

Original Article



Perceived Health Benefits of Exercise on Lifestyle of Civil Servants in Ilorin East Local Government, Kwara State

Authors' contribution:

- A. Conception and design of the study
- B. Acquisition of data
- C. Analysis and interpretation of data
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Abstract. This study examined the health benefits of exercise on lifestyle of Civil servants of Ilorin East Local Government Area. The objective of this study to find out if cardiovascular health, muscular endurance, body composition and flexibility as a result of exercise will influence positive lifestyle among Civil servants in the Area. Descriptive research design of survey method was adopted. The population for this study comprised all Civil servants in the area. Systematic sampling technique was used to select 10% of the population. A researcher designed structured questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondent. A reliability coefficient of 0.65 was obtained through Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). Four null hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics of Chi-square at 0.05 alpha level. The result revealed that Cardiovascular health, Muscular endurance, Body composition, Flexibility as a result of exercise significantly influenced lifestyle among civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government positively. It was concluded that health benefits of exercise on lifestyle among Civil servants in Ilorin East. Local Government were significantly influenced by cardiovascular health, muscular endurance, body composition and flexibility as a result of exercise. Therefore, it was recommended that Civil servants should be encouraged to participate in exercise to improve their cardiovascular health.

Keywords: civil servant; life style; self-esteem; exercise; health

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INTRODUCTION

Physical fitness is having sound strength and endurance which promotes a healthy mind. Fitness was commonly defined as the capacity to carry out day's activities without undue fatigue. However, as automation increased leisure time, changes in lifestyles following the industrial revolution rendered the definition insufficient according to Shehu, et al. (2012) current contexts, physical fitness is considered a measure of the body's ability to function efficiently and effectively in work and leisure activities to be healthy, to resist hypokinetic diseases, and to meet emergency situations (Brandon, Bailey, Belderson, Gardner, Sidebotham & Dodsworth, (2009). Exercise allows individuals to function effectively for a very long time especially during old age when one mostly is expected to be accorded with respect, control, and dignity. Also, exercise releases greater amounts of endorphins, the powerful, pain-relieving, mood elevating chemicals in the brain.

Exercise can help in improving mental and physical health. Psychological benefits such as a greater sense of well-being, increase self-esteem, and decrease anxiety or depression have all been linked to exercise. Benefits of exercise increase dramatically when exercise becomes a lifelong commitment. Experts continue to remind us that the many health benefits offered by exercise should cause people to make it a life-time priority. Many people go to gym or pound the pavement to improve their cardiovascular health, build muscle and of course get a rocking body, but working out has above the neck benefits too.

Exercise can reduce the risk of major illness such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer by up to 50% and lower the risk of early death by up to 30%. Whatever your age, there is strong scientific evidence that being physically active can help you lead a healthier and even happier life. People who do exercise regularly have a lower risk of many chronic diseases, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke and some cancers. Research has shown that exercise can also boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy, as well as reducing the risk of stress, depression, dementia and Alzheimer's disease (Nick, 2013). Health is optimal well-being that contributes to quality of life. It is more than freedom from disease and illness, though freedom from disease is important to good health. Optimal health includes high-level mental, social, emotional, spiritual, and physical wellness within the limits of one's heredity and personal abilities. Exercise, therefore, will keep body functioning properly and will keep body feel both relaxed, refreshed and promotes deep restful sleep (Adeyeye, 2007). The psychological benefits from a regular exercise routine help to eliminate occupational stress. Other psychological benefits follow from a regular workout. Improving overall health and fitness help produce self-confidence.

