



## Analysis of Social Health Benefits of Physical Activity among Middle Aged Men

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### Abstract

*The purpose of the study was to analyze the social health benefits of physical activity among middle aged men. To achieve this, a total of 40 middle aged men were selected as subjects at random from Thoothukudi District, Tamilnadu. The age of the subjects were ranged from 30 to 45 years. The selected subjects were divided into two groups with 20 subjects each according to their level of participating in physical activity. The person who did daily physical activity such as walking, jogging etc) is considering as active middle aged men I group (n=20) which consist of 20 subjects. The person who never assess any physical activity except their regular life routine is consider as inactive middle aged men group II (n=20). Several factors are associated with increased risk for feelings of loneliness in old age. Primarily, middle aged adults have a greater chance of experiencing loss. Number of roles fulfilled by middle aged people's declines over time and the quality of social networks changes. Social isolation and interaction among middle aged adults has been linked to a variety of health concerns. Hence social isolation and interaction were selected as dependent variables for this study. The selected variable is tested by using the standardized questionnaire namely, Social Health Benefits Questionnaire (SHBQ) which was developed by Keith A. King, 2005. The static group comparison design was used for this study. All the subjects were tested on selected psychological variable. The data pertaining to the variables were examined by using independent 't' test. The level of significance was fixed at .05 level of confidence for all the cases. It was concluded that, there was a significant difference exists between active and inactive middle aged men on the selected social health benefits such as social isolation and social interaction. Also active middle aged men have the least amount of social isolation and greater amount of social interaction than inactive middle aged men.*

**Keywords:** Social health, Physical Activity, Men.

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### Introduction

Older adults are not only one of the fastest growing segments of the population (Census Bureau, Population Division, 2008), they are also one of the most inactive with only approximately 31.5% of adults aged 65–74 years and 17.6% of adults aged 75 years and older meeting the public health physical activity guidelines (Department of Health and Human Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009). The high level of inactivity in this population is especially alarming as both age and physical inactivity are primary risk factors for a multitude of diseases/conditions, disability, and decreased quality of life (Brown et al., 2003; Rejeski & Mihalko, 2001).

As the generation enters the 65 years and older age range, it is critical to develop a better understanding of physical activity behavior in middle-aged and older adults in order to increase physical activity rates and significantly improve public health, reduce health care cost, and increase the likelihood of these individuals

maintaining their ability to live independently. Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986, 1997) may be a particularly useful framework for understanding physical activity behavior in middle-aged and older adults and for developing and designing programs geared toward the initiation and maintenance of physical activity in this population.

### Methodology

The purpose of the study was to analyze the social health benefits of physical activity among middle aged men. To achieve this, a total of 40 middle aged men were selected as subjects at random from Thoothukudi District, Tamilnadu. The age of the subjects were ranged from 30 to 45 years. The selected subjects were divided into two groups with 20 subjects each according to their level of participating in physical activity. The person who did daily physical activity such as walking, jogging etc) is considering as active middle aged men I group (n=20) which consist of 20 subjects. The person who never assess any physical activity except their regular life routine is consider as inactive middle aged men group II (n=20). Several factors are associated with increased risk for feelings of loneliness in old age. Primarily, middle

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aged adults have a greater chance of experiencing loss. Number of roles fulfilled by middle aged people's declines over time and the quality of social networks changes. Social isolation and interaction among middle aged adults has been linked to a variety of health concerns. Hence social isolation and interaction were selected as dependent variables for this study. The selected variable is tested by using the standardized questionnaire namely, Social Health Benefits Questionnaire (SHBQ) which was developed by Keith A. King, 2005. The static group comparison design was

used for this study. All the subjects were tested on selected psychological variable. The data pertaining to the variables were examined by using independent 't' test. The level of significance was fixed at .05 level of confidence for all the cases.

### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The data collected on selected variable were analyzed and presented in the following table. The mean values of on selected social health benefits were graphically represented in the figure I & II.

## Results

**Table I.** The summary of mean and independent 't' test on social isolation and interaction of active and inactive middle aged men

Variables	Group	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Obtained 't' Ratio
Social Isolation	Active Middle Aged Men	20	54.45	3.04	8.04 *
	Inactive Middle Aged Men	20	64.25	4.52	
Social Interaction	Active Middle Aged Men	20	54.20	3.25	10.35 *
	Inactive Middle Aged Men	20	43.75	3.13	

