



## Assessing The Awareness, Attitude and Practice of Students in The Public Health and Education Department, University of The Gambia

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### Abstract

According to WHO's 2011 "all-cause mortality list", physical inactivity and exercise is ranked number fourth. About 2 million deaths per year worldwide are attributable to physical inactivity. Physical exercise is part of physical activity that is design, organized and is done continuously in such a way that the objective is to achieve physical fitness whilst physical activity is any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure.

A cross sectional study design is used in this study. Simple random sampling was used to recruit 40 respondents. The study was conducted at the University of the Gambia, Brikama campus. Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires, analyze and presented using tables, charts and graphs.

The studies revealed that majority of the respondents were found to be between the ages 24-29. Knowledge was found to be generally adequate but for the primary source of information on physical exercise was insufficient. Attitude of respondents was found to be collectively high but pertaining to unmarried girls should participate in physical exercise was low. Practice of physical exercise among respondents was found to be quite low as almost more than 25% of the respondents spend less than an hour exercising per day.

**Keywords:** Knowledge; Attitude; Practice; Physical Exercise; Students

### Introduction

Any physical activity that is design, organised and is done continuously in such a way that the objective is to achieve physical fitness is called physical exercise whilst physical activity is any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure [1].

According to WHO's 2011 "all-cause mortality list", physical inactivity and exercise is ranked number fourth out of Tobacco, Alcohol consumption, Unhealthy diet, Overweigh/ Obesity, High blood pressure, High blood cholesterol, High blood glucose, excessive salt intake. About 2 million deaths per year worldwide are attributable to physical inactivity [2]. A World Health Report in 2011 indicated that about 3% of disease burden globally in developed and devel-

oping countries; 'more than 20% of cardiovascular disease and 10% of strokes'; were as a result of physical inactivity. This and many other findings classify physical inactivity among the list of 10 leading causes of mortality, disabilities and among the biggest public health problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In most countries in North Africa, Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) account for more than three-quarters of all deaths. In sub-Saharan Africa, NCDs are responsible for more than 25 percent of deaths in 80 percent of the countries [3]. Research by Nguyen-Michel, *et al.* in 2006 has shown that physical activity is one of the most effective means of reducing anxiety and various indices of stress among adults especially at the college population. Physical activity and exercise can also help in improving aerobic capacity, flexibility, muscular strength, lower lipid and cholesterol levels,

decrease high blood pressure in adolescents, control weight and build bone mass [4]. It has been revealed that increase physical exercise improves patient's life after receiving a cancer treatment [5].

The global records on physical inactivity indicates that it causes about 1.9 million preventable deaths per annum, increases the risk of all-cause mortality by 20-30% and a major risk factor in increasing the level of obesity [1]. In the Gambia, about 22% of the adult population (males and females) have a low level of physical exercise, whilst nearly 59% of adults do not engage in vigorous physical exercise. In the same vein, on average, Gambian adults spend 231 minutes per day on sedentary activities [6].

There has been no study conducted on physical exercise among Public Health students and Education students in the University of The Gambia and it has been observed that these students are relatively inactive and many were not meeting the daily physical exercise recommendations. Due to the above, the researcher deemed it necessary to conduct this study to determine the knowledge, attitude and practice of physical exercise among Public Health and Education students of the University of the Gambia. The study is aim at contributing to the current knowledge of physical activity among students and also to recommend to policy makers for improvement.

### Justification

One of the main causes of mortality in most countries throughout the world is chronic diseases and currently account for 60 per cent of the total mortality rate worldwide. It is expected that by 2020, this figure exceeds 60 per cent [7].

It is important for students to know physical activity recommendations and have knowledge about the benefits of physical exercise to incorporate it into their daily lives and increase physical exercise participation. Public health and Education students were studied because of the pre- assumption that they were knowledgeable on physical exercise and would have future influence on the general public. Previous studies have examined knowledge of physical exercise and current physical exercise levels of individuals but however, only a few studies indicated a significant relationship between the two components [8]. From the researchers own experience, there has been significant decrease of in physical exercise level among Public Health students and Education student of the University. In addition, there has been no research conducted on the subject matter at the University of The Gambia.

