

The Impact of Aerobics on Chinese Women's Psychological Health and Well-Being

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Abstract: The researcher aimed to assess the impact of aerobics participation on the psychological health and well-being of Chinese female students, focusing on their mental health, quality of life, self-esteem, body image, mood states, sense of belonging, and coping strategies. The study examined the respondents' profiles, including age, length of engagement, and course, to determine if these factors influenced their assessments. Additionally, it explored challenges in maintaining a regular aerobic exercise routine, the long-term psychological benefits anticipated from continued participation, and proposed a Wellness Initiative Program based on the findings. The study utilized the Descriptive research design employing both quantitative and qualitative methods of research and utilized 332 Chinese college students who are enrolled in Hengyang Normal University in Hengyang City, Hunan Province, must be enrolled this SY 2023-2024, and must be a female student who participated or enrolled in aerobics. The study revealed that young adults, mainly from the Chinese Language and Literature department, benefited from aerobics in terms of mental health and self-esteem, with older participants and those engaged longer seeing greater effects. The study recommends a Wellness Initiative Program through aerobics to improve women's psychological health and well-being.

Keywords: Aerobic Exercise; Physical Education; Psychological Health; Well-being.

1. Introduction

This section presents the rationale and background of the study. This includes the importance of conducting the study and explains what significant contributions this study can provide to the body of knowledge.

Aerobics is a form of physical exercise that combines rhythmic aerobic activity with stretching and strength training routines, often performed to music. It aims to improve all elements of fitness, including flexibility, muscular strength, and cardiovascular health. Aerobics can be practiced individually or in a group setting, making it accessible and enjoyable for people of various fitness levels.

In the context of Chinese women, aerobics holds particular significance for psychological health and well-being. It serves as a means of stress relief, boosts mood, and enhances overall mental health. Participation in aerobic exercises has been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, improve self-esteem, and foster a sense of community among participants. By engaging in regular aerobic activity, Chinese women can experience improved mental clarity, emotional stability, and a more positive outlook on life. (Song et al., 2021).

Aerobics plays a crucial role in enhancing psychological health and well-being among Chinese women. Regular participation in aerobic exercises leads to significant improvements in mental health, including reduced levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. Additionally, aerobics enhances quality of life by promoting better sleep patterns, increased energy levels, and improved cognitive function. Engaging in group aerobic activities can also enhance self-esteem and body image by fostering a supportive environment that encourages positive self-perception and social interaction. (Zhao et al., 2022).

According to a study by Shu et al. (2023), aerobic exercise significantly improves mood states and provides a sense of belonging among Chinese women. This sense of belonging is

particularly important in a collectivist culture like China, where social connections and community support play a vital role in individual well-being. By participating in aerobics, Chinese women can build stronger social networks, which in turn positively impacts their psychological health.

Despite the known benefits of aerobics, there are several problems and gaps that researcher observed specifically impact on Chinese women's psychological health. Observations indicate that while many studies focus on the physical benefits of aerobic exercise, fewer studies explore its psychological effects. Additionally, cultural factors and social barriers that may affect participation in aerobic activities are often overlooked.

One significant research gap is the lack of comprehensive studies that assess the long-term psychological benefits of aerobic exercise for Chinese women. Existing studies tend to focus on short-term effects, leaving questions about sustained mental health improvements unanswered. Another observation is the need for tailored wellness programs that address the specific psychological needs of Chinese women.

Justifying the need for this study, recent research by Zuke (2023) emphasizes the importance of culturally sensitive wellness programs that incorporate traditional Chinese values and practices. By understanding the unique challenges and barriers faced by Chinese women, such as societal expectations and limited access to exercise facilities, researchers can develop more effective intervention programs.

The study's general objective is to assess the psychological benefits of aerobic participation, identify the challenges faced by Chinese women in maintaining a regular aerobic exercise routine, and develop a tailored Wellness Initiative Program based on the study's findings. The output of this study includes a comprehensive understanding of how aerobic exercise influences various aspects of psychological health, such as mental health, quality of life, self-esteem, mood states, sense of belonging, and coping strategies. Additionally, the study aims to provide practical recommendations for

designing effective wellness programs that promote long-term psychological well-being among Chinese women.

2. Hypothesis

The hypothesis of the study is tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H01: There is no significant difference in the respondents' assessment of the impact of aerobics participation on their psychological health and well-being when profile variables are used as the test factor.

