

Level of physical inactivity and quality of life in overweight female students

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Objective: To assess the level of physical inactivity and quality of life in overweight female students in Lahore, Pakistan.

Methodology: For this cross sectional study, 213 overweight females were recruited with BMI between 25.0-29.9 while athletic students were excluded. This study was conducted in university of Lahore and was completed in 6 months. Short form 12 questionnaire was used to analyse the quality of life and physical inactivity level.

Results: Of 213 overweight female students, mean BMI was 27.42% and 77.0% were moderately limited in their activities, 78.9% were limited in stair climbing, 51.6% due to physical

health problems were limited in activities. 77.0% suffered from mild pain during routine activities and 61.0% reported energy levels a good bit of time and 15.0% reported usually. Social activities were affected due to physical and emotional problems in 52.6% and most of the time in 16.0% overweight students.

Conclusion: Prevalence of physical inactivity among these students was high especially with difficulty in climbing stairs and walking more than a mile, ultimately reducing their quality of life. (Rawal Med J 202;45:863-866).

Keywords: Physical inactivity, quality of life, overweight.

INTRODUCTION

Quality of life (QOL) outlines the negative and positive aspects of an individual life.^{1,2} It has several domains like physical and emotional.^{3,4} Stress, loss of income, feeling of neglect, loneliness, mental health problems and loss of self-esteem these are very common problems in our society which puts a negative impact on people and leads to poor quality of life.^{5,6} One's QOL may be improved if they have a supportive family and strong social interaction.^{7,8} Physical activity simply means movement of the body that uses energy.^{9,10} Doing aerobic exercises 30-60 min for three to four times a week improve cardiovascular fitness and ultimately improve QOL.^{11,12}

Obesity is progressively becoming a frequent problem in Pakistan.^{13,14} Overweight or obesity defines as the excess of body fat.^{15,16} Being overweight is common and is due to sedentary lifestyle. Some of the symptoms will indicate one is overweight or obese are breathlessness, difficulty in stair climbing, facing difficulties in daily home tasks, excessive sweating, joint pain, feeling of fatigued and tiredness almost every day.^{17,18} Obesity gives rise to musculoskeletal conditions and cardiovascular disorders.¹⁹ Healthy diet and physical activities encourage maintain the normal

weight and promote the overall health.²⁰ The purpose of study was to assess how QOL is affected in overweight females studying in universities and also determines their physical inactivity levels.

METHODOLOGY

For this descriptive cross sectional study use a questionnaire and was carried out from January to June 2019. Those females whose BMI was in between 25.0-29.9 with age between 19-30 years were included in the study. The standard questionnaire SF 12 short form was distributed among 213 overweight females who were willing to participate. It consist of questions regarding the physical, social, emotional, limitation in work and pain. After taking informed written consent data were collected and analysed.

Statistical Analysis: Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 25. For qualitative variables bar charts and frequency tables were used and for quantitative variables mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the data.

RESULTS

Out of 213 students, the mean BMI was 27.42 and 77.0% females were moderately limited in their

regular activities, 78.9% were limited a little in stair climbing (Fig. 1). 51.6% females were limited in regular daily tasks. Out of 213 overweight females, mean age was 23.04 years. 56.8% were in good health, 28.2% fair, 14.1%, very good. Moderate activities were affected a little 77.0% in overweight females. Stair climbing effected among students 78.9% (Fig. 2).

Fig 1. Climbing several flights of stairs.

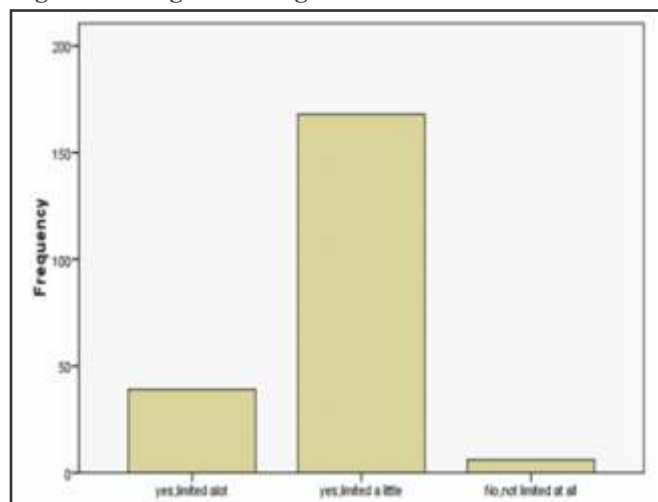


Fig 2. Walking more than a mile.

