B). The remaining three studies will involve assessing the moderating role of consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus on the relationship between the spokesperson's running achievement and consumers' motivation for running (i.e., H2). Specifically, with Study 2, I will demonstrate an interaction effect of construal level and spokesperson achievement on consumers' intention to run. Finally, for Studies 3 and 4, the moderating role of the process versus outcome focus will be investigated.

STUDIES 1A & 1B: DUAL MECHANISMS OF INSPIRATION & ATTAINABILITY

Overview of Studies 1A & 1B

The aim of Studies 1A and 1B was to establish whether perceived inspiration and perceived attainability of spokesperson achievement are two parallel and opposite forces determining consumers' motivation to pursue a goal in the same domain (H1A & H1B; see Figure 1). As hypothesized, a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson will be more inspiring, thus encouraging consumers to strive in the same domain. Conversely, the spokesperson's higher (vs. lower) domain achievement will also be less attainable, thus discouraging consumers from undertaking the same goal.

How consumers respond to sports and fitness-related marketing communication campaigns featuring a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson, thus, depends on the relative strength of these two distinct mechanisms. If the influence of perceived inspiration is stronger than that of perceived attainability, consumers will be more motivated by the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson for a same-domain goal and vice versa. On the other hand, when the two mechanisms exert comparable influences, there will be a null effect of the spokesperson's achievement level on consumers' motivation to pursue a similar goal. Hence, there is no prediction about the main effect of spokesperson achievement.

The purpose of these two studies was to show the “mediating processes” underlying the influence of a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson on consumers' motivation for a same-domain goal pursuit. Which type of spokesperson is the more effective in inducing behavior changes was not the focus of Studies 1A and 1B. In fact, the answer should be “it depends.” Many scholars have suggested that researchers should move beyond Baron and Kenny's mediation analysis procedure

(1986) and, instead, emphasize quantifying the indirect effects no matter whether there is a significant association between the independent and dependent variables (i.e., a significant main or total effect). They have asserted that this modern approach to mediation analysis allows for better detection of potential mechanisms, especially those working in contrary directions (Hayes, 2009; Hayes & Rockwood, 2017; MacKinnon, Krull, & Lockwood, 2000). Following this methodological recommendation, I focused on estimating the indirect effects of perceived inspiration and attainability in these two studies.

I examined the proposed dual-mechanism model in two single-factor between-subjects studies (levels of spokesperson achievement: higher vs. lower) across different contexts: physical activity and fitness product purchase. In these two studies, spokesperson achievement was manipulated through framing. The same spokesperson was described as someone who has accomplished a lot in a sports and fitness domain (i.e., a higher level of achievement) or someone who is still in the early stage in the same domain (i.e., a lower level of achievement). For Study 1A, I explored the effect of the higher- versus the lower-achieving spokesperson on consumers' intention to do more running. Study 1B involved investigating how the spokesperson's achievement affects consumers' likelihood to purchase a fitness tracker. I predicted that two mediating paths of perceived inspiration and attainability would explain the effect of spokesperson achievement on participants' running and purchase intention, whilst these two paths should work in opposite directions.

Study 1A: Running Program

For Study 1A, I investigated how a spokesperson's running achievement may influence consumers' motivation for running through perceived inspiration and attainability. Running is one of the most participated sports in the United States. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2016), running was among the top three popular exercise activities for American sports participants aged 15 and above from 2011 to 2015. Another U.S. nationwide online panel survey identified running and jogging as the most popular outdoor activity for American adults aged 25 and above in 2015. The same survey also revealed that running is among the top 10 most appealing exercise activities for non-sport-participating adults (The Outdoor Foundation, 2016). Hence, I chose the running context to enhance the relevance of the study scenario to participants randomly recruited from a U.S. online panel.

Methods

Participants, procedures, and measures. One hundred U.S. based participants (54% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 34.10$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 10.25$) were sourced from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) with a monetary incentive. They were randomly assigned to read either one of the two running program ad copies. The ad copy included the recommendation message from a past participant, who had either a higher or a lower level of achievement in running. Specifically, the higher-achieving spokesperson was a professional runner, who had completed several World Marathon Majors races and was on track to qualify for the Olympics. The lower-achieving spokesperson was a leisure runner, who had just started running half a year ago and had no race experience

yet. The two ad copies contained the same information and visuals, except for the achievement descriptions.

A separate pretest with 90 participants from the same online panel confirmed a significant difference in the perceived spokesperson's achievement (3 items, "*He achieves a lot in running*" "*He is successful in running,*" and "*He has remarkable running performance,*" 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .95$; $M_{\text{Higher}} = 6.36$, $SD = 0.68$, $n = 46$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 4.39$, $SD = 1.32$, $n = 44$; $t(88) = 8.93$, $p < .001$). Participants' attitude towards the higher- versus the lower-achieving spokesperson did not differ (2 items, "*I feel favorable towards him*" and "*He is likeable,*" 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; adapted from Stafford, 1998; $\alpha = .94$; $M_{\text{Higher}} = 5.42$, $SD = 1.01$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 5.05$, $SD = 1.15$; $t(88) = 1.67$, $p = .099$). Please refer to Appendix A for the stimuli.

After reading the ad copy, the participants reported their intention to pursue running with two 7-point items (adapted from Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002; $\alpha = .95$). They also answered perceived inspiration (3 items, 7-point; based on Morgenroth, 2015; Thrash et al., 2010; $\alpha = .97$) and attainability measures (1 item, 7-point; adapted from Dasgupta & Asgari, 2004). Finally, as the manipulation check, the participants rated the featured runner's achievement with the same three 7-point items, as used in the pretest ($\alpha = .97$). Please see Appendix A for the measurement items.

Results

Manipulation check. The higher-achieving spokesperson was perceived to be more successful than the lower-achieving one in running ($M_{\text{Higher}} = 6.37$, $SD = 0.97$, $n = 50$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 4.00$, $SD = 1.69$, $n = 50$; $t(98) = 8.58$, $p < .001$). Notably, although the lower-achieving spokesperson was framed as a beginner, the participants did not

consider him as a non-achiever. They gave a neutral rating and placed him at the midpoint of the achievement scale. They still found that he had made some progress in running. Thus, the manipulation of the spokesperson's levels of achievement worked as expected.

Two paths to running intention. There was no main effect of spokesperson achievement on the participants' motivation; the subjects in both conditions showed a similar intention to do more running ($M_{\text{Higher}} = 4.03$, $SD = 2.22$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 3.42$, $SD = 1.65$; $t(98) = 1.56$, $p = .12$).

To test the proposed dual-mechanism model, I ran a mediation analysis using PROCESS macro with 10,000 bias-corrected bootstrapping samples (Model 4; Hayes, 2013). The dependent variable (X) was the intention to pursue running, the independent variable (Y) was the levels of spokesperson achievement (higher vs. lower), and the mediators were perceived inspiration (M1) and attainability (M2). The results are illustrated in Figure 2.

Firstly, the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson was perceived to be more inspiring ($a_1 = 1.05$, $t(98) = 3.13$, $p = .002$), but also less attainable ($a_2 = -1.94$, $t(98) = -5.48$, $p < .001$). Both perceived inspiration ($b_1 = 0.35$, $t(96) = 3.55$, $p = .001$) and attainability ($b_2 = 0.52$, $t(96) = 5.57$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors of participants' intention for running. Moreover, the two significant indirect forces of inspiration and attainability had opposite signs. The indirect effect of spokesperson achievement on participants' intention to pursue running through inspiration ($X \rightarrow M1 \rightarrow Y$) was positive ($a_1b_1 = 0.36$, $SE = .16$, 95% CI: [0.12, 0.76]), but the indirect effect through attainability ($X \rightarrow M2 \rightarrow Y$) was negative ($a_2b_2 = -1.00$, $SE = .24$, 95% CI: [-1.54, -0.58]). As hypothesized, these two effects canceled each other out, resulting in the insignificant main effect of spokesperson achievement.

Figure 2. The mediation model of the effect of spokesperson achievement on intention to pursue running through inspiration and attainability – Study 1A.

Study 1B: Fitness Tracker

Study 1A confirmed that the dual mechanisms of inspiration and attainability explain the influence of a spokesperson’s running achievement on consumers’ intention to run. Does this dual-mechanism model also apply to consumers’ decision about whether to buy a product? Study 1B was conducted to test the postulation that perceived inspiration and attainability of spokesperson achievement could account for a product purchase decision if the focal product is part of consumers’ goal pursuit. I chose a fitness tracker as the focal product because consumers are not just buying the wearable device itself but, more importantly, expecting it to facilitate their “working towards” some fitness goals.

Furthermore, two issues arising from Study 1A about the manipulation of spokesperson achievement required attention. First, the lower-achieving spokesperson might be perceived as weaker than consumers themselves in the focal goal domain. If

that were the case, the lower-achieving spokesperson would influence consumers through a different mechanism – downward comparison (Suls, Martin, & Wheeler, 2002). Second, the spokespersons might affect perceived ad credibility, a factor shown to influence purchase intention (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). To address these concerns, I included two new manipulation check measures in Study 1B: (a) the relative difference in fitness level between the spokesperson and the participant and (b) perceived ad credibility.

Methods

Participants, procedures, and measures. A total of 122 U.S. based participants, aged between 18 and 65, were recruited from MTurk with a monetary incentive (49.2% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 39.54$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 12.19$). They imagined that they would be interested in buying a fitness tracker and chanced upon a flyer for one such device. The flyers were designed in a similar way to those for Study 1A. A fitness tracker was recommended by either two professional or two recreational cyclists. The professional cyclists were members of the national team and had won medals in the international championships; they had a higher level of cycling achievement. On the other hand, the recreational cyclists were members of a community cycling club and had no race experience; they had a lower level of cycling achievement. Please refer to Appendix B for the stimuli. Sixty-two participants were assigned to the higher achievement condition and the remaining 60 to the lower achievement one.

After reading the flyer, participants reported their purchase intention (1 item; adapted from Peloza, White, & Shang, 2013), followed by perceived inspiration (3 items; based on Morgenroth, 2015; Thrash et al., 2010; $\alpha = .98$) and attainability (3 items; adapted from Braslow, 2013; $\alpha = .99$). Then, they indicated the relative

difference in fitness (1 item), their attitude towards the spokespersons (2 items; adapted from Stafford, 1998; $\alpha = .98$), and perceived ad credibility (3 items; adapted from Cotte, Coulter, & Moore, 2005; $\alpha = .97$). Lastly, participants completed the perceived spokespersons' achievement items (3 items; $\alpha = .97$). The measures were similar to those used in Study 1A. Moreover, as cycling was a relatively less familiar context to the participants, I used 9-point scales to capture a more dispersed distribution of opinions (Dawes, 2002). To capture the relative fitness difference, I asked the participants to compare their fitness level to that of the spokespersons ($-4 =$ a lot weaker than them, $0 =$ about the same as them, $+4 =$ a lot stronger than them). Please refer to Appendix B for the measures used in this study.

Results

Manipulation checks. The higher-achieving spokespersons were perceived to be more accomplished than the lower-achieving ones ($M_{\text{Higher}} = 8.40$, $SD = 0.76$, $n = 62$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 4.67$, $SD = 1.95$, $n = 60$; $t(120) = 13.97$, $p < .001$). The two relative differences in fitness ratings were significantly smaller than zero, showing that both the higher- and the lower-achieving spokespersons were deemed to have better fitness than the participants themselves ($M_{\text{Higher}} = -2.31$, $SD = 1.86$, $t(61) = -9.76$, $p < .001$; $M_{\text{Lower}} = -0.60$, $SD = 1.99$, $t(59) = -2.33$, $p = .012$).

Furthermore, there was no difference in perceived credibility between the two flyers ($M_{\text{Higher}} = 6.47$, $SD = 2.29$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 6.98$, $SD = 1.69$; $t(120) = -1.40$, $p = .17$). The participants also had similar attitude towards the spokespersons ($M_{\text{Higher}} = 6.75$, $SD = 1.96$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 6.48$, $SD = 1.79$; $t(120) = 0.78$, $p = .44$). Overall, the manipulation of achievement levels worked as intended.

Two paths to purchase intention. The higher-achieving spokespersons did not induce a stronger purchase intention than the lower-achieving ones, i.e., no main effect of spokesperson achievement ($M_{\text{Higher}} = 3.97$, $SD = 2.32$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 4.13$, $SD = 2.38$; $t(120) = -0.39$, $p = .70$). I undertook an identical mediation analysis to that in Study 1A (Process Model 4 with 10,000 bias-corrected bootstrapping samples) to disentangle the processes behind this null effect of spokesperson achievement on purchase intention, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. The mediation model of the effect of spokesperson achievement on purchase intention through inspiration and attainability – Study 1B.

Firstly, the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokespersons were perceived as being more difficult to be on par with ($a_2 = -3.21$, $t(120) = -7.64$, $p < .001$), but they were also more inspiring ($a_1 = 1.39$, $t(120) = 3.26$, $p = .001$). Perceived inspiration ($b_1 = 0.44$, $t(118) = 5.76$, $p < .001$) and attainability ($b_2 = 0.29$, $t(118) = 3.74$, $p < .001$) were positively associated with participants' purchase intention. Taken together, the positive indirect effect through inspiration ($a_1b_1 = 0.61$, $SE = .24$, 95% CI: [0.23, 1.17])

and the negative indirect effect through attainability ($a_2b_2 = -0.94$, $SE = .30$, 95% CI : $[-1.58, -0.37]$) operated in opposite directions, leading to the insignificant main effect of spokesperson achievement.

