Abstract

OBJECTIVE:

The purpose of this analysis was to determine correlates of exercise participation among adolescents.

DESIGN:

A secondary analysis was conducted of data from a cross-sectional survey of 300 adolescents seen at an urban clinic. Using descriptive statistics and path analysis, we examined the direct and indirect effects of independent variables on exercise participation.

RESULTS:

Independent variables accounted for 15% of variance in exercise participation. In gender-stratified models, independent variables explained 18% of the variance for females. Older females were associated with lower exercise participation scores (beta=-.273, p<.001). Adolescent females who reported a strong relationship with parent(s) reported higher exercise participation scores (beta=.146, p<.05). Females with higher perception of environmental opportunities for exercise were associated with higher exercise participation (beta=.180, p<.05). Depressive symptoms had the strongest indirect effect (beta=-.10) on exercise participation via behavior-specific cognitions/affect factors among females.

CONCLUSION:

The results support that interventions to increase exercise should focus on older female adolescents. Providing information about environmental opportunities for exercise, enhancing relationship with parents, and intervening with adolescents at risk for depression might improve exercise rates in female adolescents.