

Awareness of Physical Fitness & Adherence to Fitness Program among Sedentary Women- A Survey

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Abstract

Background: Physical activity needs to be the core basic need of humans, without which all degeneration and diseases sets in. Physical activity in any forms whether with the motive of weight loss or not is always beneficial. Even if one chooses to be active, the adherence to the program remains critical.

Materials & Methods: A semi structured, self-administered questionnaire was prepared on Google Forms with open and close ended questionnaire. They were circulated among sedentary women in a community via social media, accessible to all for a period of one week. The data was calculated automatically by Google spreadsheet.

Results: 120 women in a community filled the questionnaire. Women of today are conscious about their health at the same time it was found that the adherence to any program was low.

Conclusion: Steps need to be taken to engage in physical activity for few minutes in a day making it an integral and core activity of a day.

Key Words: Awareness, Physical Fitness, Physical activity, Survey.

Introduction

The benefits of physical activity are innumerable¹ It is beneficial to health with or without weight loss. But adults and specially women find it difficult to maintain a normal weight and they should be encouraged to reduce energy intake and time spent in sedentary mode to prevent further weight gain.¹

British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences has guidelines that health professionals use (ABC of Physical Activity for Health, A is for All healthy adults, B is for Beginners, and C is for Conditioned individuals.) for maintaining physical fitness. All healthy adults aged 18-65 years should aim to take part in at least 150 min of moderate intensity aerobic

activity each week, or at least 75 min of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity per week, or equivalent combinations of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activities.¹ Most adults do know the value of fitness & health gains but adherence to the chosen plan, becomes long lived with the inclusion of enjoyment & pleasure in the plan.² Among adults higher levels of physical activity has been associated with reduced incidence of hypertension³, non insulin dependent diabetes⁴, depression⁵, osteoporotic fractures⁶ and mortality⁷.

This study intends to find out the awareness of fitness and adherence to fitness program chosen by sedentary women. It would also give insights as to what are the reasons for non adherence to a fitness program.

Materials and Methods

A survey was conducted online using social media in the form of questionnaire which has open ended and closed ended questions. The questionnaire was submitted using Google forms to all using a

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link shared via social media, (Whatsapp, Facebook, Gmail) for a period of one week. Responses were obtained and analyzed.

Results

Results were calculated directly by Google spreadsheet in terms of frequency distribution and descriptive statistics. The study was conducted on a sample of 120 women in a community setting in Bangalore.

Response Rate: The questionnaire was distributed to 120 respondents. All the 120 respondents completed the questionnaire and returned to the researcher with in 1 week (Response rate: 100 %).

Awareness about current lifestyle as sedentary: It was found from the responses that 86% of women knew that they maintained a sedentary lifestyle.

Most part of the day was spent mostly sitting. The graphical representation of which is in Fig.1.

Awareness about Physical Fitness: It was good to get in the results that 79% of women who participated in the survey had knowledge about physical fitness. The pictorial representation is as in Fig.2.

Most of the respondents in my study belong to 25-45 years age group.

Is Physical Fitness essential: On being asked whether they knew whether any form of physical fitness is essential in their day to day living, 90% of respondents accepted that physical fitness was essential. The pictorial representation is as in Fig.3.

Have you taken steps to be physically fit: 64% of the respondents tried some form of activity by which they could be physically fit, whereas 36% never thought of doing any kind of activity to be fit. The graphical representation of which is as in Fig.4.

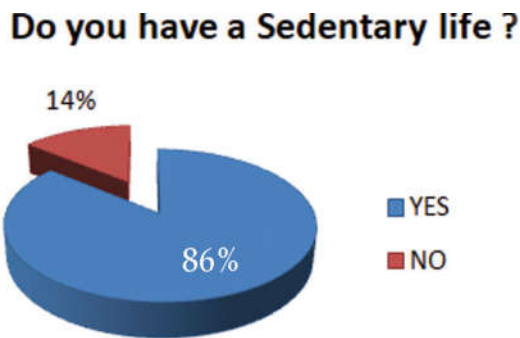


Fig. 1 Do you have a Sedentary life?

