

## **EXERCISING KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS OF ADULTS: A CASE STUDY OF DUTUGAMUNU MAWATHA IN KANDY CITY**

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Every morning and evening on weekdays and weekends Lewella-Pollgolla riverside road (Dutagamunu Mawatha) is a lively place. Groups of youths run up and down along the Mahawali riverside while elderly people jog and walk. The objectives of this research were to identify the exercising knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of those adult people who use this place and to identify the changes that could be made to the riverside road that would encourage more people to use this place more effectively. A mixed methodology was adopted in the study and participant observation, informal discussions and questionnaire were used for the data collection. The research sample consists of 74(N=74) adults who were regular users of this riverside road as walkers or joggers. There were 48 men and 26 women, and they belong to the age range of 23-78 years.

The research findings showed that the adult people were well aware that exercise is very important to maintaining good health and 65% accepted that the “best thing” they can do to have a good health. They placed highest importance on moderate exercise (71% say it is “very important”). Most of them (92%) believed that a person of their age should exercise at least twice weekly, preferably for 20-30 minutes each time. Most of them are taking steps necessary to maintain good health such as having their blood pressure checked (93%), participate in the health-related activity that they are most likely to have done in the past twelve months, discuss health issues with a doctor (72%), attempting to control weight loss/gain (78%), having their cholesterol level checked (67%) and trying to manage stress (77%) were also common activities. Further, they responded that steps considered to be most important include maintaining good food habits (88%), maintaining a healthy weight (68%), getting enough exercise (79%), reducing stress (75%) and getting regular health screenings (67%). Meanwhile, most of them had exercised “fairly regularly” (54%) or “occasionally” (46%) during the course of their lives. A link clearly exists between regular exercise and health. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of the sample was in “very good” health had exercised “regularly” or “fairly regularly” throughout their lives. Further, this research revealed that the sample had done exercise in many forms. Walking (88%) and moderate physical activity (53%) were the most popular forms of exercise among adults. According to the participant observation and informal discussions, riverside road is much needed to develop for the betterment of the users. They suggested that the Kandy Municipal Council should establish a walking path like in Colombo city and this would provide safety and maintain a standard walking path and other recreational facilities which will be helpful to motivate people to use this effective environment more and more. Finally, this research brings forward a model structure for the walking path for this place upon the responses made by the walkers and joggers of Dutugamunu Mawatha. This would lead towards the concept of “Better City-Better Life”.