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Awareness of Physical Exercise among Doctors, Lawyers, Teachers and Businessmen in Dera Ismail Khan District of Pakistan's NWFP

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Abstract: A study was formulated to assess the level of awareness regarding different exercise activities among four groups vis-à-vis doctors, lawyers, teachers and businessmen. It has been observed that all four groups are equal in their awareness of various activities (Jogging, sports, walking, swimming, morning activities, health club activities, maintenance of health and nervous system stability) except participation in any re-creative activities. The groups were also aware of the benefits of exercise that can make human look best. The level of awareness was not determined by Body Mass Index (low or high) or age (young, medium and old) of the respondents.

Key words: Physical exercise, awareness, doctors, lawyers, teachers, businessmen

INTRODUCTION

Regular activity, fitness and exercise, are critical for the health and well being of people of all ages. Research shows that everyone, young or old can benefit from regular exercise, either vigorous or moderate. Awareness of a physical activity is a complex health related behaviour in that it consists of a large number of activities that are spread over each day such as walking, cycling, swimming, running etc., the determination of one's own level of physical activity is difficult and therefore highlights the importance of a awareness of a physical activity an important determinant to perform that activity (Ronda *et al.*, 2001).

Various researchers have explained the importance of the awareness of exercise (Brassington and Hicks, 1995) advocated that physiological benefits of participation in regular physical activity are now well established. Physical activity can also have significant psychological consequences. There is now compelling evidence that regular exercise enhances psychological health and well being. More long term benefits include improved life satisfaction (Berger and Hecht, 1990), increased span of healthy life (Corbin and Pangrazi, 1996), prevention of diseases (McGinnis and Lee, 2000) and improved quality of life (Corbin and Lindsey, 1997).

Awareness of exercise is a prerequisite in predisposition to respond to that activity. Due to the importance of awareness about the goods of performing an exercise activity and bads of the consequences of health hazards as a result of not doing exercise, the

objective of this study is, therefore, to determine the awareness of the community consists of four groups namely doctors, lawyers, teachers and businessmen in Dera Ismail Khan district of Pakistan's NWFP.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Present study was conducted in District Dera Ismail Khan of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Survey method was applied in present study regarding selection of sampled respondents. This method can help in collecting information about a human population in which direct contact is made with those being studied (Bulmer and Warwick, 1993). A total of 200 respondents were selected categorised among three groups namely doctors, lawyers, teachers and businessmen. The selection of respondents was based on time, cost and accessibility issues. The research was conducted during March, 2006. Separate sampling frame for each group was constituted. List for the selection of doctors was obtained from district head quarter hospital, Bar council provided list of lawyers, teachers were chosen from details supplied by the district education officer whereas businessmen were selected from a list obtained from elected union of businessmen in Dera Ismail Khan. Systematic sampling procedure of random sampling is, therefore adopted to get a random list of interviewees from the sampling frame pertaining to 4 groups of respondents. A five point Likert scale (1931) was used to collect ordinal data ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Face to face interviewing procedure was adopted during data collection. The reason for using this technique is primarily based on saving time and also getting responses in shortest possible time. Primary data collected during the course of this study was subjected to statistical analysis by using SPSS (Statistical Package for social scientists) version 11. Chi-square (χ^2) test was used to determine statistical significance among the categories. Moreover, Spearman correlation coefficient was also used to determine relationship between BMI and age and the respondents.

RESULTS

Data were collected regarding awareness about various activities that can be termed as physical exercise. The results are presented as follows

Awareness about exercise activities

Jogging: Jogging is a simple exercise activity and is a minimal commitment in maintaining health and body fitness. Almost all the respondents (92%) are fully aware of the jogging as an activity embedded in exercise activities (Table 1). Similar responses were observed when investigations were made across four groups vis-à-vis doctors, lawyers, teachers and businessmen (Table 2). The respondents belonging to different groups are equal in their awareness about consideration of jogging as an exercise activity as statistical differences amongst four groups is non-significant.

Participation in sports: Sports are competitive experience physical activities which helps the individual in maintenance of good health and body fitness. Majority of the respondents (80%) are completely aware about sports activities, whereas on the other hand a fewer (17%) of the respondents are also termed as unaware (Table 1). The test of significance implies that the four groups are statistically non-significant in their awareness about consideration of participation in sports as an exercise activity (Table 2).

Swimming: Swimming is considered as one of the best and perfect exercise for health and body fitness, as it exercises the whole body. Almost all the respondents (96%) are fully aware of the swimming as a physical activity (Table 1). Similar results were obtained from four groups vis-à-vis doctors, lawyers, teachers and businessmen (Table 2). The respondents belonging to different groups are equal in their awareness about swimming as an exercise activity.

Walking: Walking is a simple and cheapest exercise activity which increased the span of healthy life and body fitness. Eighty two percent respondents are aware of the walking is an activity embedded in exercise activities. This trend continued when the four groups compared for differences. Statistically non-significant results entails (Table 2) that the four categories namely doctors, lawyers, teachers and businessmen are equal in their perception of walking as a physical activity.

Re-creative activities: Engagement in any physical activity during their leisure time for the purpose of revitalizing and fitness is physical exercise. More than half of the sampled respondents (61%) are aware of taking part in re-creative activities is actually an exercise activity. However comparison across groups illustrated statistically significant differences (Table 2). The respondents categorised as businessman are better in their understanding (74%) of considering re-creative activities as physical exercise than other groups.

