Gender and Body Mass Index Related Differences in Predictors of Physical Activity Among White Collar Workers

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Understanding the correlates of physical activity (PA) in a worksite setting is crucial for developing interventions tailored to the needs of that group. **PURPOSE:** To determine PA correlates and its predictors among white-collar workers. **METHOD:** 320 white-collar workers (124 women, 196 men) participated in this study (25-65 years old; M age=43±8.3). Questionnaires were completed with items including PA (Baecke PA Questionnaire), stress, self-efficacy (SE), and dietary habits. Simultaneous multiple regression analyses were stratified by gender and body mass index (BMI) and adjusted for age. BMI categories included normal weight (BMI 18.5-24.9; M=22.7±1.7), overweight (BMI 25.0-29.9; M=27.5±1.4), and obese (BMI ≥ 30; M=34.7±4.2). **RESULTS:** Regression analyses for the total sample revealed that BMI, SE for exercise, gender, stress, and dietary habit (β=-.27**, β=.26**, β=-.13*, β=-.12*, β=.11* respectively) predicted PA (R^2=.21**). For women, BMI and SE for exercise (β=-.42**, β=.33** respectively) predicted PA (R^2=.31**). For men, SE for exercise, BMI and stress (β=.22**, β=-.17*, β=-.15* respectively) predicted PA (R^2=.12**). For obese participants, gender, stress, SE for exercise and dietary habit (β=-.25**, β=-.24*, β=.20*, β=.19* respectively) predicted PA (R^2=.20**). For overweight, SE for exercise and gender (β=.29**, β=-.18* respectively) predicted PA (R^2=.14**), and SE for exercise (β=.34**) predicted PA in normal weight participants (R^2=.19**). **CONCLUSION:** SE for exercise was the most common predictor of PA across all gender and BMI categories. Men were more physically active than women. People with higher BMI were less active than those that weighed less. Efforts to increase PA among white-collar workers should consider programs that focus on increasing SE for exercise based on gender and weight status. *p<.05, **p<.01