

【Practice Article】

Assessment of Physical Activity Environment by Local Government Employees in Tomi City

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Abstract

Objective: It is important to develop supportive environment that promotes a healthy life-style. The objective of this study was to examine the usefulness of physical activity environment assessment using a checklist completed by local government employees.

Methods: Forty-nine employees (males: 32; females: 17; mean age: 43.2±10.1 years; mean length of employment: 18.0±11.7 years) of the Tomi City government, in Nagano, Japan, assessed the physical activity environment in 5 districts of the city using a checklist. The checklist consisted of 10 items, including access to exercise facilities, access to public transport, access to shops and natural scenery. The deviation score of each parameter in each district was calculated based on the overall mean and standard deviation. Radar charts were used to indicate the environmental characteristics of each district. In addition, based on the differences between the maximum and minimum values for the deviation scores, the environmental disparities among the districts were determined for each parameter.

Results: The radar charts revealed the characteristics of each district for each parameter. The parameters that showed the largest environmental disparities among the 5 districts were access to shops (21.2) and access to public transportation (19.0). The smallest disparities were observed for bicycle safety (3.6), crime safety (3.7), pedestrian safety (4.0) and natural scenery (4.4).

Conclusion: Environmental assessment by local government employees using checklists elucidated the environmental characteristics of each district and the environmental disparities among districts. In the future, further study is needed to verify the validity and reliability of this assessment tool.

Key words: ecological model, environment, assessment, disparity, local government

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