Lifestyles are patterns of behavioral choices made from the alternative that are available to people according to their socioeconomic circumstances and to the ease with which they are able to choose certain ones over others. Lifestyles are the "behavior of choice" which affect one's fitness and health status (Shehu, et al., 2010). The prevalence of obesity continues to increase in Nigeria particularly among civil servants. The factors that appeared to be most responsible are sedentary behaviour patterns and excessive fat in the diet (Adeyeye, 2007). Sedentary lifestyles are defined in relation to the numbers of hours that individual spend sitting down in a typical day or the number of hours expended walking or in either specific activity (Jose, et al., 2003). Healthy lifestyle is important in terms of quality of life. Individuals who take part in physical activity, eat a healthy diet, don't smoke, drink in moderation and manage their stress levels are likely to live longer and cope better with the daily demands of life. Our lifestyles today are very busy. We have family, school, sports, leisure and social commitments to fit into with a limited time. We need to be healthy to cope with the demands of daily life. Lifestyle plays a key role in the prevention of a large number of diseases including coronary heart disease, cancer and obesity.

When people in Western society die before the age of 65, Leavitt (2008) considered it to be early or premature death. He further explains that many factors contribute to early death in Western culture. By far the most important is unhealthy lifestyles that contribute to more than one-half of all early deaths. Eleven healthy lifestyles have been identified that are associated with reduced disease risk and increased wellness. These lifestyles affect health, wellness, and physical fitness. The double-headed arrow between health and wellness and physical fitness illustrates the interaction between these factors. Physical fitness is important to health and wellness development, and vice versa. Others factors, some not as much in your control as healthy lifestyles, also affect your health, fitness, and wellness. These factors include environmental factors (e.g., pollution, contaminants in the workplace), human biology (inherited conditions), and inadequacies in the health-care system, to name but a few. Adults with chronic conditions obtain important health benefits from regular physical activity. Leavitt (2008) asserts that when adults with chronic conditions do activity according to their abilities, physical activity or exercise is safe.

The exercise boom is not just a fad; it is a return to 'natural' activity-the kind for which our bodies are engineered and which facilitates the proper function of our biochemistry and physiology. The health benefits of exercise can't be overemphasized especially among civil servants. It is a common practice by Civil servants to engage in "how-to-office" routine on weekly basis in which this may deter them from the great health benefits of exercise on their lifestyle. Therefore, this study tends to look into the perceived health benefits of exercise on lifestyle of Civil Servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State.

Despite the large body of evidence that support the benefits of being physically active, through some selected exercises, large percentage of civil servants do not explore the benefits. Jogunola and Awoyemi (2005) in their study concluded that there is high prevalence of sedentary lifestyle among bankers, this prevalence cut across the Nigerian populations which later become a public health burden. One can rightly say that this lifestyle is also common among civil servants because 90% of their routine works are performed on sit. It has been medically proven that people who are not actively involved in exercise have: up to 35% risk of coronary heart disease and stroke; up to 50% risk of type 2 diabetes; up to 50% lower risk of colon cancer; up to 20% risk of breast cancer; a 30% risk of early death; up to 83% risk of osteoarthritis; up to 68% risk of hip fracture; 30% risk of falls (among older adults); up to 30% risk of depression; up to 30% risk of dementia (Nick 2013).

In a study by Adaramaja and Adegbite (2005), it was stated that healthy lifestyle or positive health behaviour of exercise, can help to prevent obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, stress, spread of sexually-transmitted diseases, including hepatitis 'B', HIV/AIDS and early mortality. On the other hand, they concluded that unhealthy lifestyle(s) or behaviour might have direct and indirect consequences for the health and well-being of the individual. In spite of the magnitude of problems associated with inadequate exercise, and the health benefits of exercise, only few studies have been done on health benefits of exercise on the lifestyle of civil servants, especially in Ilorin, Kwara State Nigeria. Therefore, based on these gaps, this study investigated on the health benefits of exercise on lifestyle of civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area, Kwara State.

METHOD

This study adopted the descriptive research design of survey type to obtain the relevant and needed data on the research. The method is considered best because it enables the researcher to obtain the opinion of the representative sample of the target population. The population for this study comprised all Civil Servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara state. The Population of Civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area (LGA) was 1,115. In Ilorin

East Local Government Area (LGA), there are seven (7) departments, these are; Administrative departments (191), Agriculture department (42), Education department (104), Health department (129), Medical department (243), Treasury department (252) and works department (154) civil service secretariat, 2016).