It is therefore crucial to conduct a research regarding the knowledge, attitude and practice of physical exercise among students so as to generate data on physical exercise level among students of The University. This will help in developing policies that would contribute towards improving the current status of physical exercise among students. The data would also serve as source of information for subsequent studies to be conducted in the future

### Research objectives

To determine the knowledge, attitude and practice of Public Health Students of the University of the Gambia on physical exercise.

### Specific objectives

- To assess students' level of awareness on physical exercise
- To determine students' attitude towards physical exercise
- To investigate students' level of practice of physical exercise

### Hypothesis

Public health students and Education students tempt to perform less physical exercise due to low knowledge and negative attitude towards the important of physical exercise.

### Literature Review

Today, physical inactivity is responsible for a large worldwide burden of the disease and health care costs [9]. Being physically active is one of the most important steps that one can take to improve their health. The purpose of this chapter is to review relevant literatures so as to enhance better understanding on physical activity behaviours of Public Health students. Through a review of literature, one can outline what other researchers have examined, associated results and recommendations for further investigation.

### Knowledge on physical exercise

An adequate knowledge on physical activity can encourage people to exercise regularly [5]. Researchers in the field of Physical Education (PE) indicated that identifying and understanding the factors that are associated with students' physical exercise participation are critical to the promotion of current and lifelong physical exercise participation [10]. Knowledge on physical exercise therefore means familiarity, awareness or understanding that has been perceived or learned on planned, structured, repetitive, and which maintains or improves health and physical fitness [11]. Physical activity and exercise self-efficacy levels may be connected to the

amount of knowledge of physical activity a person receives and having more knowledge about the body may lead to an increased exercise self-efficacy [3].

The University of the Gambia, Brikama campus environment; with its potential to reach a large audience in a relatively confined area, may be an ideal setting for disseminating information and delivering health promotion interventions. Assessing physical activity is of importance in epidemiological studies. It examines the relationships between inactivity and development of diseases as the results will be useful in health prevention and forming of physical activity recommendations.

### Attitude of students towards physical exercise

Among many factors, the student's attitude is considered to be a key factor that influences physical activity participation; Attitudes shape ones' behaviours in many ways and determine ones' involvement in his or her daily activities [10]. There is need for change of attitude if the attitude towards beneficial events is negative, e.g., if an individual's attitude towards participating in physical activities is negative, there is need for change to positive attitude.

Researchers indicated that students who have more positive attitudes toward physical exercise are reported to be more likely to participate in physical exercise [12]. Regular physical exercise is an essential part of the healthy life style; therefore, the public health students' attitude towards the regular physical exercise is fundamental in developing prevention-oriented behaviour of the future health officer.

### Practice of students towards physical exercise

Regular participation in physical activity such as exercise and sport are acknowledged by health authorities as an important health-promoting behaviour and a low-cost preventive measure for many lifestyle-related diseases like diabetes, hypertension, and obesity [11]. There is evidence that young people in many developing and developed nations do not participate in regular physical exercise of types and amount required for good health [13].

According to Anido, [14] practice is referred to as the means of doing something, a way of doing something that is common or habitual, frequent or systematic repetition, repeated exercise in doing something. Physical inactivity, or lack of physical activity, is a health risk factor prevalent not only in well-developed countries but also in developing countries [11]. According to United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS), regular

physical activity is associated with increase health benefit and decrease risk of all case mortality, it improves aerobic capacity, muscle strength, body agility, coordination and metabolic functioning (CDC, 2014).

A regular exercise of three to four times a week for a minimum of 30 minutes each session helps people to stay fit and healthy, even a short-term reduction in regular exercise from 4 to 2 times a week, can cause acute changes associated with diabetes that can occur even before weight gain and obesity [5]. However, it has been acknowledged that although there are many benefits to participation, there are also negatives such as unacceptable behaviour, low self-esteem and injury [15].

## Methods

### The study design

A descriptive cross-sectional study was used to compare the knowledge attitude and practice of public health students and Education students of the University of the Gambia towards physical exercise. This method of research design is considered suitable because it enables the investigators to reach a good number of the respondents. In addition to the above, this study design was chosen because it involves direct contact with the respondents and it is relatively cheap.

