

Impact of Exercise and Physical Fitness Among Female Nursing Students

Makesh Babu Subramanian¹, Sugasri Sureshkumar², Dr. Parthkumar Devmurari³, Dr. Syed Abudaheer Kajamohideen⁴, Shenbaga Sundaram Subramanian⁵

¹ Principal & Professor, Sree Anjaneya College of Paramedical Sciences, Malabar Medical College Hospital & Research Centre, Calicut, Kerala, India.
Email: makeshmpt2001@gmail.com

² Faculty of Physiotherapy, Head of the Department of Neurology, Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education and Research, Chennai, India.
Email: sugasrisuresh@gmail.com

³ Assistant Professor (MPT Cardio-Pulmonary), School of Physiotherapy, RK University, India.
Email: parthkumar.devmurari@rku.ac.in

⁴ Assistant Professor, School of Physiotherapy, AIMST University, Malaysia.
Email: syedabudaheer@aimst.edu.my

⁵ Associate Professor, Chettinad School of Physiotherapy, Chettinad Hospital and Research Institute (CHRI), Chettinad Academy of Research and Education (CARE), Kelambakkam, Tamil Nadu, India
Email: dr.subramanian@care.edu.in

Abstract

Background: Nurses and nursing students are responsible for encouraging healthy lifestyles and habits in patients and regarding this, they are more aware of the necessity of fitness. In addition, nursing students face a severe lack of time and fitness obligations that prevent them from indulging in regular exercise. **Materials and Methods:** A secondary data collection method has been followed in this study for collecting reliable and relevant qualitative data from valid journals, websites and newspaper articles. The findings have been explained and illustrated by conducting a thematic analysis. **Results:** The results of this study have disclosed that female nursing students suffer from various health issues, including high mental stress, which impacts their mental as well as physical health. **Conclusion:** An effective influence of regular exercise and fitness habits has been identified on the health of female nursing students. These practices have a vital positive influence on promoting health as well as improving academic and job performance.

Keywords: Female Nursing Students, Health and Fitness, Lack of Time, Mental Stress, Regular Exercise.

1. Background

1.1 Background

Nursing students maintain vital responsibilities of providing care and treatment to patients, looking after them and communicating with patients as well as other healthcare professionals. It has been observed that nursing students hold a comparatively low level of physical fitness. Additionally, they suffer from high mental stress which impacts their physical and psychological health. Nursing students face different issues and challenges in the workplace, including long working hours, which eventually influence little time for their personal care and fitness. It has been observed that dysmenorrhoea is among the most common physical issues of female nursing students that affect their academic performance and physical well-being also [1]. Dysmenorrhoea refers to excessive pain during the

menstruation period and it is among the most common medical condition for females. A major portion of female nursing students is involved with work and jobs outside of their academic activities.

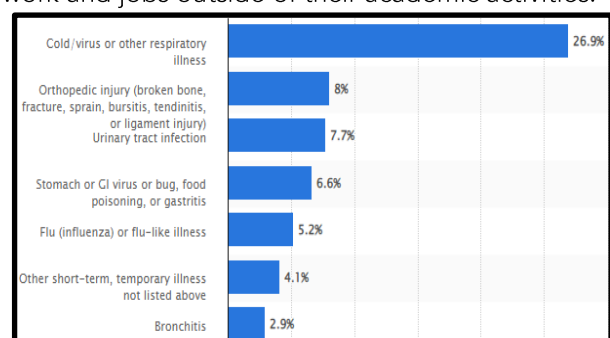


Figure 1: Common health issues of college students [2]

They face more issues regarding health and mental stress in their regular lives, which can be prevented by maintaining regular exercise. It has been observed that maintaining regular exercise and

physical fitness has the potential to improve physical as well as mental health. Additionally, female nursing students who practice regular exercise are more healthy and fit than those who do not involve in regular exercise. On the other hand, respiratory illness and orthopaedic injury have been identified to be among the most common health issues of college students [2]. Regarding this, promoting effective physical fitness and exercise among female nursing students is vital and it can even improve their role in healthcare activities. In this context, focusing on regular exercise and effective fitness habits can help to prevent these health issues and improve the health of female nursing students.

