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## Impact and influence of fitness centres on women in Coimbatore city

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### Abstract

Physical fitness history spans back to the dawn of man. Early men, being hunters, did not have the need for a separate fitness routine. They had no modern equipments to ease their way of life. This is not the scenario in today's world. Now man depends on modern technology to get through his daily life. Thus arose the need for separately implementing fitness regimes in one's life in order to stay healthy and fit. Hence this study has been undertaken with the objective of analyzing the impact created by fitness centers and the lifestyle changes brought about by the various forms of fitness programs. It has been found that women going to fitness centers have become fit, energetic and stress-free. Most fitness-center going women opted for yoga clubbed with meditation and have been found to have gained positive changes in their lifestyle as they are able to socialize easily and have also been able to achieve considerable progress in their careers.

**Keywords:** Physical fitness, lifestyle changes, fitness programs, energetic and stress-free

### 1. Introduction

*"To achieve something you have never had before, you should do something you have never done before".*

Physical fitness is a general state of health and well-being and, more specifically, the ability to perform aspects of sports or occupations. Physical fitness is generally achieved through nutrition, moderate or vigorous physical exercise and rest.

Physical fitness history spans back to the dawn of man. At that time, formal exercise wasn't necessary because pre-historic man's way of life involved a great deal of exercise. As man's innovation advanced, their natural activity levels decreased.

In the 20th century, fitness became an industry. As diseases related to lack of fitness soared, people realized that there was a need to counteract a sedentary lifestyle with planned physical fitness through sports and formal exercise. This brought the governments' attention to the lack of fitness among its citizenry.

In recent history, the fitness industry has exploded in an attempt to make up for the extremely sedentary lifestyles of the modern populace. Many fitness gurus have risen to prominence and made fortunes off of people desperate to be healthier, stronger, and younger. Today's fitness is carried out in gyms, and on playing fields around the world. It is not a way of life as it was at the dawn of civilization. Instead, fitness is one of many activities that people work into their busy schedules. Regular physical activity has many positive health benefits, including protection against chronic diseases, improved physical and mental health, and better quality of life. Moreover, lack of physical activity is associated with higher health care costs and utilization.

### 2. Statement of Problem

Due to lack of physical activity and high intake of junk food, diseases related to lack of fitness has increased manifold. This can be witnessed through the progressive growth of the Medical Industry. With today's technological advancement the influence of fitness centers can be gained through various arenas. Hence, the aim of this study is to analyze the factors influencing women to take up fitness programs.

### 3. Scope of the Study

The study has been focused on the level of awareness and acceptance of the concept of fitness by women in Coimbatore city. In today's fast moving world, people tend to lead a

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sedentary lifestyle which has affected their level of fitness to a great extent. Such decreased levels of fitness have led to various problems like obesity, blood pressure, orthopedic problems, sugar, stress, etc., particularly among women. The main scope of this study has been focused on the influence of fitness centers on women, impacts created by them and the various changes in their lifestyle brought about as a result of becoming fit.

**4. Objectives of the Study**

- To analyze the impact created by fitness centres.
- To analyze the changes in lifestyle as a result of fitness programs.

**5. Research Methodology**

Simple random sampling technique was used to collect the data in Coimbatore city. The data for the study was collected from 120 female respondents. The data was primarily collected through the distribution of structured questionnaires. The statistical tool used to analyze and interpret the primary data is Percentage Analysis.

**6. Review of Literature**

**1) Factors that affect the usage of fitness and recreation centre by students on college campuses**

This study by Shaina Smith was done to determine the factors that influence- why students attend or do not attend the fitness & recreation centers provided to them on campus. The study utilized an online questionnaire. It was distributed to a random sample of 1100 UG students at Indiana university of Pennsylvania. Results collected from this study reveal that users were likely to be male, Caucasian, non-smokers, and have no health concerns. Factors related to usage of the recreational facilities included maintaining one’s current weight as well as weight loss. A factor related to non- usage included proximity to the recreational facility in relation to the students’ living arrangements. Factors that influenced occasional non-usage in the user group were lack

**8. Results and Discussions**

**Table 1:** Impact created by fitness centers

Particulars	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel I have become a fit person	51.67%	28.33%	15%	3.33%	1.67%
Makes me stress-free	41.67%	47.5%	10.83%	0%	0%
I am more energetic	40.83%	43.34%	12.5%	3.33%	0%
I don’t shy-away from social events	30%	31.67%	28.33%	6.67%	3.33%
I feel comfortable and at ease with my life	35%	41.67%	13.33%	9.17%	0.83%
I have started following strict diet control patterns	32.5%	28.33%	26.67%	9.17%	3.33%
I am able to wear fashionable outfits	37.5%	35.84%	15.83%	5%	5.83%
I prefer taking the stairs rather than the lift	35.83%	37.5%	13.33%	6.67%	6.67%

Source: computed

Most of the women feel they have become fit, stress-free and more energetic as a result of taking up fitness programs. Majority of them agree that they fit into any type of social events; they are at absolute ease with themselves and are able to wear fashionable outfits. They also feel that control over

of time and energy, too much schoolwork, and inadequate facility operational hours.

