Exercise and eating behaviors have garnered a substantial amount of research attention. Several health risks are known to be lower in exercise science majors than physical education or sport business/leisure majors (Winkleby, Gardner, & Taylor, 1996). While these participants reported similar eating and exercise behaviors, the lowest body composition than physical education or sport business/leisure majors on the study variables (eating, exercise, and body mass index). Kinesiology majors reported healthier exercise behaviors and greater motivation to exercise than non-majors (p < .001), however no differences were found between the groups with regard to eating behaviors or eating motivation. Additionally, there were no significant differences found between the groups on BMI (see Figure 1).

**RESULTS, cont.**

Our results suggest that kinesiology majors may hold, and be more motivated toward, better exercise habits than non-majors. Exercise behavior was consistently emphasized within the curriculum of kinesiology majors. Thus they should have a more fundamental knowledge of exercise and its benefits (Kilpatrick, Hebert, & Bartholomew, 2005).

However, there were no differences between kinesiology majors and non-majors with regard to eating behavior and motivation, or BMI classification.

- Culture, including foods consumed, meal size, and frequency, may be partially responsible for this finding. Sixty-five percent of participants in the study reported Hispanic ethnicity, and Hispanics tend to show higher BMI than non-Hispanic populations (Winkleby, Gardner, & Taylor, 1996).
- Additionally, a large percentage of the kinesiology sample were college athletes. A major limitation of the study involves not accounting for differences in BMI classifications between athletes and non-athletes (Ode, Prynka, Reeves, & Knowl, 2007, Spekman et al., 2005).

A significant difference emerged among the degree tracks within kinesiology with regard to BMI.

- Fifty-six percent of the participants who were on the exercise science degree track were reported being college athletics.
- While these participants reported similar eating and exercise behaviors and motivation as the physical education and sport business/leisure participants, the exercise science degree track also reported being college athletes. The study involves not accounting for differences in BMI classifications between athletes and non-athletes (Ode, Prynka, Reeves, & Knowl, 2007, Spekman et al., 2005).

Education on how to make exercise and eating healthy fun and enjoyable, rather than just necessary and required for health, could increase motivation and ultimately behavioral outcomes for both components.

**REFERENCES**


**Figure 1:** Majors vs. Non-Majors Main Effects

**Figure 2b:** Exercise Science vs. Physical Education vs. Sport Business/Lesure Differences in BMI

**Figure 2c:** Exercise Science vs. Physical Education vs. Sport Business/Lesure Differences in Eating and Exercise Behaviors