

Making Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation Engineering a Sure Bet

Multidimensional Nature of Accessibility of Fitness Facilities for People with Mobility Disabilities

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ABSTRACT

Access to fitness and recreation facilities is an important issue for people with disabilities. The purposes of this study were to: (1) to examine the relationship between subjective and objective measures of accessibility for fitness facilities; (2) compare the level of accessibility among fitness facilities by geographic area and facility type; and (3) identify areas that are most and least accessible among fitness facilities. We assessed 122 fitness facilities in the Midwest. Overall, there were moderate to high correlations between subjective and objective accessibility scores among fitness facilities. Rehabilitation and hospital facilities had the highest overall accessibility, while university/college facilities and health clubs had the lowest overall accessibility scores. The low overall accessibility scores of fitness and recreation facilities may be a deterrent for people with mobility disabilities to join these facilities and may limit their opportunities to engage in health enhancing behaviors similar to other members of these facilities.

KEYWORDS

Accessibility, fitness facilities, disability, AIMFREE, physical activity

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