ABSTRACT
Childhood obesity is a significant health problem. This mixed methods study used an online survey to investigate senior baccalaureate nursing students’ knowledge about childhood obesity, attitudes toward, and their perceived self-efficacy in addressing childhood obesity as a health problem. Attribution value theory and social cognitive theory were used. A sample of senior BSN students (N=102) completed the survey. This study investigated whether child weight, gender, and physical activity level or parent weight influenced health promotion and attitude towards the child and parent. Student self-efficacy and educational preparation to address weight as a health problem was also investigated. Randomized multiple segment vignettes featuring a five and a 15-year old were used with open-ended questions and semantic differentials. An overweight child was more likely to elicit nutrition as a health promotion topic, \( X(1)=4.386, p=.037 \). The weight of the child was significantly related to the number of weight-related topics introduced, \( X(7)=29.35, p=.000 \). The gender of the adolescent was significantly related to the number of weight related topics, \( X(7)=91.201, p=.008 \). BSN students have more negative than positive attitudes towards overweight children and overweight mothers. Low child and adolescent activity was also associated with more negative attitudes. Students reported being confident in their abilities to work with children and families with childhood obesity. Students described varying foci of their education regarding