Discussion

Studies 1A and 1B obtained clear support for the dual-mechanism model of inspiration and attainability. The spokesperson's level of achievement influenced consumers' behavioral or purchase intention in the same goal domain through the two opposing forces. When the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson was featured together with fitness goal-centric programs or products, his or her sporting or fitness accomplishment inspired consumers to take up the focal goal or purchase the focal product. On the other hand, the success of the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson was also less likely to obtain, which, in turn, lowered consumers' intention to work on the goal or purchase the product. Further, as the influences of inspiration and attainability canceled each other out, the effect of spokesperson achievement on consumers' behavioral or purchase intention, thus, depended on the relative strength of these two forces. When they were of similar magnitude, a null effect of spokesperson achievement emerged, as observed in Studies 1A and 1B. These findings reveal that a higher-achieving spokesperson may not always be more effective than a lower-achieving one in promoting goal-directed behaviors or purchases. The results also suggest that a higher-achieving spokesperson may be more influential than a lower-achieving one when consumers pay closer attention to the inspiration aspect than to the attainability aspect of spokesperson achievement, and vice versa.

OVERVIEW OF STUDIES 2 & 3: RELATIVE FOCUS ON DESIRABILITY VS. FEASIBILITY IN A GOAL PURSUIT

Building on the findings of Studies 1A and 1B, I argue that consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus of goal pursuit adjusts their relative sensitivity to the perceived inspiration versus attainability, which subsequently determines their response towards spokespersons with varying levels of achievement (i.e., H2). If consumers are more sensitive to the desirability aspect of a goal, compared to when they are more attuned to the feasibility aspect, they will be more influenced by the positive inspiration force and less affected by the negative attainability consideration, of spokesperson achievement. As a result, desirability-focused consumers will be motivated by a higher-achieving spokesperson, and feasibility-focused ones will be more driven by a lower-achieving spokesperson. In other words, there will be a moderating effect of consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus on the relationship between the spokesperson's domain achievement and their intention to pursue a same-domain goal.

Studies 2 and 3 were aimed at demonstrating the proposed moderation effect. In both studies, the participants first completed a focus priming exercise and then went through a similar running program scenario, as in Study 1A. Consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus was activated through the construal levels in Study 2 and the process versus outcome (PO) focus in Study 3. Researchers have often drawn on these two constructs to alter individuals' relative focus on desirability versus feasibility and thus, proved their effectiveness (e.g., Liberman & Trope, 1998; Thompson, Hamilton, & Petrova, 2009). By showing that the overall effect of a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson on consumers' motivation is contingent on their construal

level and PO focus, these studies also provide further evidence for the dual mediation mechanisms of inspiration and attainability.

STUDY 2: CONSTRUAL LEVELS

Construal Levels

The construal level theory (CLT) postulates that psychological distance determines the ‘level of abstraction’ at which actions, events or objects would be mentally represented. Specifically, distance events or objects – in time, space, social relations or hypotheticality – tend to be construed more abstractly, whereas proximal ones are likely to be represented more concretely (Liberman & Trope, 1998; Rim, Trope, Liberman, & Shapira, 2013; Trope et al., 2007). The construal levels involve different information processing tendencies and hence have significant implications for consumers’ decision-making and behaviors.

Particularly relevant to this research, consumers who adopt different levels of construal also vary in their sensitivity towards the desirability versus the feasibility consideration of a goal. Desirability refers to the value of an action’s end-state, highlighting the superordinate why aspects of an action, whilst feasibility refers to the ease or difficulty of achieving the end-state, reflecting the subordinate how aspects. Hence, consumers will place more emphasis on the desirability concerns in decision-making under an abstract construal, while they put more weight to the feasibility concerns under a concrete construal (Liberman & Trope, 1998; Liu, 2008; Trope et al., 2007). For instance, Lu, Xie, and Xu (2013) observed desirability-feasibility trade-offs among consumers who decide for others versus for themselves (i.e., variance in the social distance) across stages of the decision process. When deciding for others (vs. the self), people are more likely to seek desirability- (feasibility-) related information and choose the high desirability (high feasibility) option. A similar tendency has also been detected regarding information recall in the post-decision stage. Moreover,

emphasizing desirability over feasibility, gift givers also prefer desirable gifts, whereas the reverse is true for the gift receivers (Baskin, Wakslak, Trope, & Novemsky, 2014).

Building on the CLT literature, I manipulated consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus by varying their construal levels in Study 2. Thus, a 2 (levels of spokesperson achievement: higher vs. lower) $\times$ 2 (construal level: abstract vs. concrete) between-subjects design was used to test the proposed H2. I expected a significant interaction effect of the spokesperson's domain achievement and the consumers' construal level on their intention to pursue a same-domain goal.

Methods

Participants, procedures, and measures. I recruited 241 U.S. based participants, who were aged from 20 to 55 and interested in getting into running, from Amazon MTurk. They completed Study 2 for a monetary reward (53.1% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 32.62$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 7.98$).

The first part of the study was titled "Your thoughts about some everyday activities," where I manipulated the construal levels by getting participants to describe different aspects of the activities (details in the construal level priming section). Then, the participants undertook an ostensibly unrelated scenario task. They were randomly assigned to read a running program advertisement featuring either a higher- or a lower-achieving runner as the spokesperson. The ad copies were almost identical to those used in Study 1A, with the same achievement descriptions being used. The only difference was that I reduced the amount of information about the program so as not to distract the participants from the core manipulation of running achievement. The stimuli can be found in Appendix C.

Subsequently, the participants reported their intention to pursue running (2 items; $\alpha = .88$), relative difference in running ability (1 item, 9-point; $-4 =$ a lot weaker than him, $0 =$ about the same, $+4 =$ a lot stronger than him), running self-efficacy (3 items; adapted from Murphy, 1992; $\alpha = .87$), exercise frequency (1 item, 7-point; $1 =$ never, $7 =$ almost every day) and demographics. Running self-efficacy was included as a covariate in this study because people with higher domain self-efficacy tend to have a more positive assessment of their success likelihood and thus, show stronger motivation. Self-efficacy has also been found to affect how an individual reacts towards successful others (Bandura, 2001; Hernandez, Jimenez, & Martin, 2009; Hoyt, 2013; Zhao, Seibert, & Hills, 2005). Exercise frequency was also recorded as a control variable. All measures, except for the relative difference item, were answered on 7-point scales (see Appendix C).

Construal level priming. I adopted the why/how mindset induction protocol (Freitas, Gollwitzer, & Trope, 2004) to activate participants' abstract (high-level) versus concrete (low-level) construal (see Appendix C). Participants in the abstract-construal condition considered "why" they would "(a) back up their computer" and "(b) keep in touch with their friends." The survey was programmed to successively ask for the higher-level goals the participant intended to achieve, facilitating him or her to think in a progressively more abstract manner. Participants went through three rounds of "why" consideration for each activity. Those in the concrete-construal condition went through similar thought exercises, but they explained "how" they would engage in the above two everyday activities, by indicating the sequential steps to accomplish each activity. They also completed three rounds of "how" questions and described their approaches in an increasingly more concrete manner. Total time spent on the task

did not differ between the two construal level conditions ($M_{\text{Abstract}} = 121.27$, $SD = 78.75$, $n = 122$ vs. $M_{\text{Concrete}} = 116.42$, $SD = 97.29$, $n = 119$; $t(239) = 0.43$, $p = .67$).

Results

Manipulation checks. The descriptions of the spokespersons' achievement were the same as those in Study 1A, where the manipulation of achievement level worked as expected. As an additional check, I examined the relative difference in running ability between the participant and the spokesperson. Participants in the higher achievement condition rated themselves significantly weaker in running than the spokesperson; the rating was significantly smaller than zero ($M_{\text{Higher}} = -2.73$, $SD = 1.40$, $n = 120$; $t(119) = -21.38$, $p < .001$). On the other hand, subjects in the lower achievement condition perceived the spokesperson as being directionally stronger than themselves (i.e. rating < 0), although the difference did not reach significance ($M_{\text{Lower}} = -0.19$, $SD = 2.10$, $n = 121$; $t(120) = -0.99$, $p = .16$). The perceived ability gaps were significantly different between the two conditions (-2.73 vs. -0.19 ; $t(239) = -11.04$, $p < .001$), suggesting that achievement manipulation was successful. Importantly, both spokespersons were not perceived as weaker than the participants themselves, and the manipulation did not activate downward comparison.

Running self-efficacy and exercise frequency. Participants across conditions did not vary in terms of their running self-efficacy ($F(3, 237) = 0.68$, $p = .57$) or exercise frequency ($F(3, 237) = 0.67$, $p = .57$); detailed descriptive statistics can be found in Appendix F.

Intention to pursue running. A 2 (levels of spokesperson achievement: higher coded as $+0.5$ vs. lower coded as -0.5) $\times$ 2 (construal level: abstract coded as $+0.5$ vs. concrete coded as -0.5) ANOVA was performed on participants' intention to

pursue running. There was only a significant spokesperson achievement $\times$ construal level effect ($F(1, 237) = 8.28, p = .004$), whilst all other effects were insignificant ($ps > .49$).

As illustrated in Figure 4, when participants adopted an abstract construal, they reported a higher intention to pursue running after reading the ad featuring the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson ($M_{\text{Higher-Abstract}} = 5.49, SD = 0.96, n = 61$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Abstract}} = 5.03, SD = 1.12, n = 61; F(1, 237) = 5.08, p = .025$). In contrast, participants under a concrete construal showed stronger motivation after being exposed to the lower- (vs. higher-) achieving spokesperson, albeit with only marginal significance ($M_{\text{Higher-Concrete}} = 4.97, SD = 1.30, n = 59$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Concrete}} = 5.35, SD = 1.11, n = 60; F(1, 237) = 3.31, p = .07$). The higher-achieving spokesperson better motivated the abstract-construal participants to run than he did the concrete-construal ones ($M_{\text{Higher-Abstract}} = 5.49$ vs. $M_{\text{Higher-Concrete}} = 4.97; F(1, 237) = 6.34, p = .012$). Yet, after perusing the ad featuring the lower-achieving spokesperson, there was only a close-to-marginally-significant difference in running intention between the abstract- and concrete-construal participants ($M_{\text{Lower-Abstract}} = 5.03$, vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Concrete}} = 5.35; F(1, 237) = 2.41, p = .12$).

Figure 4. Intention to pursue running as a function of spokesperson achievement and construal levels – Study 2.

Note. Error bars represent standard errors of the mean.

A follow-up ANCOVA showed that running self-efficacy was a significant covariate ($F(1, 236) = 7.58, p = .006$) of participants' intention to pursue running. Despite this, spokesperson achievement $\times$ construal level interaction remained significant ($F(1, 236) = 7.43, p = .007$). Further, even after controlling participants' exercise frequency as the covariate ($F(1, 236) = 14.28, p < .001$), the ANCOVA still revealed a significant spokesperson achievement $\times$ construal level effect ($F(1, 237) = 7.65, p = .006$). The contrast patterns were also similar to those found in the main analysis. Hence, the observed moderating effect of construal level on the relationship between spokesperson achievement and running intention was not affected by the participants' individual differences, such as running self-efficacy or exercise frequency.

Discussion

Study 2 uncovered that consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus (manipulated by the construal levels) determined how they would react towards the higher- versus the lower-achieving spokesperson. Consumers focusing on the desirability aspect of a goal (i.e., those under an abstract construal) were more motivated to run after being exposed to a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson, and vice versa for those focusing on the feasibility aspect of a goal (i.e., those under a concrete construal). Furthermore, the testimonial by the higher-achieving spokesperson was more effective only if the target audience focused on the desirability aspect or adopted an abstract construal.

To understand further how the construal levels influenced the effectiveness of spokesperson achievement in motivating consumers to run, I conducted a post hoc analysis to compare the two construal-level priming conditions with a control condition where no priming was administered. I ran a separate experiment one week after Study 2 to collect the control condition data. Using the same sampling procedures, I recruited 119 U.S. based participants (45.4% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 32.99$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 8.23$). Skipping the initial why/how mindset induction exercises, the participants reviewed identical stimuli ($n_{\text{Higher}} = 60$, $n_{\text{Lower}} = 59$) and completed the same measures used in Study 2. I combined the newly collected control condition data with the existing data of Study 2 and subjected the compiled data ($N = 360$) to a 2 (levels of spokesperson achievement: higher vs. lower) $\times$ 3 (construal level: control vs. abstract vs. concrete) ANOVA, as illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Intention to pursue running across the concrete-construal, abstract-construal and control conditions – Study 2 post hoc analysis.

Note. Error bars represent standard errors of the mean.

Firstly, the main effect of spokesperson achievement in the control condition was not significant, a similar result to those reported in Studies 1A and 1B. Regardless of which ad they reviewed, participants in the control condition showed a similar intention to run ($M_{\text{Higher-Control}} = 5.16$, $SD = 1.12$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Control}} = 5.00$, $SD = 1.08$; $F(1, 354) = 0.62$, $p = .43$). Moreover, after being exposed to the higher-achieving spokesperson, the participants' running intention was directionally stronger in the abstract construal condition than in the control one ($M_{\text{Higher-Abstract}} = 5.49$ vs. $M_{\text{Higher-Control}} = 5.16$; $F(1, 354) = 2.63$, $p = .11$), whereas those in the control and concrete-construal conditions did not differ in their running intention ($M_{\text{Higher-Control}} = 5.16$ vs. $M_{\text{Higher-Concrete}} = 4.97$; $F(1, 354) = 0.82$, $p = .37$). On the other hand, after reading about the lower-achieving spokesperson, the participants' motivation for running was marginally higher in the concrete-construal condition than in the control one ($M_{\text{Lower-Control}} = 5.00$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Concrete}} = 5.35$; $F(1, 354) = 2.95$, $p = .087$), while those in the

control and abstract-construal conditions did not show such a difference in motivation ($M_{\text{Lower-Abstract}} = 5.03$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Control}} = 5.00$; $F(1, 354) = 0.03$, $p = .87$).

The exploratory post hoc analysis provided some initial evidence for the effect of the construal levels on consumers' response towards spokespersons with varying levels of domain achievement. The abstract-construal consumers are more inclined to show a stronger running intention than their peers in other construal conditions after reading about the higher-achieving spokesperson. In contrast, compared to those adopting an abstract construal or receiving no construal priming, the concrete-construal consumers were more likely to be motivated by the lower-achieving spokesperson to pursue running. In other words, activating an abstract construal or a desirability focus might enhance consumers' behavioral response towards a higher-achieving spokesperson, whereas triggering a concrete construal or a feasibility focus could lead to a more positive reaction towards a lower-achieving one.

