

## Interest and Attitude to Physical Activity: A Cross-sectional Descriptive Analysis

### Fiziksel Aktivite için İlgi ve Tutum: Kesitsel Tanımlayıcı Analiz

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#### Abstract

**Objective:** Physical activity means, spending energy for energy balance and weight control. In this study, people who have applied to Suleyman Demirel University Faculty of Medicine for any reason were reviewed against the interest of exercise, perspectives for exercise and opportunities to do exercise.

**Material and method:** Study was carried out on a total of 81 individuals who were applied to different departments of Suleyman Demirel University Faculty of Medicine in May 2010. A questionnaire about sports, that was prepared by the researchers, was administered to the sporting subjects. The questionnaire used as a data collection tool, consists of 16 questions on personal information and sports knowledge and habits.

**Results:** Study was carried out on a total of 81 people, 33 male (40.74%) and 48 women (59.26%). The mean age of the study group was 40.58±2.5 (min:17 , max:60) years. The mean body weight was found 65.20±3.4 (min:48 , max:98) kg. Significant relation was found between educational level and exercise (p:0.009, d:0.498). There was a significant positive correlation between endocrine system disease and regular exercise everyday at least 1 hour (p:0.021, d:0.380). When it is asked to people how they decided to make exercise; 43 people (53.08%), large majority, gave the answer to protect their health. Number of health inspections before the start of exercise was 67 (82.71%). The vast majority of people; 38 people (46.91%) did not have any exercise program. For the question, what kind of sport you begun to work; 78 people (96.29%) gave the answer walking. 59 of the 81 (72.84%) were encountered with difficulties during exercise. Most complained two problems were fatigue and muscle pain.

**Conclusion:** For the prevention of risky behaviors in our population, individuals must be trained for the healthy lifestyle changes like sports and establishment of an advisory system is needed on this subject.

**Keywords:** Exercise, lifestyle changes, sports.

#### Özet

**Amaç:** Fiziksel aktivite; enerji dengesi ve kilo kontrolü için enerji harcanmasını ifade etmektedir. Bu çalışmada, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi'ne herhangi bir nedenle başvurmuş kişilerin ilgi ve tutumlarının belirlenmesi, egzersiz yapabilme durumlarının tespit edilmesi amaçlanmıştır.

**Gereç ve Yöntem:** Çalışma Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi'nin farklı kliniklerine 2010 Mayıs ayında başvuran 81 kişi ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanmış spor anketi, egzersiz yapabilecek durumdaki kişilere uygulanmıştır. Anket, kişisel bilgiler ile spor bilgi ve alışkanlıklarını sorgulayan 16 sorudan oluşturulmuştur.

**Bulgular:** Çalışma, 33 erkek (%40,74) ve 48 kadın (%59,26) olmak üzere toplam 81 kişiye uygulanmıştır. Çalışma grubunun yaş ortalaması 40.58±2.5 (min:17 , max:60) yaştır. Ortalama vücut ağırlığı 65.20±3.4 (min:48 , max:98) kg bulunmuştur. Eğitim düzeyi ile egzersiz arasında istatistiksel anlamlı ilişki tespit edilmiştir (p:0.009, d:0.498). Endokrin sistem hastalığı ile hergün en az 1 saatlik düzenli egzersiz yapma arasında da istatistiksel pozitif anlamlı korelasyon gözlenmiştir (p:0.021, d:0.380). Kişilere egzersiz kararlarını nasıl aldıkları sorulduğunda; 43 kişi (%53,08) ile büyük çoğunluk sağlıklarını korumak için cevabını vermiştir. 67 kişinin (%82,71) egzersize başlamadan önce sağlık muayenesi yaptırdığı gözlenmiştir. Kişilerin büyük oranının da, 38 kişi (%46,91), herhangi bir egzersiz programı uygulamadağı görüldü. Ne tür spor ile başladınız sorusuna da, 78 kişi (%96,29) yürüyüş cevabı verdi. 81 kişinin 59'u (%72,84) egzersiz sırasında zorluklar ile karşılaşmıştı. En çok şikayet edilen iki sorun yorgunluk ve kas ağrısıydı.

**Sonuç:** Toplumumuzdaki riskli davranışların önlenmesi için, kişiler, spor yapma gibi sağlıklı yaşam tarzı değişikliklerine yönlendirilmelidir ve bu konuda bir öneri sistemi oluşturulmasına ihtiyaç vardır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Egzersiz, yaşam tarzı değişiklikleri, spor.

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#### Introduction

Physical activity means, spending energy for energy balance and weight control. At the same time, regular

exercise is defined as physical activity. Exercise include regularly and repeated body movements (1). Sports can be defined as a physical activity leading to satisfaction

and pleasure and which usually includes some kind of confrontation with self and/or other people (2).

