

Mentally Active and Passive Sedentary Behaviors: Associations with Mental Health Among Adults in Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to examine the association between sedentary behavior (SB), having mentally active and passive SB and its assertion with individuals' psychological status among the public aged 18 and above in Saudi Arabia. This is an online cross-sectional survey study that was conducted in Saudi Arabia between June and July 2023. The Sedentary Behavior Questionnaire (SBQ) was used to measure participants' mentally active and passive sedentary behaviors. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) was used to assess the psychological status. A total of 617 participants were involved in this study. The median number of SB hours per day was 7.0 (IQR: 4.6-10.1). Depression was prevalent among 65.0% of the study participants. This was followed by anxiety and stress where 18.9% and 11.3% of the study participants demonstrated severe to extremely severe anxiety and severe stress, respectively. Participants who possessed longer sedentary behavior hours per day (7 hours per day and above) and those who possessed longer mentally passive sedentary behavior hours per day (2.0 hours per day and above) were more likely to have higher psychological issues as measured by DASS-21 compared to others ($p < 0.05$). Mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, and stress, are common among the population under investigation. Spending more time being inactive and engaging in intellectually unstimulating activities for longer periods each day are factors that contribute to an increased likelihood of experiencing psychological problems, such as anxiety and depression. The high prevalence of these conditions emphasizes the urgent requirement for specific therapies and support measures.

Keywords: anxiety, depression, mental health, sedentary behavior, Saudi Arabia

Bahrain Med Bull 2025; 47 (3): 2312-2320

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