### The study site

The study was conducted at the University of the Gambia, Brikama campus. It is located in Brikama Nyambai which is approximately 32km away from the capital city Banjul. The Department of Public Health offers a bachelor's degree in public and Environmental Health and train Public Health Officers for the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare whilst the School of Education offers BA in education. These departments are one of the busiest in the University and students in these departments are so much engage that they hardly have time for physical exercise. Hence there appeared to be a high level of inactive students with a negative attitude towards physical exercise.

### Study population

The population for this study consisted of students enrolled to the University of The Gambia, Department of Public Health and School of Education on full time basis. This consists of students in their first year of study, second year of study, third year of study, and fourth year of study. A sample was collected from each of these levels.

### Sampling technique

A simple random sampling technique was used in this study to obtain a proportionate sample from each level (10 students per level). This will be done by using Microsoft Excel randomization command.

First, the list of each level was obtained from the head of the departments of both public health and education. Students from each level was given a unique number and entered into Microsoft Excel. An excel function called the randomization function (=rand()) did the sampling. This sampling method was chosen because it offers every student a chance to enroll in the study and avoid selection bias.

### Inclusion and exclusion criteria

- All students who were enroll at The University of the Gambia, department of Public health and School of Education and are present at the time of sampling were included in this study.
- All students who were enroll at The University of the Gambia, department of Public health and School of education and are absent at the time of sampling were excluded in this study.

### Data collection tool and technique

Data was collected using semi structured questionnaires (containing both closed ended and open-ended question). Structured questionnaires can collect a lot of quantifiable data and Semi-structures questionnaires can generate large amount of details. This tool (questionnaires) helps to gather large amount of information from a large number of people in a short period of time and in a relatively cost effective. The results of the questionnaires can usually be quickly and easily be quantified by either the researcher or by using a software package. Self-administered questionnaires were used as a data collection technique. Self-administered questionnaires were used because it is cost effective and easy to administer.

### Validity and reliability of the study

In order to ensure the validity of this study, a total of 80 respondents were recruited in to the study. The research tools were developed based on the research objective from the review of relevant literatures. They were discussed with colleagues in the same class and were reviewed by different experts in the field of research. The tools were later pretested in a different study population but with

common demographic information to ensure that questions were valid prior to the actual study. After this, necessary rectifications were made base on the pretest results to ensure its validity and reliability.

### Data management

Raw data was imputed into Microsoft Excel and summarize using the same. Data was analyzed and presented using table, charts and graphs. Data in their numerical forms does not seem meaningful until they are presented in tables, charts or graphs. Tabulation of data reduces and simplifies the details as well as brings out the main features of the data thereby making it easy to understand.

### Ethical consideration

Prior to data collection, consent of all respondents was sought and it was made clear to them that participation will be completely voluntary. It was made clear to them that they had the right to accept or withdraw at any time they wish and no financial cost was attached for participation. In addition, they were informed that the data would be used for only academic purpose and also assured confidentiality.

### Analysis and presentation of findings

Table 1 above shows that from a total of 80 respondents, 40 were Public Health students and a similar number were Education students from the University of the Gambia. Among the Public Health students, 62.5% were male and 37.5% were female. The same number of students was recorded in the Education student. The table also revealed that there were 10 (25%) public health and Education students from each year of study. It revealed that majority of the Public health students in this study (37.5%), were between the ages of 24 and 26 years old whilst majority (32.5%) among the education students were between 27 and 29 years of age. It shows that 70% of Public health students in this study were single and the remaining 30% were married. Among the Education students, 37.5%, 55%, and 7.5% were single, married, and divorced respectively.

Table 2 above reveals the respondent's awareness on physical exercise and its importance. All of the public health respondents (100%) reported knowing what physical exercise is. On the other hand, 32.5% of Education students reported not knowing what physical exercise is. Again, more than half (60%) of Public health students reported knowing that preventing NCDs is an important component of physical exercise, 35% for controlling weight, and

5% for income earning. Alternatively, 65% of Education students perceived the importance of physical exercise as a means controlling weight, 25% for the prevention of NCDs, and 10% for income earning.

