

Crime, Physical Activity and Outdoor Recreation among Latino Adolescents

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Introduction

- Physical inactivity is one of the most important factors contributing to high obesity rates among Latino children and adolescents (CDC, 2007).
- Fewer Latino than White adolescents 12-17 years of age meet CDC's physical activity recommendations. This trend persists among first and second generation teens (Allen et al., 2007).
- Physical inactivity is higher among Latina girls than among Latino boys, who report higher rates of participation in out-of-school physical activity, team sports, physical education classes, and total in and out-of-school vigorous physical activity (Sallis, Prochaska, & Taylor, 2000; Sallis, Zakarian, Hovell, & Hofstetter, 1996).

Introduction

- A number of factors have been shown to constrain physical activity participation among Latino youth and adults.
- Experiences with crime, fear of crime, and community disorder are some of these constraints (Gordon-Larsen, McMurray, & Popkin, 2001; Molnar, Gortmaker, Bull, & Buka, 2004; Roman & Chalfin, 2008; Ross, 2000; Zhu & Lee, 2008).
 - There is evidence that fear of crime and physical disorder in the neighborhood have an effect on people's likelihood of encouraging their children to use local playgrounds and on children's likelihood of walking to school and being involved in vigorous PA.
 - Studies have also shown that fear may cause people to avoid visiting certain recreational places, walking after dark, or walking alone (Ross, 2000; Ross & Mirowski, 2001).
- In light of these trends, investigations of Latino youths' physical activity behaviors, acculturation, and neighborhood characteristics such as crime that can constrain physical activity are needed.

Purpose / Aims

- The study examines bi-directional relationship between crime and physical activity participation and outdoor recreation among Latino adolescents ages 11-14 (grades 6-8) and 15-18 (grades 9-12).
- It evaluates participation in after-school physical activity and outdoor recreation in three types of environments in one of the predominantly Latino neighborhoods in Chicago: (1) parks, (2) neighborhood streets, sidewalks, alleys, and front/backyards, and (3) school yards/school grounds.