Lifetime exposure to physical activity is an important construct for evaluating associations between physical activity and disease outcomes, given the long induction periods in many chronic diseases (3). Related with technological developments in recent years; human life is transformed into a more passive life way. This new way of life; rather than to affect human health, directly or indirectly cause a type of disease called immobility (4). Immobilization, today, is a reason for many important diseases like coronary heart disease, hypertension, obesity, diabetes, varices, bone deformity, rheumatism, stress and psychological/physiological discomfort (5,6). Moreover; it is an important issue for the elderly (7). Stuck et al. identified lack of physical activity as an important risk factor for functional status decline in old age (8). Awareness about this issue is increasing and people tend to make more exercise programs. To protect human health and to make it better, an environment away from stress and psychological pressures is also necessary. It is also a known fact that sports develop such an environment (9).

As it is known; today sports sector show major improvements. Related with these developments, many athletes can earn big bucks. This situation leads to the request of being athletes, especially among young people. People with high expectation of performance in the future, are doing heavy workouts at an early age and often are continuing their work without medical support. Uncontrolled exercising individuals expose to a variety of sports injuries. However; individuals who begin professional sport must pass a comprehensive examination and questioning (10). According to the findings of this inquiry and examination, individual exercise programs should be established. Broad sense, the concept of exercise allows athletes reach the maximal efficiency on sports field (11).

In this study, people who have applied to Suleyman Demirel University Faculty of Medicine for any reason were reviewed against the interest of exercise, perspectives for exercise and opportunities to do exercise.

## **Material and Methods**

Study was carried out on a total of 81 exercising individuals who were applied to different departments of Suleyman Demirel University Faculty of Medicine in

May 2010. A sampling method has not been calculated for the study group; individuals were selected randomly.

A questionnaire about sports, that was prepared by the researchers, was administered to the sporting subjects. The questionnaire used as a data collection tool, consists of 16 questions on personal information and sports knowledge and habits. The research questions of the questionnaire has been utilized by the help of questions prepared previously. The survey was administered by the researcher. Researcher filled out the questionnaire after giving information to the subjects about research subjects.

Students' answers to the questionnaire were evaluated by statistical programme SPSS 16.0 software. % frequency test was used for the study. Answers to the questions in terms of significance compared with the chi-square test. P value under 0.05 was detected as the significance value.

## **Results**

Study was carried out on a total of 81 people, 33 male (40.74%) and 48 women (59.26%). The mean age of the study group was  $40.58 \pm 2.5$  (min:17, max:60) years. The mean body weight was found  $65.20 \pm 3.4$  (min:48, max:98) kg, respectively. Educational attainment were as follows: 3 people (3.71%) was illiterate; 20 people (24.70%) primary school, 14 people (17.28%) junior high school, 16 people (19.75%) high school, 10 people (12.34%) vocational high school and 18 other (22.22%) were found to be university graduates. Significant relation was found between educational level and exercise ( $p:0.009$ ,  $d:0.498$ ). When professions of the participants was examined, 17 people (20.98%) constituted the largest group as teachers. Other than that; very different occupational groups such as barber, electrician, furniture were included in the study.

Individuals, as a habit, are usually making healthy lifestyle changes like sports when a health problem occur. In this respect, these individuals were asked whether they have any current/previous disease. While 35 (43.20%) had no disease, 46 people (56.80%) had at least one current/previous disease. There was a significant positive correlation between endocrine system disease and regular exercise everyday at least 1 hour ( $p:0.021$ ,  $d:0.380$ ). Distribution of the individuals within the scope of current/previous diseases, are shown in table 1.

**Table 1.** Distribution of the individuals within the scope of current/previous diseases

Current/previous disease	Number of people	%
Do not have any disease	35	43.20
+Respiratory system disease	9	11.11
Urinary tract disease	5	6.18
Endocrine system disease	23	28.39
Locomotor system disease	5	6.18
Those with multiple disease	4	4.94

When it is asked to people how they decided to make exercise; 43 people (53.08%), large majority, gave the answer to protect their health. 23 people (28.39%) was making exercise for the weight loss (p:0.015). 12 people were making exercise by the recommendation of their doctor; while 3 (3.70%) were making a workout by the pressure of environment.

Number of health inspections before the start of exercise was 67 (82.71%), while exceeding was 14 people (17.28%).

Study covered 33 people (40.74%) who were previously dealing with sport. Besides 48 people (59.26) had started to make exercise at first time.

In table 2; how individuals organize their exercise programs was questioned. The vast majority of people; 38 people (46.91%) did not have any program. Moreover, 23 people (28.39%) were using their own exercise program.