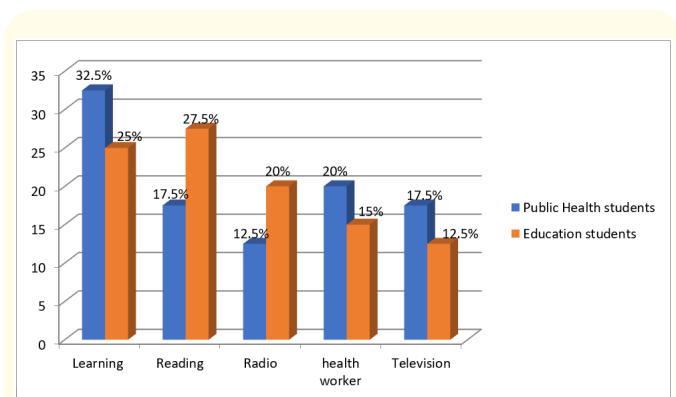
	Health Students	Education Students	Total
Sex			
Male	(25)62.5%	(25)62.5%	(50)62.5 %
Female	(15)37.5%	(15)37.5%	(30)37.5%
Total	(40)100%	(40)100%	(80)100%
Year of Study			
First Year	(10)25%	(10)25%	(20)25%
Second Year	(10)25%	(10)25%	(20)25%
Third Year	(10)25%	(10)25%	(20)25%
Final Year	(10)25%	(10)25%	(20)25%
Total	(40)100%	(40)100%	(80) 100%
Age			
18-20	(2)5%	(1)2.5%	(3)3.8%
21-23	(13)32.5%	(9)22.5%	(22)27.6%
24-26	(15)37.5%	(11)27.5%	(26)32.6%
27-29	(7)17.5%	(13)32.5%	(20)25.1%
30 & above	(3)7.5%	(6)15%	(9)11.3%
Total	(40)100%	(40)100%	(80)100%
Marital Status			
Single	(28)70%	(15)37.5%	(43)53.8%
Married	(12)30%	(22)55%	(34)42.5%
Divorced	(0)0%	(3)7.5%	(3)3.8%
Widowed	(0)0%	(0)0%	(0)0%
Others	(0)0%	(0)0%	(0)0%
Total	(40)100%	(40)100%	(80)100%

**Table 1:** Demographic data of respondents.

Figure 1 above displays the respondent’s source of information about physical exercise. 32.5% of public health students reported been aware of physical exercise through learning, 20% obtained it through a health worker, 17.5% through television and reading, 12.5% over listening to radio. Aside, majority (27.5%) of education students got information about physical exercise through reading and the least (12.5%) through the television.

Respondents' perception on physical exercise and its importance			
	Health students	Education students	Total
What is physical exercise? Making workout	(0)0% (40)100%	(13)32.5% (27)67.5%	(13)16.3 (67)83.8
Any bodily activity that enhance/maintain physical fitness and overall health			
Is the act of rotating from one place to another	(0)0% (0)0%	(0)0% (0)0%	(0)0% (0)0%
Don't know	(40)100%	(40)100%	(80)0%
Total			
What is the importance of physical exercise?			
Control weight	(14)35%	(26)65%	(40)50%
Prevent non-communicable diseases	(24)60%	(10)25%	(34)42.5%
Income earning	(2)5%	(4)10%	(6)7.5%
Others	(0)0%	(0)0%	(0)0%
Total	(40)100%	(40)100%	(80)100%

**Table 2**



**Figure 1:** Respondents source of information about physical exercise.

Figure 2 above reflects the respondent’s awareness on the negative health impacts that can be acquired through engaging in physical exercise. Three quarter of public health students (75%) reported been aware that injuries can be acquired from physical education. On the other hand, half of the education students believed that injury can be caused by physical exercise.

Table 3 above displays the attitude of respondents towards physical exercise. Attitude is gauged in this analysis by presenting a statement to respondents for them to react.

Pertaining to the statement “Participants of Physical exercise live longer that does that do not”, majority of public health students (67.5%) strongly agreed, 30% agreed, and 2.5% disagreed to this statement. Meanwhile, half of the education students strongly agreed to this statement, 45% agreed, and 5% disagreed.

