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Magnitude and determinants of physical activity in Ethiopia: Evidence from 2015 Ethiopia NCD national survey

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Background: Physical activity can significantly reduce NCDs burden with low-cost and high impact interventions. But global reports show that physical inactivity has remained a major pandemic problem with deteriorating patterns and, worse yet, given very little attention mainly in the developing nations. Globally, 20 percent of adult men and 27 percent of adult women did not meet the normal- recommendations of physical activity for health (WHO 2014).

Methods: Community-based cross-sectional study using WHO NCD stepwise approach was conducted in the 9 regions and two city administrations; from April to June 2015 (n=9801, response rate 95.5%). The target population was all men and women age 15-69 years. A mix of sampling approach namely stratified, three-stage cluster sampling, simple random sampling and Kish method were employed to select the study settings and participants.

Result: Descriptive statistics was used to estimate the magnitude and intensity of physical activity, while logistic regression models were used to assess the factors associated with it. Among the study participants, in general 94.2% of them did physical activity as per WHO recommendations (95% of male, and 91% of female). Based on multivariate analysis, rural residence was 2.5 (AOR=2.46, (95% CI: 2.12, 2.86)) times more likely to do physical activity as compared to their urban counterparts. The youngest age group 15-29 were 3.5 (AOR=3.46, (95% CI: 2.74, 4.36)) times more likely to be physically active than the oldest age group 60-69 years old. Participants who had college and above education were 28 percent (AOR=0.72, (95% CI: 0.55, 0.96)) less likely to do physical activity than those with no formal education.

Conclusion: It showed that, individuals in rural areas were more exposed to physical activity; while individuals who had college and above education and older age group (60-69 years) were less likely to do physical activity.

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