

【Original Article】

Associations between Parent's Educational Levels and Children's Time Spent in Exercise

Mitsuya Yamakita¹⁾, Miri Sato²⁾, Daisuke Ando³⁾,
Kohta Suzuki⁴⁾, Zentaro Yamagata^{2,5)}

Abstract

Objective: Socioeconomic status, measured by factors, such as parents' incomes, occupations, and educational levels, has been found to influence children's exercise habits. However, these associations have not been clarified among Japanese children. This study examined the associations between parents' educational levels, used to measure socioeconomic status, and the exercise habits of Japanese children.

Methods: Participants were children aged 9–15 years who responded to a survey conducted in Koshu city, Yamanashi in July 2011. Parents' educational data were collected from the maternal and child management cards created at the time of pregnancy registration. Exercise habits data were obtained from the children's self-report questionnaires. Poisson regression analysis adjusting for child's month of age and body mass index tested the associations between parents' educational levels and children's time spent in exercising.

Results: Participants were 658 children (360 boys and 298 girls with a follow-up rate of 87.5%). Elementary school girls of parents with 13 or more years of education were more likely to exercise less than 7 hours per week than elementary school girls of parents with 12 or fewer years of education (PR: 1.30, 95% CI: 1.00-1.69, $p = 0.0498$). However, no significant influences of parents' educational levels were found for boys or junior high school girls.

Conclusion: Among elementary school girls, parents' educational levels were negatively associated with time spent in exercise. Although this study's results suggest that parental socioeconomic status might influence their children's exercise habits, further studies in the other regions are needed as well.

Key words: parental education, socioeconomic status, children and adolescents, exercise habit

1) Health Sciences Section, Center for Human and Social Sciences, Kitasato University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Sagami-hara, Japan

2) Center for Birth Cohort Studies, Graduate School Department of Interdisciplinary Research, University of Yamanashi, Chuo, Japan

3) Faculty of Education, Graduate School Department of Interdisciplinary Research, University of Yamanashi, Kofu, Japan

4) Department of Health and Psychosocial Medicine, Aichi Medical University School of Medicine, Nagakute, Japan

5) Department of Health Sciences, Basic Science for Clinical Medicine, Division of Medicine, Graduate School Department of Interdisciplinary Research, University of Yamanashi, Chuo, Japan