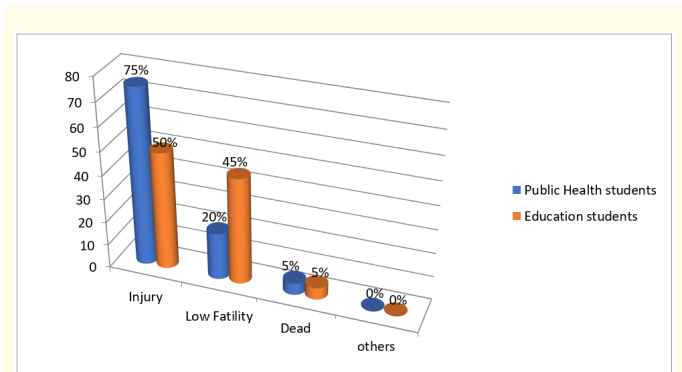


Figure 2: Respondents perception on the negative health impacts of physical exercise.

#	Statement	Reaction of Respondents to statement			
		Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.1	P. E participators live longer than those who do not				
	Public Health Students	(12)30%	(27)67.5%	(1)2.5%	(0)0%
2.2	Physical Exercise is for everybody				
	Public Health Students	(16)40%	(23)57.5%	(1)2.5%	(0)0%
2.3	I hate participating in physical exercise				
	Public Health Students	(4)10%	(0)0%	(12)30%	(24)60%
2.4	Unmarried female should not participate in physical exercise				
	Public Health Students	(0)0%	(0)0%	(16)40%	(24)60%
2.5	frequent Participation in physical exercise makes one look healthy				
	Public Health Students	(0)0%	(40)100%	(0)0%	(0)0%
2.6	P.E can be used to manage NCDs and other conditions				
	Public Health Students	(0)0%	(40)100%	(0)0%	(0)0%
2.7	I feel happy engaging in physical exercise (P.E)				
	Public Health Students	(15)37.5%	(20)50%	(5)12.5%	(0)0%
2.8	Involving in physical exercise increase blood circulation				
	Public Health Students	(0)0%	(40)100%	(0)0%	(0)0%

Table 3: Respondents attitude towards physical exercise.

Concerning the statement which says “physical exercise is for everybody” 57.5% of public health student strongly agreed to it whilst 45% of education students strongly agreed to the statement.

Considering the opinion on “I hate participating in physical exercise” majority (60%) of the public health student strongly disagreed to the statement, and 45% of the education students strongly disagreed to this statement.

With regards to the statement “unmarried girls should not participate in physical exercise” 60% of public health student strongly disagreed to this statement whilst the remaining 40% disagreed to it. Conversely, 45% of education student disagreed to this statement.

Regarding the statement “frequent participating in physical exercise makes one look healthy”, all (100%) of the public health respondents strongly agreed to this statement while 75% of the education respondents strongly agrees to the statement.

Pertaining to the statement “physical exercise can be used to manage Non-Communicable Diseases and other conditions”, all public health respondents and 75% of education students strongly agreed to this statement.

With reference to the statement “participating in physical exercise increase blood circulation”, all (100%) public health respondents and 75% of education students strongly agreed to this statement.

Figure 3 above shows the respondent’s participation in physical exercise. It revealed that 90% and 95% of public health students and education students respectively participate in physical exercise.

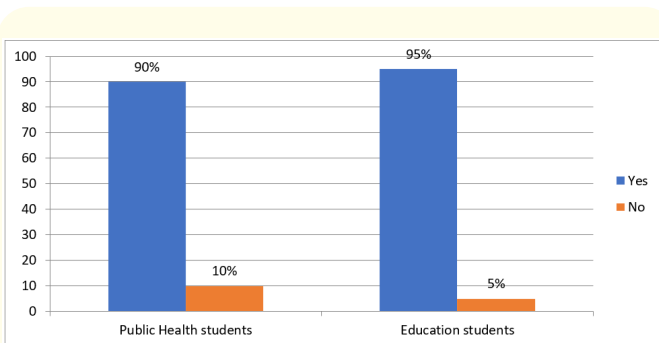


Figure 3: Participation in physical exercise in the school.

Figure 4 above displays the respondents last time of engaging in physical exercise. It has been shown that more than half (62.5%) and half of public health students and education student respectively recently (less than a week) engaged in physical exercise.

