

STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE WOMEN FROM DIVERSE ETHNIC BACKGROUND TO TAKE EXERCISE IN BIRMINGHAM



INTRODUCTION

Studies have shown that women of diverse ethnic backgrounds in the United Kingdom have the lowest rates of physical exercise. Women from Asian (46.6%), Black (52.1%) and 'other' (54.1%) ethnic groups are less likely to be active than women from mixed (66.4%), white British (61.0%) and white 'other' (65.6%) ethnic groups (Ethnicity, facts and figure, gov.uk, 2022)

'The correlations between ethnic status, gender, health, and participation in physical activity are well established' (Snape, 2005: 147). There are a number of reasons for these disparities such as religious, cultural, gender-based and socio-economic factors.

AIMS

To identify successful strategies that encourage women from diverse ethnic backgrounds to exercise and implement them in Birmingham.

OBJECTIVES

To identify specific forms of physical activity preferred by women from various cultural and religious backgrounds

METHODOLOGY

Identified key sources: GOV.UK & PubMed
 Searched key terms: 'women's health', 'physical activity', 'ethnic minorities'

-> Included: 'South Asian origin' and 'Afro-Caribbean origin'

-> Excluded: 'Chinese origin' and 'Gipsy, Roma and Traveller origin'

Preferred Physical Activities



WALKING

With

- FAMILY
- FRIENDS

And preferably with women from the same ethnicity and religion.



GARDENING

Successful because:

- Social support
- Safety: protected space compared to streets so less likely to have street harassment
- Low-intensity physical activity



DANCING

3 factors for a successful women's dance group:

- A familiar local venue
- A supportive session leader
- none-mixed sessions

GYM

- Women only gym sessions
- low-cost/free gym sessions
- gym trainer from the community and able to speak the language



Methods of Communication

- use plain English or community's language
- use symbols
- in-person marketing

CASE STUDY: GYM FOR FREE

- implemented in Birmingham Ladywood constituency
- uptake of the exercise facilities from 25% to 64%
- successful especially among women from Pakistani and African-Caribbean ethnic backgrounds

Recommendations

- further research on perceived facilitators and barriers to physical exercise for the Afro-Caribbean, Chinese, and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller women of Birmingham
- in person marketing campaigns
- set up women-only walking groups



Limitations

Lack of existing UK-centric research on the physical activity of Black, Chinese and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller women

CONCLUSION

women from diverse ethnic backgrounds prefer to exercise when those four factors are in place:

- A social support
- Low cost
- None-mix
- Led in plain English or by someone from the community