STUDY 3: PROCESS VS. OUTCOME FOCUS

Process versus Outcome Focus

In a goal pursuit, means (the process) are linked to the ends (the outcome). Individuals differ in how much they emphasize the means versus the ends. Focusing more on the means over the ends suggests a process focus, and the opposite is an outcome focus (Freund & Hennecke, 2015; Krause & Freund, 2016). Moreover, people may also engage in process-oriented or outcome-oriented mental simulation. The former directs one's thoughts to the process or steps to achieve a goal, whilst the latter focuses one's attention on the outcomes from achieving it (e.g., Escalas & Luce, 2003; Pham & Taylor, 1999).

The conceptualization of the process versus outcome (PO) focus is in line with the construal level theory. The process refers to “how” a goal or an action is achieved, highlighting the subordinate and concrete features of this goal. On the other hand, the outcome indicates “why” a goal is pursued, or an action taken, thereby offering superordinate and abstract information. Hence, thinking about a goal in terms of outcome (vs. process) activates an abstract (concrete) construal (Pham & Taylor, 1999; Rim et al., 2013; Zhao et al., 2007). Consequently, PO focus will change the relative emphasis individuals place on the desirability versus the feasibility consideration. Outcome-focused consumers concentrate more on the abstract desirability aspect of a goal, whereas the process-focused ones emphasize more the concrete feasibility aspect (Hamilton & Thompson, 2007; Thompson et al., 2009; Zhao et al., 2007).

In situations involving trade-offs between desirability and feasibility, PO focus plays a major role in determining consumers' final decisions or behaviors. For instance, Escalas and Luce (2003) found that process-focused customers, compared to their

outcome-focused counterparts, tend to contemplate more about whether a product or an action plan can bring about the fulfillment of a goal. Their concerns over feasibility make them more likely to be persuaded by stronger (vs. weaker) advertisement arguments. Furthermore, PO focus resolves preference inconsistency over time. Zhao and colleagues (2007) discovered that evoking an outcome focus in a near-future situation increases people's preference for the high desirability option because an outcome focus highlights the neglected desirability aspect. Similarly, a process focus reduces the tendency to choose high desirability items in a distant-future context by stressing the feasibility issue.

Drawing upon the PO focus literature, I primed consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus by putting them into either an outcome or a process focus. According to H2, PO focus should moderate the relationship between spokesperson achievement and consumers' motivation. In Study 3, the moderation effect of spokesperson achievement (higher vs. lower) and PO focus (outcome vs. process) on consumers' intention to adopt a same-domain goal was examined in an experiment with a 2×2 between-subject design.

Cross-Domain Effect of the Spokesperson's Achievement

Study 3 also had the aim of exploring a cross-domain effect of spokesperson achievement. A null effect of spokesperson achievement on the same-domain behavioral intention (i.e., the intention to pursue running) was observed in the previous studies (Studies 1A & 2 post hoc analysis). As seen in Study 1A, this null effect was due to the two mediating forces of perceived inspiration and perceived attainability canceling each other out. Consequently, a significant main effect of the spokesperson's achievement on consumers' behavioral intention will emerge should any one of the

indirect paths be switched off or attenuated. One such situation is pursuing goals in a different but related domain (i.e., the cross-domain goals).

Compared to a lower-achieving spokesperson, a higher-achieving one is more inspiring, thus motivating individuals to emulate him or her success (Morgenroth et al., 2015; Thrash et al., 2010). The striving to catch up with that spokesperson may spill over to other domains of importance to the individuals; for example, an excellent basketball player (e.g., Michael Jordan) can encourage people to aspire in their own profession (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Schindler et al., 2015). On the other hand, perceived attainability is an assessment based on an ability comparison between the self and the spokesperson in the focal goal domain. Hence, it should affect individuals' motivation only in the comparison domain. In short, inspiration is a more abstract and domain-general driver of motivation, and attainability is a more concrete and domain-specific concern (Lieberman & Trope, 1998). Thus, attainability would become an irrelevant consideration when consumers evaluate a cross-domain goal. A higher-achieving spokesperson would then have a positive influence on consumers' cross-domain behavioral intention.

This hypothesized cross-domain effect of spokesperson achievement was examined in this study. In relation to running, I chose healthy eating as the cross-domain goal, and I expected a significant main effect of the spokesperson's running achievement on participants' intention for healthy eating.

Methods

Participants, procedures, and measures. Four hundred and nine U.S. based MTurk workers, aged from 20 to 55 and interested in getting into running, completed Study 3 for a monetary reward. After removing two participants from India and six

others, who declared they were unfit for exercises, 401 responses were used in the analysis (56.1% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 31.73$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 8.69$).

After giving their consent, the participants were asked to imagine that a running program would be offered in their neighborhood. They were then requested to perform a mental simulation exercise while reviewing the program poster. The PO focus was manipulated via the mental simulation exercise (adapted from Chan, Sengupta, & Mukhopadhyay, 2013). In the outcome-focus condition, the participants were instructed to visualize the end benefit of achieving a similar level of success as the spokesperson featured in the poster; in the process-focus condition, they were required to visualize the process they would go through to reach a similar level of success as the spokesperson. On the subsequent page, they reviewed the program poster, featuring a spokesperson with either a higher or a lower level of running achievement. The posters were similar to the ones used in Studies 1A and 2. Please see Appendix D for the mental simulation instructions and stimuli.

Next, the participants answered two dependent measures, intention to pursue running (2 items; $\alpha = .88$) and intention for healthy eating (2 items; adapted from Lockwood, Wong, McShane, & Dolderman, 2005; $\alpha = .85$). They also indicated the relative difference in running ability between themselves and the spokesperson (1 item, 9-point; same as in Study 2). As the manipulation checks, they reported the extent to which they thought about the process or the outcome of achieving a similar success as the spokesperson when reviewing the poster, in 2 items, respectively (adapted from Chan et al., 2013; $\alpha_{\text{process}} = .85$; $\alpha_{\text{outcome}} = .81$). They also rated the spokesperson's achievement (2 items; $\alpha = .92$). The survey ended with running self-efficacy (3 items; $\alpha = .87$), exercise frequency (1 item, same as in Study 2) and demographics questions.

Apart from the relative difference item, all measures were answered on 7-point scales (see Appendix D).

Results

Manipulation checks. Participants who undertook outcome-focused simulation reported having more outcome-related thoughts ($M_{\text{Outcome}} = 5.79$, $SD = 1.19$, $n = 200$ vs. $M_{\text{Process}} = 4.97$, $SD = 1.54$, $n = 201$; $t(399) = 5.91$, $p < .001$) but fewer process-related ones ($M_{\text{Outcome}} = 5.35$, $SD = 1.33$ vs. $M_{\text{Process}} = 5.70$, $SD = 1.26$; $t(399) = -2.78$, $p = .006$) than those who performed process-focused simulation. Thus, PO focus manipulation was successful.

Furthermore, the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson was perceived to be more successful in running ($M_{\text{Higher}} = 6.59$, $SD = 0.63$, $n = 206$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 4.70$, $SD = 1.45$, $n = 195$; $t(399) = 17.11$, $p < .001$). The relative ability difference measure showed that both spokespersons were perceived to be significantly stronger than the participants in running (i.e., rating < 0 ; $M_{\text{Higher}} = -2.74$, $SD = 1.48$, $t(205) = -26.65$, $p < .001$; $M_{\text{Lower}} = -0.42$, $SD = 1.98$, $t(194) = -2.92$, $p = .002$). The manipulation of spokesperson achievement worked as expected.

Running self-efficacy and exercise frequency. The participants indicated significantly different levels of running self-efficacy ($F(3, 397) = 4.24$, $p = .006$). Particularly, those in the higher-achieving spokesperson/process focus condition ($M_{\text{Higher-Process}} = 3.53$, $SD = 1.41$) were less confident in running than those in the two lower-achieving spokesperson conditions respectively ($M_{\text{Lower-Outcome}} = 4.10$, $SD = 1.18$, $p = .013$; $M_{\text{Lower-Process}} = 4.08$, $SD = 1.37$, $p = .017$). There was no significant difference in the participants' reported exercise frequency across conditions ($F(3, 397) = 0.61$, $p = .61$). Detailed descriptive statistics can be found in Appendix F.

Intention to pursue running. A 2 (levels of spokesperson achievement: higher coded as +0.5 vs. lower coded as -0.5) $\times$ 2 (PO focus: outcome coded as +0.5 vs. process coded as -0.5) ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of PO focus ($F(1, 397) = 6.74, p = .01$) and a significant interaction effect of spokesperson achievement and PO focus on participants' intention to pursue running ($F(1, 397) = 4.89, p = .028$). However, the main effect of spokesperson achievement was not significant ($p = .31$; see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Intention to pursue running as a function of spokesperson achievement and process vs. outcome focus – Study 3.

Note. Error bars represent standard errors of the mean.

In the outcome-focus condition, the participants reported a higher intention to pursue running, if the program was recommended by the spokesperson with a higher (vs. lower) level of achievement ($M_{\text{Higher-Outcome}} = 5.62, SD = 1.01, n = 104$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Outcome}} = 5.26, SD = 1.22, n = 96; F(1, 397) = 5.18, p = .023$). There was no such difference in the process-focus condition ($M_{\text{Higher-Process}} = 5.08, SD = 1.17, n = 102$ vs.

$M_{\text{Lower-Process}} = 5.21$, $SD = 1.06$, $n = 99$; $F(1, 397) = 0.72$, $p = .40$). The participants with an outcome focus responded more positively towards the higher-achieving spokesperson than those with a process focus ($M_{\text{Higher-Outcome}} = 5.62$ vs. $M_{\text{Higher-Process}} = 5.08$; $F(1, 397) = 11.88$, $p = .001$); however, they did not respond differently towards the lower-achieving one ($M_{\text{Lower-Outcome}} = 5.26$, vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Process}} = 5.21$; $F(1, 397) = 0.07$, $p = .79$).

Even after controlling running self-efficacy ($F(1, 396) = 44.65$, $p < .001$) in the analysis, the observed interaction effect ($F(1, 396) = 4.14$, $p = .042$) and contrast patterns remained unchanged. Moreover, exercise frequency was not a significant covariate for running intention ($F(1, 396) = 2.16$, $p = .14$). The ANCOVA, with exercise frequency as the covariate, also revealed similar results as in the main analysis. Hence, the moderation effect of PO focus on the relationship between spokesperson achievement and running intention was not affected by the participants' running self-efficacy or exercise frequency.

Cross-domain effect on healthy eating. A spokesperson achievement $\times$ PO focus ANOVA on participants' intention for healthy eating uncovered only a main effect of spokesperson achievement ($F(1, 397) = 8.75$, $p = .003$). The other effects were insignificant ($ps > .23$). As predicted, there was a positive influence of the spokesperson's running achievement on participants' motivation for healthy eating – a related cross-domain goal, as seen in Figure 7.

The outcome-focused participants reported a significantly higher intention for healthy eating after seeing the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson ($M_{\text{Higher-Outcome}} = 5.61$, $SD = 1.14$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Outcome}} = 5.17$, $SD = 1.41$; $F(1, 397) = 5.52$, $p = .019$; Cohen's $d = 0.34$). A similar pattern was observed among the process-focused participants despite the marginally significant difference ($M_{\text{Higher-Process}} = 5.40$, $SD =$

1.26 vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Process}} = 5.06$, $SD = 1.47$; $F(1, 397) = 3.36$, $p = .068$; Cohen's $d = 0.25$), whilst the other contrasts were not significant ($ps > .26$).

Figure 7. Intention for healthy eating as a function of spokesperson achievement and process vs. outcome focus – Study 3.

Note. Error bars represent standard errors of the mean.

Discussion

Study 3 showed that consumers' response towards a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson depended on their focus on desirability versus feasibility (manipulated by the PO focus). The higher-achieving spokesperson motivated desirability-focused individuals (i.e., those adopting an outcome focus) to devote more to running than the lower-achieving one did. However, feasibility-focused individuals (i.e., those adopting a process focus) did not respond differently towards the higher- versus the lower-achieving spokespersons. The spokesperson with a higher level of achievement appeared to motivate goal-directed behaviors in the same domain only when consumers focused on the outcome or the desirability aspect of a goal.

Furthermore, the spokesperson's higher (vs. lower) running achievement was found to encourage consumers to pursue a cross-domain goal of healthy eating. Regardless of their PO focus, consumers were more motivated to keep a healthy diet after being exposed to the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson, which supports my conjecture. Compared to perceived attainability, the motivational effect of inspiration appears to be more domain-generic, and its influence can spill over into a different yet related goal.

STUDY 4: EXPLORING MEDIATION EFFECTS UNDER THE DESIRABILITY VS. FEASIBILITY FOCUS OF GOAL PURSUIT

The purpose of Study 4 was to understand how the two forces of perceived inspiration and perceived attainability influence consumers' motivation under a desirability versus a feasibility focus of goal pursuit. That is, Study 4 was aimed at investigating the moderated mediation patterns underlying the effect of the spokesperson's domain achievement on consumers' motivation to pursue a same-domain goal.

To strengthen the manipulation of the desirability versus feasibility focus, I adopted a stronger process versus outcome (PO) focus protocol that required the participants to describe the process (means) or outcome (ends) of an event in an essay. I assessed how PO focus interacts with the dual mechanisms of inspiration and attainability to determine consumers' response towards a spokesperson with a higher (vs. lower) level of achievement. I expected to obtain similar results as in Study 3. There should be a significant moderation effect of spokesperson achievement and PO focus on participants' intention to pursue running. Furthermore, the strength of the two mediating paths should also be altered by the process versus outcome focus. The indirect effect ($X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$) through perceived inspiration should be larger under an outcome focus than under a process focus, while the indirect effect through perceived attainability should be weaker under an outcome focus than under a process focus.