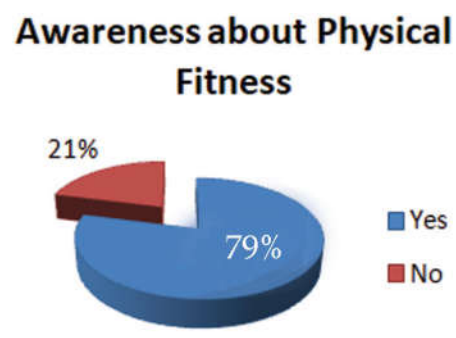


Fig. 2 Awareness about Physical Fitness

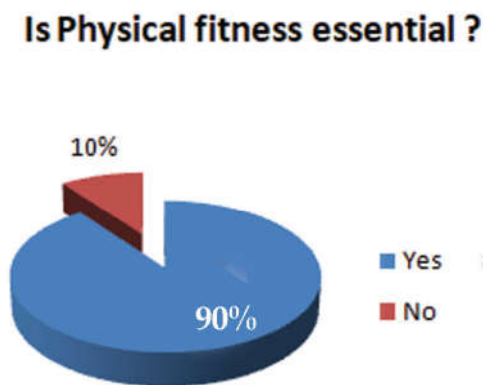


Fig. 3 Is Physical fitness essential?

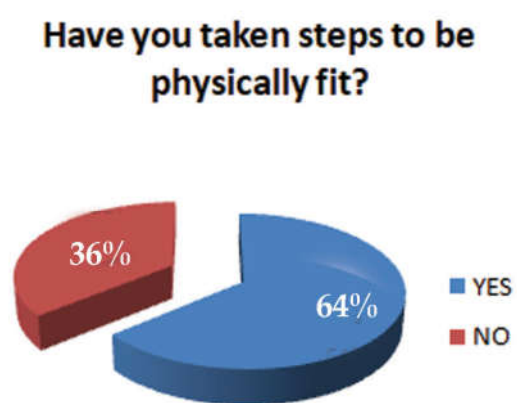


Fig. 4 Have you taken steps to be physically fit?

Activities tried to attain Physical Fitness- Those respondents who felt they need to be physically fit , tried various means to achieve it. 38% started walking,18% enrolled in gym, 13% enrolled in various online fitness app, 12% tried Pilates/ Aerobics, 7 % tried Yoga; whereas 12% did not try anything which is represented in Fig.5.

Support from friends/family in physical fitness- On being asked whether in the try for being physically fit, respondents were supported by friends & family to continue in their endeavor. 56% were well supported & motivated by friends & family which is pictorially represented in Fig.6.

Do you agree walking is the best means for physical fitness: 70% of responses were in favor of walking as the best means to stay fit. This is pictorially represented in Fig.7.

Will enrollment by any means make you physically active: 75% of the responses were in favor that enrollment kept them continuing with their respective physical fitness regimes which is represented as in Fig.8.

Activities tried to attain Physical Fitness:

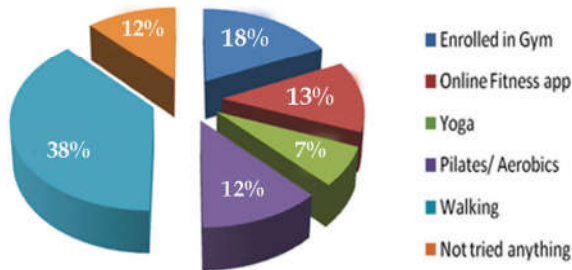


Fig. 5 Activities tried to attain Physical Fitness.

Support from family & friends to continue fitness activities?

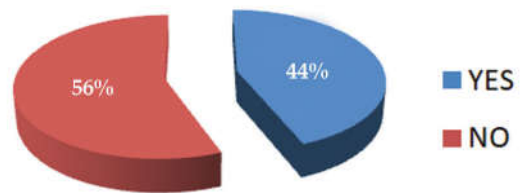


Fig. 6 Support from family & friends to continue fitness activities?

Do you agree that walking is the best means of physical fitness?

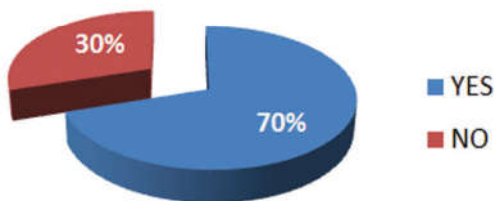


Fig. 7 Do you agree that walking is the best means of physical fitness?

Will enrollment by paid means make you adherent to physical fitness program?

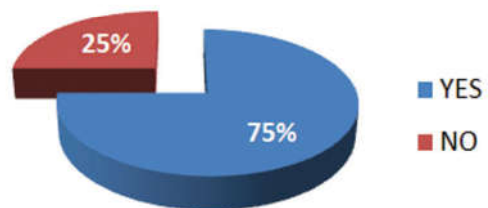


Fig. 8 Will enrollment by paid means make you adherent to physical fitness program?

