

## PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AS RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY

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### Abstract

**Aim.** Physical inactivity, is a major public health risk in the world (World Health Organization, 2017). The present study aimed to investigate the physical activity as a recreational activity of individuals; physical activity participation, preferences of physical activity types, goals of doing physical activity of individuals.

**Methods.** The study was conducted on a group of 46 men aged between 20-24 (the mean age;  $21.63 \pm 1.14$  years) in the Faculty of Sport Sciences. The data was obtained by means of a questionnaire related to recreation and physical activities of subjects, which was administered. Body mass indexes (BMI) of the participants were calculated. A descriptive data analysis was used for statistics and data were expressed in terms of the percentages.

**Results.** The mean of the BMI was  $23.06 \pm 2.46$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>. This value is at the normal levels between 18.50-24.99 kg/m<sup>2</sup> of BMI. The vast majority of them as 89.2% were participating in physical activity as recreational activity "one hour or more" in a day. They were doing physical activity in a week as "1-2 hours" 21.8%, "3-4 hours" 15.2%, "5 hours and more" 60.9% respectively. The most preferred physical activities by them in their free time as recreational activity were "going to gym" 17.4% and "playing football" 17.4% as the first choice. They mostly participated in the physical activities in their free time with "their friends" 37.0% and "alone" 13.0%.

**Conclusions.** The participation in different types of physical activity as a recreational activity of individuals could be encouraged to develop more active life style. This may decrease physically inactivity and the sedentary life of individuals. Therefore improving more active people will be helpful to develop more healthy societies in the future.

**Key words:** Recreation, leisure, activity, health.

### Introduction

Physical inactivity is a major public health risk in the world (World Health Organization, 2017), could be a reason of overweight and obesity (Lakerweld et al. 2011; Atlantis et al., 2008). Inadequate physical activity is common in the community (Hallal et al., 2012; Aceijas et al. 2017). Therefore, international authorities are concerned about the high level of physical inactivity in the population (WHO, 2017).

Inactive people have greater risks of some health problems such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, cancer and psychological problems (Lee et al. 2012; Plotnikoff et al. 2015), physical activity is an important determinant of health (Pardo et al. 2014).

Previous studies reported intrinsic motives to be associated with higher allegiance to physical activity (Kilpatrick et al., 2005) and better psychological well-being (Maltby & Day, 2001).

Moreover, WHO (2017) includes walking as a recommended moderate-intensity activity and recommends (for adults) at least 150 min

of moderate physical activity, or 75 min of more vigorous physical activity a week – and in bouts of at least 10 min duration.

Physical activity as a recreational activity gains importance for individuals at all age groups. Because physical activity is an important determinant of health (WHO 2017; Hallal et al. 2012), it is important to evaluate the leisure-time physical activity (Pardo et al. 2014; Hulthe et al. 2017). But the importance of planning physical activity programs and making certain that people experience benefits from their participation cannot be stressed enough (Berg et al. 2015).

It is important therefore to determine the physical activity in young adults and to understand some factors that may be associated with physical activity levels.

The present study aimed to investigate the physical activity as a recreational activity of individuals; physical activity participation, preferences of physical activity types, goals of doing physical activity of individuals.

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## Methods

The study was conducted on a group of 46 men aged between 20-24 (the mean age;  $21.63 \pm 1.14$  years) in the Faculty of Sport Sciences. The data was obtained by means of a questionnaire related to recreation and physical activities of

## Results

The mean value of the Body Mass Index was  $23.06 \pm 2.46$  kg/m<sup>2</sup> of the subjects. This value is at the normal levels that are between 18.50-24.99 kg/m<sup>2</sup> of BMI.