In contrast to the previous studies, this experiment was conducted in a more controlled lab setting with younger participants from a different culture. If subjects with different demographics and cultural backgrounds react similarly towards a higher- versus a lower-achieving spokesperson, that would be preliminary support for

the idea that the dual-mechanism model of inspiration and attainability on goal motivation is applicable across cultural and demographic groups. According to Sport Singapore (2016), running is the most popular exercise activity among the young adults (20 -39 years), both male and female, in Singapore. It is also the second most aspired sport by people who have not undergone any physical activity in the past year (i.e., non-participants). Hence, I used the same running program scenario as in Studies 2 and 3, deeming that the scenario would be relevant to most of the young adult students taking part in this study.

Methods

Participants, procedures, and measures. Two hundred and thirty undergraduate students from Nanyang Technological University completed Study 4 in exchange for credit for a marketing course. As the study stimuli presented an Asian youth as the spokesperson and the dependent variable was the decision whether to do more running or not, I removed eight exchange students from the Western countries and 21 others, who declared that they were unfit to exercise. As a result, 201 responses were used for the analysis (55.2% female, $M_{\text{age}} = 20.30$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 1.30$).

The procedures were similar to those of Study 2. Firstly, the participants were asked to “share their experiences of working in a project group,” where their focus on process versus outcome was primed (see PO focus priming section). Specifically, they described the steps they took to complete a project versus the outputs they delivered from it. At the end of the priming task, the participants reported current mood (1 item; “*how is your feeling right now?*” 1 = very bad, 7 = very good).

Next, the participants moved on to an ostensibly unrelated scenario task. They were told that the University would have a running program open for all students and

that they would be considering joining the program. Subsequently, they read an ad copy for it. The manipulation of the spokesperson's running achievement was embedded in the ad (see stimuli section). The dependent measure was their intention to pursue running (2 items, $\alpha = .94$). The participants also reported perceived inspiration (3 items, same as in Study 1B; $\alpha = .93$), attainability (3 items, same as in Study 1B; $\alpha = .96$), relative difference in running ability (as the manipulation check; 1 item, 9-point), spokesperson's achievement (as the manipulation check; 3 items, $\alpha = .94$), running self-efficacy (3 items, $\alpha = .95$) as well as their exercise frequency (1 item). The measures were similar to those used in Studies 2 and 3. Lastly, the participants indicated how difficult the PO focus priming task was (single item; 1 = not at all difficult, 7 = very difficult). They were asked to review their own essay and to rate the extent to which it addressed process-related or outcome-related issues (1 item respectively; 1 = not at all, 7 = very much). The study ended with demographics questions. Except for the relative difference question, all items were measured on 7-point scales. All measures could be found in Appendix E.

Process versus outcome (PO) focus priming. I adapted the protocol used by Woolley (2009) to prime the process versus outcome focus. Her original manipulation materials were two worksheets designed for a team-based task. One facilitated the team to identify necessary sub-tasks and assign duties among members (i.e., the process-focus condition), while the other guided the team to list desired outcomes and prioritize them (i.e., the outcome-focus condition). As Study 4 happened near to the last third of the semester, students were finishing their project assignments. Hence, the timing offered a natural setting for the use of Woolley's protocol (2009). Instead of planning for a future project, I asked the students to write about an experience that they had undergone or were going through, making it easier for them to discuss the

process- or outcome-related details about their project. Moreover, their sharing was not limited to the marketing course project in that they could describe any preferred ongoing or concluded project assignment. In short, this PO focus priming exercise involved students more in the task, thus enhancing the strength of the manipulation.

The participants in the process condition ($n = 99$) were asked to identify a team project that they were involved in and then to delineate on the “approaches” they used to tackle the project, such as group meetings, task assignment, and so on. In contrast, those in the outcome-focus condition ($n = 102$) wrote about the “final output” they produced for the project and discussed the importance of those project deliverables.

There was a marginally significant difference in the total time spent on the writing task ($M_{\text{Outcome}} = 283.88$ seconds, $SD = 94.32$ vs. $M_{\text{Process}} = 314.13$, $SD = 122.17$; $t(199) = -1.97$, $p = .050$), whilst the participants did not differ in their mood upon completing the priming task ($M_{\text{Outcome}} = 4.50$, $SD = 1.27$ vs. $M_{\text{Process}} = 4.57$, $SD = 1.34$; $t(199) = -0.36$, $p = .72$). They also found the priming tasks equally manageable ($M_{\text{Outcome}} = 2.89$, $SD = 1.43$ vs. $M_{\text{Process}} = 2.60$, $SD = 1.36$; $t(199) = 1.50$, $p = .13$). Moreover, compared to those in the process-focus condition, the participants in the outcome-focus condition elaborated more on the outcome-related issues ($M_{\text{Outcome}} = 4.77$, $SD = 1.33$ vs. $M_{\text{Process}} = 3.39$, $SD = 1.50$; $t(199) = 6.91$, $p < .001$) and covered the process-related issues to a lesser extent ($M_{\text{Outcome}} = 3.78$, $SD = 1.50$ vs. $M_{\text{Process}} = 5.10$, $SD = 1.19$; $t(199) = -6.88$, $p < .001$). These results show that the manipulation of the PO focus was successful.

Stimuli. The two running program ad copies were identical to those used in Study 3, except for the portrait image used. Given that the participants were students from a university in Asia, I used an image of an Asian young adult, instead of a

Caucasian one, to enhance participants' identification with the spokesperson. The running program was thus endorsed by a young Asian male past participant.

A separate pretest with 52 undergraduate students from the same University (84.6% female, $M_{\text{age}} = 21.94$, $SD_{\text{age}} = 1.83$) confirmed that (a) the higher- and the lower-achieving spokespersons were equally likeable (2 items, same as in Study 1A pretest; $\alpha = .78$; $M_{\text{Higher}} = 4.28$, $SD = 1.14$, $n = 27$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 4.24$, $SD = 0.91$, $n = 25$; $t(50) = 0.13$, $p = .90$); (b) the ad copies did not differ in terms of perceived credibility (3 items, "*the ad is believable/realistic/credible*"; $\alpha = .81$; $M_{\text{Higher}} = 3.86$, $SD = 1.28$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 4.36$, $SD = 0.99$; $t(50) = -1.56$, $p = .13$); (c) lastly, the higher-achieving spokesperson was perceived to be significantly more successful in running than the lower-achieving one (the same 3 items as in the main study, $\alpha = .95$; $M_{\text{Higher}} = 5.41$, $SD = 1.10$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 3.68$, $SD = 1.41$; $t(50) = 4.94$, $p < .001$).

Results

Manipulation checks. In the main study, 100 participants reviewed the ad featuring the higher-achieving spokesperson, and the remaining 101 read information presented by the lower-achieving one. Perceived spokesperson's achievement differed between the two conditions ($M_{\text{Higher}} = 5.54$, $SD = 1.05$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower}} = 3.40$, $SD = 1.25$; $t(199) = 13.15$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, in both conditions, the participants found the spokesperson not weaker than themselves. The higher-achieving spokesperson were significantly stronger at running than the participants (i.e., rating < 0 ; $M_{\text{Higher}} = -2.46$, $SD = 1.53$, $t(99) = -16.11$, $p < .001$), while the lower-achieving one was perceived to have directionally better running ability than the subjects ($M_{\text{Lower}} = -0.23$, $SD = 2.08$, $t(100) = -1.10$, $p = .14$). The manipulation of the spokesperson's achievement worked as intended.

Running self-efficacy and exercise frequency. The participants indicated similar levels of running self-efficacy ($F(3, 197) = 0.66, p = .58$) and exercise frequency ($F(3, 197) = 0.76, p = .52$). The descriptive statistics are summarized in Appendix F.

Intention to pursue running. The participants' intention to pursue running was subject to a two-way ANOVA, with spokesperson achievement and PO focus being the two fixed factors (contrast coded as in Study 3). Similar to what was found in Study 3, a significant interaction effect of spokesperson achievement and PO focus emerged ($F(1, 197) = 4.16, p = .043$) with no other significant effect ($ps > .55$). See Figure 8.

Planned contrasts revealed that participants primed with an outcome focus were relatively more likely to pursue running after reading the ad featuring the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson ($M_{\text{Higher-Outcome}} = 3.46, SD = 1.33, n = 51$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Outcome}} = 3.06, SD = 1.43, n = 51; F(1, 197) = 2.01, p = .16$). In contrast, the process-focused participants indicated a directionally higher intention to pursue running after being exposed to the lower- (vs. higher-) achieving spokesperson ($M_{\text{Higher-Process}} = 2.93, SD = 1.29, n = 49$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Process}} = 3.35, SD = 1.65, n = 50; F(1, 197) = 2.15, p = .14$). In addition, the higher-achieving spokesperson better motivated the outcome-focused participants to run than he did the process-focused ones ($M_{\text{Higher-Outcome}} = 3.46$ vs. $M_{\text{Higher-Process}} = 2.93, F(1, 197) = 3.46, p = .064$). Participants in both PO focus conditions did not show significantly different responses towards the lower-achieving spokesperson ($M_{\text{Lower-Outcome}} = 3.06$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Process}} = 3.35, F(1, 197) = 1.04, p = .31$). The statistically less significant contrast results, compared to those in the earlier studies, could be due to the smaller sample size in this lab study (i.e., lower power).

Additional ANCOVA, with running self-efficacy as the covariate ($F(1, 196) = 18.95, p < .001$), revealed a significant spokesperson achievement $\times$ PO focus effect ($F(1, 196) = 4.03, p = .046$) and similar contrast patterns. Further, including exercise frequency ($F(1, 196) = 5.90, p = .016$) in the analysis did not change the observed interaction effect ($F(1, 196) = 4.15, p = .043$) and contrast results. Despite participants' running self-efficacy and exercise frequency being significant predictors of running intention, accounting for these two variables, respectively, in the ANCOVAs did not attenuate the significant interaction effect of spokesperson achievement and PO focus observed in the main analysis.

Figure 8. Intention to pursue running as a function of spokesperson achievement and process vs. outcome focus – Study 4.

Note. Error bars represent standard errors of the mean.

Moderated mediation. An exploratory moderated mediation analysis (PROCESS Model 59) revealed that PO focus was likely to change how participants perceived the spokesperson's achievement, but it might not have adjusted the weight

they assigned to the inspiration versus attainability consideration. Hence, I ran a moderated mediation analysis using PROCESS Model 8 with 10,000 bias-corrected bootstrapping samples. Spokesperson achievement was entered as the independent variable (X), intention to pursue running was the dependent one (Y), PO focus was the moderator (W), and perceived inspiration (M1) and attainability (M2) were the two mediators. PO focus was set to moderate the first stage ($X \rightarrow M1/M2$) of the mediation model. The model and results are illustrated in Figure 9.

After accounting for the mediators, the residual spokesperson achievement $\times$ PO focus ($X \cdot W$) effect turned insignificant ($b_5 = 0.35$, $t(195) = 0.96$, $p = .34$). Perceived inspiration and attainability mediated the observed moderation effect on participants' intention to pursue running. Furthermore, in the first stage of the model, the spokesperson achievement $\times$ PO focus interaction effect was marginally significant on inspiration ($a_3 = 0.65$, $t(197) = 1.75$, $p = .082$) and significant on attainability ($a_4 = 0.92$, $t(197) = 2.31$, $p = .022$). I will elaborate on these moderation effects in the next section.

The path coefficients and indirect effects ($X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$) in the process- versus the outcome-focus condition were estimated and compiled in the summary table of Figure 9. The path coefficients were all significant, except for the path from spokesperson achievement to inspiration ($X \rightarrow M1$) in the process-focus condition. The indirect effect of spokesperson achievement on running intention through perceived inspiration was significant in the outcome-focus condition ($ab = 0.52$, $SE = .15$; 95% CI : [0.25, 0.87]), but this indirect effect was only marginally significant in the process-focus condition ($ab = 0.21$, $SE = .13$; 90% CI : [0.01, 0.43]). The strength of the inspiration force varied across the PO focus conditions, albeit with a marginal significance (moderated mediation index = 0.31, $SE = .19$, 90% CI : [0.02, 0.66]).

Moreover, the indirect effects through perceived attainability were significant in both PO focus conditions, and the strength of the attainability force significantly differed between these conditions (moderated mediation index = 0.17, $SE = .10$, 95% CI : [0.03, 0.47]). Attainability was a more serious concern for the process-focused participants ($ab = -0.48$, $SE = .19$; 95% CI : [-0.88, -0.12]) than for those outcome-focused ones ($ab = -0.31$, $SE = .13$; 95% CI : [-0.61, -0.08]).

In sum, these results support my proposition that the participants' focus on process versus outcome altered the relative influences of the dual mediating forces of inspiration and attainability, which then led to their different behavioral responses towards the higher-versus the lower-achieving spokesperson.

Path Coefficient and Bootstrap Results

	X → M Estimate (SE)	M → Y Estimate (SE)	X → M → Y Indirect Effect Estimate (SE)	95% CI	90% CI
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>ab</i>		
Perceived Inspiration (M1)					
Process Focus	0.45 [†] (.27)	0.47***	0.21 (.13)	[-0.03, 0.47]	[0.01, 0.43]
Outcome Focus	1.10*** (.26)	(.07)	0.52 (.15)	[0.25, 0.87]	[0.29, 0.79]
Mod. Med Index			0.31 (.19)	[-0.02, 0.75]	[0.02, 0.66]
Perceived Attainability (M2)					
Process Focus	-2.58*** (.28)	0.19**	-0.48 (.19)	[-0.88, -0.12]	[-0.83, -0.18]
Outcome Focus	-1.66*** (.28)	(.06)	-0.31 (.13)	[-0.61, -0.08]	[-0.56, -0.12]
Mod. Med. Index			0.17 (.10)	[0.03, 0.47]	[0.04, 0.40]

** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$ [†] $p < .10$

Figure 9. The moderated mediation model of spokesperson achievement on intention to pursue running and indirect effect estimates – Study 4.