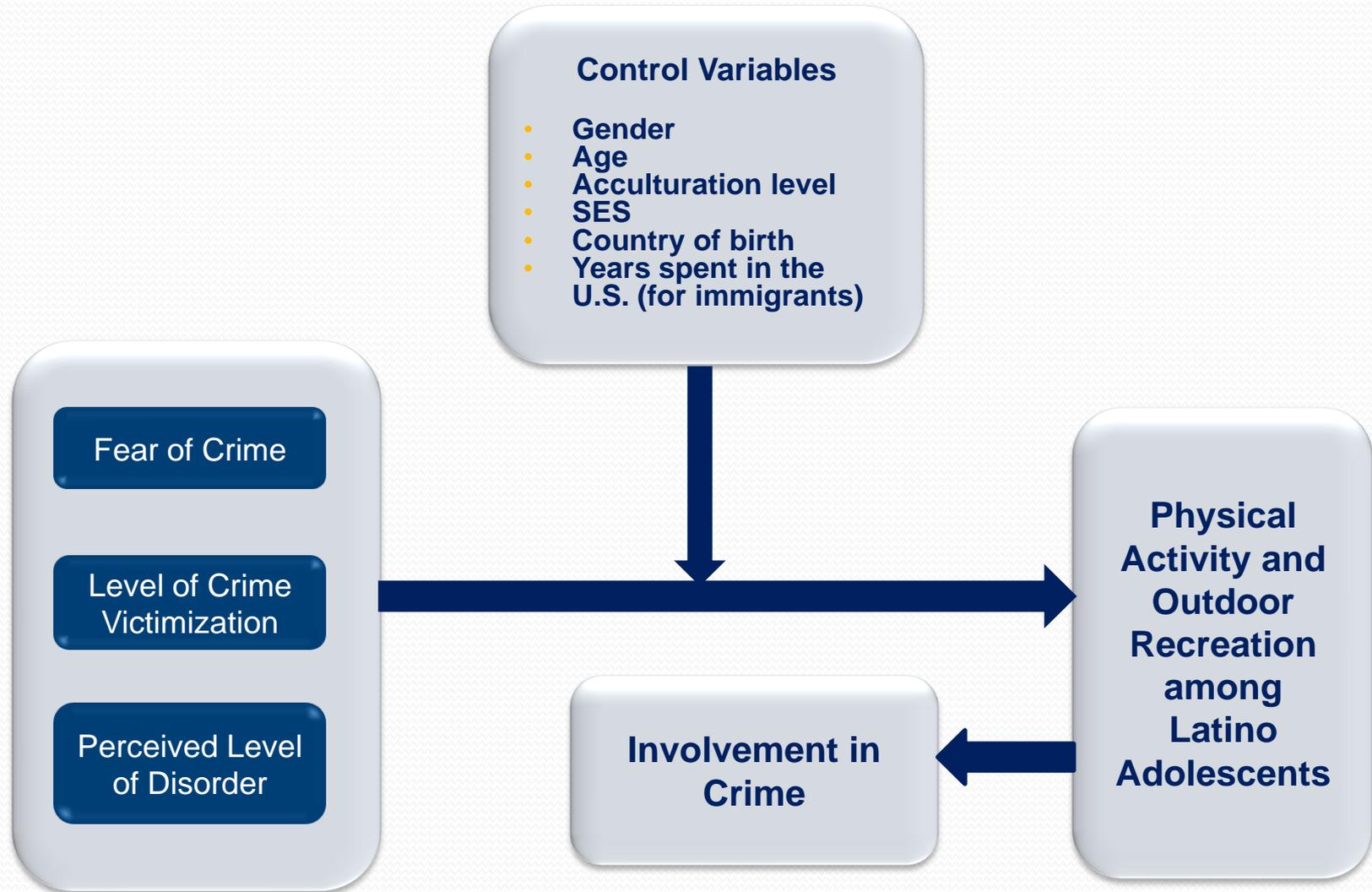
Hypotheses

- H1: Higher levels of crime will be negatively associated with PA participation and outdoor recreation in parks, neighborhoods, and school grounds among Latino adolescents.
- H2: The effects of crime on PA participation and outdoor recreation will be stronger for Latina female adolescents than for Latino male adolescents.
- H3: The effects of crime on PA participation and outdoor recreation will be stronger for Latina female adolescents of lower acculturation level than for Latina female adolescents of higher acculturation level.
- H4: The acculturation level will have no effect on how crime affects PA participation and outdoor recreation among Latino male adolescents.
- H5: Regardless of their acculturation level, Latino adolescents with higher rates of participation in PA and outdoor recreation will be less likely to be involved in crime.

Theoretical Framework

- **Ecological model of health behavior:**
Emphasizes the roles of environmental attributes as determinants of physical activity participation, acknowledging that “environments themselves and people’s behavior within them are shaped by social and organizational influences.”
Humpel, Owen, & Leslie , 2002, p. 189). Human actions are affected by individual intrapersonal factors, cultural values, social systems and physical environments (Sallis & Owen, 1997).

Conceptual Model



Location

Little Village (South Lawndale) – a predominantly Latino, central-city Community in Chicago, IL. Pop. 91,071; 83% Latino



Our previous involvement with the community (2005-2009) & Interest / experience in the field

- Focus on **physical activity** as one of the factors affecting obesity among Latinos.
- RWJF-funded study of the effect of sport facilities and trail systems on the use of green spaces for physical activity among Latinos (surveys of Latino visitors to parks, sports complexes, and trails in the Chicago area).
- NRPA-funded study of intercultural understanding between park managers and Latino users of urban parks (surveys of users of Piotrowski Park, Little Village).
- USDA-funded study of environmental preferences and the use of urban parks for physical activity among Latinos (door-to-door survey of Little Village residents; focus groups with community residents; interviews with stakeholders). Study identified:
 - Constraints on physical activity among local Latino residents
 - The effects of fear of gang crime on recreation participation among local Latino residents
 - The use of recreation and PA participation as a tool to combat juvenile delinquency among local Latino youth

Methods

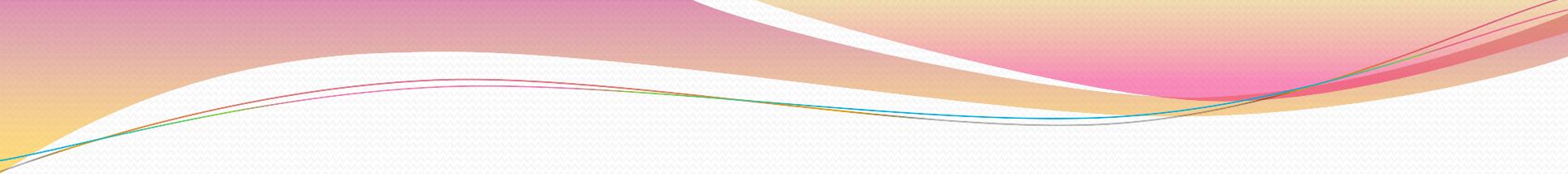
- The study employs correlational design. It consists of two major components:
 - A questionnaire survey will be distributed to 400 adolescent students in two middle schools and two high schools in Little Village.
 - Year 1: 200 surveys administered to Latino adolescents ages 11-14 years old
 - Year 2: 200 to adolescents ages 15-18 years old.
 - The survey is used to obtain information on adolescents' fear of crime, level of crime victimization, and perceptions of disorder in the community (independent variables), physical activity participation and outdoor recreation (dependent/independent variable), crime involvement (dependent variable), and all the control variables.
- Individual in-depth interviews will be conducted with 24 adolescents selected from the pool of students who have completed the surveys. The interviews will be designed to provide more in-depth understanding of the ways in which crime and other related factors are related to adolescents' physical activity participation and outdoor recreation.

Analysis

- The relationship between crime and physical activity participation and outdoor recreation model proposed by this study will be tested and parameter invariance by gender will be examined using the SEM. To test proposed hypotheses, factorial ANOVA will also be employed to examine 1) the effects of crime, gender, and acculturation, as well as their interaction, on adolescents' physical activity and outdoor recreation levels and 2) the effects of physical activity participation on adolescents' involvement in crime.
- Analysis of the qualitative data will be performed using constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

End User / Potential policy impact

- This project is designed in collaboration with the office of the Alderman of Chicago's 12th Ward and with the *Little Village Community Development Corporation*.
- The findings of this study will be shared with both parties and will inform their efforts to address the obesity problem among Little Village youth.
- They will help us devise culturally appropriate, practical suggestions that policy-makers and practitioners can use to increase physical activity participation and outdoor recreation among Latino youth. For instance, they will inform local decision makers:
 - Which locations and activities are perceived to be most dangerous by children when it comes to physical activity?
 - How to provide spaces conducive to physical activity participation that are safe from crime?
 - How involvement of youth in physical activity and outdoor recreation may lead to decreasing crime levels in minority neighborhoods, and thus improving the environment for other potential participants.



Thank You!