1.2 Aim and objectives

The main purpose of carrying out this study is to address the impact and effectiveness of exercise and the role of physical fitness among female nursing students.

2. Objectives

1. To evaluate the effectiveness and regular exercise and physical fitness among female nursing students
2. To address the common health and fitness issues of female nursing students
3. To explain the effectiveness of exercise and physical fitness to prevent these issues

1.3 Significance of the study

The present study has been focused on explaining the effectiveness and significance of regular exercise and physical fitness among female nursing students. It has been observed that nursing students suffer from various health issues, mainly mental stress and lack of time to maintain physical fitness. In addition, maintaining regular exercise has the potential to prevent these physical and mental health issues. Thus, this study has provided significant insights associated with the benefits and importance of exercise and good physical fitness among female nursing students. Maintaining physical fitness and exercise helps to prevent health issues as well as improve the health and job performance of female nursing students. In this study, the impact and influence of exercise and fitness among female nursing students have been explored and explained.

3. Materials and Methods

2.1 Research design

Research methods refer to the techniques and methods that can be used to investigate a social phenomenon. Additionally, the research design can be defined as the framework consisting of the techniques and methods selected to use in the research. Among the different types of research design, an exploratory design has been selected to use in the following study. An exploratory design is considered to be a mixed-method approach and it helps to interpret the research findings [3].

Therefore, this particular research design has been chosen to explore and interpret the impact and effectiveness of exercise and physical fitness among female nursing students.

2.2 Research philosophy

Research philosophy can be referred to as a set of ideas or beliefs guiding the research procedures and methods toward gathering, assessing and interpreting data. The main types of research philosophy are positivism, pragmatism, realism and interpretivism. In the present study, the researcher has decided to use an interpretivism research philosophy in order to understand the process of the research phenomenon. This research philosophy involves explaining the research phenomenon with a "subjective perspective" [4]. Hence, using an interpretivism research philosophy will help to address the issues, importance and implications of exercise and physical fitness among female students.

2.3 Data collection

In order to develop knowledge about a particular phenomenon, the researcher has to collect relevant and reliable information associated with the phenomenon. This procedure can be conducted by following secondary or primary methods. Additionally, secondary data refers to previously published data that has been collected by someone else [5]. Gathering secondary data provides various opportunities and advantages such as cost benefits, requires less effort and also allows accessing large data sets. Considering these aspects, a secondary data collection method has been selected for gathering qualitative data from reliable and valid journals, websites and newspaper articles.

2.4 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria

1. Reliable and valid journals and websites published in 2018 or after the year have been used for data collection.
2. Secondary sources that are free to access and published in the English language have been used.

Exclusion criteria

1. Journals and websites published before 2018 have not been used for data collection.
2. Paid sources have not been explored and no data has been collected from these sources.
3. Websites or journals published in other languages than English have been excluded from data collection.

2.5 Data analysis process

This procedure involves interpreting the collected data and developing suitable insights associated with the research problem. In the present study, the research has selected a secondary qualitative data collection method and in order to analyse the collected data, a thematic analysis will be conducted. It has been observed that thematic analysis is

regarded to be the most common approach for assessing and illustrating qualitative data [6]. Therefore, several themes have been developed depending on the patterns identified in the collected data and the research objectives. Conducting a thematic analysis will help to evaluate and illustrate the effectiveness and importance of exercise and physical fitness among female nursing students more effectively.

2.6 Ethical considerations

Research ethics helps to maintain scientific integration during the investigation of a social incident. It has been observed that maintaining potential “ethical principles” during the scientific investigation is vital for protecting human subjects associated with the procedures [7]. In the present study, a secondary qualitative methodology has been followed and no person associated with the research phenomenon has been asked for sharing their personal data. Additionally, no natural elements have been harmed or destroyed and only journals, articles and websites that are free to access have been used for collecting reliable and relevant data regarding the research problem.

4. Results and Discussion

3.1 Factors affecting the fitness of female nursing students

Nursing students face some common health and fitness issues mental stress, long working hours and several other issues, while female students face more difficulties due to menstruation, pregnancy and similar conditions. It has been identified that breast carcinoma is among the common factors impacting female fitness [8]. On the other hand, maintaining regular physical activity improves academic performance, health and mental well-being among nursing students, while they face a severe problem of lack of time to focus on exercise. Another common health issue of young adults is prehypertension which is often influenced by job roles and mental stress [9]. Changing lifestyle preferences, consumption habits and work timing have enhanced physical and mental stress for female nursing students.

