

EXPLORING THE BARRIERS THAT ADULT FEMALES EXPERIENCE IN PARTICIPATING IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG THE PURE STUDY PARTICIPANTS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

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Introduction

Obesity has become a global epidemic. From a public health perspective, obesity is a risk factor leading to chronic and life threatening health conditions, and needs intervention. The purpose of this study was to explore the barriers that could prevent obese women in the Western Cape from participating in physical activity (PA).

Methodology

A mixed method approach was followed using quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. A total of 20 obese adults aged 45-65 years old were purposefully selected from PURE-UWC base line data base. Height, weight of the participants was used to calculate their Body Mass Index. International physical activity questionnaire (IPAQ) was used to assess their physical activity level. Semi-structured interviews were used to probe into barriers that adult females experience in participating in physical activity.

Preliminary Results

The results showed that advent of fast food joint and education was reported as the major barriers to participation in physical activity. Culture was also stated as one of the main factors that could influence an individual being obese and not engaging in physical activity. Therefore, obese individuals perceive themselves as healthy, and they perceive being slender as an illness. Since the participants were from low-socioeconomic background, they perceived healthy lifestyle as expensive.

Conclusion

The listed factors militating against the participation in physical activity should critically be looked into in this population. It is also important that this population is educated about the negative effects of obesity and the benefit of physical activity participation, so as to prevent the increasing illnesses emanating from obesity.

Keywords: Obesity, barriers, physical activity, chronic disease, sedentary lifestyle, Western Cape

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