3. Scope and Delimitation

This study aims to assess the impact of aerobics on the psychological health and well-being of Chinese women, with the ultimate goal of formulating a Wellness Initiative Program. The scope of the study includes examining the profile of the respondents in terms of age, length of engagement in aerobics, and their course. The study also assessed the impact of aerobics on several aspects of psychological health and well-being, including mental health, quality of life, self-esteem and body image, mood states, sense of belonging, and coping strategies. Additionally, the study determined whether there are significant differences in the respondents' assessments of the impact of aerobics on their psychological health and well-being when grouped according to their profile.

Furthermore, the research also explored the challenges or barriers that respondents encounter in maintaining a regular aerobic exercise routine and identify the long-term psychological benefits they hope to achieve through continued participation in aerobic exercise. Based on the study's results, a Wellness Initiative Program is designed to improve women's psychological health and well-being through aerobics.

The research used a descriptive research design employing the quantitative and qualitative methods of research which is only limited to Chinese female college students from Hengyang Normal University in Hengyang City, Hunan Province in China.

However, the study has certain limitations. The reliance on self-reported data may introduce biases, as participants might overestimate or underestimate the impact of aerobics on their psychological health. The study is also limited to a specific demographic group, Chinese women, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to other populations. Additionally, external factors such as lifestyle, diet, and social support systems, which can also influence psychological health, are not controlled for in this study. Despite these limitations, the research aims to provide valuable insights into the role of aerobics in enhancing the psychological health and well-being of Chinese female students.

4. Research Design

The study used a mixed-methodologies research strategy, which included a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single investigation. This approach aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how entrepreneurial education may be integrated into the professional development of university professors and students. The research aimed to get a thorough comprehension of the issue under investigation by using both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

A quantitative data collection was conducted to assess the frequency of engagement in professional development

activities related to entrepreneurship education. This included identifying patterns and trends among various participant profiles. Furthermore, quantitative surveys were conducted to evaluate the perceived importance of entrepreneurial education and its impact on faculty members' teaching methods and students' preparedness for their future professions.

Conversely, qualitative methodologies, such as interviews or focus groups, provided a more comprehensive investigation into the participants' experiences, attitudes, and perspectives. These strategies offer comprehensive explanations and essential perspectives on the process of integration. The research sought to enhance its results' dependability, accuracy, and comprehensiveness by examining both quantitative and qualitative data. The report offered pragmatic observations and suggestions for all parties involved.

A mixed-methods approach was ideal for this research, as it enabled the investigation of both quantitative patterns and qualitative subtleties, leading to a thorough understanding of the complexities involved in integrating entrepreneurial education into professional development programs in university settings.

5. Results

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents as to Age

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
18-19 years old	65	19.6
20-21 years old	195	58.7
22-23 years old	72	21.7
Total	332	100.0

Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents as to age. Data reveals that majority of the respondents are 20-21 years old with 58.7% while the least are 18-19 years old with 19.6%. This means that most of the respondents belongs to early adulthood. Early adulthood is a period of exploration and learning. Many young adults are curious about the world and eager to expand their knowledge. Participating in research allows them to engage with new ideas, concepts, and methods, which can be intellectually stimulating. (Hasyim et al., 2024).

Table 2. Profile of the Respondents as to Length of Engagement

Length of Engagement	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
0-6 months	65	19.6
7-12 months	195	58.7
1 year and above	72	21.7
Total	332	100.0

Table 2 displays the profile of the respondents as to length of engagement. Majority of the respondents are engaged in aerobics for 7-12 months with 58.7% while the least are engaged for 0-6 months only with 19.6. This implies that most of the respondents are engaged in aerobics for almost a year. College women enrolled in a year-long program to maintain or improve their physical health, manage weight, and build strength and stamina. (Pinckard et al., 2019).

Table 3. Profile of the Respondents as to Course

COURSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Applied Psychology	65	19.6
Business English	70	21.1
Preschool Education	55	16.6
Education	70	21.1
Chinese Language and Literature	72	21.7
Total	332	100.0

Table 3 determines the profile of the respondents as to course. It is noted that most of the respondents are from Chinese Language and Literature department with 21.7% while the least are from Preschool Education with 16.6%. Chinese Language and Literature studies are intellectually demanding, involving extensive reading, writing, and analysis. Aerobics provides a physical outlet that balances the mental intensity of their academic work, helping them maintain overall well-being. (Martin-Rodriguez et al., 2024).

