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Is African-American Girls’ Perception of their Mother-Daughter Relationship Associated to Psychosocial and Physical Activity Variables?

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Comments
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Is African-American girls’ perception of their mother-daughter relationship associated to psychosocial and physical activity variables?

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Maternal influence has been reported to play a significant role in the health behaviors of children. In Caucasian girls, it has been reported that mother-daughter relationship can influence psychosocial variables such as physical activity (PA) self-efficacy. Currently, there is very little data on the impact of African-American girls’ perception of their relationship with their mother and psychosocial variables. **PURPOSE:** To examine the association between mother-daughter relationship, PA self-efficacy (PA-SE) and PA levels in African-American girls. **METHODS:** Baseline data from mothers (n=28; age=37.0±6.7 years; BMI=33.5±10.6 kg/m²) and daughters (n=32; age=9.0±1.2 years; BMI=20.4±5.7 kg/m², 90th percentile) participating in an afterschool mother-daughter PA study was used in this analysis. PA was measured for 7 continuous days using accelerometers. Parental Responsiveness (PR) and Adolescent Openness to Parental Socialization scales were used to assess mother-daughter relationship. Daughters’ self-esteem and depressive symptoms were assessed with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem (RSE) scale and the Child Depression Inventory (CDI), respectively. Participants’ PA-SE was assessed with validated questionnaires. Spearman correlations were used to examine associations between mother-daughter relationship, psychosocial variables, and PA levels. Daughters’ scores for the PR scale were divided into tertiles. Between group (high versus low perception of mother-daughter relationship) differences in psychosocial variables and PA were assessed with t-tests. **RESULTS:** Daughters’ perception of their mother-daughter relationship was positively correlated with RSE (r=0.36, p=0.04). Daughters’ percent time spent in MVPA was negatively correlated with CDI (r=-0.42, p=0.03) and positively correlated with mothers’ PA-SE (r=0.44, p=0.04). With respect to daughters’ PR scale, significant differences in RSE score (HIGH=23.82±4.33; LOW=18.20±4.87, p=0.01) and percent time spent in sedentary activity (HIGH=27.83±32.31; LOW=57.41±20.93, p=0.02) were observed between tertiles. **CONCLUSION:** African-American girls’ perception of their relationship with their mother seems to be associated with self-esteem, depressive symptoms and sedentary pursuits. Future studies should target interventions that improve mother-daughter relationship.

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