Female nursing students face several types of social, environmental and behavioural aspects that affect their fitness and physical as well as mental health. On the other hand, dysmenorrhoea has been identified to be another major issue affecting the health and fitness of female nursing students [10]. Therefore, it can be stated that the main factor affecting the fitness of female students is long working hours and less time for personal care which have influenced the prevalence of these common health issues. Reducing the working hour of female students is vital for improving their fitness and providing time for personal care and treatment.

3.2 Common health issues of nursing students

The nursing students are the largest groups of healthcare students and the education of these students define the future of the medical science of the country thus their education is very important. Clinical practice is an interesting aspect of healthcare provisioning and it requires a core component of the education of nurses and midwifery. Nurses who deal with the treatment of different people also face health issues which impact their studies and their working lives. Besides that, the clinical environments are consisted with risks as the human have different health issues in different quality and quantity which complicate the work processes of the nurses, and intense use of technology [11]. However, the female trainee and nurses works in these risky environments which badly impacts on their health which had sometimes led to death.

Hr female nurses are exposed to risky environments by getting affected by different drugs and other factors such as “chemotherapy drugs and gases”, “violence”, “needle stick injuries”, “skin problems”, “latex allergies”, “musculoskeletal system problems”, “cancer from working late at night”, “loss of hearing” and many others. Apart from that, the major problem many nurses face is when they suffer from “mental health” issues such as “anxiety”, “stress and depression regarding their workforce”, “assignments with a deadline”, “being exposed to occupational hazards as other professional health workers in a clinical environment”, “undeveloped skills” and various other reasons which negatively impacts on their mental health and creates mental pressure on them [12]. In this digital era, the profession of nursing has gained positive responses as it has changed the dimension of treatments with the help of advanced technologies and improved the nursing quality and treatment process.

The dimensions of nursing have evolved with advanced technologies over time which has positively developed the treatment processes of various health issues. The nursing programs include theoretical and practical training components which sometimes negatively impact the health and mental health of the nurses. In this digital era, competitiveness has increased over time in every field which also creates stress among the nurses in the medical field about their skills and workforce. Besides that, a person's activity aiming to deal with stressful events has increased in recent years which also negatively impact the mental health of the nurses as they need to deal with various health issues of different patients in one day [13]. The stress experienced by the nurses in the clinical environment is associated with the care of patients, accompanying a patient in the face of death, negative interaction with other staff members, and work pressure which creates a lot of stress among them. Hence, it is very mandatory to provide more care and facilities for the nurses to improve their health issues to balance their daily lifestyle.

3.3 Influence of exercise to improve the fitness of female nursing students

Physical activity helps to improve the quality of life and in this digital era, due to the excessive competitiveness every person from different fields deals with stress anxiety and other health issues. Exercising every day reduces stress from the human mind and also helps an individual to discuss their work and helps them to stay active in their work frames. Stressful academic environment increases disruptions in physical and mental health which creates difficulties for a nurse to lead a healthy lifestyle. The imbalance between physical work process and excessive workloads increases "musculoskeletal disorder" risk among undergraduate nursing students. In recent times, a large proportion of studies have reported the side effect of musculoskeletal as it causes low back, neck and shoulder pain in excessive amounts [14].

It has become a major part of the nursing process and to improve the mental and physical health issues of the nurses it is very important to educate them on health literacy and the importance of physical fitness and ways to achieve it, which will help them to improve their work capacity as well as their health conditions. Improving nursing students' fitness will help them to enhance their working capacities and help them to achieve longevity in this occupation. Besides that, physical activity has multiple health benefits as physical exercising helps to reduce stress, improve the ability to work, mood boosters and many others which positively impact the health of an individual and also change their reading lifestyles of them in positive way [15].