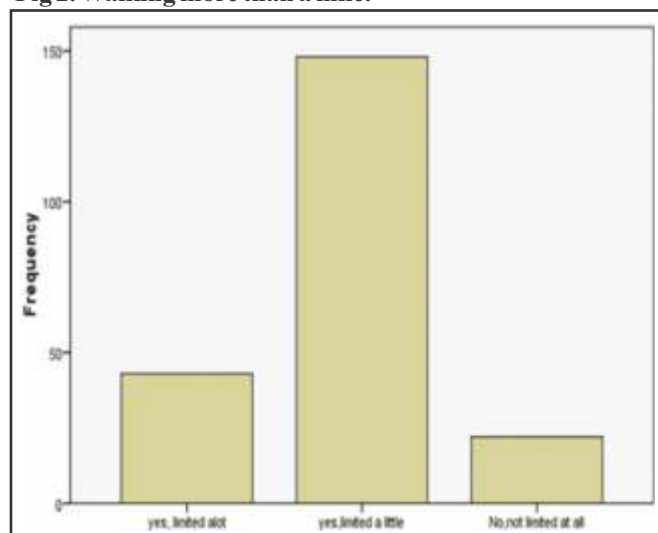


Table. Limitation in activities due to emotional problems.

Accomplished less than you would like	Frequency	Percent
Yes	126	59.2
No	87	40.8
Total	213	100

Emotional problems (depression/ anxiety) affected 59.2% females. 77.0% suffered from mild pain during routine activities. 61.0% reported energy levels a good bit of time and 15.0% reported usually. Physical health or emotional problems interfered with social activities a good bit of time in 52.6% females and most of the time in 16.0% overweight students. In this study 71.4% overweight females were facing problems in regular activities and accomplished less than they were like emotional problems (anxiety /depression) effect 59.2% of students and causing limitation in their work (Table). 52.6% students faced problems in visiting their friends due to their physical and emotional problems.

DISCUSSION

In current study, out of 213 overweight females as a result of their physical health they were facing problems in work and yes accomplished less than they were like and which is 71.4%. 51.6% overweight females were limited in the kind of work or the regular activities as a result of physical health problem.

A study reported that physical component was affected in 60% of the students and of these females were higher in number and their QOL was effected more as compared to normal healthy weight females.²¹ In study by Alotaibi 127 female students from Al-Qassim University participated and smart wristband bracelet was used to track daily step counts, walking distance, level of activity, amount of sleep, resting heart rate and the daily number of calories burned. There was a significant difference between active and inactive female participants ($p < 0.005$). in this study reach the minimum daily recommend level of exercise advocated by the WHO.²²

A study by Malinauskiene et al showed associations between leisure-time physical inactivity and psychological distress, accounting for the possible relation of psychosocial factors at work in 323 family physicians. A high proportion were physically inactive during leisure. Leisure-time physical inactivity was strongly associated with psychological distress.²³

The novelty in our study is that this kind of study is

not published yet as it highlights the major health and physical activity levels of students. It is recommended to conduct a study like this on a larger scale including more students from different universities. Awareness should be conducted about the benefits of physical activity and improvement in quality of life.

CONCLUSION

The prevalence of physical inactivity among female students was high leading to difficulty in climbing stairs and walking. Quality of life in their physical, emotional and social interactions domains were also moderately affected. Regular participation in moderate exercises minimizes the chances of being overweight.

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Conception and Design: Areeba Ghaffar
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