

Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Bingham University Students of Physical Activity on Mental Health Benefits

Ugwoke Chisom Faith*, Danladi Zainab Suleiman, Samuel Faith Boman, Napoleon Melody
Amarachi, Balat Precious, Oluwatoyosi A. Adekeye

Department of Community Medicine and Primary Health Care

*Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Physical activity (PA) significantly improves mental health by reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress. Despite strong evidence supporting this link, university students often face academic, social, and environmental pressures that hinder regular participation. Understanding students' knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) toward PA and its mental health benefits is crucial for designing effective campus interventions.

General Objective: To assess the KAP of Bingham University undergraduates regarding PA and its mental health benefits, and identify barriers and facilitators to participation.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional design was used. A structured questionnaire was administered to 405 students selected through multistage sampling. Data on socio-demographics, PA knowledge, attitudes, practices, and perceived barriers were collected and analysed using descriptive statistics and chi-square tests.

Results: Most students (76.5%) believed PA improves mental health, with 41.5% believing it helps very frequently. Walking or jogging (48.6%) was most common, followed by gym workouts and team sports. However, 12.6% reported no PA engagement. Major barriers were lack of facilities (18%), motivation (13.1%), and time (10.9%). Although attitudes toward PA were generally positive, practice was inconsistent. Peer encouragement and facility access significantly influenced participation.

Conclusion: Awareness of PA's mental health benefits is high among Bingham students, but consistent practice remains low. Addressing barriers such as inadequate facilities, time constraints, and low motivation is essential. Universities should invest in recreational spaces, encourage group activities, and implement student-led wellness programs to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice, supporting student mental well-being.

