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Research Article

**EVALUATION OF KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE
OF SAUDI WOMEN TOWARDS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

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Abstract:

Background: physical activity is defined as any movement of the body that uses energy such as walking, playing football and dancing. Physical activities can help in maintaining body's health and prevention of diseases. In addition, increasing the general health awareness about physical activities can prevent obesity and chronic diseases. **Objectives:** this study aimed to evaluate knowledge, attitude and practice [KAP] of Saudi women regarding physical activity in eastern region, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia [KSA]. **Methods:** this was a cross-sectional study based on questionnaire was conducted 400 Saudi adult females and they were chosen randomly during the period from August to September 2018. The study included socio-demographics information and assessed the KAP about physical activity. **Results:** all participants were females 400 [100%] and about half of them were aged between 18-30 years old [46%]. Two-thirds of participants had college degree [67%]. The vast majority of the participants had good knowledge about the general benefits of physical activity [76.5%]. The majority of participants had positive attitude toward physical activity as 86.75% were planning in doing exercise in the future. But, the majority revealed that they didn't do regular physical exercise [79%]. **Conclusion:** the general knowledge of participants was good. Also, the participants showed positive attitude towards physical activities. In contrast, most of participants showed negative practice in which they did not do regular physical activities thus, more campaigns needed to enhance general population to do regular physical activities.

Keywords: KAP, physical activity, women, Saudi Arabia.

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INTRODUCTION:

Physical activity is essential for prevention of many diseases and keeps body in health state [1]. Also, it is essential for enhancing the metabolic process in human's body resulting in improving the bone strength and fitness [2]. There was a significant change in the people's lifestyle in Saudi Arabia which resulted in increasing the rate of surviving. In addition, there are other factors that can contribute in decreasing physical activities in KSA such as the hot weather which let people to use transportation methods like cars rather than walking. Also, unhealthy food consumption has shown major health defects among people in Saudi Arabia [3].

Many articles showed that the Saudi population do not practice physical activities regularly in both side either insufficient duration or low frequency and this because of low level of awareness towards the benefits and people give unacceptable excuses such as not having free time and lack of motivation [4-5]. Also, there is a shortage in the studies regarding physical in activities in KSA [6]. This study aimed to evaluate the KAP of Saudi women regarding physical activity in KSA.

METHODS:**Study design**

This cross-sectional study based on questionnaire conducted 400 Saudian women in eastern region,

Saudi Arabia during the period from August to September 2018. The sample was collected randomly from 400 Saudi adult females. Inclusion criteria were adult Saudi females aged from 18-50 years old.

Study tools

A self-administrated questionnaire was distributed among the included females randomly. All participants asked to fill the questionnaire. This questionnaire consisted of 4 parts including demographics data of participants, questions about knowledge, attitude and practice.

Ethical consideration

Permission was taken from the participants in public places. The information of each participant was kept private and confident.

Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis and data entering was done by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences [SPSS].

RESULTS:

Socio-demographic characteristics of participants:

Table 1 showed the characteristics of female's participants with age from 18-50 years old, most of the participants aged from 18-30 then from 31-40. Most of participants were not-employed [58.25%] and about two-third have a college degree [67.25%] [**Table 1**].

Table 1: characteristics of respondent females [N=400]:

Characteristics	N=400	Percentage
Age	Frequency	Percent %
18-30	185	46.25
31-40	135	33.75
41-50	80	20
Employment	Frequency	Percent [%]
Employed	167	41.75
Not-employed	233	58.25
Education	Frequency	Percent [%]
College	269	67.25
Primary-Secondary	101	25.25
Illiterate	30	7.5

Knowledge of the included participants:

The knowledge of females regarding physical activity showed that majority of the participants had good knowledge about the general benefits of physical activity [76.5%] also in relation between physical activities and prevention/protection of specific diseases, half of participants knew the correct answers [50%] and about the third of the participants didn't know the correct answers of questionnaires [**Table 2**].

Table 2: characteristics of respondent females [N=400]:

Questions	No	Yes	Don't Know
1. Physical activity has benefits?	41 [10.25%]	306 [76.5%]	53 [13.25%]
2. Physical activity could protect from disease?	96 [24%]	145 [36.25%]	159 [39.75%]
3. Physical activity could prevent heart diseases?	77 [19.25%]	189 [47.25%]	134 [33.5%]
4. Physical activity could prevent chronic diseases like diabetes mellitus and hypertension?	34 [8.5%]	211 [52.75%]	155 [38.75%]
5. Physical activity could prevent psychological stress and keep good mood?	64 [16%]	197 [49.25%]	139 [34.75%]

Attitude of the included participants:

The attitude of females was shown in **Table 3**.

3. The majority of participants had positive attitude toward physical activity as 86.75% were planning in doing exercise in the future. Two-thirds of participants believed that physical activities improved their bodies' health also, 72.24% believed that physical activities decrease anxiety and depression.

Table 3: attitude of participants toward physical activity [N=400]:

Questions	Yes	No
1. Are you planning to do exercise in the future?	347 [86.75%]	53 [13.25%]
2. Physical activity improves your confidence?	273 [68.25%]	127 [31.75%]
3. Physical activity decreases depression?	289 72.25%]	111 [27.75%]

Practice pattern of included the participants:

Regarding participant's practice, the majority revealed that they didn't do regular physical exercise [79%] while; only [21%] do exercise regularly. Almost, 70% of the participants did not go for walking while only 30% who go for walking [Table 4].

Table 4: practice pattern of respondents toward physical activity [N=400]:

Questions	Yes	No
1. Do you practice regular physical exercise?	84 [21%]	316 [79%]
2. Do you often go for walking?	123 [30.75%]	277 [69.25%]

DISCUSSION:

Physical activity is an effective component of health and key factor to prevent many diseases. Increasing the general health awareness about physical activity could prevent fatal and chronic diseases such as obesity [7]. This study aimed to evaluate the KAP of a randomized sample of Saudi adult females toward physical activity in Saudi Arabia. Half of participated females had a good knowledge however; about two-thirds of the females had bad practice of physical activities. Almost two-thirds of the females had positive attitude toward physical activities. Also, other studies conducted in Saudi Arabia reported a high level of physical inactivity [8]. The changing in lifestyle of Saudi population was responsible for high prevalence of physical inactivity and chronic diseases [9]. Also, the physical activity was relatively low and this could be attributed to many factors such as lack of awareness and practice pattern among Saudis people [10].

CONCLUSION:

There is conflict between the general knowledge and practice in which participant's knowledge was good while, participants did not practice exercising regularly. Also, more efforts should be given for increasing the level of awareness toward physical activity through educational campaigns in public places.

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