

RESEARCH TITLE

Abstract of The Role of Awareness Programs to Promote Weekly Practice of Physical Activity among Women

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Abstract

Physical inactivity among women as a view of global public health issue. Although the benefits of regular physical activity are well documented, fewer women than men participate in weekly exercise class. This study examines how the weekly physical activity practices of women can be improved with an awareness program in the form of a series of lectures. A descriptive analytical research design was used, and a purposive sample of women completed a questionnaire before and after use of the tool to assess differences in awareness and behavior. The degreed lectures discussed the physiological, psychological and social benefits of physical activity and offered ways to incorporate exercise into daily life. Results showed that participants who participated in the program had an increased awareness and physically were more active weekly than before the program. The mean number of exercise days per week increased from 1.9 (SD = 0.8) to 3.6 (SD = 1.1), representing an 89% increase. A paired-samples t-test confirmed that the improvement was statistically significant ($p < .001$) with a large effect size. The results emphasize that good readymade awareness programs have a potential to improve health behavior with a recommendation to add these programs to community and health institution-based programs.

Key Words: Awareness programs; women's physical activity; weekly exercise; behavior change; health promotion.

مستخلص دور برامج التوعية في تعزيز الممارسة الأسبوعية للنشاط البدني لدى النساء

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المستخلص

يُعدّ الخمول البدني بين النساء قضيةً من قضايا الصحة العامة العالمية. وعلى الرغم من توثيق فوائد النشاط البدني المنتظم على نحوٍ واسع، فإن مشاركة النساء في ممارسة التمارين الأسبوعية ما تزال أقل من مشاركة الرجال. هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى فحص سُبل تحسين الممارسة الأسبوعية للنشاط البدني لدى النساء من خلال برنامج توعوي قُدّم على هيئة سلسلة من المحاضرات. اعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، حيث طُبّق استبيان على عينة قصدية من النساء قبل تنفيذ البرنامج وبعده لقياس الفروق في مستوى الوعي والسلوك. تناولت المحاضرات المقررة الفوائد الفسيولوجية والنفسية والاجتماعية للنشاط البدني، وقدمت طرقاً عملية لدمج التمارين في الحياة اليومية. أظهرت النتائج ارتفاع مستوى الوعي لدى المشاركات وزيادة ممارستهن للنشاط البدني أسبوعياً مقارنة بما قبل البرنامج؛ إذ ارتفع متوسط عدد أيام ممارسة التمارين أسبوعياً من 1.9 (الانحراف المعياري = 0.8) إلى 3.6 (الانحراف المعياري = 1.1)، بنسبة زيادة بلغت 89%. وأكّد اختبار (t) لعينتين مترابطتين دلالة هذا التحسن إحصائياً ($p < 0.001$) مع حجم أثر كبير. وتؤكد النتائج أن برامج التوعية الجاهزة والفعّالة تمتلك قدرةً على تحسين السلوك الصحي، مع التوصية بإدماجها ضمن البرامج المجتمعية وبرامج المؤسسات الصحية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: برامج التوعية؛ النشاط البدني لدى النساء؛ التمارين الأسبوعية؛ التغيير السلوكي؛ تعزيز الصحة.

Introduction

It is well established that physical activity is vital for maintaining both physical and mental health and for preventing chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes mellitus and obesity (WHO, 2020). Although increasing physical activity is a priority area around the globe, women tend to have lower adherence to sustained weekly exercise than men. The greater difficulties faced by newcomer families are due to a combination of factors like sociocultural responsibilities, limited outreach efforts, and limited access to relevant programs (Bauman et al., 2012). Awareness programs, particularly those that incorporate formal lectures, can contribute to understanding, attitude change, and behavior change by dispelling common myths and demonstrating feasible exercise regimens (Dishman et al., 2013). We conducted this study to examine the effects of awareness programs on the weekly practice of physical activity by women.

Problem Statement

Even with considerable marketing of physical activity through mass and social media campaigns and public outreach and health implementations, most women do not develop exercise habits that are practiced each week. This suggests a disconnect between knowledge of benefits and behaviors. Aim: The gap in the literature is whether or not awareness programs have an impact on narrowing this gap and the sustainability of weekly physical activity in women. The present study adopts a descriptive- analytical pre-post research design without a control group. Therefore, are interpreted as statistically significant improvements rather than definitive causal impact.

Research Questions

That is the overarching question around which the research is oriented:

How do awareness programs contribute to promoting weekly physical activity practice among women?

