

A Study of the Physical Activity in supporters of Professional Sports

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1) BACKGROUND

- Physical inactivity has been identified as the fourth leading cause of global mortality according to the World Health Organisation.¹
- Regular moderate intensity physical activity and minimizing sedentary behaviour has significant benefits for health.²
- The Department of Health (DOH) physical activity (PA) guidelines suggest that adults should achieve a weekly minimum of 150 minutes of moderate activity, 75 minutes of vigorous activity or a combination of the two. Adults should also partake in muscle strengthening (MS) exercise on at least two days per week.³

2) AIMS

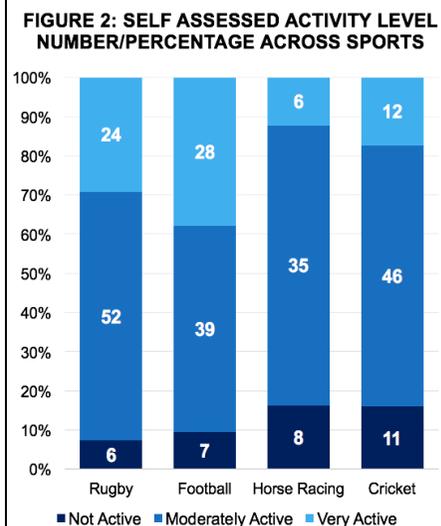
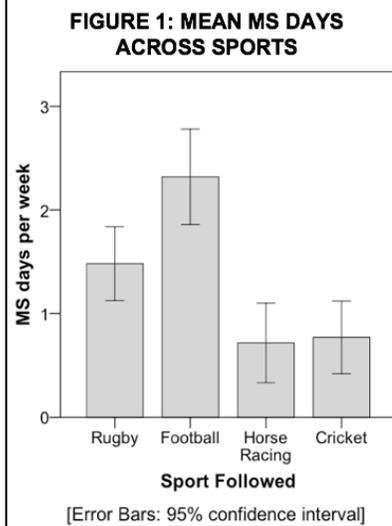
- To assess Sports fans' knowledge of PA and MS guidelines.
- To evaluate the amount of PA and MS undertaken.
- To assess whether PA and MS knowledge and participation is influenced by sport preference.

3) METHODS

- A 2 part questionnaire was handed out to supporters aged over 18 attending a fixture at Durham County Cricket Club, Sunderland AFC, Newcastle Falcons RFC and Newcastle Racecourse.
- Part 1- awareness and knowledge of PA guidelines
- Part 2- amount of PA undertaken in an average week
- Supporters with health problems limiting moderate exercise were excluded from Part 2.
- Questionnaires were collected on the day. 277 supporters were analysed.
- Relevant data for incorrectly completed questionnaires was excluded and valid percentages were used.

4) RESULTS

- All data was analysed using the statistical packages for the social sciences software (SPSS version 23.0).
- 72% of participants said they were aware of the existence of PA guidelines, however only 6.2% answered correctly for the amount of PA recommended per week. 25.6% correctly documented 2 MS days per week.
- 21.1% of participants failed to reach 150 minutes PA per week, with 59.6% performing MS exercise on less than 2 days per week. There was no significant difference between sports for time spent sedentary or time spent physically active.
- **When we compared number of days per week of MS exercise between sports, there were statistically significant results** (Figure 1). Football fans performed the most MS exercise, mean 2.32 (SD 2.01), followed by Rugby 1.48 (SD 1.63), Cricket 0.77 (SD 1.37) and Horse Racing 0.72 (SD 1.29). $P < 0.001$.
- **There was a significant difference between sports for participant perspective of how active they are** ($p = 0.004$) (Figure 2).



5) DISCUSSION

- The majority of sports fans do meet the DOH guidelines for moderate or vigorous PA. This suggests that non-sports fans could be most at risk of physical inactivity.
- There are statistically significant results to show that fans of more sedentary sports may undertake less MS activity and perceive themselves to be less active. This may be a population of sports fans to target to achieve recommended guidelines.
- Results suggested a lack of knowledge of recommended PA per week. Further education is required across the population.

6) LIMITATIONS

- More participants are required to make conclusions with more certainty.
- Interpretation of physical activity can be subjective and using questionnaires may increase the chance of response bias by participants.

7) ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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