A proportionate sampling technique was used to select 10% each of the seven (7) departments of civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area (LGA) there by selecting from each department as follows: Administrative (19), Agriculture (4), Education (10), Health (13), Medical (24), Treasury (25) and Works (15). In total, one hundred and ten (110) respondents were used for this study in the Local Government Area (LGA). This method was used in order to give equal chance to civil servants irrespective of their level, year of experience or rank in the government service in that Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Researcher-designed questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents. These instruments are deliberately design to find out the attitudes, views and opinions of the sample population on their health benefits of exercise. It's made up of two sections; A and B. Section A of questionnaire consists of elicit information on the demographic information of the respondents while section B consist of selected close ended questions where respondents have to pick from given number of options which are as follow; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). This was to provide information on the variables related to study which in turn will help to test the hypothesis for the study. The researcher was able to establish the validity of the questionnaire by giving it to three lecturers in the field of Human Kinetic Education. Their comments and suggestions were used to improve the content of the research instrument. In other to determine the reliability, a test re-test procedure was applied, therefore, the instrument was administered twice within an interval of two weeks and the scores obtained were correlated to establish a 0.96 degree of reliability.

A letter of introduction was submitted to Head of Administration in Ilorin East Local Government introducing the researcher. This letter was used for the purpose of instrument administration for data collection. The rights and dignity of participants and their privacy was considered. The researcher sought the informed consent of all those who participate in the study. The researcher also respected the privacy of the participants/respondents by making it clear to them that they are free to decide what information they wish to share with the researcher and that they should not feel pressure or obligation to discuss matters that they did not wish to. The researcher made every effort to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of research participants.

The data collected was subjected to appropriate statistical analysis and the researcher adopted the use of percentage to analyse and present the personal data of the respondents while chi-square (χ^2) was employed to test the hypothesis for the study at 0.05 alpha level.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by gender, age, marital status and years of experience

S/N	VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
	GENDER:		
1	Male	77	68.8
	Female	35	31.3
	Total	112	100.0
	AGE:		
2	20 – 29 years	78	69.6
	30 – 39 years	18	16.1
	40 – 49 years	11	9.8
	Above 50 years	5	4.5
	Total	112	100.0
3	MARITAL STATUS:		

	Single	72	64.3
	Married	33	29.5
	Divorced	4	3.6
	Widow(er)	3	2.7
	Total	112	100.0
	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE:		
4	5 – 10 years	51	45.5
	11 – 20 years	37	33.0
	21 – 35 years	24	21.4
	Total	112	100.0

Table 1 shows that 77 of the respondents which make to 68.8% are male, while 35 (31.3%) of the total population are female. It can also be seen from the table that out of the total population of 112 respondents, 78 (69.6%) respondents are between the age range of 20 – 29 years, 18 (16.1%) respondents are within the age range of 30 to 39 years, 11 (9.8%) respondents fall within the age range of 40 to 49 years while 5 (4.5%) respondents are above 50 years of age.

It can also be seen that 77 (64.3%) out of the total population are single, 33 (29.5%) are married, 4 (3.6%) are divorced while 3 which constitute 2.7% of the population are either widows or widowers. 51 (45.5%) of the respondent have between 5 to 10 years of working experience, 37 (33.0%) have between 11 to 20 years of working experience while 24 (21.4) have between 21 to 35 years of working experience.

Table 2: chi square contingency table showing results on cardiovascular health and life style of civil servant

Items	sa	a	d	sd	row total	df	Cal value	Table value	Remark
Cardiovascular health as a result of exercise improves civil servant performance at work	65 (58.0%)	39 (34.8%)	6 (5.4%)	2 (1.8%)	112				
Cardiovascular health as a result of exercise helps to reduce fatigue	58 (51.8%)	47 (42.0%)	6 (5.4%)	1 (0.9%)	112	9	19.91	16.919	H₀ Rejected
Cardiovascular health as a result of exercise helps to prevent affluent diseases	45 (40.2%)	56 (50.0%)	10 (8.9%)	1 (0.9%)	112				
Cardiovascular health as a result of exercise helps to improve longevity at service	47 (42.0%)	44 (39.3%)	19 (17.0%)	2 (1.8%)	112				
Total	215	186	41	6	448				

From table two, the result shows the chi square calculated value to be 19.91 which is greater than the tabulated value of 16.919 with 9 df at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Because the calculated chi square value is greater than the tabulated chi square value, the null hypothesis is rejected which implies that flexibility as a result of exercise significantly influences the lifestyle of Civil Servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Table 3. Chi square contingency table showing result on muscular endurance and life style of civil servant.