Note. X = spokesperson achievement; Y = intention to pursue running; and Mod. Med. Index = moderated mediation index. The numbers in the illustration represent unstandardized regression coefficients. Not all relationships are indicated in the diagram. Please refer to Appendix F for the complete regression results.

Influence of PO focus on perceived inspiration and attainability. PO focus was found to influence how the participants perceived the spokespersons of varying levels of domain achievement. I offer more insights into the spokesperson achievement $\times$ PO focus interaction effect on perceived inspiration and perceived attainability below.

As seen in Figure 10A, the outcome-focused participants found the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson more inspiring ($M_{\text{Higher-Outcome}} = 4.03$, $SD = 1.33$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Outcome}} = 2.93$, $SD = 1.26$; $F(1, 197) = 17.60$, $p < .001$). Process-focused participants did not have such a big difference in their perceived inspiration ($M_{\text{Higher-Process}} = 3.27$, $SD = 1.27$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Process}} = 2.82$, $SD = 1.42$; $F(1, 197) = 2.81$, $p = .095$). Moreover, the higher-achieving spokesperson was significantly more inspiring for the outcome-focused participants than for their process-focused counterparts ($M_{\text{Higher-Outcome}} = 4.03$ vs. $M_{\text{Higher-Process}} = 3.27$; $F(1, 197) = 8.28$, $p = .004$).

In terms of attainability (Figure 10B), the process-focused participants found the higher-achieving spokesperson's achievement significantly less attainable than that of the lower-achieving one ($M_{\text{Higher-Process}} = 2.52$, $SD = 1.36$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Process}} = 5.10$, $SD = 1.29$; $F(1, 197) = 83.42$, $p < .001$; Cohen's $d = -1.84$). Whilst the outcome-focused participants also reported a significantly lower attainability of the spokesperson's higher (vs. lower) achievement, the magnitude of difference was smaller ($M_{\text{Higher-Outcome}} = 3.14$, $SD = 1.45$ vs. $M_{\text{Lower-Outcome}} = 4.80$, $SD = 1.50$; $F(1, 197) = 35.69$, $p < .001$; Cohen's $d = -1.18$). In addition, matching the higher-achieving spokesperson was significantly less viable for the process-focused participants than for those outcome-focused ones ($M_{\text{Higher-Outcome}} = 3.14$ vs. $M_{\text{Higher-Process}} = 2.52$; $F(1, 197) = 4.78$, $p = .03$).

Figure 10. (A) Perceived inspiration and (B) attainability as a function of spokesperson achievement and process vs. outcome focus – Study 4.

Note. Error bars represent standard errors of the mean.

The above findings underline the role of the desirability versus feasibility focus in determining consumers' perceptions of spokesperson achievement. Compared to their process-focused counterparts, the outcome-focused participants were more sensitive to the desirability aspect, resulting in a stronger perceived inspiration of the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson. As the participants with a process focus were more concerned about the feasibility issue, they reported a much lower attainability of the spokesperson's higher (vs. lower) achievement than those with an outcome focus.

Discussion

By employing a different PO focus protocol and recruiting subjects from a different culture, the results of Study 4 have further asserted the moderating role of the desirability versus feasibility focus (primed by the PO focus) in determining the effect of the spokesperson's domain achievement on consumers' intention to pursue a same-domain goal. The results have also shown that consumers' focus on desirability versus feasibility changed how they perceived the spokesperson's achievement. Compared to their feasibility-focused peers, desirability-focused consumers found the higher-achieving spokesperson much more inspiring. On the other hand, feasibility-focused consumers believed that the higher-achieving spokesperson was much less attainable than their desirability-focused counterparts did. Moreover, the influences of inspiration and attainability on consumer's behavioral intentions varied in strength between the two focuses of goal pursuit. The positive indirect effect of spokesperson achievement on consumers' intention to pursue running through perceived inspiration was stronger when they focused on the desirability (vs. feasibility) aspect of the goal. On the other

hand, the negative indirect effect through perceived attainability on running intention was more substantial if they focused on the feasibility (vs. desirability) aspect.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The results from five studies support the proposed dual-mechanism model of inspiration and attainability. First two studies established that a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson influences consumers' motivation to pursue a goal in the same domain through these two opposite forces. The remaining three studies demonstrated that consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus of goal pursuit determines the overall motivating effect of spokesperson achievement.

Studies 1A and 1B confirmed that the spokesperson's domain achievement influenced consumers' motivation for a same-domain goal through perceived inspiration and attainability. The higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson was perceived to be more inspiring, thus encouraging consumers to work on the goal. On the other hand, the spokesperson's higher (vs. lower) achievement was also less attainable, thus discouraging consumers from pursuing it. Perceived inspiration and attainability of the spokesperson's sporting and fitness achievement not only predicted consumers' intention to embark on a congruent goal (i.e., running), but also explained their willingness to purchase a fitness goal-facilitating product (i.e., a fitness tracker).

Furthermore, Studies 2 to 4 provided convergent evidence that consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus in a goal pursuit moderates the relationship between the spokesperson's running achievement and their intention to pursue running. I shifted consumer focus of goal pursuit by activating an abstract versus a concrete construal (Study 2) or priming a process versus an outcome focus (Studies 3 & 4). Desirability-focused consumers (i.e., those under an abstract construal or an outcome focus) showed stronger motivation for running after being exposed to the higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson. On the other hand, feasibility-focused consumers (i.e.,

those under a concrete construal or a process focus) showed directionally stronger motivation for running after reading about the lower- (vs. higher-) achieving spokesperson. In addition, Study 3 revealed a positive cross-domain effect of the spokesperson's running achievement on consumers' intention for healthy eating. The above findings suggest that the motivating effect of spokesperson achievement is subject to consumers' focus on desirability versus feasibility, thereby offering additional backing for the dual-mechanism model.

Study 4 also offered empirical support, albeit with only marginal significance, that the mediating effects of perceived inspiration and attainability differ in their strength between the two focuses of goal pursuit (i.e., moderated mediations). The indirect effect of the spokesperson's running achievement on consumers' running intention through perceived inspiration (attainability) was stronger when they focused on the desirability (feasibility) aspect of a goal. The results suggest that consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus alters their sensitivity towards the influencing forces of perceived inspiration versus attainability, thus leading to different behavioral responses towards the higher- versus the lower-achieving spokesperson.

Meta-Analysis of the Desirability vs. Feasibility Focus Moderating Effect

Across Studies 2 to 4, I found that desirability-focused participants were more motivated for running after being exposed to the spokesperson with a higher (vs. lower) running achievement. However, contrary to the predictions of H2, those feasibility-focused ones in these three studies only reported directionally higher intention to run after reading about the lower- (vs. higher-) achieving spokesperson. These results could be because the goal under investigation involves approaching favorable outcomes (i.e., exercising for better fitness; Mann, De Ridder, & Fujita, 2013). The

promotion nature of the goal might further strengthen consumers' focus on desirability (Lee, Keller, & Sternthal, 2010), leading to the observed larger difference in their reactions towards the spokesperson's achievement (i.e., a bigger contrast) under the desirability- (vs. feasibility-) focus conditions.

To confirm H2, I conducted a single-paper meta-analysis (SPM; McShane & Böckenholt, 2017) of Studies 2 to 4 to estimate the followings: (a) the interaction effect, (b) the simple effect of spokesperson achievement under a desirability focus, and (c) the simple effect of spokesperson achievement under a feasibility focus.

The SPM revealed a significant interaction effect ($estimate = 0.65$, $SE = .16$, $z = 4.05$, $p < .001$, 95% CI : [0.34, 0.97]). The simple effect of spokesperson achievement under a desirability focus was positive at 0.41 ($SE = .11$, $z = 3.66$, $p < .001$, 95% CI : [0.19, 0.62]). Moreover, the simple effect of spokesperson achievement under a feasibility focus was estimated to be significantly negative (contrast = -0.25 , $SE = .12$, $z = -2.12$, $p = .034$, 95% CI : [-0.48 , -0.02]). Overall, the SPM results support H2 that consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus determines the effectiveness of a spokesperson's running achievement in motivating their motivation to pursue a goal in the same domain. Specifically, desirability-focused consumers are better motivated to run by the higher-achieving spokesperson, while feasibility-focused consumers are more driven by the lower-achieving one.

Further Analyses of the Influences of Self-Efficacy and Exercise Frequency

Domain-specific self-efficacy may affect consumers' attainability judgment and goal setting in the focal domain (e.g., Bandura, 2001). For example, Hoyt (2013) found that after being exposed to highly successful female leaders, female students with higher (vs. lower) leadership self-efficacy are more likely to consider the leaders'

achievement “within reach,” thus aspiring more for leadership roles. Given this, further analyses were undertaken to understand whether and how participants’ running self-efficacy might influence the moderation results observed in Studies 2 to 4.

As reported, even though self-efficacy was a significant covariate of consumers’ running intention, controlling it in the ANCOVAs did not attenuate the interaction effect of spokesperson achievement and consumers’ desirability versus feasibility focus. Furthermore, I investigated whether self-efficacy might affect how consumers responded to the two types of spokesperson under different focuses of goal pursuit by examining the effect of spokesperson achievement $\times$ desirability vs. feasibility focus $\times$ self-efficacy on running intention in the three studies. This three-way interaction effect was significant only in Study 4, where the moderation effect of spokesperson achievement and the process versus outcome focus was not significant for students having lower running self-efficacy (< 3.45). They reported similar running intention regardless of the spokesperson they saw or the focus they adopted.

I also conducted identical analyses to explore the effect of consumers’ exercise frequency on the observed moderation patterns. Similar findings emerged. Even after accounting for exercise frequency, the observed moderation effect of spokesperson achievement and consumers’ desirability versus feasibility focus in Studies 2 to 4 remained unchanged. Moreover, I observed a significant three-way interaction on running intention only in Study 4, where the moderation effect of spokesperson achievement and the process versus outcome focus was insignificant for students who exercised less frequently (i.e., frequency rating < 2.80). No matter which spokesperson they read, or which focus they adopted, their intention to run did not differ.

To summarize, further analyses highlight that the observed effect of the spokesperson’s domain achievement on consumers’ same-domain goal pursuit is not

influenced by individual differences, such as self-efficacy and exercise frequency. Moreover, the inconsistent three-way interaction analyses results could not offer conclusive evidence that self-efficacy or exercise frequency might affect how consumers respond to the spokesperson's level of domain achievement under different focuses of goal pursuit.

Theoretical Contributions

Building on role model and goal setting theories, I established a dual-mechanism model of inspiration and attainability that systematically explains how a spokesperson's domain achievement motivates consumers to pursue a goal in the same domain. Most of the existing research has discussed the role of attainability in determining people's reactions after being exposed to successful others (e.g., Hoyt & Simon, 2011; Lockwood & Kunda, 1997, 1999; Rogers & Feller, 2016), with only few studies exploring feelings of inspiration as an affective response towards those accomplishing ones (e.g., Buunk et al., 2007; Marx & Ko, 2012). Neither has past research assessed perceived inspiration and attainability as two potential parallel mechanisms. By simultaneously considering the motivating forces of perceived inspiration and perceived attainability of spokesperson achievement, the dual-mechanism model offers a more comprehensive picture of the processes underlying the motivating effect of a higher- versus a lower-achieving spokesperson.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus of goal pursuit determines how they respond to the higher- versus the lower-achieving spokesperson in terms of perceived inspiration, perceived attainability and the subsequent motivation for a same-domain goal pursuit. To the best of my knowledge, prior research has not explored how a person's desirability versus

feasibility focus may affect his or her reactions towards others' achievement. These findings provide additional evidence that the desirability versus feasibility focus plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' perceptions, choices, and behaviors (e.g., Hamilton & Thompson, 2007; Liberman & Trope, 1998; Liu, 2008).

As discussed in the Introduction (p. 4), health authorities often employ exemplars to encourage public members to make health-improving lifestyle changes, for instance, physical activities, weight loss, healthy eating, smoking cessation, alcohol reduction, and so forth. Researchers have been investigating the effects of different types of health exemplars on people's forming healthy lifestyle habits (e.g., Lockwood et al., 2005; Wasilenko et al., 2007). The current work contributes to this area of research by revealing how exemplars with varying levels of sporting or fitness accomplishments affect people's goal pursuit in a similar domain. Specifically, desirability-focused individuals show greater intention to act on sports and fitness goals, if the goals are presented by a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson, and vice versa for those feasibility-focused ones.

Moreover, despite the studies being focused on the domain of sports and fitness, the findings and the dual-mechanism model should apply to other performance contexts, such as academic studies, career advancement, attendance, music, art, and so on. Policymakers and researchers have been trying to address the gender gap in the areas of leadership, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM; McCullough, 2011). Positive role models are often showcased to lure more women into these fields (Hoyt et al., 2012), but few researchers have explored how models with varying levels of success may affect women's aspirations (see Hoyt & Simon, 2011; Hoyt, 2013). Furthermore, behavioral research has also been assessing the effectiveness of various information interventions in decreasing absenteeism at school,

and one such absence-reducing tactic is providing other students' attendance records (e.g., Rogers & Feller, 2018). As these research streams pertain to the motivating impact of other people's performance, my research offers additional insights for understanding the target individual's potential responses towards these interventions, thereby contributing to the search of solutions to these current social issues.

This research also adds to the literature on inspiration. Prior research has explored how inspiration may influence individual well-being, creativity, and productivity (e.g., Thrash et al., 2014), but there has been limited coverage of its influences on consumers' judgment and decision-making. One exception is Liang, Chen, and Lei's (2016) work on donation. When a donation recipient demonstrates courage, perseverance, and competence in the face of adversity, the donors feel inspired and subsequently show a more favorable attitude towards the donation appeal and pledge more money to it. In the same vein, as found in this research, the spokesperson's sports and fitness achievement inspires consumers to strive for a similar goal. Further, the cross-domain effect observed in Study 3 is most likely due to the domain-general motivating force of inspiration generated by spokesperson achievement. While perceived attainability, a more concrete and domain-specific consideration, has limited influence beyond the focal main, perceived inspiration is a more abstract and universal force that may spill over to other domains, thereby motivating consumers to pursue cross-domain goals relevant to themselves. The observed cross-domain effect offers preliminary support for Thrash and colleagues' proposition that an inspiring superior other has the potential to motivate individuals to strive in their own personal domains outside that inspiring person's area of excellence (Thrash & Elliot, 2003; Thrash et al., 2010).

