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Food Intake Pattern and Lifestyle Practices among Fitness Enthusiasts during COVID Pandemic

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Abstract:

The global growth of the fitness industry is playing an important role in expanding activity by making exercise more convenient, affordable, personalized, and results-oriented. This study was conducted to analyze food intake patterns and lifestyle practices in fitness enthusiasts selected and to compare the various fitness activities and eating patterns of selected adults before and during the COVID pandemic and its effects among the adults selected for survey.

The study was conducted in Dindigul, Tamil Nadu. A total of 100 respondents, consisting of 50 women and 50 fitness enthusiasts, were selected for the study using the Purposive sampling technique. A well-structured questionnaire was designed as a Google form to request information on the lifestyle practices of fitness enthusiasts during the COVID pandemic. Changes in Food consumption patterns, physical activity, sleep patterns, and stress patterns have been observed.

Out of 100 fitness enthusiasts, 70 percent of those surveyed reduced their stress through exercise. It was also reported that 58 percent had stress-related symptoms, such as lack of energy, and 44 fitness enthusiasts experienced insomnia. Burning extra calories and exercising endurance will help maintain individual stamina and well-being. Regular workouts performed by fitness enthusiasts help balance dietary needs and intake and maintain healthy vitality. The results of the study showed that, among the selected fitness enthusiasts more than half have gained weight during the pandemic. Physically active lifestyle practices as a daily program will help everyone to experience good health at all times and especially during such a pandemic situation.

Keywords: Food intake Patten, Food intake pattern, Lifestyle practices.

Introduction:

The World Health Organization defines Health is "a state of complete physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being, not just the absence of disease or illness" (WHO, 2020). A balanced diet is important for human health and happiness. A food intake pattern refers to the intake of substances such as carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals. Cereals, legumes, fruits and vegetables are rich in fiber, vitamins, minerals and other nutrients that our body needs to function properly. Actual consumption refers to the total amount of food consumed by everyone (Pascale salameh, 2014).

Exercise was found to have more health benefits. Having moderate physical activity as part of your daily routine will help reduce many of the risks. It is beneficial not only for physical health, but also for mental and emotional well-being. Moving from a conventional lifestyle to a modernized or westernized one has health implications (Aye MyaWin, 2015)

The number of people visiting fitness facilities around the world to start losing weight is increasing and as a result, the number is increasing in the gym. A gym is an excellent place to enhance one's health because, in addition to exercise, diet conversations are prioritized (Opheliayoueng, 2019).

To maintain physical and mental well-being, it is important to eat a healthy and balanced diet and exercise regularly. These are not the only factors that affect mental health and well-being. These are not only helpful in preventing unnecessary weight gain or maintaining weight loss, but they are also linked to better sleep and mood (Adam Felman, April 19, 2020).

Materials and Methods

I. Selection of study participants:

The selected area was Dindigul. The study participants were 100 fitness enthusiasts, consisting of 50 male And 50 female respondents, who were selected through purposive sampling.

II. Designing of research tools Collection of data:

A well-structured questionnaire was designed as a Google form, and contains general information, food intake pattern, anthropometry measurements, lifestyle practices, and physical workouts. In addition to all these details questions related to sleep pattern and stress pattern were also added to the questionnaire. General information includes the respondent's name, respondent's age, mobile phone number, and respondent's email identification details. Anthropometric measurements helped to determine the nutritional status of the fitness enthusiast. The height in centimeters, weight in kilograms, BMI (body mass index), waist and hip index (WHR) of the respondents were recorded.

Food intake pattern was scored by questions about a person's eating habits, eating patterns, type of food consumed, dietary supplements, frequency patterns of foods such as cereals, legumes, legumes, leafy vegetables greens, other vegetables, roots and tubers, and intake. Of fruits, fruits, milk and dairy products, the consumption of nuts and oil and the consumption of processed foods were determined by the respondents. Changes in their physical activities, like yoga, meditation, exercise, walking, jogging, sleeping pattern, and stress pattern were collected from the respondents.

III. Creating awareness for the fitness enthusiast:

To raise awareness, three different modules were created with the topics of balanced and healthy nutrition, various trainings and equipment and daily motivational quotes. As well as PowerPoint presentations, e-posters were convened once a week for a month through a WhatsApp group named Get Fit which was developed for fitness enthusiasts.

IV. Results and interpretation of data:

The data collected were statistically interpreted to know the physical activity pattern and lifestyle practices followed by the fitness enthusiast before and during the COVID pandemic and its reflections on the anthropometric parameters and thereby health.

