

The Effect of Aerobic exercise on Body image and Depression among Iranian women

Sareh Zarshenas, Ali Hosseini, Ashraf Noori, Mehdi Rahgozar, Parsa Hooshvar
welfare sciences and rehabilitation of Tehran, Tehran, Iran, Islamic Republic of

Introduction: Depression is a major and common problem especially throughout the women(1). Nowadays one of the reasons that create this disorder is body dissatisfaction or negative body image(2). Exercise is used by occupational therapist(3-5), however little evidence exists about the special type of exercise and also on depression and body image.

Objectives: the present study investigated the aerobic exercise effects on depression and body image attitude among women.

Methods: In this quasi experimental study 82 participants among 150 women(18-45 years old) meet criteria for depression and Negative attitude in body image based on a Two measures, 1) The Beck Depression Inventory-II(BDI-II), 2) The Multidimensional Body Self-Relation Questionnaire(MBSRQ). They did not participated in any exercise in 3 months ago and also they did not have any physical disease. 41 women participated in aerobic exercise program. These sessions lasted 3 hours a week for 4 weeks. Control group(n=41) did not participate in any exercise activity.

Results: The study's results confirmed that, relative to the control group, the exercisers made significant improvements on depression(p=0/000). In addition, Participants in exercise training significantly improved in sub items of body image: Appearance evaluation(p=0/000), Appearance orientation(p=0/001), health orientation(p=0/003), Illness orientation(p=0/022) but their fitness evaluation and fitness orientation, health evaluation, Body areas satisfaction, overweight preoccupation, self-classified weight did not change clearly.

Conclusion: Short term aerobic exercise can effectively reduce depression and develop body image in women, and aerobic exercise can be used as a method of treatment in these disorders in occupational therapy.

Keywords: Aerobic exercise, Depression disorder, Body image attitude, Body dissatisfaction, women.

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