Lastly, the current research contributes to our knowledge about spokesperson effectiveness by showing how spokesperson achievement – a less discussed attribute (Amos et al., 2008) in the literature– may influence consumers’ goal pursuit in a similar domain. As discussed, achievement reflects the spokesperson’s ability in executing goal-related tasks and thus, higher- and lower-achieving spokespersons differ in their levels of skill in the goal domain. While there has been a great deal of discussion on the effect of a spokesperson’s product-domain knowledge on consumers’ attitudes and purchase decisions, limited research has been undertaken to understand how a spokesperson’s domain achievement (and skill) may influence consumers’ motivation. My research addresses this gap by examining the impact of such achievement on consumers’ intention to adopt same-domain goal-related behaviors. The findings highlight that spokesperson achievement may not always be motivating, and its overall effect on consumers’ behavioral intention may vary across situations – similar to what the advertising literature has discovered about the persuasive effect of the spokesperson’s product-domain expertise. What is more, this research answers the call to explore new spokesperson selection guidelines for effective health communications (Newton, Wong, & Newton, 2015) by highlighting the impacts of a spokesperson’s sporting or fitness achievement on consumers’ corresponding goal pursuit.

Practical Insights and Implications for Health Authorities and Businesses

As poor health not only impacts individuals’ well-being but also brings substantial economic consequences, promoting healthy living has become an important focus of public policies in recent years. It is also common to see spokespersons with varying levels of achievement being featured to encourage the

adoption of healthy lifestyle behaviors. This research responds to the ongoing healthy living movement by offering useful insights for setting effective spokesperson strategies to promote participation in physical activities.

First, a higher-achieving spokesperson is not always the better choice for encouraging consumers to adopt sports or fitness-related goals, for a lower-achieving spokesperson could also be a more effective persuasive agent in inducing goal pursuit behaviors in this domain. Specifically, what would appear to be the case is that when consumers are drawn to the desirability aspect of the sports or fitness goal, a higher-achieving spokesperson tends to be more motivating than a lower-achieving one, and vice versa is true when they are concerned about the feasibility issue.

The above findings also demonstrate the potential efficacy of tailoring the spokesperson's level of achievement to the consumer's focus in the sports or fitness goal pursuit. To maximize health communication effectiveness and to choose a spokesperson who best suits the role, it is necessary to assess the nature of the advocated goals carefully. For goals that make feasibility thoughts salient, for instance, running a marathon and building muscle strength, a lower-achieving spokesperson would be more effective in promoting goal adoption. On the other hand, for goals that activate desirability thoughts, such as improving body shape and sticking to balanced nutrition, a higher-achieving spokesperson should be more successful in persuading consumers into taking up this type of goal.

Moreover, as seen in the current studies, consumers' focus on desirability versus feasibility can be shifted via priming. Hence, it is possible to enhance the effectiveness of the chosen spokesperson further using thoughtfully designed marketing messages. Elaborating upon the reasons for or benefits from pursuing the sports or fitness goal would strengthen consumers' desirability focus, thus leading to

their more persuaded by a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson. On the other hand, emphasizing the steps or necessary actions to attain the goal would reinforce their feasibility focus, resulting in their being more receptive to a lower (vs. higher-) achieving one.

The above insights are particularly relevant for health authorities, which often leverage on success stories or exemplars as the spokespersons for physical activities. Given the limited resources available for public health communication campaigns (Royne & Levy, 2015), it is also good news that a lower-achieving spokesperson can be a less costly, yet more effective, option to motivate feasibility-concerned people to embark on a sports or fitness goal. Furthermore, to ensure that the success stories or exemplars appeal to the target audience, it is crucial to understand the target individuals' view about the focal goal before making the selection. Sport England's "This Girl Can" campaign is one such example illustrating the importance of fitting the spokesperson strategy to the characteristics of the target audience. Knowing from extensive research that women's low sports participation is partly due to the lack of confidence in their sporting ability (i.e., a feasibility focus), Sport England has depicted ordinary women we see in our everyday lives in their physical activity promotion campaigns. These ordinary spokespersons have not had much sporting success (i.e., a lower achievement), and seeing them doing exercise helps to raise women's feasibility perceptions about physical activity. As a result, this campaign attracted a total of 1.6 million women to start exercising within the first one and a half years from its launch (Kemp, 2016). Moreover, even when the target audience's perceptions about the focal goal are wavering, health authorities can attempt to alter their perspectives to match the type of spokesperson featured (i.e., higher or lower-achieving one) using well-crafted communication taglines or messages.

As mentioned earlier, businesses are increasingly capitalizing on the trend of healthy living by offering fitness-enabling products or services. Sportswear brands, fitness device/app makers, and fitness service providers, to name but a few, are benefiting from consumers' growing interest in healthy lifestyles. While trying to enhance the sales of their products or services, these businesses also need to encourage consumers to participate in sports or fitness activities. Thus, the implications for health authorities are applicable for business marketers as well. They should be aware that groups of consumers may respond differently towards higher- versus lower-achieving spokespersons and be flexible in crafting their spokesperson strategies. For instance, Adidas found that female customers are better reached through bloggers or online influencers with little sporting success than through female star athletes (Bain, 2017). The fact that some consumers may react more favorably towards a lower- (vs. higher-) achieving spokesperson also has substantial financial and operational implications. That is, it is not always necessary to spend big money and resources in securing superstar spokespersons and managing risks associated with them (e.g., negative publicity).

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This research has involved examining behavioral intention as the dependent variable. As there is often a gap between one's behavioral intention and actual performance (Schwarzer, 2008), future research could be undertaken to determine the effects of spokesperson achievement on consumers' actual goal-pursuit behaviors, such as program signups, time spent on goal-related activities (e.g., Wasilenko et al., 2007), and so forth. Moreover, consumers' focus on desirability versus feasibility was manipulated using incidental priming in Studies 2 to 4. Future studies may wish to

explore whether consumer focus can be induced by the how/process or why/outcome information about the advocated goals embedded with the spokesperson manipulation (i.e., integrated priming). Successful attempts would enhance the practical relevance of the findings from this research.

This research has primarily focused on how a spokesperson's sporting or fitness achievement affect consumers' participation in physical activities. There are other healthy lifestyle behaviors, such as weight loss or healthy dieting, that deserve research attention. Future research may look at whether and how spokespersons with varying levels of achievement in these healthy lifestyle domains promote corresponding behavior changes. A possible research question is this: what kind of exemplars would be more effective in encouraging weight loss, a person losing 100 pounds or one losing 24 pounds? I argue that the dual-mechanism model of inspiration and attainability should still be applicable, allowing us to disentangle the influences of the spokesperson's achievement on people's behaviors in the advocated healthy lifestyle domain.

Further, the goal discussed in this research (i.e., sports and fitness) has mainly involved individuals taking up health-enhancing lifestyle behaviors. In practice, people could also be urged to reduce health-compromising activities, for example, smoking, drinking, sugar intake, and so on (Lockwood & Pinkus, 2008). Both types of goals are essential areas in the promotion of healthy living. However, I have not discussed how a spokesperson's achievement may trigger healthy lifestyle changes that involve refraining from harmful activities, and future research could investigate this area. I anticipate that the dual-mechanism model would be able to predict the effect of spokesperson achievement on consumers' motivation to reduce unhealthy habits or behaviors. Take quitting smoking as an example, a spokesperson's substantial

achievement in tobacco cessation (e.g., staying smoke-free for years) would inspire smokers to quit. However, at the same time, his or her accomplishment may be perceived as being challenging to attain, and this perception, in turn, would hinder smokers' motivation to quit smoking. The overall effect would, thus, depend on the relative strength of the perceived inspiration versus attainability. There should still be no main effect of spokesperson achievement on consumers' intention to reduce unhealthy habits or behaviors. Furthermore, when considering whether to act on prevention-nature goals that involve the avoidance of unwanted health consequences (e.g., quitting to avoid getting lung cancer), consumers are likely to pay more attention to the concrete feasibility information (Lee et al., 2010). Hence, I expect that consumers would show a wider gap in their responses towards the spokesperson's achievement (i.e., a bigger contrast) under the feasibility (vs. desirability) focus.

Moreover, as this research has been focusing on assessing how a spokesperson's achievement may influence consumers' same-domain goal pursuit rather than finding the optimal achievement level that best motivates consumers, the levels of achievement have been arbitrarily set and experimentally manipulated in the studies. Nevertheless, there might be a level of achievement where spokesperson effectiveness is maximized.

As shown in this research, consumers' motivation to pursue a same-domain goal is determined by both perceived inspiration and perceived attainability of the spokesperson's domain achievement. While his or her achievement is perceived as attainable, a lower-achieving spokesperson is also perceived as being less inspiring. As the achievement level increases, perceived attainability drops, and perceived inspiration goes up concurrently. When the achievement level is still within the consumer's reach, the positive effect of perceived inspiration will outweigh the

negative impact of perceived attainability. However, when this level goes beyond the normal range, the negative impact of perceived attainability would outweigh the positive influence of perceived inspiration. Hence, consumers' motivation to pursue the goal might follow an inverted-U-curve pattern from a low to a high level of spokesperson achievement. Further research can examine whether there is an optimal achievement level (i.e., where the spokesperson achievement is perceived as both attainable and inspiring) to motivate consumers to pursue a goal in the same domain.

Importantly, as perceived inspiration and attainability are consumers' subjective responses towards the spokesperson's achievement, the level of achievement that is considered motivating (i.e., the optimal level) could vary across individuals. An optimal state or level of an experience is often personally determined. For example, people from different cultural or age groups show varied preferences in the kinds of positive affect they want to experience (i.e., the ideal affect; Scheibe, English, Tsai, & Carstensen, 2013; Tsai, 2007). In the same vein, an optimal level of achievement may also depend on the characteristics of the target consumers. Study 4 showed that consumers' desirability versus feasibility focus of goal pursuit alters their perceived inspiration and attainability of the spokesperson's achievement. The earlier analyses on the influences of self-efficacy and exercise frequency also suggest that consumers' experiences in the goal domain might affect their responses towards the spokespersons. Thus, future research could further investigate how a spokesperson's achievement level interacts with individual differences to determine consumers' perceived inspiration, attainability, and subsequent motivation to pursue a same-domain goal.

Whilst for this research a spokesperson's achievement has been defined as his or her goal-domain performance, in reality, one spokesperson can have achievements

in dimensions beyond objective performance, such as hard work, perseverance, courage, passion, determination, and so forth. These admirable “soft” qualities of a spokesperson are inspiring and could potentially increase consumers’ motivation to pursue a goal (Morgenroth et al., 2015; Thrash & Elliot, 2003; Thrash et al., 2010). Future research could involve examining how these soft qualities influence consumers’ goal pursuit through the dual mechanisms of perceived inspiration and attainability. I expect that these highly-valued spokesperson attributes can serve as additional sources of inspiration and subsequently enhance consumers’ intention to pursue a goal.

Researchers may also wish to consider a spokesperson’s admirable soft qualities on top of his or her objective achievement. For example, we often see underdogs being engaged in sports and fitness-related appeals in the marketplace. One such case is an accident survivor, who returns to sports despite having suffered a physical disability, being featured to promote physical activities. Underdogs are people who face external disadvantages beyond normal circumstances but show passion and determination to overcome these obstacles in their goal pursuit (Paharia, Keinan, Avery, & Schor, 2011). In other words, underdog spokespersons possess admirable soft qualities, but they may not have a very high level of domain success. They demonstrate to consumers that a goal can be achieved even in the face of difficulties, and their passion as well as determination to struggle against the odds are also inspiring to consumers. Moreover, underdog spokespersons seem to be able to inspire consumers without heightening attainability concerns. Hence, the effectiveness of underdog spokespersons in inducing goal pursuit behaviors deserves further investigation. It is also interesting to understand the extent to which achievement and admirable qualities contribute to motivating consumers, respectively. Future research should try to understand how a spokesperson’s objective achievement and soft

qualities interplay to influence consumers' goal motivation, for the findings may shed light on the approaches to maximizing the spokesperson's effectiveness in urging consumers to take up new goals.

Conclusion

This research has shown that a spokesperson's sporting or fitness achievement influences consumers' goal pursuit in the same domain via two opposing forces: perceived inspiration and attainability. Consumers' focus on desirability versus feasibility in the goal pursuit adjusts the relative strength of these two forces, which, in turn, determines the overall effectiveness of a higher- (vs. lower-) achieving spokesperson in inducing sports and fitness goal-directed behaviors. These findings provide useful insights for developing effective spokesperson strategies to promote physical activities – a critical area of healthy living. I hope my work can spur on more research into better ways to persuade consumers to take up a healthy lifestyle, for this knowledge will contribute to the building of a healthier society.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Study 1A Stimuli & Measures

Stimuli

Higher spokesperson achievement condition

"I Highly Recommend This Program."

Scott Miller
Professional Runner

Scott Miller was one of our former participants in the running program.

Scott is an elite runner. His best timing ranks top 100 in the world. He has competed in several World Marathon Majors races. He is on track to qualify for the Olympics.

Let's Start Running from Today!

Join our running program now. Through this training program, you will receive personalized coaching and training support.

We will make a runner out of you.

BODY STRIDE

Lower spokesperson achievement condition

"I Highly Recommend This Program."

Scott Miller
Leisure Runner

Scott Miller was one of our former participants in the running program.

Scott is new to running. He picked up this sport half a year ago. He has not participated in any race yet. He is interested in running his first marathon someday.

Let's Start Running from Today!

Join our running program now. Through this training program, you will receive personalized coaching and training support.

We will make a runner out of you.

