

Exploring physical health and wellbeing amongst members of Slimming World and the general population

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Introduction

Slimming World offers a multi-component approach to weight management that encourages healthy eating and gradual increases in physical activity, alongside behaviour change support in order to promote a healthier lifestyle and sustainable weight loss.

The aim of this study was to understand how losing weight with Slimming World impacts physical health and well-being, using the UK general population as a comparator.

Methods

Two surveys were conducted:

- 1 Member survey:** Slimming World members were invited to complete the online survey via an article placed on the member website. The survey asked questions about their health and wellbeing retrospectively, before joining Slimming World and currently, as a Slimming World member.
- 2 General population survey:** hosted by IPSOS Mori, this survey was open to the UK general population who considered themselves to be overweight and asked questions about their current health and wellbeing.

Both surveys were analysed using descriptive statistics and the results were compared.

Results

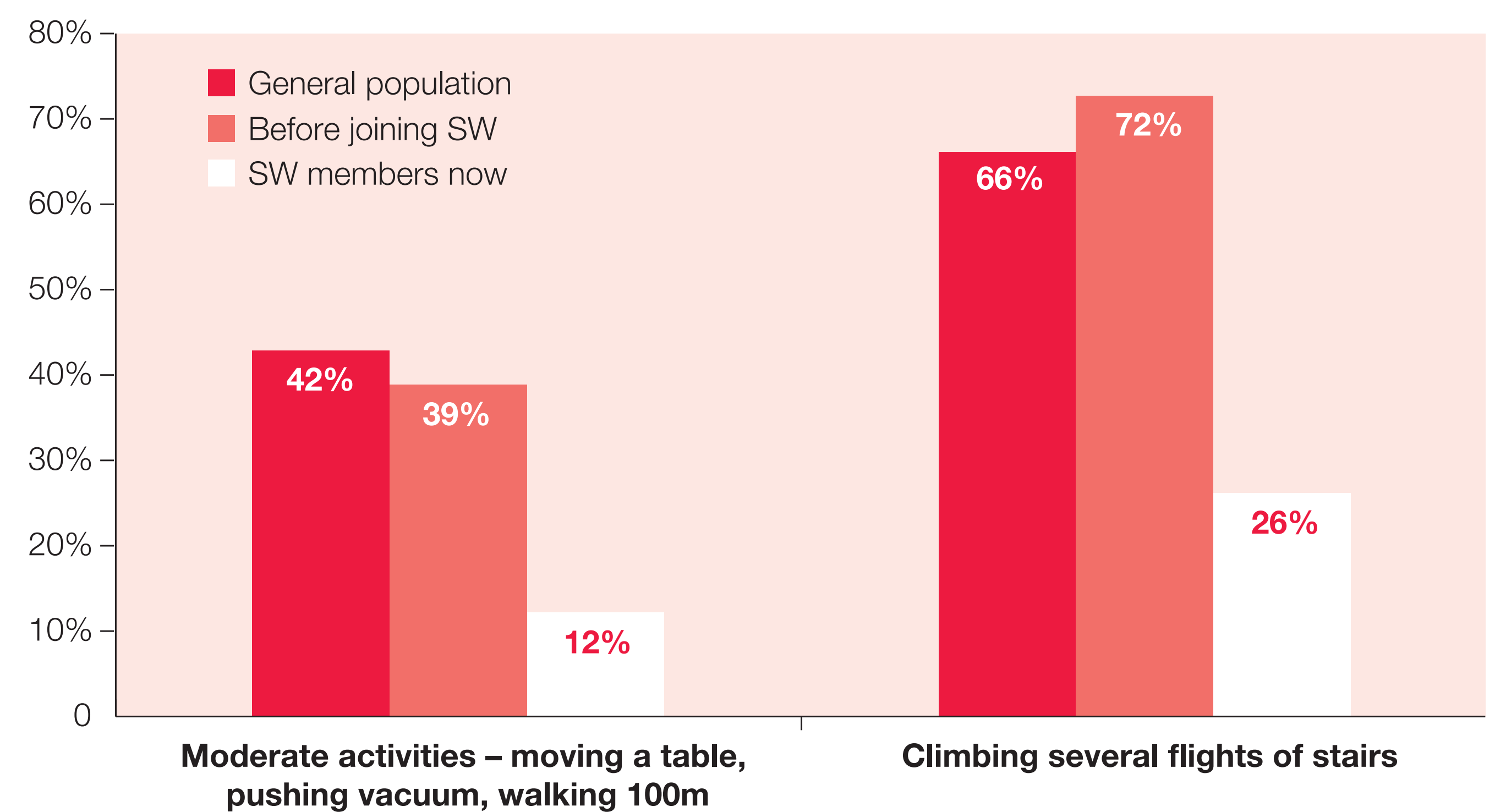
- The SW member survey elicited 1187 responses and the general population survey 1544 responses.
- Upon joining Slimming World members had weighed on average 111.3kg with a BMI of 37.3kg/m², and at the time of the survey they had achieved an average weight loss of 14.4% (33kg).