Items	sa	a	d	sd	row total	df	Cal value	Table value
Muscular endurance fitness as a result of exercise helps civil servant in performing daily activities in the place of work without undue fatigue	69 (61.6%)	32 (28.6%)	9 (8.0%)	2 (1.8%)	112			
Muscular endurance fitness as a result of exercise helps civil servant in having ample energy to face emergencies after daily work	40 (35.7%)	51 (45.5%)	16 (14.3%)	5 (4.5%)	112	9	28.32	16.919
Muscular endurance fitness as a result of exercise provided civil servant with energy to ensure leisure time after work	38 (33.9%)	48 (42.9%)	23 (20.5%)	3 (2.7%)	112			
Muscular endurance fitness as a result of exercise prevents injuries which may arise from muscle overloading during servant daily work	58 (51.8%)	35 (31.3%)	13 (11.6%)	6 (5.4%)	112			
Total	190	189	64	5	448			

From table three, the result shows the chi square calculated value to be 28.32 which is greater than the tabulated value of 16.919 with 9 df at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Because the calculated chi square value is greater than the tabulated chi square value, the null hypothesis is rejected, which implies that cardiovascular health as a result of exercise significantly influences the lifestyle of Civil servants in Ilorin East local Government Area of Kwara State.

Table 4. chi square contingency table showing result for body composition benefits and lifestyle of civil servant

Items	Sa	A	D	Sd	Row total	Df	Cal value	Table value	Remark
Health body composition as a result of exercise helps to maintain healthy heart	72 (64.3%)	29 (25.9%)	11 (9.8%)	0 (0%)	112				
Health body composition as a result of exercise prevent the occurrence of high blood pressure	57 (50.9%)	45 (40.2%)	8 (7.1%)	2 (1.8%)	112	9	18.71	16.919	Ho Rejected
Health body composition as a result of exercise helps to prevent stroke	61 (54.5%)	46 (41.1%)	5 (4.5%)	0 (0%)	112				
Proper lung function can be enhance through healthy body composition as a result of excercise	45 (40.2%)	51 (45.5%)	15 (13.4%)	1 (0.9%)	112				
Total	235	171	39	3	448				

From table four, the result shows the chi square calculated value to be 18.71 which is greater than the tabulated value of 16.919 with 9 df at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Because

the calculated chi square value is greater than the tabulated chi square value, the null hypothesis is rejected, which implies that body composition as a result of exercise significantly influences the lifestyle of Civil servants in Ilorin East local Government Area of Kwara State.

Table 5. chi square contingency table showing result for the flexibility and lifestyle of civil servant

S/n	Items	Sa	A	D	Sd	Row total	Df	Cal value	Table value	Remark
1	Flexibility as a result of exercise promote proper relaxation	66 (58.9%)	36 (32.1%)	10 (8.9%)	0 (0%)	112				
2	Flexibility as a result of exercise enhance sound sleep	45 (40.2%)	55 (49.1%)	12 (10.7%)	0 (0%)	112	9	28.78	16.919	
3	Flexibility as a result of exercise helps reduce body pain	58 (58.1%)	35 (31.3%)	17 (15.2%)	2 (1.8%)	112				Ho Rejected
4	Flexibility as a result of exercise help to reduce injury at the work place	38 (33.9%)	45 (40.2%)	24 (21.4%)	5 (4.5%)	112				
	Total	207	171	63	7	448				

From table five, the result shows the chi square calculated value to be 28.78 which is greater than the tabulated value of 16.919 with 9 degrees of freedom at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Because the calculated chi square value is greater than the tabulated chi square value, the null hypothesis is rejected, which implies that muscular endurance as a result of exercise will not significantly influence the lifestyle of Civil servants in Ilorin East local Government Area of Kwara State.