Results:

I. Weight wise distribution among Fitness enthusiasts:

Weight of the respondents (kg)	BEFORE COVID			DURING COVID		
	Male N=50	Female N=50	N=100	Male N=50	Female N=50	N=100
45 – 50	-	9	9	-	6	6
51-60	6	30	36	7	35	42
61-70	19	8	27	15	5	24
71-80	19	2	21	23	3	29
81-90	6	1	7	5	1	8

Table 1: Weight wise distribution among Fitness enthusiasts

Table 1 shows the age distribution of the selected fitness enthusiasts. It shows that before the COVID pandemic, 36% of those surveyed belonged to the 51-60 age group. During the COVID pandemic, 42% of those surveyed were between the ages of 51 and 60. Compared to before and during the COVID pandemic, 8% of those surveyed had changes in their body weight.

ii. Junk foods intake among fitness enthusiast during COVID pandemic:

NAME OF THE FOOD	DAILY				WEEKLY				RARELY			
	Before Covid		During Covid		Before Covid		During Covid		Before Covid		During Covid	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Pastries/ Cake	6	5	8	5	24	29	10	11	20	16	32	34
Chat items	8	6	4	3	19	32	13	10	23	13	33	37
Fried items	7	7	7	6	22	32	15	21	21	11	28	23
Pizza	2	2	1	1	17	28	14	7	31	22	15	42
Chips	8	12	6	7	24	32	17	24	18	6	27	19
Burger	3	4	4	1	29	24	9	6	18	22	37	43
Chilly Gobi	4	2	3	3	16	33	15	13	30	15	32	34
Chilly Mushroom	2	4	3	3	23	30	11	7	25	16	36	40
Carbonated Beverages	5	4	5	4	15	32	13	6	30	14	32	40

Table 2: Junk foods intake among fitness enthusiast

Table 2 explains about the Junk foods intake of the selected fitness enthusiasts. Weekly intake of junk foods was high before COVID pandemic. But the consumption of junk food intake was reduced during COVID pandemic by 10 %.

iii. Workouts followed by the fitness enthusiast

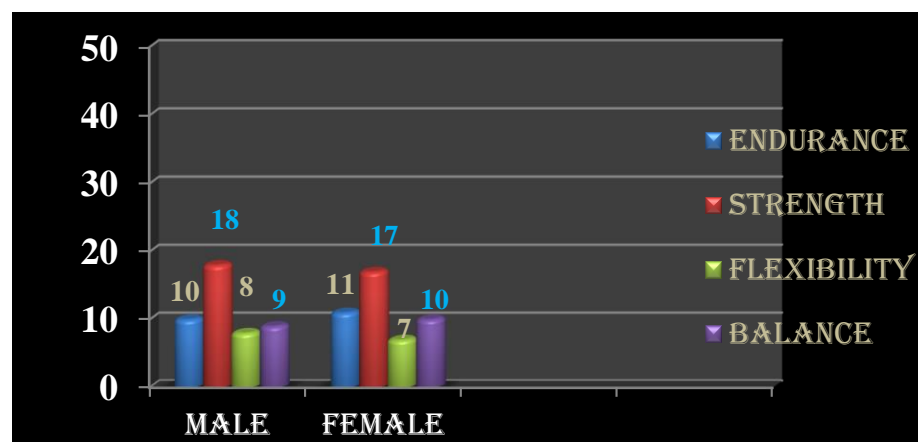


Figure – 1: Workouts followed by the fitness enthusiast

Figure 1 illustrate about the different workouts followed by the fitness enthusiasts. It shows that 18% of male and 17 % of female respondents did strength workouts as it helps to maintain the fitness. Likewise 8 % of male and 7 % of female respondents did flexibility workouts which were done by the least.

iv. Exercise followed by the fitness enthusiast during COVID pandemic:

