

Gender and Weight Related Differences in Predictors of Physical Activity among U.S. White-Collar Workers

Yun-Ping Lin^a, Kimberlee A. Gretebeck^a, Tatiana Bailey^b, David Ronis^a, Randall J. Gretebeck^c
^aThe University of Michigan, ^bCorporation for a Skilled Workforce, ^cWayne State University
^{a,b}Ann Arbor, Michigan, ^cDetroit, Michigan

Background and Significance: Fewer than half of U.S. adults met the physical activity (PA) recommendation for health promotion. Understanding the correlates of PA in a worksite setting is crucial for developing interventions tailored to the needs of that group. However, little is known about whether the predictors of PA varied according to gender and weight among white-collar workers. **Purpose:** To determine PA correlates and its predictors among white-collar workers. **Methods:** 320 white-collar workers (196 males, 124 females) participated in this study (25-65 years old; M age=43±8.3). A correlational study design with a self-reported questionnaire completed with items including PA (Baecke PA Questionnaire), dietary habits, stress, and self-efficacy (SE). Data were evaluated separately for each gender and BMI categories. Student's t -test, ANOVA, chi-square test, and Pearson correlation were performed, followed by simultaneous multiple regression analyses adjusting for age, gender, BMI, and mean arterial pressure. BMI categories included normal weight (BMI 18.5-24.9; $M=22.7\pm 1.7$), overweight (BMI 25.0-29.9; $M=27.5\pm 1.4$), and obese (BMI ≥ 30 ; $M=34.7\pm 4.2$). **Results:** regression analyses for the total sample revealed that SE for exercise, dietary habit, and stress ($\beta=.25^{***}$, $\beta=.22^{***}$, and $\beta=-.13^*$, respectively) predicted PA ($R^2=.14^{***}$). For males, SE for exercise and dietary habit ($\beta=.17^*$ respectively) predicted PA ($R^2=.09^{**}$). For females, SE for exercise and dietary habit ($\beta=.32^{***}$ and $\beta=.32^{**}$, respectively) predicted PA ($R^2=.22^{***}$). For normal weight and overweight participants, only SE for exercise predicted PA ($\beta=.29^{**}$, $R^2=.20^{**}$ and $\beta=.29^*$, $R^2=.11^*$, respectively). For obese participants, stress and dietary habit ($\beta=-.29^{**}$ and $\beta=.23^*$, respectively) predicted PA ($R^2=.15^*$). **Conclusions/Implications:** SE for exercise was the most common predictor of PA across all gender and BMI categories except obese group. 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, along with other effective strategies (e.g., organizational action and goal setting). Future research on workplace PA should consider workplace environment regarding social, organizational, community, policy, and physical environmental factors that may influence PA of workers. * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$