Discussion

The result revealed that Cardiovascular health as a result of exercise significantly influenced the lifestyle of Civil Servants in Ilorin East Local Government. This finding corroborates with the findings of Myers (2004), which states that higher levels of cardiovascular fitness are associated with a 50% reduction in CVD risk in men). Myers and colleagues demonstrated that increasing physical activity to a total of at least 1,000 kilocalories per week is associated with a 20% reduction of mortality in men. Hu and colleagues (2004) showed that physically inactive middle-aged women (engaging in less than 1 hour of exercise per week) doubled their risk of mortality from CVD compared with their physically active female counterparts. It should be emphasized that Haskell (2003) notes that CVD is a multifactor process and that “not smoking, being physically active, eating a heart-healthy diet, staying reasonably lean and avoiding stress and depression are the major components of an effective CVD prevention program.”

The result further revealed that Muscular Endurance as a result of exercise will significantly influence the lifestyle of Civil Servants in Ilorin East Local Government. This finding corroborates with the findings of Marcell (2004) which states that the rate of muscle loss with age is relatively consistent, approximately 1%–2% per year starting at age 50. He notes that there is a linear relationship with loss of muscle strength and loss of independence, contributing to falls, fractures and admissions into nursing homes. In addition, there is a decrease in metabolic rate and maximal oxygen consumption (owing to the loss of muscle mass). Improved musculoskeletal health may allow elderly persons to perform activities of daily living more effectively and with less effort (ACSM 2006). ACSM’s 2006 resistance training guidelines for elderly persons suggest performing at least 1 set of 8–10 exercises that use all of the major muscle groups. Each set should include 10–15 repetitions that elicit a somewhat hard intensity for the active older exerciser. For sarcopenia prevention, multijoint exercises on

machines are recommended, because these exercises require less skill and may allow the user to more easily control the exercise range of motion.

The result revealed that Body composition as a result of exercise will significantly influence the lifestyle of Civil Servants in Ilorin East Local Government. This finding corroborates with the findings of ACSM (2006), which states that Obesity has risen to epidemic levels in the U.S., with more than 65% of adults overweight and 31% obese. According to the CDC (2007b), overweight and obesity are associated with increased risk for hypertension, osteoarthritis, abnormal cholesterol and triglyceride levels, type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, sleep apnea, respiratory problems and some cancers (endometrial, breast and colon). Resistance training and circuit training research has shown meaningful changes in body composition (Marx, 2001). One of the noteworthy benefits of resistance exercise, as it relates to body composition, is the positive impact of maintaining or increasing fat-free body mass while encouraging the loss of fat body weight in a progressive overload resistance training program.

The result also revealed that flexibility as a result of exercise will significantly influence the lifestyle of Civil Servants in Ilorin East Local Government. This finding corroborates with the findings of Nicola, (1998), states that Stretching routines are complementary to cardio and strength training in a fitness regimen. Flexibility enables individual to perform all the movements involved in daily life with natural efficiency and ease. Flexibility is the result of elasticity of the muscle and connective tissues and it can achieve it by performing regular stretching exercises. An inactive and sedentary lifestyle will lead to the progressive loss of elasticity and increase the risk of muscle tears and changes in posture.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study it was concluded that;

1. Cardiovascular health as a result of exercise significantly influenced positive lifestyle among civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara State.
2. Muscular endurance as a result of exercise significantly influenced positive lifestyle among civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara State.
3. Body composition as a result of exercise significantly influenced positive lifestyle among civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara State.
4. Flexibility as a result of exercise significantly influenced positive lifestyle among civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from this study the following recommendations were made;

1. Civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government should be encouraged to participate in exercise to improve their cardiovascular health.
2. Civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government should improve on their participation on exercise that improve body composition.
3. Exercise that will promote muscular endurance should be designed for Civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government.
4. Health educator should create awareness on importance of flexibility exercise to Civil servants in Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara State.

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