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Sedentary behavior and mental health of school going adolescents of Siddhartha Vanasthali Institute, Balaju-Kathmandu, Nepal

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Background: Adolescents of this era; have reduced participation in active pursuits and increased their sedentary behaviors as result of technological advancements. Evidences are emerging to show the relationship between sedentary behavior and mental health. Most adulthood mental disorders begin in childhood and adolescents. In Nepal, school adolescents have sedentary time more than 6 hours a day. However, the Australian research network suggests that ≥ 4 hrs/day is considered as high sedentary behavior. Hence, this study was carried out to show the correlation between sedentary behavior and mental health among adolescents.

Objective: To find out the relationship between sedentary behavior and mental health in adolescent.

Method: A cross-sectional analytical study was conducted among 180 students of Siddhartha Vanasthali Institute, Balaju-Kathmandu. WHO approved modified standard questionnaire was used as research tool. Simple random sampling technique was applied in the study. Data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics, inferential statistics and co relational coefficient statistical measure in SPSS version 16.

Results: The study found that the mean sedentary time per weekdays was 5.5 hrs (screen based 2.03hrs) and weekends 7.98 hrs. Age was associated with sedentary behavior but other variables like gender, grade, ethnicity and availability of playground near house didn't show any relationship with sedentary behavior. The mean SRQ score among adolescents was 5.33 and 70% of them have healthy mental health. Moreover, there was significant positive relationship between mental health and the sedentary time per day.

Conclusion: The study concluded that the school going adolescents have high sedentary behavior in average. Screen based sedentary activities was also found to be slightly more than 2 hours. Since, sedentary activities have significant positive relation with mental health, promotion of physical activities of adolescents in school and home is recommended.

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