

A Latent Class Analysis of Barriers to Exercise and Sports among Japanese Female University Students

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A Latent Class Analysis of Barriers to Exercise and Sports among Japanese Female University Students

(日本の女子大学生における運動とスポーツの障壁に関する潜在クラス分析)

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Abstract

Individual internal motivations, social and environmental factors are recognized as disincentives for exercise implementation among university students. A complex knowledge base is needed to promote exercise by eliminating barriers. Recent literature, utilizing latent class model analysis identifies diverse groups and tailors intervention programs based on perceived barriers. This study aims to conduct a latent class analysis among 782 female university students (aged 18-21) from two Tokyo universities to identify characteristics related to barriers for exercise participation.

A self-administered, anonymous, web-based questionnaire was used collect data on living conditions, exercise and sports activities, reasons for not engaging in exercise, and perceptions of exercise and sports behaviors. Latent class analysis was conducted using 17 items related to reasons for not exercising, with a subsequent χ^2 test to compare differences in living conditions, exercise and sports activities, and perceptions among the identified classes.

Four classes emerged from the latent class analysis. Class 1 faced few perceived barriers, highlighting their proactive approach to exercise. Class 2, influenced by their surrounding environment, particularly lacked friends and nearby places for exercise. Class 3 demonstrated a higher percentage of non-participation owing to a dislike for exercise, indicating a hindrance to engagement. Class 4, characterized by a strong aversion to exercise and limited exposure to information, presented unique challenges. Individuals exhibited varying barriers, influencing their living conditions, exercise activities, and perceptions. Understanding these trends provides valuable insights for promoting regular exercise.

The results underscore the importance of tailoring interventions based on specific disincentives to foster consistent exercise habits.