Best time to engage in Physical Fitness: For office goers:60% of respondents preferred 6-9 am was the most appropriate time slot for office goers to participate in any form of physical activity which is represented as in Fig 9 (a).

form of physical activity which is represented in Fig 9 (b).

For non office goers:75% of non office goers preferred 9am-12 noon time for engaging in any

Reason for non adherence: the main reason respondents stated for non adherence was “no time” by 51%, 37% women mentioned “being lazy or insincere” was the main reason for drop out from physical fitness protocol as in Fig .10.

Best time slot for engaging in Physical fitness:

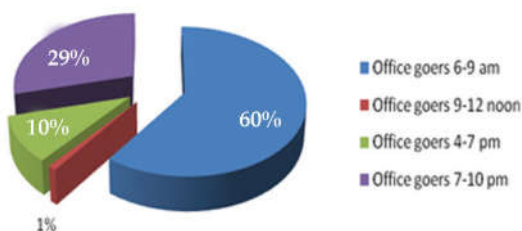


Fig. 9 (a) Best time slot for engaging in Physical fitness:

Best time to engage in Physical Fitness:

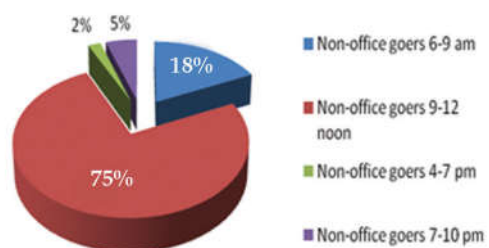


Fig. 9 (b) Best time to engage in Physical Fitness.

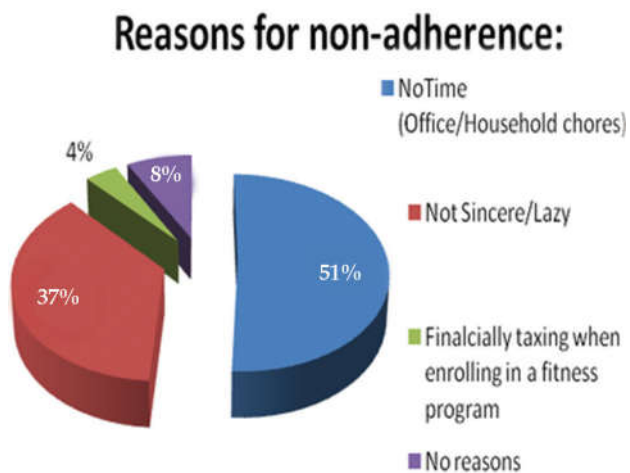


Fig. 10 Reasons for non-adherence.

Discussion

Participation in any form of physical activity every day is utmost essential. Physical inactivity (PI) is defined as less than 30 minutes of any form of physical activity (PA) per week^{9,10}, which has significant impact on morbidity and mortality which leads to economic burden on healthcare systems and wider society. People who are inactive tend to spend 38% more days in hospital than most active people¹¹.

In the current study, most of the women respondents were aware about their sedentary lifestyle. They also were educated & aware about physical fitness and its significance. 64% of the respondents had taken steps to keep themselves physically active in some form. But most of them dropped out from the regimen they were into.

Walking daily was the most commonly accepted means of maintaining physical fitness for 38% of the respondents. 56% of women mentioned that even if they wanted to do certain physical fitness activity but it was not facilitated well by family & friends. 75% of the respondents believed that if they enrolled themselves in any form of fitness program, by payment that would make them stick to it. 51% of the respondents mentioned being lazy was the major reason for which they could not continue with their preferred physical fitness regime.

The time most appropriate for working women to work out was 9 am -12 noon whereas for non working women the most appropriate for work out is 6-9 am.

There needs to be steps taken to motivate women to make them adhere to steps that they have taken to keep themselves physically active. Continuance of physical activity will keep them physically fit.

Along with all chores in 24 hours; physical activity towards attaining physical fitness needs to be given utmost priority for a healthier generation. All these steps reduce the health expenses & also improves mental health.

Conclusion

Women though conscious about their health & also having the motive to be physically active could not adhere to fitness programs. They in spite of wanting to maintain their health ended up ignoring it due to lack of time, family support or laziness due to completing other household chores which consumed most of the waking hours of the day.

Conflicts of Interest: None

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