Morning walk: Morning walk is effective form of exercise which refreshes the mind and increasing the positive balance feelings. Almost all the respondents (96%) are fully aware of the morning walk is a physical activity. Similar results were obtained from four groups vis-à-vis doctors, lawyers, teachers and businessmen (Table 2). The respondents belonging to different groups are equal in their awareness about morning walk as an exercise activity.

Awareness of exercise as maintenance of health: It is a well established fact that healthy body is having healthy brain and healthy body is less vulnerable to risks associated with various health problems. The awareness of the role of exercise in maintaining health is determined and explained in different heads.

Health club activities: Health clubs play pivotal role in the promotion and development of health and body fitness activities. Almost half of the respondents (57%) are in agreement that activities undertaken in the health clubs are well and truly are exercise activities and are helpful in maintaining health (Table 1). Non-significant difference observed between the four groups which suggested that they equally believe in joining health club activities are meant for exercise (Table 2).

Health: Health is optimal well being that contributes to a quality of life. Optimal health includes high level mental, social, emotional, spiritual and physical fitness. Majority

Table 1: Agreement/disagreement of respondent regarding awareness about different exercise activities and benefits

Awareness about exercise/benefits	Agreement/disagreement of respondents (%)				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Jogging as physical activity	41	54	3	2	0
Participation in sports	29	51	3	14	3
Swimming as physical activity	46	49	1	3	1
Walking as physical activity	31	50	6	11	2
Re-creative activities	17	44	11	27	1
Morning walk as physical activity	17	44	11	27	1
Health club activities	16	40	7	31	5
Exercise as good for health	42	47	6	4	1
Nervous system stability	42	47	6	4	1
Looking best	42	52	3	2	1

Table 2: Agreement/disagreement across respondent groups (%) regarding awareness about different exercise activities and benefits

Awareness about exercise/benefits	Agreement/disagreement of respondents' groups (%)																				Chi-Square test
	Strongly agree				Agree				Undecided				Disagree				Strongly disagree				
	D	L	T	B	D	L	T	B	D	L	T	B	D	L	T	B	D	L	T	B	
Jogging as physical activity	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	2	1	1	27	28	30	24	21	20	19	22	0.652 ^{ns}
Participation in sports	2	2	2	4	18	18	18	4	0	4	4	6	46	46	46	64	34	30	30	22	0.858 ^{ns}
Swimming as physical activity	0	0	4	0	6	2	0	4	0	2	0	0	36	56	62	42	58	40	34	54	0.797 ^{ns}
Walking as physical activity	2	2	0	2	16	6	12	8	4	10	0	10	50	46	58	28	36	30	28	28	0.645 ^{ns}
Re-creative activities	2	0	0	0	14	36	26	34	10	8	10	16	46	46	44	40	28	10	20	10	0.033 [*]
Morning walk as physical activity	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	40	52	58	64	56	44	38	30	0.419 ^{ns}
Health club activities	6	4	8	2	30	38	40	18	2	8	4	14	40	36	32	54	22	41	16	12	0.677 ^{ns}
Exercise as good for health	0	0	0	2	6	2	10	0	6	6	6	4	54	50	34	52	34	42	50	42	0.428 ^{ns}
Nervous system stability	2	0	0	2	2	2	0	2	4	4	2	2	54	48	48	60	38	46	50	34	0.928 ^{ns}
Looking best	2	2	0	2	4	6	2	4	6	8	2	8	50	54	50	52	38	30	46	34	0.733 ^{ns}

D, L, T, B representing Doctors, Lawyers, Teacher and Businessmen, ^{ns}showing non significant while, ^{*}denoting significance at 5% level

of the respondents (90%) are fully aware that exercise is good for health. Similar results were obtained when comparisons were made across our groups (Table 2).

Nervous system stability: Engagement in any physical activity, keeping the nervous system healthy and fit. Almost all the respondents (95%) are fully aware of the Nervous system stability as a result of engaging in any exercise activity. Similarly non-significant differences were observed across four groups denoting that the groups are equal in their perception of the role of exercise in stabilizing nervous system (Table 2).

Looking best: Regular exercise activities make a man looking and feeling best and cause maintaining health and body fitness. The conscience of looking good is quite prevalent in the society. Since taking part in exercise activities are instrumental in marinating physical fitness as well as decrease the risk of carrying any health problem. This perception make an individual quite fit and look good. This was quoted by large majority of sampled respondents (89%) that taking part in various exercise activities are meant for keeping one fit and therefore helps to be looking best (Table 1). On the same toucan, the four groups are also statistically at par in perceiving that exercise assisted in looking and feeling good by having fit mind and body (Table 2).

The high level of disagreement (Table 1) concerning awareness of exercise as re-creative activity, engagement in physical events in addition to morning walk and engagement in health club activities is might be due to specialized nature of these activities joined by very few individuals because of time, cost and physique constraints as opposed to simple activities namely walking, swimming whereby most individuals are performing consciously or unconsciously as exercise.

Relationship between Body Mass Index (BMI) and Age with Awareness of Exercise Activities: Relationship between BMI and age of the respondents was determined. Statistically non-significant differences showed that awareness of various activities (jogging, sports, swimming, walking, morning walk, re-creative activities, health club activities, health maintenance, nervous system stability and looking best) as physical exercise is not determined by BMI or the age of the respondents.

CONCLUSIONS

It has been observed that the community comprising of doctors, lawyers, teachers and businessmen in present study are fully aware of various exercise activities that are beneficial for health and overall well being for humans. This perception is also irrespective of high or low BMI or

young or old age groups. This study also opens avenues for further study the trend and pattern of exercise as based on level of awareness for bringing exercise into regular programme of routine activities.

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