6. Conclusion

Based on the summary of findings, the following conclusions are formulated:

1) The majority of respondents are young adults are in early adulthood and have been engaged in aerobics for almost a year, primarily from the Chinese Language and Literature department. This demographic profile implies that young adults, particularly those in humanities-related courses, are more inclined to participate in aerobic activities.

2) Aerobic participation has a highly positive impact on students' mental health, quality of life, self-esteem, mood states, sense of belonging, and coping strategies. The findings indicate that aerobics fosters a more positive body image, emotional stability, and social connections, although the degree of impact varies slightly across different psychological indicators.

3) The impact of aerobics on psychological well-being varies significantly with age, length of engagement, and course of study. Older participants and those with longer engagement report greater psychological benefits. Additionally, students from the Chinese Language and Literature department experience more substantial benefits compared to those from Applied Psychology. These differences highlight the importance of demographic factors in influencing the effectiveness of aerobic exercise on psychological health.

4) The key psychological benefits respondents hope to achieve include improved mental health, emotional stability, and physical fitness. However, challenges such as motivation, consistency, and the exercise environment present significant barriers. The findings implies that while there is a strong desire for psychological and physical benefits, individual challenges must be addressed to ensure sustained participation in aerobic exercise.

5) Strategies for achieving long-term benefits through aerobic exercise are focused on mental health, social skills, and physical fitness. These strategies include integrating mindfulness, meditation, and social engagement into exercise routines. The findings imply that a holistic approach, incorporating both mental and social aspects into physical exercise, is essential for maximizing the long-term benefits of aerobic participation.

6) There is a need to formulate a Wellness Initiative

Program through aerobics to improve women's psychological health and well-being.

7. Recommendations

Based on the following conclusion, recommendations are designed such as:

1) Develop introductory aerobic programs tailored specifically for younger participants (18-19 years old) to increase their engagement. These programs could focus on building confidence and familiarity with aerobic exercises, potentially offering peer support groups to encourage participation and reduce any initial apprehensions. Additionally, implement a mentorship or buddy system that pairs new participants (0-6 months) with more experienced individuals to foster a supportive environment. Furthermore, offering beginner-level classes that gradually increase in intensity could help retain participants and extend their engagement period. Design specialized aerobic sessions that resonate with the interests of students in the Preschool Education department. This could include integrating activities that are creative and fun, reflecting the nature of their academic focus, which may encourage higher participation rates.

2) Combine aerobic programs with mental health elements like guided reflections, stress-relief exercises, and goal-setting workshops to reduce depressive symptoms and enhance life satisfaction. This may involve empowerment sessions with personal milestones and positive reinforcement. Integrate stress-management techniques and mindfulness practices to build emotional resilience. Moreover, foster a sense of community through social events and team-building activities and develop specialized classes focused on stress relief and emotional resilience, incorporating relaxation techniques and resources for daily stress management.

3) Create age-specific programs for younger participants, emphasizing the unique benefits of aerobics for their mental and emotional well-being such as including motivational talks and providing a platform for sharing experiences may help younger participants see the value of consistent participation. Focus on retention strategies for new participants, such as offering incentives for continued participation and providing clear milestones to track progress and ensuring that beginners see tangible benefits early on could increase long-term commitment. Engage Applied Psychology students by highlighting the psychological benefits of aerobic exercise, perhaps incorporating elements of their academic studies into the program, such as discussions on the mental health benefits of physical activity. This relevance could increase their interest and participation.

4) Introduce variety into aerobic routines to keep participants engaged, such as rotating different types of aerobic exercises or incorporating music and dance. This may involve offering themed classes or challenges could also help combat monotony and maintain interest and providing a confidence-building workshops or beginner-friendly classes that address common fears, such as fear of judgment or failure. In addition, encouraging a non-competitive, supportive atmosphere in aerobic classes could help participants overcome these barriers.

5) Promote the broader benefits of aerobic exercise, such as its impact on self-confidence, goal-setting, and work efficiency, by integrating these themes into program marketing and participant feedback. Offering seminars or resources on how to apply these benefits in daily life could

encourage participants to focus on these less frequently mentioned but valuable outcomes.

6) Create a Wellness Initiative Program through aerobics to improve women's psychological health and well-being. This could lead to an enhanced mental health, increased life satisfaction, improved self-esteem, and stronger emotional resilience among participants. This program could also foster a supportive community, empowering women to better manage stress, connect with others, and achieve personal wellness goals.

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