

Identifying Roadblocks; What Keeps Adults Away from Physical Activities

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze various barriers to physical activity among young sedentary adults. University students (n = 90, age = 19-22 years) participated in this study. All participants self-disclosed that they hardly do any kind of physical activity and were active not more than 20 minutes once a week. Using a Likert type scale, participants responded to an instrument with 21 items representing barriers to physical activity. The results showed that lack of will power (71%) was the most important barrier. Lack of time (55%), lack of energy (55%), lack of resources (45.55%) and social influence (36%) were also some of the important barriers cited by the participants. It was concluded that both intrinsic as well as extrinsic factors are responsible for non-participation of students in physical activities but intrinsic factors show higher barrier percentage than extrinsic factors.

Keywords: Barriers, Physical Activity, Non-participation.

Introduction

A Nation can dream of development and progress when its people are healthy and fit. Research has proved that active participation in physical activity programmes is the ultimate and affordable source for being physically, physiologically and mentally fit and healthy. Regular physical activity improves myocardial function, maintains or increases myocardial oxygen supply, and increases the electrical stability of the myocardium (Fang et al., 2003). But in spite of lifelong wellness benefits majority of the people do not engage in regular physical activity programs. Sherwood and Jeffery (2000) suggested that in spite of well-documented health benefits of physical activity a majority of adult men and women are found to be inactive. Hence, promoting regular physical activity is a public health priority.

The Canadian Fitness and Life Style Institute (CFLSI) (1995) reveal that barriers are different for active and inactive individuals. Also different populations and genders show a wide range of differences in these barriers. Gal, Santos, and Barros (2005) conducted a study among a Portuguese urban population. The results of the study found that sedentarism is high during leisure time among both Portuguese men and women.

Besides knowing the benefits of physical activities adults particularly students still prefer to live sedentary life style. This research paper was meant to find out the reasons behind the physical in-activism of the adult students in order to plan some effective interventions there upon.

Methodology

The "Barriers to being Active Quiz" questionnaire was used in this study (Latham, 1999). Adapted with permission from, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, USA, November-02-2015. The participants were asked to provide information regarding, age, gender and information regarding the levels of physical activity participation. After this all the participants were asked to complete the questionnaire regarding "Barriers to Being Active" There were 21 items in the questionnaire. It was a closed-ended questionnaire that aimed at finding the reasons why people do not get as much physical activity as they think they should. There was no time limit for the completion of the test. However the subjects were asked to take as minimum time as possible. Scoring was done on a 4 - point Likert scale that ranged from "very likely" (3) to "very unlikely" (0). Three questions related to each category, a) Lack of Will power, b) Lack of Time, c) Lack of Energy, d) Lack of Resources, e) Social Influence, f) Fear of Injury and g) Lack of Skill, were asked in this questionnaire.



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Data Analysis

Frequency distributions of the total barrier scores in each of the seven barrier categories were generated and helped to determine the observed and the expected frequencies of the total barrier score in

each of the seven categories. A listing of the number of respondents indicating the barrier as important (with barrier scores of 5 or higher) appears in Table (1)

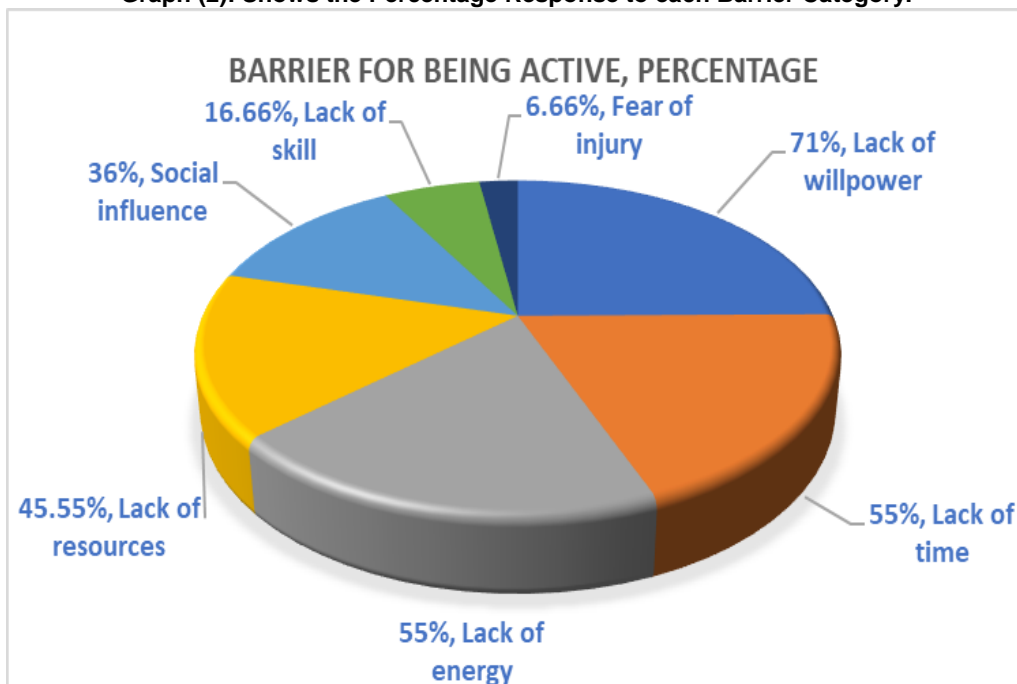
S. No	Barriers	Total (N)	Observed (N)
1	Lack of willpower	90	64
2	Lack of time	90	50
3	Lack of energy	90	50
4	Lack of resources	90	41
5	Social influence	90	33
6	Lack of skill	90	15
7	Fear of injury	90	6

