OPEN PEER REVIEW

Open Peer Review (OPR)

As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
- More motivations for all involved roles in the review process
- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
- Education of both authors and new students
- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

You can find out more at:
https://brieflands.com/briefland/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

Middle East Journal of Rehabilitation and Health Studies
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Peer Review Report for "Evaluation of the Relationship Between Daily Physical Activity Level and Laboratory Factors and the Length of Hospitalization in Patients with COVID-19"

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Review Timeline:

- Submit Date: 14 Mar 2021
- Revised Date: 14 Aug 2021
- Accepted Date: 21 Aug 2021

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0)

18 Apr 2021

Dear AE,

This study investigated the relationship between the level of daily physical activity and laboratory factors and the length of Hospitalization time in patients with COVID-19.

- The questionnaire used in this research is a questionnaire assessing the level of physical activity only in the last 7 days. - And this questionnaire cannot determine whether the person was exercising or not. While in the discussion of the article, the effects of exercise on the cardiovascular system and blood markers are discussed, even in athletes. The two are not comparable.

- Considering that in articles and nutritional instructions for COVID-19, it is mentioned that the use of vitamins (vitamins C, D, E, selenium) and some drugs are also effective in controlling COVID-19 disease. Were patients asked about taking such supplements before hospitalization?

- Did you investigate the lung lobe involvements in chest- CT?

- Liu et al: The proportion of lymphocytes in the elderly group was significantly lower than

that in the young and middle-aged group (P < 0.001), and the C-reactive protein was significantly higher in the young group
- Please insert "unit" for the tables.
- In table 1. What did you mean of (mead and SD) for gender?
- Please use the appropriate title for Tables 2. All abbreviations should be subtitled in the table.
- Please provide a separate table for men and women. Due to the difference in responses between the sexes with physical activity and exercise
- Since most inflammatory factors and responses, such as PT, PTT, ESR, CRP, Lymphocyte, … are important in the body's resistance to the virus, it is best to discuss the effect of physical activity on these inflammatory responses rather than the ones that have not been studied in this study.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 25 Apr 2021

Dear AE,
- Why were paired t test not used to compare means?
- The study was retrospective so the limitation mentioned for measuring physical activity is illogical.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 26 Apr 2021

Dear EIC,
Thanks for this submission to the Middle East Journal of Rehabilitation and Health Services. A revision is required and the manuscript may be re-reviewed. The reviewers' comments can be found at the bottom of this email.
Please the authors revise their manuscript according to the reviewers' suggestions and provide a point-by-point response to the reviews. Please also highlight the corrections in the text.
THanks.

Fatemeh Ehsani: EIC | **Revision** (0) 1 May 2021

Dear Authors
According to the reviewers and associated editor’s comments, your article needs to be revise minor. Please response to the reviewers’ comments and submit the required files up to two months. In addition, please cite two related articles which published in the MEJRH.
Thanks.

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Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Response to reviewers: MEJRH-D-20-R1 entitled "Evaluation **of the relationship between daily physical activity level and laboratory factors and the length of Hospitalization time in patients with COVID-19**".

I am very much thankful to the reviewers for their deep and thorough review. I have revised my present research paper in the light of their useful suggestions and comments. I hope my revision has improved the paper to a level of their satisfaction. Number wise answers to their specific comments/suggestions/queries are as follows.

Reviewers' Comments:

Reviewer 1:
This study investigated the relationship between the level of daily physical activity and laboratory factors and the length of Hospitalization time in patients with COVID-19.
The questionnaire used in this research is a questionnaire assessing the level of physical activity only in the last 7 days. And this questionnaire cannot determine whether the person was exercising or not. While in the discussion of the article, the effects of exercise on the cardiovascular system and blood markers are discussed, even in athletes. The two are not comparable.

Response: With many thanks, according to your valuable comment, the acute effects of exercise are considered in the discussion using some sentences in this section.

Considering that in articles and nutritional instructions for COVID-19, it is mentioned that the use of vitamins (vitamins C, D, E, selenium) and some drugs are also effective in controlling COVID-19 disease. Were patients asked about taking such supplements before hospitalization?

Response: we aimed briefly to examine the effects of level of physical activity on the COVID-19. Therefore the nutritional issues were not considered in our study. It might a lack of this study or even should be studied in the future. This issue is added in the limitation.

Did you investigate the lung lobe involvements in chest- CT?

Response: no, we examined the involvement according to CT. However, which lobe of the lung was involved was not examined.

Liu et al: The proportion of lymphocytes in the elderly group was significantly lower than that in the young and middle-aged group (P < 0.001), and the C-reactive protein was significantly higher in the young group
Please insert "unit" for the tables.

Response: with many thanks, "unit" is provided for tables.

In table 1. What did you mean of (mead and SD) for gender?

Response: this typo-error is corrected.

Please use the appropriate title for Tables 2. All abbreviations should be subtitled in the table.

Response: title for the table 2 is corrected.

Please provide a separate table for men and women. Due to the difference in responses between the sexes with physical activity and exercise.

Response: according to table 3 in the results section, convalescence period was similar between men and women both in the participants with and without lung involvement (CT positive and CT negative). However, if the respected reviewer thinks that separate table is needed, we can provide separate tables for men and women in the manuscript.

Since most inflammatory factors and responses, such as PT, PTT, ESR, CRP, Lymphocyte, ... are important in the body's resistance to the virus, it is best to discuss the effect of physical activity on these inflammatory responses rather than the ones that have not been studied in this study.

Response: with thanks, some sentences are added in the discussion according to your comment.

Reviewer 2:

Why were paired t test not used to compare means?

Response: This study was an observational study with two independent groups, and we had not any intervention for both groups, therefore to compare of the study variables, independent t-Test was done for comparison.

The study was retrospective so the limitation mentioned for measuring physical activity is illogical.

Response: according to your comment, the sentence is corrected in the last paragraph of the discussion.

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (1) 20 Aug 2021

Dear EIC,
we are pleased to inform that the reviewer's concern about some points in the article has been fulfilled and the article has been corrected to an acceptable level.
Thanks.

Fatemeh Ehsani: EIC | **Revision** (1) 21 Aug 2021

Dear Authors
We are pleased to inform you that your article is accepted for publication in the MEJRHS.
We hope to receive the other qualified articles from your group
Thanks.