BODY STRIDE

Measures

Intention to pursue running - adapted from Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda (2002)

To what extent do the following statements describe your current feeling? (1 not at all true – 7 very true)

- I plan to start running more.
- I want to put more time into my running.

Perceived inspiration - developed based on Morgenroth (2015, Study 3) & Thrash et al. (2010)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your feeling while examining the poster? (1 strongly disagree – 7 strongly agree)

- I feel uplifted by what Scott Miller managed to achieve.
- Scott Miller's accomplishments inspire me.
- I feel inspired by Scott Miller's success.

Perceived attainability - adapted from Dasgupta & Asgari (2004)

Do you think some day in the future you might reach a similar level of success in running as Scott Miller? (1 not at all likely – 7 very likely)

Perceived spokesperson's achievement - developed by the author

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the person featured in the poster (i.e., Scott Miller)? (1 strongly disagree – 7 strongly agree)

- He achieves a lot in running.
- He is successful in running.
- He has remarkable running performance.

Appendix B: Study 1B Stimuli & Measures

Stimuli

Higher spokesperson achievement condition

Vivace HR+
Your Personal Fitness Assistant.

“ I love Vivace HR+ and all its functions. It is such a great help for my cycling! ”
— Devin Carson, Professional Cyclist

“ If you are looking for a well-built day-to-day fitness tracker, Vivace HR+ is one of the best available. ”
— Elena Barton, Professional Cyclist

Elena and Devin are elite cyclists, ranking in the Top 10 nationwide. They are teammates in the national team. For them, cycling is a passion and a pursuit of excellence. They have won medals in several World Championships. They are striving to win more international races in 2017.

They use Vivace HR+ to track their activities and monitor their heart rate and fitness level.

Lower spokesperson achievement condition

Vivace HR+
Your Personal Fitness Assistant.

“ I love Vivace HR+ and all its functions. It is such a great help for my cycling! ”
— Devin Carson, Recreational Cyclist

“ If you are looking for a well-built day-to-day fitness tracker, Vivace HR+ is one of the best available. ”
— Elena Barton, Recreational Cyclist

Elena and Devin are new to cycling. They are members of the Dawson Community Cycling Club. For them, cycling is a hobby, a recreation, and a casual activity. They have not participated in any cycling event yet. They are interested in joining a few recreational rides in 2017.

They use Vivace HR+ to track their activities and monitor their heart rate and fitness level.

Measures

Purchase intention - adopted from Peloza, White, & Shang (2013)

Based on the flyer you saw earlier, how likely are you to purchase Vivace HR+? (1 very unlikely – 9 very likely)

Perceived inspiration - developed based on Morgenroth (2015, Study 3) & Thrash et al. (2010)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the two cyclists featured in the flyer, i.e., Elena and Devin? (1 strongly disagree – 9 strongly agree)

- Their accomplishments inspire me.
- Their achievements are motivating to me.
- Their achievements drive me to aim higher.

Perceived attainability – adapted from Braslow (2013)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the two cyclists featured in the flyer, i.e., Elena and Devin? (1 strongly disagree – 9 strongly agree)

- I can reach a similar level of success in cycling as them.
- Their accomplishments are attainable for me.
- I find their achievements within my reach.

Relative difference in terms of fitness level - developed by the author

How would you rate your level of fitness compared to the two cyclists featured in the flyer, i.e., Elena and Devin? (-4 a lot weaker than them – 0 about the same as them – 4 a lot stronger than them)

Perceived flyer credibility – adapted from Cotte, Coulter, & Moore (2005)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the flyer? (1 strongly disagree – 9 strongly agree)

- The flyer is believable.
- The flyer is realistic.
- The flyer is credible.

Attitude towards the spokespersons – adapted from Stafford (1998)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the two cyclists featured in the flyer, i.e., Elena and Devin? (1 strongly disagree – 9 strongly agree)

- I feel favorable towards him.
- I have positive feelings towards them.

Perceived spokesperson's achievement - developed by the author

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the two cyclists featured in the flyer, i.e., Elena and Devin? (1 strongly disagree – 9 strongly agree)

- They achieve a lot in cycling.
- They are successful in cycling.
- They have remarkable cycling performance.

Appendix C: Study 2 Stimuli, Protocol, & Measures

Construal Level Priming Protocol

Abstract Construal condition

For everything we do, there is always a reason *why* we do it.

Often, the causes of our behavior are traced to broad life goals that we have. For example, you are currently answering a survey.

- Why are you doing this survey? Perhaps to earn money.
- Why are you earning money? Perhaps to buy something nice for yourself.
- Why do you buy something nice? Maybe because buying nice things makes you feel good about yourself.

Research suggests that engaging in thought exercises like that above, in which one thinks about how one's actions relate to one's ultimate life goals, can improve people's life satisfaction.

In this survey, we are testing such a technique. This thought exercise is intended to focus your attention on *why* you do the things you do. You will be asked to consider 2 different everyday activities in this thought exercise. *[The presentation of the focal activities was randomized.]*

The everyday activity you will consider here is: **back up the data in the computer**. We will bring you through 3 rounds of *why* consideration, as illustrated in the picture below.

The everyday activity you will consider here is: **keep in touch with friends**. We will bring you through 3 rounds of *why* consideration, as illustrated in the picture below.

Concrete Construal condition

For everything we do, there is always a process of **how** we do it.

Moreover, we often can follow our broad life goals down to our very specific behaviors. For example, you are currently answering a survey.

- How do you complete the survey? Answer the questions.
- How do you answer the questions? Read the questions carefully and answer based on your own knowledge.
- How do you read the questions? Read left to right, putting words together in a sentence.

Research suggests that engaging in thought exercises like that above, in which one thinks about how one's ultimate life goals can be expressed through specific actions, can improve people's life satisfaction.

In this survey, we are testing such a technique. This thought exercise is intended to focus your attention on **how** you do the things you do. You will be asked to consider 2 different everyday activities in this thought exercise. *[The presentation of the focal activities was randomized.]*

The everyday activity you will consider here is: **back up the data in the computer**. We will bring you through 3 rounds of **how** consideration, as illustrated in the picture below.

The everyday activity you will consider here is: **keep in touch with friends**. We will bring you through 3 rounds of **how** consideration, as illustrated in the picture below.

Stimuli

Higher spokesperson achievement condition

"I Highly Recommend This Program."

Scott Miller
Professional Runner

Scott Miller was one of our former participants in the running program.

Scott is an elite runner. His best timing ranks top 100 in the world. He has competed in several World Marathon Majors races. He is on track to qualify for the Olympics.

Join Our Running Program Now!

BODY STRIDE

Lower spokesperson achievement condition

"I Highly Recommend This Program."

Scott Miller
Leisure Runner

Scott Miller was one of our former participants in the running program.

Scott is new to running. He picked up this sport half a year ago. He has not participated in any race yet. He is interested in running his first marathon someday.

Join Our Running Program Now!

BODY STRIDE

Measures

Intention to pursue running - adapted from Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda (2002)

- How likely are you to put more time into running? (1 very unlikely – 7 very likely)
- How willing are you to start running more? (1 very unwilling – 7 very willing)

Relative difference in terms of running ability - developed by the author

How would you rate your running ability compared to the spokesperson shown in the ad, i.e., Scott Miller? (-4 a lot weaker than Scott Miller – 0 about the same as Scott Miller – 4 a lot stronger than Scott Miller)

Running self-efficacy - adapted from Murphy (1992)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about yourself? (1 strongly disagree – 7 strongly agree)

- I am generally a lot better than average people in running
- In general, I am very good at running.
- I am more confident to take part in running activities, compared to other people.

Exercise Frequency - developed by the author

How often do you exercise (inclusive of running) in a typical week?

Never (1)	Once a week (2)	Twice a week (3)	3 times a week (4)	4 times a week (5)	5 times a week (6)	Almost every day (7)
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Appendix D: Study 3 Stimuli, Protocol, & Measures

Instructions for Process vs. Outcome-focused Mental Simulation

Process-focused mental simulation

While you are reviewing the poster on the following screen, we would like you to rely on your imagination and visualize the **PROCESS** you would go through to achieve a similar level of success as the person in the poster.

Focus your imagination and only visualize the steps or running program activities that you would do in order to achieve a similar level of success as him.

It is VERY IMPORTANT that you imagine the **PROCESS** clearly and have these visualizations in your mind.

Outcome-focused mental simulation

While you are reviewing the poster on the following screen, we would like you to rely on your imagination and visualize the **END BENEFITS** of achieving a similar level of success as the person in the poster.

Focus your imagination and only visualize that you achieve a similar level of success as him as a result of the running program.

It is VERY IMPORTANT that you imagine the **END BENEFITS** clearly and have these visualizations in your mind.

Stimuli

Higher spokesperson achievement condition

A man with a beard and short hair, wearing a blue athletic top, smiling. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with green trees.

"I Highly Recommend This Program."

Scott Miller
Professional Runner

Scott Miller was one of our former participants in the running program.

Scott is an elite runner. His best timing ranks top 100 in the world. He has competed in several World Marathon Majors races. He is on track to qualify for the Olympics.

Join Our Running Program!

Through this training program, you will receive personalized coaching and training support.

We will make a runner out of you.

The logo for Body Stride, featuring a stylized orange and blue figure running, followed by the text "BODY STRIDE" in bold, uppercase letters.

Lower spokesperson achievement condition

A man with a beard and short hair, wearing a blue athletic top, smiling. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with green trees.

"I Highly Recommend This Program."

Scott Miller
Leisure Runner

Scott Miller was one of our former participants in the running program.

Scott is new to running. He picked up this sport half a year ago. He has not participated in any race yet. He is interested in running his first marathon someday.

Join Our Running Program!

Through this training program, you will receive personalized coaching and training support.

We will make a runner out of you.

The logo for Body Stride, featuring a stylized orange and blue figure running, followed by the text "BODY STRIDE" in bold, uppercase letters.

Measures

Intention to pursue running - adapted from Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda (2002)

- How likely are you to put more time into running? (1 very unlikely – 7 very likely)
- How willing are you to start running more? (1 very unwilling – 7 very willing)

Intention for healthy eating - adapted from Lockwood, Wong, McShane, & Dolderman (2005)

- How likely are you to follow a healthy diet? (1 very unlikely – 7 very likely)
- How willing are you to cut down on unhealthy snacks and junk food? (1 very unwilling – 7 very willing)

Relative difference in terms of running ability - developed by the author

How would you rate your running ability compared to the spokesperson shown in the poster, i.e., Scott Miller? (–4 a lot weaker than Scott Miller – 0 about the same as Scott Miller – 4 a lot stronger than Scott Miller)

Manipulation check for process- vs. outcome-focused mental simulation - adapted from Chan, Sengupta, & Mukhopadhyay (2013)

While reviewing the running program poster, how much did you think about.....? (1 not at all – 7 very much)

Process Focus

- The process you would have to go through to achieve a similar level of success as the person
- The steps or activities that you would do to achieve a similar level of success as the person

Outcome Focus

- The end benefits of achieving a similar level of success as the person
- The outcome of achieving a similar level of success as the person

Perceived spokesperson's achievement - developed by the author

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about Scott Miller? (1 strongly disagree – 7 strongly agree)

- He achieves a lot in running.
- He is successful in running.

Running self-efficacy - adapted from Murphy (1992)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about yourself? (1 strongly disagree – 7 strongly agree)

- I am generally a lot better than average people in running
- In general, I am very good at running.
- I am more confident to take part in running activities, compared to other people.

Exercise Frequency - developed by the author

How often do you exercise (inclusive of running) in a typical week?

Never (1)	Once a week (2)	Twice a week (3)	3 times a week (4)	4 times a week (5)	5 times a week (6)	Almost every day (7)
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Appendix E: Study 4 Stimuli, Protocol, & Measures

Process vs. Outcome Focus Priming Protocol

Process Focus condition

Name and describe a project that you have done or are currently doing together with your peers.

What are the **approaches** you and your project group members use to tackle the project?

Specifically,

- (a) describe the **tasks or activities** that your group has done or is going to do to complete the project, e.g., team meetings, rehearsal, etc.;
- (b) explain each member's **roles and assignments** for the project.

We would like you to share **as many details** about your group's approaches **as possible**. You will have at least 3 minutes to write, but feel free to take as much time as you want.

Outcome Focus condition

Name and describe a project that you have done or are currently doing together with your peers.

What is the **final output** you and your group members produce for this project?

Specifically,

- (a) describe the **deliverables** your group has prepared or is going to prepare for submission as part of the project, e.g., report, slides, a prototype, etc.;
- (b) explain **why** each of the work mentioned in part (a) is important for the project.

We would like you to share **as many details** about your group's final output **as possible**. You will have at least 3 minutes to write, but feel free to take as much time as you want.

Stimuli

Higher spokesperson achievement condition

A photograph of Adrian Lee, a professional runner, sitting outdoors and holding a water bottle. He is wearing a red shirt and has a confident smile. The background is a soft-focus green landscape.

"I Highly Recommend This Program."

Adrian Lee
Professional Runner

Adrian Lee was one of our former participants in the running program.

Adrian is an elite runner. His best timing ranks top 100 in the world. He has competed in several World Marathon Majors races. He is on track to qualify for the Olympics.

Join Our Running Program!

Through this training program, you will receive personalized coaching and training support.

We will make a runner out of you.

The logo for Body Stride, featuring a stylized orange and black figure running, followed by the text "BODY STRIDE" in bold, black, uppercase letters.

Lower spokesperson achievement condition

A photograph of Adrian Lee, a leisure runner, sitting outdoors and holding a water bottle. He is wearing a red shirt and has a friendly smile. The background is a soft-focus green landscape.

"I Highly Recommend This Program."

Adrian Lee
Leisure Runner

Adrian Lee was one of our former participants in the running program.

Adrian is new to running. He picked up this sport half a year ago. He has not participated in any race yet. He is interested in running his first marathon someday.

Join Our Running Program!

Through this training program, you will receive personalized coaching and training support.

We will make a runner out of you.