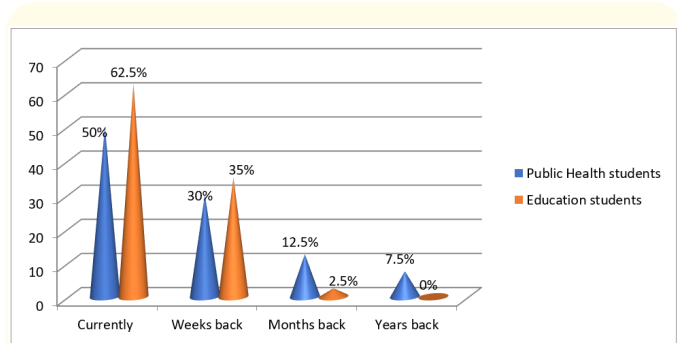


Figure 4: Respondents last time of engaging in physical exercise.

Figure 5 above shows the types of exercise that respondents preferred. It has been indicated that over 70% and more than half (57.5%) of education student and public health student respectively prefer group physical exercise.

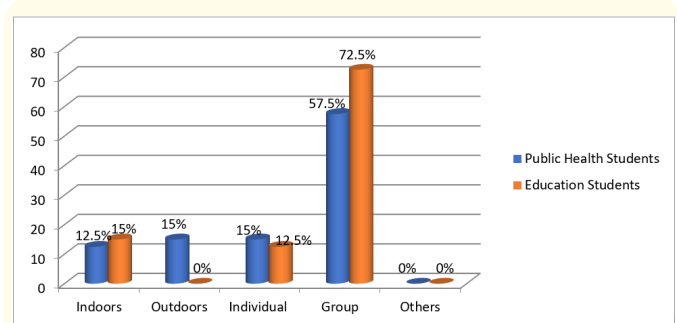


Figure 5: Types of exercise that respondent preferred.

Figure 6 above displays the respondents used of sport at leisure time. It revealed that majority of public health student (72.5%) and education student (82.5%) involve in sport during leisure time.

Figure 7 above shows the time that respondents spend doing physical exercise. It indicates that three quarter of education students spent hours on physical exercise whilst 62.5% of public health students spent hours on physical exercise.

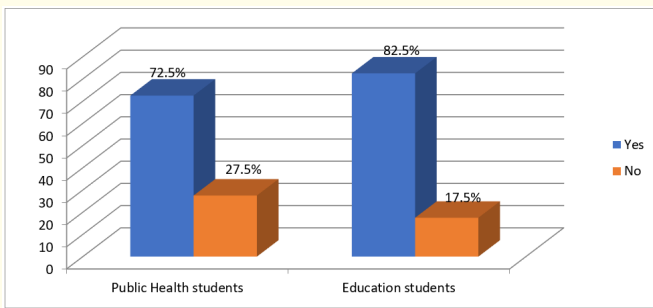


Figure 6: The use of physical exercise at leisure time.

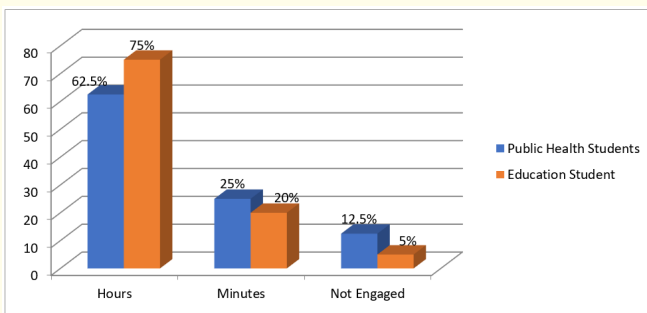


Figure 7: Time spend on physical exercise per day.

### Discussion on Findings

The results of the study are discussed in this chapter in order to reach conclusions from the findings made in the study. The aim of this study was to examine the knowledge, attitude and practice of Public Health students towards physical exercise.

### Findings on Demographics

With regards to the ages of the respondents, it has been found that majority of the respondents 57.7% (n=80) reported been at the age of 24-29. This agrees to a similar study by Mohammed., *et al.* (2014) which found majority of the respondents to be between the ages of 25-27; but this does not agree with a study by Chaubal S.J, (2016) on the effects of knowledge of exercise benefit on attitude, motivation and exercise motivation at state University, New York; whose result indicated that most of the respondents were between the ages 18-20. This might be due to the fact that both studies were conducted in a tertiary institution in which some students have dalliance in enrolment.

