

LIFE STRESS AND HEALTH CONDITION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' MOTHERS IN TAIPEI

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Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the life stress and health condition of elementary school students' mothers in Taipei. Research has pointed out that sports can make people feel relaxed and relieve them from stress; however, for a number of women, they cannot relieve their multiple stresses from doing favorite sports at free will. In Taiwan, 47% adults were sedentary (based on the 2002 National Health Survey) and women were less active than men. Therefore, with an eye to achieving mental and physical health, doing sports at leisure will be beneficial for build up women's self-confidence, broadening their social connections, and relieving them from stress.

Method

The stratified random sample of 1,009 elementary school students' mothers in Taipei City was drawn, who completed a questionnaire, containing personal data and the scales of life stress and health condition. Analysis was by descriptive statistics, item analysis, exploratory factor analysis, and stepwise regression analysis using SPSS X. The statistical significance level was 0.05.

After factor analysis, life stress could be classified into five factors: Mental consciousness, Children's education, Social stress, Physical symptoms and Spouse stress; and the negative health conditions could be classified into: Health disorder, Anxiety-depressed, Social disorder and Unhealthful behavior.

Findings

These included:

1. The life stress of elementary school students' mothers in Taipei mainly came from Children's education" and Social stress
2. The strongest negative health conditions were Anxiety-depressed and Health disorder, though most elementary school students' mothers in Taipei were in good health
3. The mothers' life stress is the basis for predicting their negative health conditions, the results from stepwise regression analysis showing:
 - * Mental consciousness, Physical symptoms and Social stress predict their Health disorder
 - * Mental consciousness, Physical symptoms and Social stress predict their Anxiety-depressed
 - * Mental consciousness and Spouse stress will predict their Social disorder
 - * Mental consciousness and Physical symptoms will predict their Unhealthful behavior

Discussion/implications

Findings of this study could present references for school health practices in promoting exercise behavior for students' mothers and for further research in field. Based on the findings of this study, recommendations were as follows: First, mental and physical health institutions should be set up in elementary schools in Taipei. Second, elementary school students' mothers should be able to choose recreational sports in free time, according to their physical and mental health status. Third, elementary school students' mothers should be encouraged to adopt health-promoting lifestyles. Finally, the government should promote exercise as part of a women's health policy in Taipei. For future study, we can realize the cause and effect among elementary school students' mothers life stress, health conditions and sport behaviours by cohort study.

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