

A questionnaire survey of awareness of physical activity among the faculties of medical college

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ABSTRACT

Background: The physical activity in teaching faculties is an important aspect to maintain good health. This not only prevents the various non-communicable diseases but also has role in secondary prevention of diseases. It is also proven that the growing epidemic of obesity mostly in children is linked to recent decline in physical activity levels both in home, school and working places. Social class is thought to have a bearing on physical activity. On basis of this, the survey was done to assess the physical activity levels in higher social class population i.e. on teaching faculty of Melaka Manipal Medical College, Manipal, Karnataka, India. **Materials and Methods:** Questionnaire study was implemented in 2010 as the design of this research without any manual intervention. No experiment was conducted in the research. Questions were specific and related to the physical activities in home and also in working environment. **Results:** The study found that in medical college the lifestyle is restricted mostly to sedentary and moderate work. Most of faculties were using bike and cars to reach their working place and also we found the physical activities in the form of exercise and sports activity were lacking. **Discussion:** In addition to the importance of a physical activity professional's potential influence on others as a model, engaging in a physically active lifestyle is very important for personal reasons. Achieving and maintaining a health-enhancing level of physical fitness is one of the basic standards for good teaching and maintaining good health. Physical activity in professionals leads to both personal health benefits, and improve job satisfaction. **Conclusion:** Infrastructure improvements such as sports activity in colleges among faculties, combined with regular exercise provide additional physical activity that would help reduce obesity and non-communicable diseases.

Key words: Exercise, physical activity, sports, teachers

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INTRODUCTION

Today's lifestyle should always be associated with the physical activities to reduce the risk of conditions such as cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, Osteoporosis and Cancer. Once the disease has set in, physical activity often has a therapeutic and/or secondary preventive effect. Unfortunately, that potential is not being fully understood – most people such as teaching faculties benefited from regular exercise who leads a sedentary lifestyles.

There is increasing evidence that physical activity is associated with altered risk for certain specific types of cancer,

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especially colon and prostate.^[1,2] The physical health benefits of regular physical activity are well-established and regular participation in such activities is associated with a longer and better quality of life, reduced risks of a variety of diseases and many psychological and emotional benefits.^[3,4] There are lot of literatures showing that inactivity is one of the most significant causes of reduced quality of life, disability, and death in the developed world.^[5]

The links between physical activity and health are clearly shown in studies.^[6,7] Although, we know the strong association between physical activity and health, the majority of individuals in many developed populations are not sufficiently studied. It is also proven that the growing epidemic of obesity mostly in children is linked to recent decline in physical activity levels^[8] both in home, school and working places. Social class is thought to have a bearing on physical activity and studies have contradictory findings about the same. But recent advancement in technologies has made people dependent on them and this is especially true in teaching cadre.

On basis of this, the survey was done to assess the physical activity levels in higher social class population i.e. on teaching faculty of Melaka Manipal Medical College, Manipal, Karnataka, INDIA. The results may have implications for the design of effective physical activity programs by the college for the faculty.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Questionnaire study was implemented in 2010 as the design of this research without any manual intervention. No experiment was conducted in the research. In this research all the faculty members of Melaka Manipal Medical College (MMMC) are asked to answer the question pertaining to physical activity in a specific way. A total 45 faculty members were participated in the study. The questions in subject were selected from various sources and compelled to required form. A preliminary set of questionnaire were given to the senior faculty members to validate the questions. Later

implemented in a small group of students, to know how they understood the questions. These pre validated questions were implemented in the study.

Statistical analysis

The analysis was done by obtaining the percentages of each response's using Microsoft excel.

RESULTS

The study subjects included 20 males in the age range of 35-45 years and 25 females in the age range of 32-40 years [Table 1]. The majority of faculties were in agreement with changing the life style [Table 2].

DISCUSSION

The physical and psychological benefits of physical activity are well documented and are highlighted in the Chief Medical Officer's report which recommends at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a day.^[9] It is recognized that the growing epidemic of obesity is linked to recent decline in physical activity levels.^[10]

Our study has found that in medical colleges especially in teaching field provides less physical activity environment. Most of the faculties were using cars and bikes for their regular travel and not involved in any sports activity. This indicates that faculties are sedentary or moderate workers and there is increased risk of non-communicable diseases in these persons.

Maintaining the normal weight involves a good physical activity, in combination with dietary changes. This has been

Table 1: Gender and age variations in the groups

Characteristic	SD	SD
Age (Years)	35±10	32±8
Number of participants gender wise	20	25

Table 2: The results of each question given to study subjects

How many hours do you sleep daily	6-7 Hours 23	7-8 Hours 16	8-9 Hours 2		
What is the nature of your work	Sedentary 11	Moderate 27	Heavy 3		
What mode of transportation do you use to reach workplace	Walking NIL	Cycle NIL	Motor bike 14	Car 16	Bus 8
Do you exercise regularly	Yes 13	No 28			
Are you involved in any sport activities before joining MMMC	Yes 18	No 22			
How many classes do you take in a week	0-2 Hours NIL	2-3 Hours	3-5 Hours 17	5-7 Hours 10	7-9 Hours 10
Did your working area give opportunities to be physically active	Strongly agree 3	agree 19	Disagree 19		
Would you like to change your physical activity	YES 29	NO 12			

proved by a study which states that an activity such as normal walking of more than 9000 daily steps, is associated with a lower likelihood of being obese.^[11]

In addition to the importance of a physical activity professional's potential influence on others as a model, engaging in a physically active lifestyle is very important for personal reasons. There are studies that show that participation in organized fitness programs (e.g., corporate fitness programs) results in greater productivity, reduced absenteeism, lower health care costs, and greater job satisfaction among employees.^[10] So the college or the universities have to evolve the program which involves more physical activity such as regular sports competition for the faculties.

The persons who are in teaching profession will also look into other ways of fitness, such as regular exercise and using traditional methods such as walking when there is no need of transport vehicle's.

Social class is thought to have a bearing on physical activity. The Whitehall II study showed that people in a lower social class do less physical activity than those in higher social classes or grades of employment.^[12] This was not seen in our case as all the study subjects were from higher class.

Achieving and maintaining a health-enhancing level of physical fitness is one of the basic standards for good teaching and maintaining good health. Physical activity in professionals leads to both personal health benefits, and improve job satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

It has been proven that physically active individuals gain less weight over time and maintains a good health. Thus infrastructure improvements such as sports activity in colleges among faculties, combined with regular exercise provide additional physical activity that would help to reduce obesity and non-communicable diseases in the future.

Limitations of the study

Body mass index was not calculated and low socioeconomic group was not included to compare the levels of physical activity.

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