Nursing students and nurses help to encourage their patients to lead a healthy lifestyle and provide them with plans for regular exercise, so they are already aware of the necessity of fitness. Female nursing students and nurses face various mental and physical health issues which impact their mental health where exercising helps to improve their physical and mental health conditions. However, there are six different components of health-promoting behaviours such as stress management, physical activity, proper nutrition, interpersonal relationship, health responsibility and spiritual growth. Today's nursing students will become the future healthcare providers thus maintaining their physical and mental health issues has become a major focus in the clinical environment. The revenue from global mental health issues is projected to reach up to 20.09 billion U.S. dollars in 2023 [16].

However, during the pandemic situation, the density of nursing in every country has increased compared to previous years in Spain there were 6.7 and 5.7% nurses per 1000 people, in China there were 2.7% nurses, and in India 1.5% nurses per 1000 people respectively [17]. Apart from this, the nurses and nursing students face many challenging situations every day which negatively impact their mental health where different physical activities help to reduce their stress and anxiety and help them to focus on achieving their goals. Hence, it is mandatory for every clinical management to establish proper

guidance for female nurses and nursing students regarding exercising and influence them to exercise and maintain a healthy lifestyle to improve their physical and mental health issues.

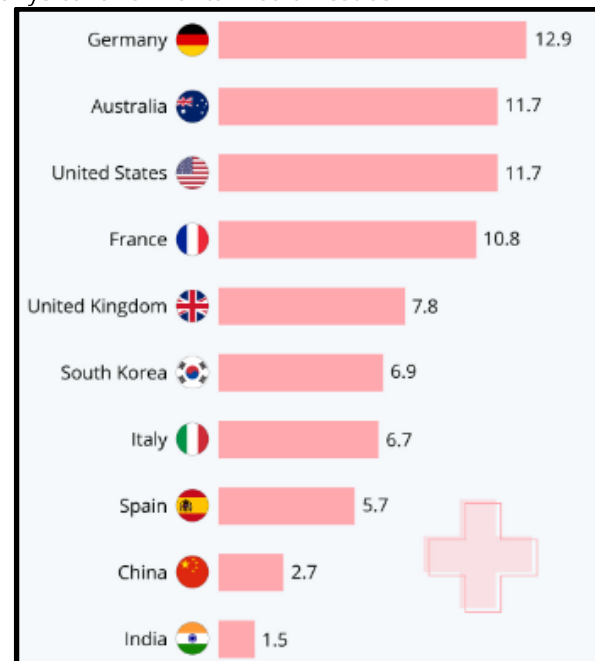


Figure 2 : Highest density of nurses in different countries of the whole world [17]

Future Scope

There are some beneficial future scopes of this study, as it is eligible to provide appropriate information and data for future researchers on those topics that are associated with female nursing and their health issues. Besides that, the researchers have given insight view regarding the importance of exercise in the daily lives of female nurses and nursing students which will help other researchers to access more impactful information from this study in future. However, in this study, there are some gaps regarding the barriers to developing plans for the female nurse in clinical management which can be improvised in future research studies to conduct more effective research papers regarding the impact of exercise and physical fitness among female nursing students.

5. Conclusion

In this study, all the important aspects that are associated with the impact of physical exercise and physical fitness of female nursing students have been evaluated in a detailed manner throughout the study. There is a detailed discussion about the factors that affect the physical health and mental health conditions of female nurses in the clinical environment. The two major factors that affect the health conditions of most female nursing students are pre-hypertension and breast cancer. These two factors establish many challenging situations for female nurses in their daily lifestyle leading and some failing to achieve their goals due to these factors. Apart from that, there are many other common health issues of female nursing students such as

allergies, loss of hearing, skin problems and many others.

The reasons behind these health issues are associated with different factors such as chemotherapy drugs and gas, patience with violence, patients who have gone through major accidents, needle stick injuries, skin problems, patients with different allergies, cancer due to late night work shifts and many others. All these factors create hazardous environments in a clinical firm which sometimes impact the mental health of the nursing students in a negative way. There are various other reasons that affect the mental health of the nursing students such as stress and anxiety related to their assignments and world loads, undeveloped skills and many others. Thus, in this study, the importance of physical exercises and leading a healthy lifestyle have been discussed in a detailed manner. Hence, it is very important for female nursing students to maintain a healthy lifestyle by doing exercises that will reduce their physical and mental health issues and help them to achieve their goals in their lives and in this study the researcher have discussed the beneficial factors of daily exercise for the female nursing students in a detailed manner.

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