Table 1. Participant characteristics

	Members	General population
Males	586 (49%)	855 (55.4%)
Females	601 (51%)	689 (44.6%)
Average weight (kg) at survey	94.1	92.1
Average BMI (kg/m ²) at survey	31.9	31.2

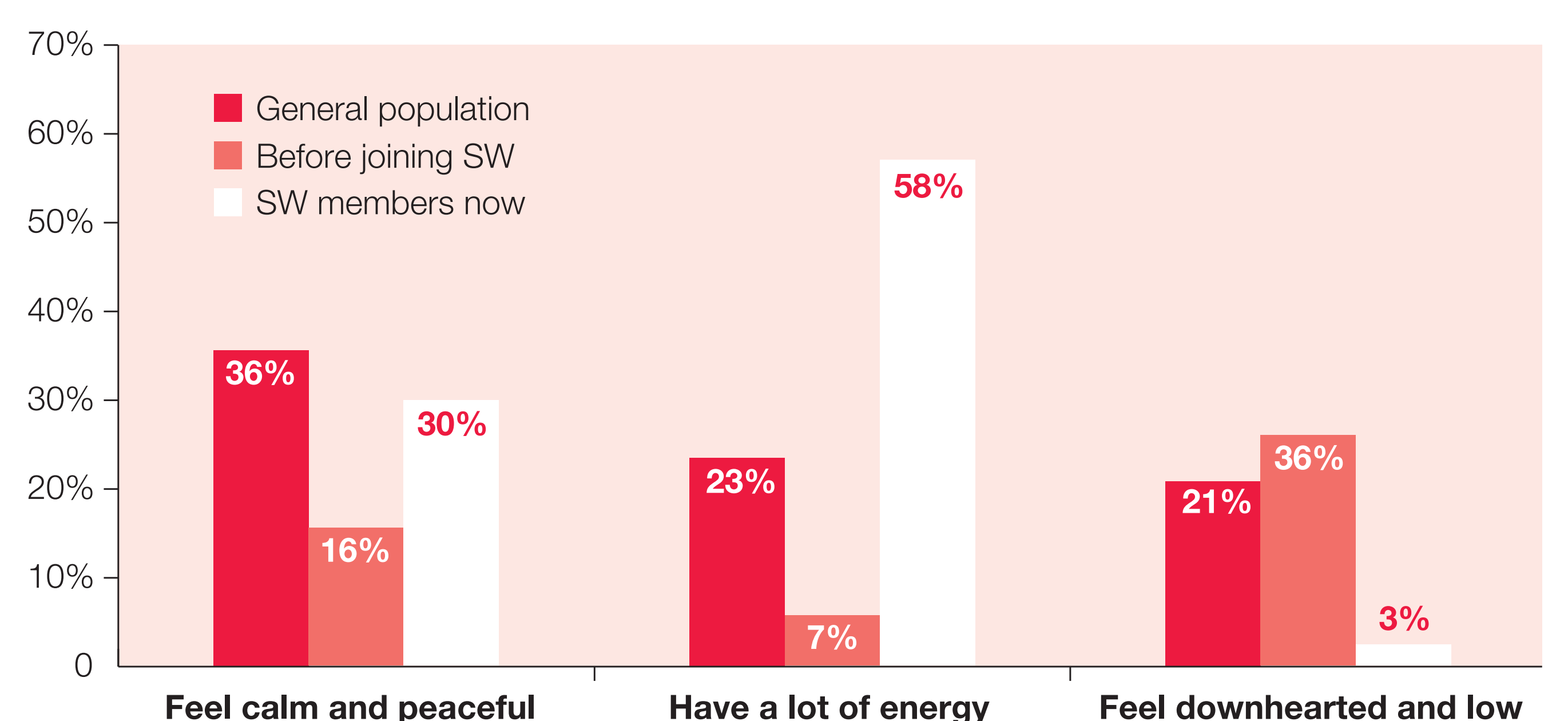
- Since joining Slimming World, fewer members feel that their health limits them in physical activities compared to before joining Slimming World and compared to the general population.
- Before joining Slimming World, 39% had felt their health limited them in moderate activities such as moving a table, pushing a vacuum or walking up to 100 metres. Just 12% of members currently feel limited, compared to 42% of the general population (figure 1).
- Similarly, 72% had struggled to climb a flight of stairs before joining Slimming World, compared to 26% of members now and 66% of the general population (figure 1).

Figure 1. Proportion of participants who feel that their health limits them in activities



- Three quarters of members had felt that their physical or emotional health impacted social activities before joining Slimming World (77%), compared to 21% of members now and 49% of the general population.
- 62% of members felt that pain interfered with work before joining Slimming World, compared to 37% of members now and 56% of the general population
- Members' quality of life has also improved since joining Slimming World (figure 2), with more members reporting feeling calm and peaceful and having a lot of energy now (30% and 58%, respectively) compared to before joining (16%, 7%).
- Only 3% of members reported currently feeling downhearted and low, while 36% reported this feeling before joining Slimming World compared to 21% of the general population

Figure 2. Quality of life ratings amongst Slimming World members and the general population



Conclusions

Results indicate that losing weight with Slimming World can improve physical health/wellbeing, positively impacting physical, social and work-based activities. Despite still having a slightly higher BMI, Slimming World members rated their physical wellbeing higher than the general population, suggesting the action of weight loss and/or other elements of the Slimming World support programme can influence overall health and wellbeing.