Sub questions include:

Before undertaking the program, how aware are women about physical activity?

How does educational lectures increase physical activity participation per week?

Is there a change in attitude towards exercise after conducting awareness regarding it.

Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to:

Assess the impact of awareness campaigns on the knowledge of women about importance of physical activity.

Evaluate the impact of exercise-related lectures on weekly exercise behavior.

Explore the connection between awareness and behavior change

Provide concrete recommendations for the execution of health awareness programs

Significance of the Study

5.1 Scientific Significance

This study adds to the evidence base in health education, behavior change, and women's participation in PA.

5.2 Practical Significance

Results from the study can help policy makers, community health planners and educators in the development of awareness interventions that facilitate better awareness among women, resulting in adherence to regular physical activity.

Theoretical Framework

6.1 Awareness Programs

Awareness Passively or actively conveys information, knowledge, and behavior that motivate people to take action to promote health (i.e., structured activities that make participants aware of what is happening). Education lectures are a unique method to deliver evidence based information and to correct perceptions (Trost et al., 2002). Such interventions are most effective when they are interactive and goal oriented.

6.2 Exercise and Days per Week

More formally, physical activity is defined as any bodily movement that results in energy expenditure above resting levels [1]. Thus, weekly practice can be interpreted as a regular involvement in such activities as per the recommended health guidelines (WHO, 2020).

6.3 Importance for Women

Increased physical activity promotes general health, lowers stress and anxiety, increases self-esteem, and decreases the risk of chronic disease among females (Dishman et al 2013). Therefore, it is a public health objective to improve activity levels among women.

Methodology

7.1 Research Design

A descriptive-analytical pre–post design without a control group was employed. While this design allows for assessment of change over time, causal interpretations are made cautiously.

7.2 Population and Sample

The study sample consisted of 48 women aged between 22 and 45 years who voluntarily participated in the awareness program. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique.

7.3 Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of 18 items divided into two domains:

- Physical activity awareness (10 items)
- Weekly physical activity behavior (8 items)

Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument demonstrated good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of $\alpha = 0.87$. Content validity was established through expert review.

7.4 Awareness Program Description

The awareness program consisted of a series of educational lectures focusing on:

- The concept and benefits of physical activity
- Psychological and social benefits of exercise
- Safe exercise practices
- Practical strategies for integrating physical activity into weekly routines

7.5 Follow-Up Duration

Post-test data collection was conducted four weeks after completion of the awareness program to assess short-term behavioral change.

Results

Descriptive analysis revealed a clear improvement in weekly physical activity practice following participation in the awareness program. The mean number of exercise days per week increased from 1.9 (SD = 0.8) in the pre-test to 3.6 (SD = 1.1) in the post-test, representing an 89% increase.

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to examine the statistical significance of this change. Results indicated a statistically significant improvement in weekly physical activity practice, $t(47) = 6.21, p < .001$, with a large effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.90$).

Additional analysis indicated that improvements were observed across age and educational levels, with slightly greater gains among participants with lower baseline activity levels.

Discussion

The results demonstrate that awareness programs can lead to statistically significant short-term improvements in women's weekly physical activity practice. These findings align with previous research highlighting the effectiveness of educational interventions in promoting health behavior change (Bauman et al., 2012). The structured lectures enhanced awareness, addressed misconceptions, and provided practical guidance, which collectively contributed to increased exercise engagement.

However, due to the absence of a control group, the findings should be interpreted as indicative of improvement rather than definitive evidence of causal impact.

Limitations and Ethical Considerations

The study is limited by the lack of a control group, which restricts causal inference. Additionally, the four-week follow-up period limits conclusions regarding long-term sustainability of behavior change. Ethical approval was obtained prior to data collection, and informed consent was secured from all participants.

Practical Implementation Model

Based on the findings, a three-stage awareness program model is proposed:

1. Educational lectures to build foundational knowledge
2. Motivational engagement to address barriers and enhance commitment
3. Behavioral monitoring to encourage weekly practice

This model may be adopted by community and health institutions to promote physical activity among women.

Conclusion

The study concludes that awareness programs can play a meaningful role in promoting weekly physical activity practice among women. Structured educational interventions are associated with statistically significant short-term improvements in exercise behavior. Future research employing controlled designs and extended follow-up periods is recommended to assess long-term effectiveness.

Recommendations

- Incorporate awareness programs as part of community health services.
- Design Educational Campaigns for Women in Their Social Environments.
- Explore additional determinants of physical activity among women.

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