

**ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND FITNESS PATTERNS AMONG
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ABSTRACT

University students are at risk of losing their focus on maintaining healthy levels of physical activity because of their engagements with curricular and cocurricular activities. In India, the physical activity levels of the adult population have been reported to be declining in the recent years. However, studies focusing on university students pertaining to their physical activity are lacking in the Indian context. Moreover, a question that has not been properly addressed is the following: “do the curricula in higher education promote physical activity?” A sample of 76 was used where there were 61 male and 15 female. This study gathered quantitative data through structured questionnaires to understand each of the objectives. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse data where the mean, median, mode and standard deviation was calculated, and a number of correlations were made using the same. It was found that respondents aging from 17-28 have low levels of physical activity. Moreover, when a comparison was made between the males and females on their levels of physical activity, women were found to do easier levels of physical activity. The BMI was likewise determined, so as to discover the class of weights that individual’s fall into. While the vast majority expressed that practicing was imperative to them, they, despite everything neglected to work out for adequate hours per week. While individuals know and have the correct disposition towards working out, they have recently been unsuccessful when it came to really working out. At the point when it went to the reasons why individuals work out, the most well-known ones were to get fitter or more grounded or accomplish a positive inclination. Be that as it may, when it went to the demotivation of working out the most widely recognized reasons were the lack of time, energy and inspiration to work out. Some different elements that were a consequence of individuals being overweight were their temptations/cravings to eat fast food. A greater part of the respondents said that, they expended cheap food in any event 2-3 times per day. 17-28-year-old have busy lifestyles and hence are much harder to reach. A targeted intervention could be carried out in order to educate people about the importance of physical activity.

KEYWORDS: Physical activity, Fitness, BMI, University Students, Food Consumption.**INTRODUCTION**

This report understands the physical health and fitness patterns among the university students in Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand. The university students are seen hitting the gyms and being self-conscious in the recent day and age. Thus, this research’s purpose is to study the level of physical activity, the general attitude and perceived impact of physical activity on health, food consumption patterns, the motivating factors and challenges faced while taking up fitness activities. The aim is to provide the colleges information about the university students of today, so that if necessary, actions can be taken

accordingly. Physical activity is one of the most basic human functions and needs, which has benefits across the lifespan and has sufficient evidence that the university students believe and agree to the fact that physical activity improves: sleeping patterns, activeness and physical and mental wellbeing.^[1]

Physical activity can be defined as “any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that require expenditure”. Physical inactivity or being sedentary is a fourth leading risk factor for global mortality and is a major contributing factor for various non-communicable

diseases such as diabetes mellitus, cancer and heart diseases.^[2]

With growing affluence and a dramatic increase in TV watching and laptop usage documented in India, it is more likely to observe more sedentary habits among adolescents. The world is facing an epidemic of non-communicable diseases, and lack of physical activity is a major risk factor for these diseases. It is estimated that lack of physical activity causes 1.9 million deaths worldwide. As per WHO estimates, 80% of premature heart diseases as well as incidence of diabetes could be well prevented by a strategy of combined healthy diet, physical activity and avoidance of tobacco. Since students are the pillars of the future nation it is essential for the youngsters to perform physical activity for the sake of physical, emotional and mental health.^[3]

OBJECTIVES

- To study the level of physical activity among university students in Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand.
- To research the food consumption patterns among university students in Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand.

METHODOLOGY

Study design: Cross-Sectional study.

Study Site: The study was conducted in Maharaja Agrasen Himalayan Garhwal University, Pokhra, Pauri Garhwal-246169, Uttarakhand, India.

Study Duration: The study duration was 6 months.

Study Criteria

• Inclusion Criteria

- a) All the students attending gym, yoga classes of Maharaja Agrasen Himalayan Garhwal University Pokhra, Pauri Garhwal-246169, Uttarakhand, India are included.
- b) Both genders.

• Exclusion Criteria

- a) All the students of the concerned department of the university.
- b) Apart from the students attending gym and yoga classes, no other students are involved.