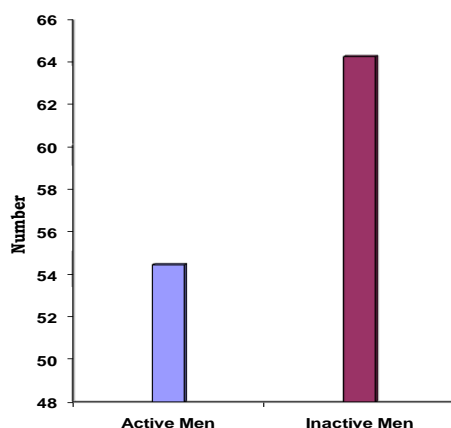
\* Significant at .05 level

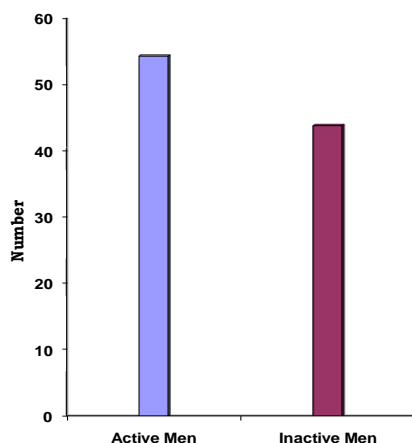
The table value for .05 level of significance with df 38 is 2.02

Table I indicated that, the mean values of active and inactive middle aged men are 54.45 and 64.25 respectively. The obtained independent "t" ratio between active and inactive middle aged men group is 8.04. The table value required for significant difference with df 38 at .05 level is 2.02. Since the obtained t-ratio value was greater than the required table value, it was understood that there is a significant difference exists between the active and inactive middle aged men group on social

isolation. The table also shows that, the mean values of active and inactive middle aged men are 54.20 and 43.75 respectively. The obtained independent "t" ratio between active and inactive middle aged men group is 10.35. The table value required for significant difference with df 38 at .05 level is 2.02. Since the obtained t-ratio value was greater than the required table value, it was understood that there is a significant difference exists between the active and inactive middle aged men group on social interaction.

**Figure I.** Mean values of active and inactive middle aged men on social isolation



**Figure II.** Mean values of active and inactive middle aged men on social interaction

### Discussion on Findings

The results of the study indicated that, there was a significant difference exists between active and inactive middle aged men on the selected social health benefits such as social isolation and social interaction. Also show that the active middle aged men has the least amount of social isolation than inactive middle aged men, which means they never feel loneliness when compared to inactive middle aged men. Also show that, the active middle aged men has the greater amount of social interaction than inactive middle aged men, which means they feel comfortable with social so that easily interact with social and have more satisfaction with their life when compared to inactive middle aged men. The findings of the present study were supported by many research findings. Sorkin and colleagues (2002) found that loneliness increased the likelihood of having a heart condition. The researchers asserted that an unfavorable perception of one's health status is associated with both feeling lonelier and having a heart condition. However, perceived health status alone does not fully account for the association between loneliness and heart condition status. In addition to maintaining an active lifestyle to improve one's physical health, experts also recommend physical activity as a way for middle aged adults to stay psychologically and socially healthy.

Nezlek and colleagues (2002) found that study participants who reported higher quality social interactions also indicated greater life satisfaction. In addition, well-being was positively related to quantity of interaction. Study participants who were more socially active reported greater life satisfaction than those who were less socially active. Stathi and colleagues (2002) studied perceived well-being of middle aged adults who participated in physical activity, their findings supported the WHO's recommendations. Respondents frequently indicated that physical activity allowed them to stay fit,

which helped to reduce isolation that often results from decreased physical functioning. In addition, all participants stated that physical activity provided an opportunity for them to meet people with similar interests and to broaden their social lives. McAuley and colleagues (2000) found that frequency of exercise participation and social support was related to improvements in subjective well-being. Higher frequency of participation and accomplishment of improvements in social support during an intervention led to a significantly higher degree of life satisfaction among middle aged adults. An especially interesting aspect of this study was the approach taken that the physical activity group constituted its own social environment, providing unique (and otherwise nonexistent) opportunities for interactions.

Nezlek and colleagues (2002) found that well-being was positively related to quantity of interaction. Study participants who were more socially active reported greater life satisfaction than those who were less socially active. In contrast to the relationship between quality of interactions and marital status, this connection was found for both married and unmarried persons. The authors acknowledged that this particular statistical relationship is contradictory to some earlier research findings. Reasons for this discrepancy may well be based on a difference in the age of the population studied. It is inferred from the literatures and from the result of the study that there was a significant difference exists between active and inactive middle aged men on social health benefits. Hence it is concluded from the result of the study and also from the literature cited, participating in physical activity play a greater role in health benefits especially at the middle age.

### Conclusion

1. There was a significant difference exists between

active and inactive middle aged men on the selected social health benefits such as social isolation and social interaction.

2. Active middle aged men have the least amount of social isolation and greater amount of social interaction than inactive middle aged men.

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