

Abstract

The present study was designed to strengthen and generalize existing evidence on the role of parenting styles on an individual's regulatory focus and its subsequent effects on physical activity level. This study examined the impact of perceived parental behaviors, including parental psychological and behavioral control and support, on Hong Kong young adults' regulatory focus as well as the effects of young adults' regulatory focus on their level of physical activities. The underlying mediating role of young adults' regulatory focus on the relationship between perceived parenting styles and their level of physical activities was also examined. 122 Hong Kong young adults and their parents have completed an online survey. Young adults have to complete the measurements of regulatory focus, level of physical activities, perceived parental support, psychological control and behavioral control, while parents have to complete the measurement of regulatory focus. The results showed a correlation between young adults' prevention regulatory focus and perceived parental support and control, as well as a link between young adults' promotion focus and their level of physical activity. Yet, an insignificant mediating role of regulatory focus has been found in the relationship between perceived parenting styles and level of physical activities. These results provide empirical support for the Regulatory Focus Theory (Higgins, 1997) and directions for intervention aimed at encouraging physical activity. Further research is suggested to replicate our exploratory findings on the positive correlation between parental and young adults' regulatory focus.

Keywords: parenting styles; parental support; parental control; regulatory focus; physical activity