Data Collection

The study data was collected in the format (Appendix-I) consisting of demographic characteristics of respondents and level of physical activity or exercise of students.

A descriptive research was done to understand the physical health and fitness patterns among university students in Mumbai. The key objectives of this study explored the level of physical activity among university students, their attitudes towards physical activity and the perceived impact that people have regarding their physical activity and their weights. A cross-sectional study was carried out where the study was used to gather quantitative data through structured questionnaires to understand each of the above-mentioned objectives.

This study was conducted on 76 students studying in the university. Who were between 17-28 years of age.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed by preparing tables and graphs using Microsoft word.

RESULTS

➤ Assessment of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. It was found that 19.73% of the respondents were females whereas males were 80.26%. The mean weight of the respondents was 62.507 (SD=12.09) ranging from 37Kg to 100kg. The ages of the respondents ranged from 17 to 28 where the maximum number of student were between the ages 21-24. The weights and heights of the respondents were also asked, in order to calculate their BMI status. It was found that 17.11% of the respondents were underweight, 50% were healthy, 30.26% were overweight and 2.63% were obese. BMI of less than 18.5 means that a person is underweight, BMI between 18.5 and 24.9 is ideal, between 25 and 29.9 is overweight and a BMI over 30 indicates obesity.

Table 1(i, ii, iii): Assessment of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

(i)

Age	No. of Students (%) (n=76)
17-20	17 (22.36%)
21-24	41 (53.94%)
25-28	18 (23.68%)

(ii)

QUALIFICATION STATUS	No. Of Students (%) (n=76)
Under-Graduate	16 (21.05%)
Graduate	39 (51.31%)
Post-Graduate	21 (27.63%)

(iii)

BMI STATUS	No. of Students (%) (n=76)
Underweight	13 (17.11%)
Healthy	38 (50%)
Overweight	23 (30.26%)
Obese	02 (2.63%)

➤ **Objective 1:** To study the level of physical activity among university students in Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand.

The first objective of this paper studied the levels of physical activity carried out by the respondents. It was

found that 27.89% of the respondents rarely workout of which females constituted 56%. Further, 27% of respondents said that they exercise 3-4 times a week which show contrasting views of people being in the category of either rarely exercising or doing it 3-4 times a week.

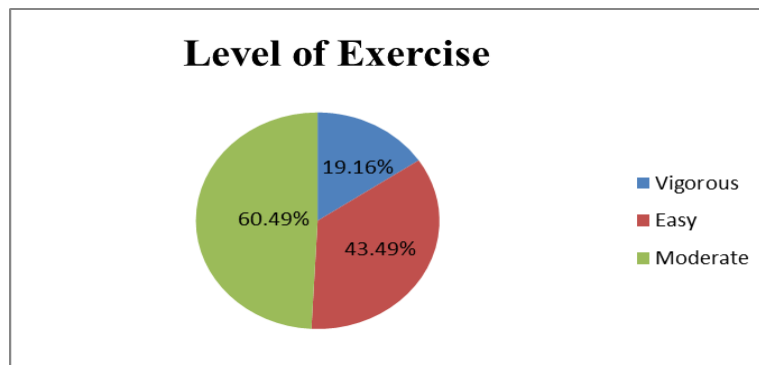


Fig. 1: Level of exercise.

As seen in the graph in figure 1 the level of physical activity carried out by the respondents observed that 60.49% of the respondents said they did a moderate level of physical exercise of which, the ratio of males to females was almost equal. It was found that more people did an easy level of exercise as compared to the vigorous level. 43.49% of respondents doing an easy level were females. Vigorous levels of exercise were done the least where males constituted 19.16%.

Furthermore, it is observed that most of the youth chooses the easy way out where the average no of hours per week is less than 2hrs and the most common form of physical activity chosen was Cardio (82.89% of the respondents) as seen in Table 2. It is an activity that requires the least amount of efforts, as even walking is included and doesn't require one to specially go to a location where the activities can be performed.

Table 2: Form of physical activity.