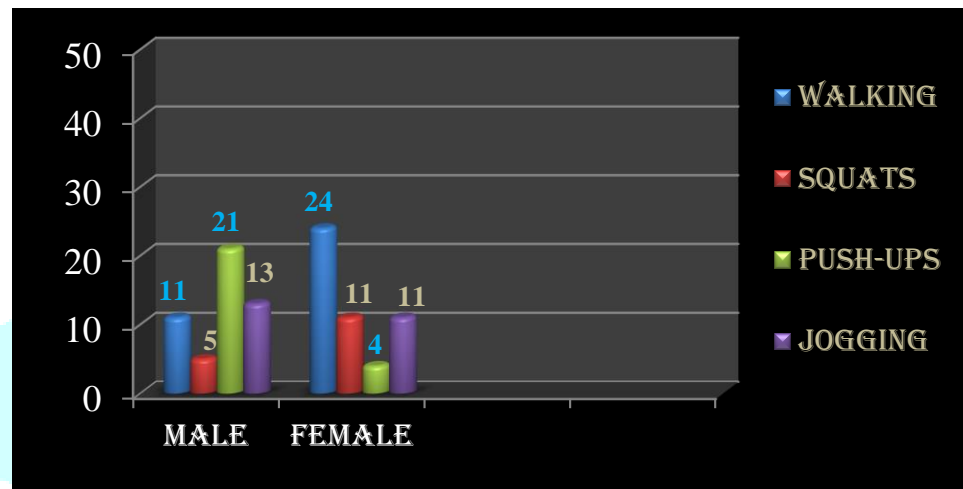


Figure -2 Exercise followed by the fitness enthusiast during COVID pandemic

Figure 2 illustrate about different exercises followed by the fitness enthusiasts during COVID pandemic. It shows that 11% of male and 24% of female respondents followed walking exercise regularly which was easier for both genders to practice.

v. Symptoms observed by the fitness enthusiast:

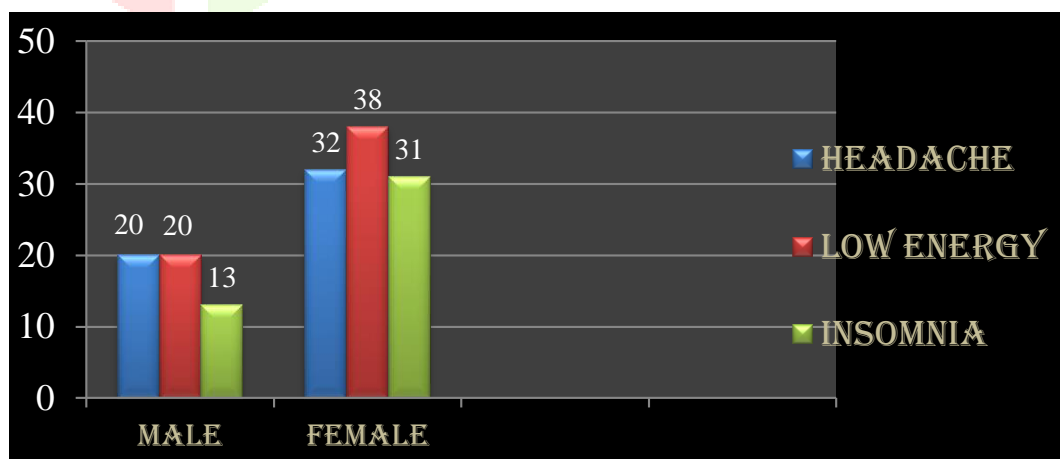


Figure – 3: Symptoms observed by the fitness enthusiast

Figure 3 shows the stress symptoms observed by the fitness enthusiasts. It was observed that 20% of the male and 38% of the female had low energy under stress, and it was also reported that 13% of the male and 31% of the female experienced insomnia under stress.

vi. Correlation between hours of workout and calories burnt by the fitness enthusiasts:

Table 3: Correlation between hours of workout and calories burnt by the fitness enthusiasts

HOURS OF WORKOUT	One Hour	Two Hours	Three Hours		P value
Male	26	20	4		0.286319
Female	44	4	2		
CALORIES BURNT	>500	500-1000	1000-2000	<2000	
Male	16	25	7	2	
Female	26	22	2	-	

Table 3 shows the correlation between hours of workout and calories burnt by the fitness enthusiast which shows a positive correlation, and the P value was 0.286319. It clearly says Hours of workout is directly related with calories burnt. When the hours of workout increases, calories burnt will also be increased.

Conclusion:

Improper and unhealthy dietary habits with excess of fats, consumption of junk and fast foods and inadequate vegetables and fruits were noted among the adult fitness enthusiasts. In addition, disturbances in sleep pattern, lack of physical activity are the risk factors for the onset of disorders among people. Sedentary lifestyle practices with less or no physical activity leads to increased morbidity ratios and can be very well curtailed through vigorous physical activity in gyms for the workouts in the urban lifestyle. Burning out extra calories and engaging in physical endurance will help to maintain stamina and wellbeing of the individuals. Regular workouts by the fitness enthusiasts will help to maintain balance in the food requirements and intake. Healthy and physically active lifestyle practices as an everyday regimen with workouts will help to experience good health by all, during all times and especially during such pandemic situation.

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