

**IDENTIFICATION OF THE BARRIERS AND ENABLERS OF HEALTHY  
EATING AMONG HABITUALLY PHYSICALLY ACTIVE USERS AT THE  
SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION CENTRE (SPEC) GYMNASIUM.**

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**Background:** The inability of various physically active persons in society to identify possible barriers of healthy eating and counteract these challenges with enablers increases possible risk diminishing their health status. Consequently, identification of these barriers and enablers encourages healthy eating while reducing the risk of developing lifestyle and dietary illness such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, cancer and obesity.

**Objective:** To identify:(1) the Barriers and Enablers to Healthy Eating among the group of PTI student by the use of a mixed method of data collection (2) Evaluate the PTI students' knowledge of the six Food Groups used in the Caribbean and their respective serving sizes (3) Determine the impact on knowledge, attitudes and practice as a consequence of the education intervention given as an aid to alleviate the problem of barriers within the group.

**Design:** The mixed method of data collection was used to gather information from the 37 PTI participants, where both qualitative and quantitative information was gathered as it comprised of various demographic and relevant information. The information gathered from the questionnaires were entered into SPSS, version 12, hypotheses were then rejected or failed to be rejected with the use of analytical tests including Descriptive, ANOVA, Frequencies and Paired-T tests. Prospective participants must be either a PTI or an UWI STA student who uses the SPEC Gymnasium facilities either the gym, indoor or outdoor and training at least three times for the week while simultaneously studying towards achieving either a PTI certificate or a UWI degree.

**Results:** The students' knowledge of the six food groups used in the Caribbean was evaluated with a two-tailed paired sample t test revealed that the knowledge of the six food groups in the Caribbean increased after the eight weeks period specified, week one ( $m = 0.270$ ,  $s = 0.450$ )

compared to week 7 ( $m = 0.890$ ,  $s = 0.315$ ),  $t(36) = -6.935$ ,  $p \leq 0.050$ , hence hypothesis  $H_A$  was rejected. Hence the null hypothesis was proven true as the average difference score of all participants was less than zero and the p-value at 5% level.

**Conclusion:** Hence from the study done over the eight week period the barriers and enablers among the sample of habitually active persons at SPEC's Gymnasium was identified and evaluated along with other previously mentioned objectives and it was noted that all  $H_0$  hypotheses were proven true, therefore the aim of the study was achieved.