They were doing physical activity in a day as "less than 1 hour" 8.7%, "1-2 hours" 67.4%, "3-4 hours" 19.6%, "5 hours and more" 2.2% and "none" 2.2% respectively. The vast majority of

The most preferred physical activities by them in their free time as recreational activity were "going to gym" 17.4% and "playing football" 17.4% as the first choice, "running" 15.2% as the second choice, "playing tennis" 10.9% as the third choice, "walking" 10.9%, "playing volleyball" 6.5% and "playing table tennis" 6.5% as the fourth choice respectively.

## Discussion

Because physical inactivity is behavior of major public health concern, encouragement of people to be more physically active is an important issue globally (WHO, 2017). Participating in physical activity is an important element for health benefit (Pardo et al. 2014). This study has demonstrated physical activity participation, preferences of physical activity types, goals of doing physical activity and some other related issues of individuals.

Studying the different types of leisure-time physical activities and participation in these activities globally are important issues (Hulteen et al. 2017) because large amounts of adolescents (80%) and adults (31%) are currently defined as inadequately active (Hallal et al., 2012).

In this study BMI mean value was in "normal" level, great majority of them (67.4%) participated in physical activity "1-2 hours" in a day and a great majority of them (60.9%) participated in physical activity "5 hours and more" in a week. These are high levels of doing physical activity daily and weekly. These findings are thought to be consistent with the results of Salmon et al. (2000) that presented overweight and obese adults are more likely to spend their leisure-time in sedentary behaviors. That is overweight and obese adults are not participating in physical activity at an expected level or never. They spend their free time with more sedentary activities. In addition to this, in several studies, insufficient physical activity was

subjects, which was administered. Body mass indexes (BMI) of the participants were calculated. A descriptive data analysis was used for statistics and data were expressed in terms of the percentages.

them as 89.2% were participating in physical activity as recreational activity "one hour or more" in a day.

They were doing physical activity in a week as "1-2 hours" 21.8%, "3-4 hours" 15.2%, "5 hours and more" 60.9% and "none" 2.2% respectively. The great majority of subjects as 76.1% were participating in physical activity as recreational activity "3 hours or more" in a week.

They do different types of physical activity "for my health" 19.6%, "i want to be in a good physical shape" 10.9%, "it relaxes me" 8.7% and "to get fun" 8.7% primarily.

They mostly participated in the physical activities in their free time with "their friends" 37.0% and "alone" 13.0%.

reported among university students (Aceijas et al. 2017; Booker et al. 2015).

In the study 10.9% of participants were doing "walking" as physical activity in free time for them. Walking type of physical activity has physical, mental and social health benefits (Hanson & Jones, 2015).

The most preferred physical activities in their free time as recreational activity were going to gym, playing football, running, playing tennis and walking in this study. These results are in consistent with previous study by Hulteen et al. (2017) showed that walking, running, and soccer are mostly preferred activities globally for all ages of people. They also recommended activities such as walking, running, swimming for maintaining public health because they are easier to do.

Participants do different types of physical activity as recreation activity mainly; for my health, i want to be in a good physical shape, it relaxes me, and to get fun as primarily. Accordingly, in another study, participants reported their main motives for participating in different physical activity in their leisure time by selecting three items out of nine given motives: friendships, competition, losing weight, stress relief, become professional, self-esteem, enjoyment, it is trendy, and health (Verkooijen et al., 2009).

Majority participated in physical activities with their friends. This may be due to that they may prefer spending free time with their friends, this also could be an supportive situation for them to participate in the activities. This finding is in

consistent with a previous research that reported the friendships and competition were relatively significant motives for males to participate in leisure time physical activity (Verkooijen et al. 2009).

The health benefits of physical activity, such as daily walking, may be informed to the

### Conclusion

The understanding of what types of physical activities individuals choose to perform in their free time as recreational activity or leisure activity contribute to the literature.

The participation in different types of physical activity as a recreational activity of individuals could be encouraged to develop more active life style. This may decrease physically inactivity and the sedentary life of individuals.

Therefore improving more active people will be helpful to develop more healthy societies in the future.

Another important point is to give information to the people about the health benefits

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