

# What church related factors help African American churchgoers increase physical activity?



Kevin Guevara, Natasha Aduloju-Ajijola, Jannette Berkley-Patton  
University of Missouri – Kansas City School of Medicine



## Introduction

- African Americans are among the highest rates of diabetes and obesity in the United States (Hales et al. 2017; Spanakis and Golden 2013).
- It is recommended that Americans get at least 150 minutes of exercise per week (Olsen et al.).
- Barriers to exercise include lack of time, money, motivation, etc. (Reichert et al. 2007).
- Multiple studies with African American churches hosting exercise and wellness classes look at correlations between participation, affiliation and health overall (Izquierdo-Porrera et al. 2002).
- Little is known on how much the different aspects from the African American church affects the amount of exercise of its participants in and out of the church.

## Methodology

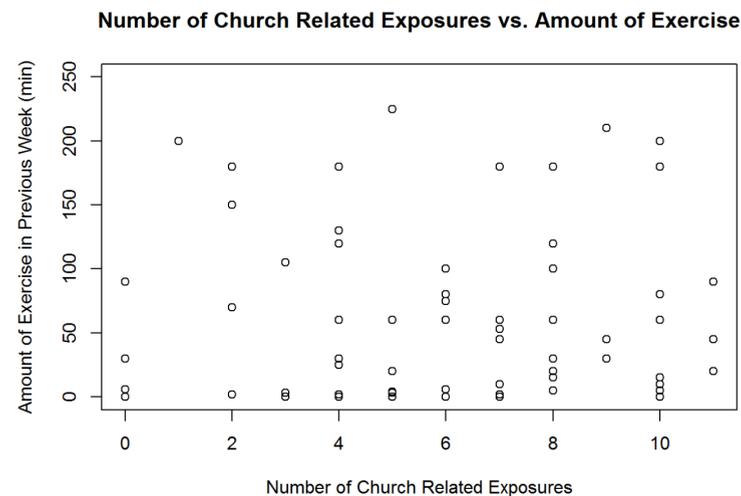
72 participants recruited from the African American Church community in Kansas City, MO who participate in Project FIT (Faith Influencing Transformation), a 6-month program designed to help resolve or prevent diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

We created a study using the baseline data obtained from Project FIT consisting of a survey.

This survey included 11 church related exposure questions asking participants to respond “yes” or “no”. These statements were: “I exercised with family, friends, or church members.” “I saw my pastor exercise.” “I saw others exercising at church-events.” “I saw others moving during praise and worship services at my church.” “My church regularly discussed the importance of exercise.” “The pastor or other church leader asked the church/community members to exercise.” “Someone from church asked me to exercise with them.” “The church provided exercise training sessions that helped me learn proper form and technique.” “I felt she, like I would not be judged or talked about when exercising at church.” “I wanted to exercise to be a good example for my family.” “I received support from church members to exercise.”

We also asked “How many minutes of exercise did you perform in the last week?”

## Results



A chi-square test was performed between the number of church related exposures and the amount of exercise in minutes,  $\chi = 323.9$ . With the p-value at 0.1358.

A t-test analysis was performed between the number of exposures and participants who exercised at least 150 minutes in the previous week.  $t = 0.363$ , P-value = 0.722 (95% CI [-1.904, 2.674]).

A chi-square test was also performed for each exposure in relationship to the participants exercising at least 150 minutes in the previous week. The combined negative and positive predictive values were largest in the exposures: “I exercised with family, friends, or church members,” “I saw others exercising at church-events,” and “Someone from church asked me to exercise with them.”



## Patient Demographics

N= 72. All participants were at least 18 years old. Mean age was 58.9 (SD= 13.2), 52 Female and 20 male. 71 African American and 1 American Irish. 71 participants had at least a high school degree or GED. All participants were members of the churches.

	Overall N (%)	Men n (%)	Women n (%)
Total	72 (100%)	20 (27.7%)	52 (72.2%)
HTN	42 (58.3%)	7 (35%)	35 (67.3%)*
Hyperlipidemia	22 (30.6%)	3 (15%)	19 (36.5%)
Diabetes Type II	18 (25%)	3 (15%)	15 (28.8%)
Has Children	65 (90.3%)	17 (85%)	48 (92.3%)
Medicare	23 (31.9%)	5 (25%)	18 (34.6%)
Medicaid	2 (2.8%)	1 (5%)	1 (1.9%)
Private Insurance	44 (61.1%)	8 (40%)	36 (69.2%)*
Other Insurance	6 (8.3%)	2 (10%)	4 (7.7%)
No Insurance	7 (9.7%)	6 (30%)	1 (1.9%)*

Responses are not mutually exclusive

## Summary/Conclusion

1. No correlation was found between the amount of church related factors and amount of exercise that the participants performed in the previous week.
2. Exercise tended to increase when participants were exposed to factors involving others in their church.

This can possibly be associated to increased enjoyment of exercise when performed with others as well as a sense of accountability. Further research comparing those who exercise alone vs those who exercise in group settings in the African American church community may show significant results.

## References

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