Table:1, total number of subjects and number of subjects who marked each category as Important (barrier totals with scores of 5 or higher are categorized as important).

Table (2), Percentage response to each barrier category

S.No	Barrier Category	Important Barrier	Not Important Barrier
1	Lack of willpower	71%	29%
2	Lack of time	55%	45%
3	Lack of energy	55%	45%
4	Lack of resources	45.55%	54.45%
5	Social influence	36%	64%
6	Lack of skill	16.66%	83%
7	Fear of injury	6.66%	93.34%

**Graphic representation of the percentages of the respective categories:
Graph (2): Shows the Percentage Response to each Barrier Category.**

**Results and Discussion**

This study was meant to track out the barriers that are responsible for the non participation of adults in physical activities. After statistically analyzing the response of the subjects to the, "barriers to being active quiz", the responses were summarized under the following categories as: a) Lack of Will Power b) Lack of Time c) Lack of Energy d) Lack of Resources e) Social Influence f) Lack of Skill and g) Fear of Injury.

The finding of this study is as:

1. 64 out of 90 subjects are showing positive tendencies towards lack of willpower i.e.,71% of

subjects stay away from daily exercise due to lack of willpower.

2. 50 out of 90 subjects are showing positive tendencies for lack of time i.e., 55% of subjects stay away from daily exercise due to lack of time.
3. 50 out of 90 subjects are showing positive tendencies towards lack of energy i.e., 55% of subjects stay away from daily exercise due to lack of energy.
4. 41 out of 90 subjects are showing positive tendencies towards Lack of resources i.e., 45.55% of subjects stay away from daily exercise due to Lack of resources.

5. 33 out of 90 subjects are showing positive tendencies towards social influence i.e., 36% of subjects stay away from daily exercise due to influence of the society they live in on them.
6. 15 out of 90 subjects are showing positive tendencies towards Lack of skill i.e., 16.66% of subjects stay away from daily exercise due to Lack of skill.
7. 6 out of 90 subjects are showing positive tendencies towards Fear of injury i.e., 6.66% of subjects stay away from daily exercise due to Fear of injury.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to identify the roadblocks or barriers that are responsible for the common Physicity-Absentia problem among the adults. 90 male students of the age 19-22, from Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh participated in the study. The age of the participants was recorded and they self reported that they neither play any sport nor do any kind of physical activity. Subjects self reported that they are using motor bikes and hardly walk a mile in a day. A standardized questionnaire was used to get the responses from the subjects and to draw the conclusions for this study. After analyzing the data it was found that many factors are responsible for keeping the adults away from physical activity. The barriers identified in this study comprise of seven categories as Lack of Will Power, Lack of Time, Lack of Energy, Lack of Resources, Social Influence, Lack of Skill and Fear of Injury.

It was concluded that barriers do exist among the adult boys that hinder their participation in the physical activities. These barriers need an immediate attention and should be dealt with a primary preference in order to help the students to stay fit, active and healthy.

It was found that there is a great deal of misconception and misunderstanding among the subjects of this study regarding physical activities as the subjects responded that they do not participate in physical exercises because they do not have the resources (45.55%), they lack the skill for sports

(36%) and they have fear of injury (6.66%). So to remove these confusions and misconceptions regarding physical activity and to aware them about the lifelong benefits of physical exercise, experts of department of physical education, coaches, trainers and medical professionals should organize lectures, seminars in the general education colleges, departments to reach out to every single adult and motivate them to shun the sedentary life style and to participate in physical activities.

Physical Activity participating could be made compulsory for all at school, college and university levels (NDRI, Haryana has successfully implemented physical activity participation programme).

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