Pertaining to the marital status of the respondents, majority of the respondents (53.8%) reported been single. This might be attributed to the fact that most female students in the Gambia prefer to pursue tertiary academic qualification before marriage. The finding concurs with the finding of Ogunjimi L.O., *et al.* 2012 in Nigeria on utilization of physical exercise by students of cross river states tertiary institution which revealed that 56% of respondents where single.

### Discussion on the knowledge of respondents

Due to the fact that public health students and education students would be the future health officers and educators of this country and that might provide an ideal model for people in terms of adequate health and better education, investigating their level of awareness on physical exercise is of value. An individual’s physical exercise habits are influenced by knowledge of physical exercise. This means that an individual’s knowledge guides his behavior or reactions to some events. In this study, knowledge is gauged by remembering or recall of a material that has been learned previously. This discusses on the findings obtained from the respondent’s knowledge.

Generally, the finding of this study indicated that all public health students 100% (n=40) and 67.5% of education students reported knowing what physical exercise is. This might be due to the fact that respondents acquired knowledge on physical exercise during their previous academic training. This finding is in consistent with the finding of a recent research conducted by Res in 2016 at Taibah University in al-Madinah al-Munawarah, Saudi Arabia on knowledge, attitude and practice of physical activity among male students whose results indicated 86% of the respondents had adequate knowledge on physical exercise whilst 24% had inadequate knowledge on physical exercise.

Moreover, 60% (n=40) among public health respondents perceived that physical exercise is important in preventing non-communicable diseases. This could be as a result of the fact that most respondents were educated and had previous knowledge on physical exercise. This is similar to a study in Saudi Arabia on Female University Students on Physical Activity Levels and Associated Factors For health; which found that 37% of respondents believed physical exercise is important in improving health.

Regarding the respondent’s awareness on the negative health impacts of physical exercise, majority of the public health respondents (75%) and education student (50%) reported been aware



that injuries can be acquired through physical exercise. This could be due to the fact that most respondents understood that some forms of physical exercise require strenuous musculoskeletal movement. This concurs with a study by Alif, *et al.* 2006 on Knowledge, attitude and practice regarding exercise among people exercising in gymnasium and recreational parks around Kuantan, which indicated that 83.5% of participants have an understanding that exercise causes significant injury.

### Discussion of the attitude of respondents

Attitude is a hypothetical construct that represents an individual's degree of like or dislike for an object or item. Attitudes are generally positive or negative views of a person about a place, thing or event (Aniodo n.d, 2014). This discusses the findings obtained from respondents' attitude.

Pertaining to the statement "Participants of Physical exercise live longer than those who do not", 67.5% and 50% of public health respondents and education respondents respectively strongly agreed to this statement. This shows a positive attitude towards physical exercise by respondents. This might be as a result of respondents having good knowledge on the importance of physical exercise. This finding is in line with that of [14] on Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Physical Activities Among Undergraduate Students of University of Nigeria, which revealed that 63% of the respondents strongly agreed that physical exercise participants live longer than those who do not.

Concerning the statement "physical exercise is for everybody", 57.5% and 45% of public health student and education student respectively strongly agreed to the statement. This is in agreement with a research by Aniodo, n.d, in 2014 on Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Physical Activities Among Undergraduate Students of University of Nigeria, which indicated that majority (35%) of respondents had positive attitude towards physical exercise.

With regards to the statement "unmarried girls should not participate in physical exercise", 60% of public health respondents strongly disagreed to the statement whilst 45% of the education student strongly disagreed to the statement. This might be as a result of the respondents changing attitude towards societies believes on girl child and physical exercise. This result does not agree with a study by Ward, *et al.* 2014 on Assessment of Knowledge, Attitude and Practices Regarding Life Style Modification among

Type 2 diabetic Mellitus Patients Attending Adama Hospital Medical College, Oromia Region, Ethiopia whose result indicated 93.4 % of respondents reported that girls should not participate in physical exercise.

Pertaining the statement "physical exercise can be used to manage Non-Communicable Diseases and other conditions" it has been reported that 100% and 75% of the public health respondents and education respondents strongly agreed to the mentioned statement. This could be that all respondents must have had a previous experience and they were aware of its importance. This finding was in accordance with the findings of Afif, *et al.* 2016 on Attitude of participants regarding the reasons they do exercise. 90.8% of his respondents indicated that, improving health is the main reason of engaging in physical exercise.