What forms of physical activity do you currently participate in?	N	Male (%)	Female (%)
Cardio (Waking/Running/Cycling/ Swimming/ Salt-Climbing)	63	54 (85.71%)	09 (14.28%)
Outdoor Sport (Badminton/ Basketball/ Cricket/ Football/ Tennis)	73	61 (83.56%)	12 (16.43%)
Flexibility and Strength (Yoga, power Yoga Pilates, Gym)	52	37 (71.15%)	15 (28.84%)
Dance (Aerobics/ Zumba)	09	05 (55.55%)	04 (44.44%)
Others	08	04 (50%)	04 (50%)

➤ **Objective 2:** To research the food consumption patterns among university students in Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand.

On analysing the rate of fast food consumption, it was seen that the highest rate of consumption (36 respondents) was "once 2-3 days", followed by three rates which are very close to each other with "once 4-5" days, "once a week" and so on. To understand the major

reason/factor for every rate of consumption, the occurrence of each factor for every rate was counted. It was seen that for the units who consume fast food every day, temptation/cravings are the major reason. For people who consume fast food once in 2-3 days, again temptation/ cravings being the biggest factor with the ease of access being a significantly contributing factor too.

Table 3 (i, ii, iii, iv, v, vi): Relation between fast food consumption and balance diet preventive factors.

(i)

Everyday	
Preventive factors	Respondents
Ease of access to fast food	03
Temptation/ Cravings	11
Lack of time	04
Emotional eating	01
Cost	00
Accessibility	00
Other	01

(ii)

Once in 2-3 days	
Preventive factors	Respondents
Ease of access to fast food	11
Temptation/ Cravings	15
Lack of time	05
Emotional eating	00
Cost	01
Accessibility	00
Other	00

(iii)

Once 4-5 days	
Preventive factors	Respondents
Ease of access to fast food	07
Temptation/ Cravings	04
Lack of time	01
Emotional eating	05
Cost	06
Accessibility	00
Other	00

(iv)

Once a week	
Preventive factors	Respondents
Ease of access to fast food	4
Temptation/ Cravings	08
Lack of time	02
Emotional eating	03
Cost	01
Accessibility	01
Other	02

(v)

Few times a month	
Preventive factors	Respondents
Ease of access to fast food	01
Temptation/ Cravings	08
Lack of time	02
Emotional eating	01
Cost	00
Accessibility	00
Other	00

(vi)

Rarely	
Preventive factors	Respondents
Ease of access to fast food	01
Temptation/ Cravings	01
Lack of time	00
Emotional eating	01
Cost	01
Accessibility	00
Other	01

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

University students aging from 17-28 have lower levels of physical activity than required; this is consistent with findings from (Poobalan, Aucott, Clarke, & Smith, 2012)^[4], (Eichorn, Bruner, Short, & Abraham, 2018)^[5] as well. Moreover, when the level of physical activity between males and females were compared, it was found to be lower for females as found in (Ajibade, 2011)^[6] as well. The BMI was also calculated in order to find out the category of weights that people fall into.

While most people stated that exercising was important to them, they still failed to work out for sufficient hours per week. While people are aware and have the right attitude towards working out, they have just been unsuccessful when it came to actually working out. When it came to the reasons why people exercise, the most common ones were to get fitter or stronger or achieving a positive feeling. However, when it came to the demotivation's of working out the most common reasons were the lack of time, energy and motivation to work out.

Based on the findings it can be said that there is need to create some serious awareness of the importance of physical activity in one's daily life and its benefits. Targeted interventions must be given to the university students to improve and sustain the levels of physical activity taken up by the university students. Awareness must also be created regarding the food consumption patterns among the university students.

LIMITATIONS

- The heights and weights collected were self-reported by the samples thus there is a chance of error from the respondent's side.
- Objective number two is more indicative than factual, only tells what is perceived by the respondents and may not correspond to their actions in reality.
- Non-Probability method of sampling and convenience sampling is used, which may not be the true representation of the population.
- The data collected is cross-sectional in nature, thus is only true for Mumbai, in the current period.

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