**Table 2.** How individuals organize their exercise program

How individuals organize their exercise program	Number of people	%
Learned from television/radio/newspaper	2	2.47
According to their friends' exercise program	4	4.94
Don't have a spesific Schedule	38	46.91
Applying a work program organized by a specialist	14	17.29
Work program organized by themselves	23	28.39

For the question, what kind of sport you begun to work; 78 people (96.29%) gave the answer walking, 2 people (2.46) aerobic and 1 person (1.23%) jogging. Fourty six people (56.79%) of the total 81, at the same time were applying a dietary program. When table 3 is examined;

59 of the 81 (72.84%) were encountered with difficulties during exercise. Most complained two problems were fatigue and muscle pain.

**Table 3.** Difficulties encountered during exercise

Difficulties encountered during exercise	Number of people	%
Fatigue	17	20.98
Myalgia	17	20.98
Joint pain	11	13.59
Difficult breathing	4	4.93
Tachycardia	1	1.24
Fainting	1	1.24
Fragment	1	1.24
Multiple complaints	7	8.64
No complaint	22	27.16

While 8 persons (9.87%) were eating something 30 minutes before the start of exercise, 27 persons (33.34%) were eating 1 hour ago and 2 persons (2.47%) were eating 2 hours ago. 44 people (54.32%) were not eating anything.

During exercise; 42 people (51.85%) were drinking water while 39 (48.15%) were not. The causes for drinking water were thirst, lose weight, sweating, dry mouth and doctor advise. Do not need water, was the cause for not drinking.

During exercise, only 1 person (1.23%) was using special nylon sports cloths; 80 persons (98.76%) found this type of materials harmful.

Whole study group were using sports shoes during exercise and 77 people (95.06%) were using special sports clothing.

Number of those, who exercise regularly, everyday, at least 1 hour a day, was 24 people (29.62%). 57 people (70.37%) were exercising insufficient or irregular. When it is asked to people how long they think to continue their exercise program, 69 people (85.18%) gave the answer "as I can".

All persons within the scope of work were thinking that exercise doesn't give any damage but it must be done consciously.

## **Discussion**

In terms of sociodemographic characteristics; according to sex distribution, number of women was higher than number of males. In accordance with our study, according to the latest Population and Health research which is conducted every five years and covers the whole nation, 48.6% of the population are men and 51.4% are women (12).

The mean age of the persons covered by the study was around 40 years old. When it is thought that study was carried out at an university outpatient clinic, the interpreted average age value was as the expected value. The mean body weights of persons within the scope of study was in agreement with the average of Turkey. Photiou et al, in their study on Hungarian society, showed that individuals have more sedentary life and less participate physical activity, consequently BMI, body composition is negatively affected (13).

Related with the education level; the biggest groups were primary school graduates and university graduates. This finding is consistent with the level of general education in the study area and consistent finding with the studies previously performed in this region (14). In our, in line with the national research men have been found to have higher levels of education (12). Correlated with the education level increase, making exercise also showed a significant increase (p:0.009, d:0.498). Zeev and his colleagues, in their new study in 2011; were found that men were more active then women. Moreover, making exercise showed positive correlation with higher education level, higher income and low number of existing disease (15). These two studies are paralel in terms of training and exercise.

Teachers within the scope of health insurance, can receive health care from university hospitals easily in Turkey. When this situation is taken into account, it was normal that, teachers was the biggest group in the study. Individuals, as a habit, are turning to healthy lifestyle changes like sports when a health problem occurs. This situation is seen in the study too. Those with endocrine system disease are tend to make exercise mostly. Those with endocrine system disease make regular exercise at least 1 hour a day everyday as a meaningful way. This suggest that; people believe exercise to be good on endocrine disturbances.

When asked people how they decided to make exercise; a large majority (53.08%) gave the answer to protect their health. Weight loss with exercise was aimed by 28.39% of the subjects. 14.81% were making exercise by their doctors' recommendation. Whereas, 3.70% were exercising with the pressure of environment. In a similar study; people gave answers to the question about the reasons for exercise as; stay in shape for 25% of the subjects, 20% for health and 23.75% just interest (16).

The majority of study participants (70.37) were making insufficient or irregular exercise. In a similar study made in our country; 51.25% of the subjects were sometimes making exercise, 1.25% were always exercising and 36.25% were exercising when come to their mind (16). The vast majority of the subjects were not enough attending to sports events, may be as a result of traditional governmental structure.

For the question, "What kind of sport did you begin to work"; 78 people (96.29%) gave the answer walking. 2 people (2.46%) started to exercise with aerobic and 1 person (1.23%) with jogging. In a comprehensive study on the British population made by Belanger and at all., running was the most common type of exercise (17). Various researches show that there are some differences between the types of sports activities according to gender (18). In the study, there wasn't any significant difference by sex and type of exercise.

## **Conclusion**

For the prevention of risky behaviors in our population, individuals must be trained for the healthy lifestyle changes like sports and establishment of an advisory system is needed on this subject.

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