Taking a look at the statement which says "I feel happy participating in physical exercise", 91% of the respondents reported that they have agreed and strongly agreed on the statement, which is a positive attitude towards physical exercise. This result concurs with a result obtain by Afif, *et al.* 2016 on Knowledge, attitude and practice regarding exercise among people exercising in gymnasium and recreational parks around Kuantan, Malaysia whose result indicated that 99% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed to the statement. This could be as a result of respondents' experience in feeling happy after physical exercise.

### Discussion on the respondents' level of practice on physical exercise

Health is wealth, and everybody desires a good healthy living. It is essential for everybody to attain a reasonable level of health and one of the ways through which this could be achieved is regular participating in physical exercise. Something people do regularly or the way in which they do it can be referred to as practice (Aniodo, 2014). This discusses the findings obtain from respondents' participation level.

With regards to the respondent's participation of physical exercise in the school, it has been found that 90% of public health respondents and 95% of education students had participated in physical exercise in the school. This might be due to the fact that respondents were at youthful age and are more likely to exercise. This is similar to a study conducted at the University of Nigeria by Azuhairi, A. in 2014 which indicates that 95.09% of the respondents engaged in physical exercise whilst 4.9 had ever participated on physical exercise in their school.

Concerning respondents exercise during leisure times, 72.5% of the public health respondents and 82.5% of education respondents reported exercising during leisure time. This might be due to respondent's preference for engaging in other social activities rather than physical activities. This result agrees with the result of Ramezankhani, *et al*, 2013 on The Study of Knowledge, attitude and practice towards physical activity and its Related Factors of College Students Living on Campus in Shahid Beheshti University of medical science which indicated that 38.9 per cent of total young population had no activity during their free time; but this study does not agree with a research by Angyan, *et al*, 2017 on Selected Physical Characteristics of Medical Students at the University of Pecs, Hungary which result found that 78.2% of the medical students reported no leisure time physical activity.

The result of the study also reveals that 62.5% of the public health respondents and 75% of education respondents spend hours in doing physical exercise in a day. This result meets the global recommendation on physical activity for health which states that adult aged 18–64 years should do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week, or do at least 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity throughout the week but this does not concur with Previous study at South Dakota State University by Fountaine, Liguori, & Jr in 2008 on Physical Activity and Screen Time Sedentary Behaviors which found that 50% of students do not meet recommended levels of Physical activity [16-20].

## Conclusion

Generally, despite the high level of awareness of respondents on physical exercise, most respondents within the school of education were unaware of the negative health impacts of physical exercise on humans. The study revealed that the primary source of information on physical exercise for most respondents was through learning and reading. A considerable number also depends on digital media (TV and Radio) for information regarding physical exercise.

Attitude of respondents towards physical exercise was found to be adequate as majority of respondents believed that participating in physical exercise prolongs life and would definitely associate with people that participate in physical activity. Despite the positive attitude shown by respondents in the study, a significant number especially in the education student believed that un-married female should not participate in physical exercise.

Furthermore, practice of physical exercise among respondents was found to be quite low as almost more than 25% of the respondents in both schools spend less than an hour exercising per day. However, the practice level of education students is shown to be higher than that of the public health students. A considerable number of respondents were not engaged in physical exercise at all. It was also found that, the last time some respondents engaged in physical exercise was a while (more than a week ago).

## Recommendation

- There is a need for more sensitization on the negative health impacts associated with physical exercise on humans at the school
- More behavioural change communication should be conducted among students to help improve their attitude towards unmarried girls should participate in physical exercise.
- Integration of physical education in the school curriculum in other to improve students physical exercise habit.
- Further research on physical exercise among university students should be done to find out why they temp to exercise less.

## Limitation of the Study

- The sample size used in this study was too small and therefore, the result may not be generalised to the entire university.
- Self-administered questionnaires were used in this study which may not give the true reflection or the true picture of the situation of physical exercise in the school
- The use of self-administer questionnaires is easy to administer and cost effective but has limiting factor of recall bias and estimation error.
- The study design was cross sectional, hence the relationships established between the predictors and outcome can not be assured perfectly.

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