The logo for Body Stride, featuring a stylized orange and black figure running, followed by the text "BODY STRIDE" in bold, black, uppercase letters.

Measures

Intention to pursue running - adapted from Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda (2002)

How likely are you to put more time into running? (1 very unlikely – 7 very likely)

- How likely are you to put more time into running? (1 very unlikely – 7 very likely)
- How willing are you to start running more? (1 very unwilling – 7 very willing)

Perceived inspiration - developed based on Morgenroth (2015, Study 3) & Thrash et al. (2010)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about Adrian Lee? (1 strongly disagree – 7 strongly agree)

- His accomplishment inspires me.
- His achievement is motivating to me.
- His achievement drives me to aim higher.

Perceived attainability – adapted from Braslow (2013)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (1 strongly disagree – 7 strongly agree)

- I can reach a similar level of success in running as Adrian Lee.
- Adrian Lee's accomplishment is attainable for me.
- I find Adrian Lee's achievement within my reach.

Relative difference in terms of running ability - developed by the author

How would you rate your running ability compared to the spokesperson shown in the ad, i.e., Adrian Lee? (–4 a lot weaker than Adrian Lee – 0 about the same as Adrian Lee – 4 a lot stronger than Adrian Lee)

Perceived spokesperson's achievement - developed by the author

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the person featured in the ad (i.e., Adrian Lee)? (1 strongly disagree – 7 strongly agree)

- He achieves a lot in running.
- He is successful in running.
- He has remarkable running performance.

Running self-efficacy - adapted from Murphy (1992)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about yourself? (1 strongly disagree – 7 strongly agree)

- I am generally a lot better than average people in running
- In general, I am very good at running.
- I am more confident to take part in running activities, compared to other people.

Exercise Frequency - developed by the author

- How often do you exercise (inclusive of running) in a typical week?

Never (1)	Once a week (2)	Twice a week (3)	3 times a week (4)	4 times a week (5)	5 times a week (6)	Almost every day (7)
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Perceived difficulty of process vs. outcome focus priming task - developed by the author

Now, recall the writing task you have done at the start of this experiment, i.e., Task 1.

- How difficult is this writing task to you? (1 not at all difficult – 7 very difficult)

Manipulation check for process vs. outcome focus priming task - developed by the author

We would like you to review what you have written about your project group experience during Task 1.

- To what extent does your writeup elaborate on process-related issues? (1 not at all – 7 very much)
- To what extent does your writeup touch on outcome-related issues? (1 not at all – 7 very much)

Appendix F: Summary of Descriptive Statistics and Analysis Results

Summary of Descriptive Statistics Across Studies

Study No.	Condition	N/n	Gender Ratio	Age		Exercise Frequency		Running Self-Efficacy	
				Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Mean
1A	Overall	100	46.0% Male	34.10	10.25	19-62	-	-	-
1A	Lower achieving	50	48.0% Male	32.34	9.32	19-60	-	-	-
1A	Higher achieving	50	44.0% Male	35.86	10.92	19-62	-	-	-
1B	Overall	122	50.8% Male	39.54	12.12	19-65	-	-	-
1B	Lower achieving	60	56.7% Male	37.77	12.57	21-65	-	-	-
1B	Higher achieving	62	45.2% Male	41.26	11.66	19-64	-	-	-
2	Overall	241	46.9% Male	32.62	7.98	20-55	4.46	1.47	4.24
2	Higher achieving -Abstract construal	61	50.8% Male	34.00	8.56	21-52	4.41	1.69	4.32
2	Higher achieving -Concrete construal	59	55.9% Male	32.03	6.90	20-50	4.49	1.42	4.27
2	Lower achieving -Abstract construal	61	42.6% Male	32.39	8.46	21-53	4.28	1.36	4.05
2	Lower achieving-Concrete construal	60	38.3% Male	32.03	7.88	20-55	4.65	1.40	4.34
3	Overall	401	43.9% Male	31.73	8.69	18-55	3.98	1.61	3.87
3	Higher achieving-Outcome focus	104	42.3% Male	31.69	8.61	18-55	4.00	1.59	3.78
3	Higher achieving-Process focus	102	37.3% Male	31.66	8.28	19-53	3.95	1.72	3.53 ^a
3	Lower achieving-Outcome focus	96	53.1% Male	31.61	9.16	20-55	4.15	1.49	4.10 ^b
3	Lower achieving-Process focus	99	43.4% Male	31.96	8.86	18-55	3.84	1.64	4.08 ^b
4	Overall	201	44.8% Male	20.30	1.30	18-27	2.83	1.44	3.61
4	Higher achieving -Outcome focus	51	56.9% Male	20.84 ^a	1.61	19-27	2.67	1.47	3.59
4	Higher achieving-Process focus	49	46.9% Male	20.06 ^b	1.09	18-22	2.94	1.51	3.37
4	Lower achieving-Outcome focus	51	41.2% Male	20.27	1.15	18-23	2.69	1.32	3.76
4	Lower achieving-Process focus	50	34.0% Male	20.02 ^b	1.15	18-24	3.02	1.49	3.71
									1.58

Note. All ANOVAs were insignificant, except for the running self-efficacy comparison in the Study 3 ($F(3, 397) = 4.24, p = .006$) and age comparison in the Study 4 ($F(3, 197) = 4.52, p = .004$); ^{a,b} indicated a significant post-hoc test result ($p < .05$).

Study 1A

Summary of Regression Results on Intention to Pursue Running - Mediation Model (Model 4; Figure 2)

	Perceived Inspiration				Perceived Attainability				Intention to Pursue Running			
	B	SE	t-value	p-value	B	SE	t-value	p-value	B	SE	t-value	p-value
Achievement Level (X)	1.05	.34	3.13	.002	-1.94	.35	-5.48	<.001	1.24	.39	3.22	.002
Inspiration (M1)									0.35	.10	3.55	.001
Attainability (M2)									0.52	.09	5.57	<.001
Constant	4.13	.17	24.59	<.001	3.23	.18	28.23	<.001	3.73	.16	24.05	<.001
$R^2 = .09, F(1, 98) = 9.82, p = .002$												
$R^2 = .23, F(1, 98) = 29.98, p < .001$												

Note. Inspiration (M1) and attainability (M2) were mean-centered before entering the regression model for intention to pursue running.

Study 1B

Summary of Regression Results on Purchase Intention - Mediation Model (Model 4; Figure 3)

	Perceived Inspiration				Perceived Attainability				Purchase Intention			
	B	SE	t-value	p-value	B	SE	t-value	p-value	B	SE	t-value	p-value
Achievement Level (X)	1.39	.43	3.26	.001	-3.21	.42	-7.64	<.001	0.16	.46	0.35	.73
Inspiration (M1)									0.44	.08	5.76	<.001
Attainability (M2)									0.29	.08	3.74	<.001
Constant	5.39	.21	25.21	<.001	5.01	.21	23.87	<.001	4.05	.18	22.98	<.001
$R^2 = .08, F(1, 120) = 10.59, p = .001$												
$R^2 = .33, F(1, 120) = 58.35, p < .001$												

Note. Inspiration (M1) and attainability (M2) were mean-centered before entering regression model for purchase intention.

Study 2

Summary of ANOVA and ANCOVA Results on Intention to Pursue Running

	Intention to Pursue Running			Intention to Pursue Running (Controlling Running SE)			Intention to Pursue Running (Controlling Exercise Frequency)		
	SS	F-value	p-value	SS	F-value	p-value	SS	F-value	p-value
Achievement Level (X)	0.11	0.08	.77	0.04	0.03	.86	0.12	0.10	.75
Construal Level (CLT)	0.60	0.48	.49	0.85	0.69	.41	1.20	1.00	.32
Achievement Level $\times$ CLT	10.49	8.28	.004	9.15	7.43	.007	9.18	7.65	.006
Running Self-Efficacy				9.33	7.58	.006			
Exercise Frequency							17.11	14.28	< .001
	$R^2 = .04, F(3, 237) = 2.95^*$			$R^2 = .07, F(4, 236) = 4.17^{**}$			$R^2 = .09, F(4, 236) = 5.91^{***}$		

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Study 3

Summary of ANOVA and ANCOVA Results on Intention to Pursue Running

	Intention to Pursue Running			Intention to Pursue Running (Controlling Running SE)			Intention to Pursue Running (Controlling Exercise Frequency)		
	SS	F-value	p-value	SS	F-value	p-value	SS	F-value	p-value
Achievement Level (X)	1.28	1.03	.31	5.20	4.62	.032	1.30	1.05	.31
Process/Outcome Focus (PO)	8.42	6.74	.01	6.43	5.71	.017	7.88	6.33	.012
Achievement Level $\times$ PO	6.11	4.89	.028	4.67	4.14	.042	6.43	5.16	.024
Running Self-Efficacy (SE)				50.26	44.65	< .001			
Exercise Frequency							2.69	2.16	.14
	$R^2 = .03, F(3, 397) = 4.35^{**}$			$R^2 = .13, F(4, 396) = 14.78^{***}$			$R^2 = .04, F(4, 396) = 3.81^{**}$		

** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Study 3

Summary of ANOVA Results on Intention for Healthy Eating

	Intention for Healthy Eating		
	SS	F-value	p-value
Achievement Level (X)	15.26	8.75	.003
Process/Outcome Focus (PO)	2.56	1.47	.23
Achievement Level $\times$ PO	0.24	0.14	.71
$R^2 = .03, F(3, 397) = 3.49^*$			

* $p < .05$

Study 4

Summary of ANOVA and ANCOVA Results on Intention to Pursue Running

Intention to Pursue Running	Intention to Pursue Running (Controlling Running SE)			Intention to Pursue Running (Controlling Exercise Frequency)		
	SS	F-value	p-value	SS	F-value	p-value
Achievement Level (X)	0.01	0.00	.96	0.19	0.10	.75
Process/Outcome Focus (PO)	0.73	0.36	.55	0.33	0.17	.67
Achievement Level $\times$ PO	8.52	4.16	.043	7.56	4.03	.046
Running Self-Efficacy				35.56	18.95	< .001
Exercise Frequency						
$R^2 = .02, F(3, 197) = 1.50$				$R^2 = .11, F(4, 196) = 5.97^{***}$		
				11.79	5.90	.016
				$R^2 = .05, F(4, 196) = 2.63^*$		

* $p < .05$ *** $p < .001$

Study 4

Summary of Regression Results on Intention to Pursue Running – Moderated Mediation Model (Model 8; Figure 9)

	Perceived Inspiration				Perceived Attainability				Intention to Pursue Running			
	B	SE	t-value	p-value	B	SE	t-value	p-value	B	SE	t-value	p-value
Achievement Level (X)	0.77	.19	4.14	< .001	-2.12	.20	-10.70	< .001	0.02	.23	0.09	.93
Inspiration (M1)									0.47	.07	6.90	< .001
Attainability (M2)									0.19	.06	2.90	.004
Process/Outcome Focus (PO)	0.43	.19	2.33	.021	0.16	.20	0.79	.43	-0.11	.18	-0.63	.53
Achievement Level × PO	0.65	.37	1.75	.082	0.92	.40	2.31	.022	0.35	.36	0.96	.34
Constant	3.26	.09	34.97	< .001	3.89	.10	39.29	< .001	3.20	.09	36.11	< .001
$R^2 = .12, F(3, 197) = 8.63, p < .001$					$R^2 = .38, F(3, 197) = 39.88, p < .001$				$R^2 = .25, F(5, 195) = 13.21, p < .001$			

Note. Inspiration (M1) and attainability (M2) were mean-centered before entering the regression model for intention to pursue running.

Study 4

Summary of ANOVA Results on Perceived Inspiration and Attainability

	Perceived Inspiration			Perceived Attainability		
	SS	F-value	p-value	SS	F-value	p-value
Achievement Level (X)	29.92	17.13	< .001	225.39	114.47	< .001
Process/Outcome Focus (PO)	9.83	5.43	.021	1.213	0.62	.43
Achievement Level × PO	5.35	3.06	.082	10.54	5.35	.022
$R^2 = .12, F(3, 197) = 8.63^{***}$				$R^2 = .38, F(3, 197) = 39.88^{***}$		

*** $p < .001$

Meta-Analysis of Studies 2 - 4

Summary of Study Information

Study	Factor 1: Spokesperson Achievement	Factor 2: Focus	Mean	SD	n
2	Lower	Feasibility (Concrete Construal)	5.35	1.11	60
	Lower	Desirability (Abstract Construal)	5.03	1.12	61
	Higher	Feasibility (Concrete Construal)	4.97	1.30	59
	Higher	Desirability (Abstract Construal)	5.49	0.96	61
3	Lower	Feasibility (Process Focus)	5.21	1.06	99
	Lower	Desirability (Outcome Focus)	5.26	1.22	96
	Higher	Feasibility (Process Focus)	5.08	1.17	102
	Higher	Desirability (Outcome Focus)	5.62	1.01	104
4	Lower	Feasibility (Process Focus)	3.35	1.65	50
	Lower	Desirability (Outcome Focus)	3.06	1.43	51
	Higher	Feasibility (Process Focus)	2.93	1.29	49
	Higher	Desirability (Outcome Focus)	3.46	1.33	51

Summary of Meta-Analysis Results

	Estimate	SE	z-value	p-value	95% CI
Simple effect of focus when spokesperson achievement is low	-0.12	.12	-1.05	.29	[-0.35, 0.11]
Simple effect of focus when spokesperson achievement is high	0.53	.11	4.79	<.001	[0.31, 0.75]
Simple effect of achievement under a feasibility focus	-0.25	.12	-2.12	.034	[-0.48, -0.02]
Simple effect of achievement under a desirability focus	0.41	.11	3.66	<.001	[0.19, 0.62]
Main effect of spokesperson achievement	0.16	.16	0.98	.33	[-0.16, 0.47]
Main effect of focus	0.41	.16	2.53	.011	[0.09, 0.72]
Interaction effect of spokesperson achievement and focus	0.65	.16	4.05	<.001	[0.34, 0.97]