**2) Effects of health plan-sponsored fitness centre benefits on physical activity, health outcomes, & health care costs &utilization**

John W. William Jr., MD., M.H.SC, Director of the evidence-based synthesis program centre, Durham VA Medical Centre, has conducted a survey on the “effects of health plan-sponsored fitness centre benefits on physical activity, health outcomes, & health care costs &utilization” with the objective to summarize the result of diverse studies of health plan-sponsored fitness centre membership in an effort to understand how these benefits affect physical activity, clinical outcomes, health care costs &utilization, retention of plan members &member satisfaction. The research was conducted with the help of a master librarian, search using MEDLINE, Embase, the Cochrane database of systematic reviews. Here, 3589 unique citations have been identified. They have concluded that health plan –sponsored fitness centre memberships have the potential to increase levels of physical activity and, subsequently, improve health &economic outcomes for veterans. Few studies have assessed the impact of health plan- sponsored fitness membership benefits. It has been concluded that, further evidence is needed on which to base policy recommendations on the merits of providing health plan-sponsored fitness centre membership.

**7. Limitations of the Study**

Every study has certain limitation. Some of these are inherent in the research design while some others become part of the study during various stages of research process. The present study is subject to the following limitations.

- The sample size is limited to 120 respondents.
- The respondents are restricted to women having fitness centre membership.

their diet and preference towards taking the stairs rather than the lift are the other major impacts caused.

On the whole, we can conclude that fitness centers have created a positive impact on the respondents.

**Table 2:** Best ways to achieve the motive

Motives	Yoga (%)	Zumba (%)	Aerobics (%)	Meditation (%)
Enhancing my fitness state	56.7	14.2	21.7	7.5
Relaxation	30.0	24.2	17.5	28.3
Stress reduction	29.2	24.2	23.3	23.3
Control body weight	46.7	13.3	25.8	14.2
Beauty conscious	39.2	21.7	17.5	20.8

Source: computed

From the above table it is clear that 56.7 % of the respondents opine that yoga is the best way to enhance their fitness state. Meditation along with yoga is the best way to relax while for reducing stress and controlling body weight

too, most of them choose yoga. It can be concluded that yoga clubbed with meditation is opted by most of the women, as the best way to achieve their fitness motives.

**Table 3:** Changes in lifestyle after the fitness program

Particulars	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Has increased my confidence level	63.3%	28.3%	8.3%	0%	0%
I have gained a positive attitude	38.3%	49.2%	11.7%	0.8%	0%
My general health condition has improved	36.7%	45.8%	16.7%	0.8%	0%
My sugar and BP levels are under control	26.7%	34.2%	29.2%	6.7%	3.3%
I am able to present myself well in any types of social circles	34.2%	26.7%	25.8%	11.7%	1.7%
Has given a boost in my professional ladder	36.7%	26.7%	25.8%	7.5%	3.3%
Has improved my emotional state of mind	31.7%	38.3%	24.2%	3.3%	2.5%
Has brought in a self-actualization about fitness	32.5%	31.7%	26.7%	6.7%	2.5%
My loyalty towards my fitness center is unshakeable	37.5%	34.2%	17.5%	8.3%	2.5%
I will motivate others to join fitness centers	44.2%	25.8%	15.0%	9.2%	5.8%

Source: computed

From the table depicting the lifestyle changes in women, it can be found that most of them feel their confidence level to have increased and to have gained a positive attitude towards life while majority of the respondents have improved their general health conditions.

Also it is noted that most of them have controlled their sugar and BP level, and they agree that fitness program has given a boost in their professional ladder. Majority of them agreed to have realized the importance of fitness and pledge their loyalty towards their fitness center. They also volunteer to motivate others.

We find that most of the women have positive changes in their lifestyle as a result of being fit.

## 9. Suggestions

Based on the survey conducted, the following suggestions have been given:

- 1) Obesity has become a common issue among the youth of today. If fully fledged fitness centres are run within the campus of Universities, Colleges and other educational institutions, it would be helpful for the youth to fight against obesity and its ill effects.
- 2) Women will welcome the establishment of beauty clinics within fitness centres which will pave way for their holistic approach towards fitness.

## 10. Conclusion

Since health related problems are soaring up high, everyone is much concerned about their fitness level. Most women agree that their quality of life has improved. Having realized the importance of being fit, they also volunteer to motivate others. The study reveals that, though the services offered by fitness centers are expensive, the customers are ready to

spend in order to avail themselves the best of the services offered.

*“Obesity does not run in the family, it’s because no one runs in that family.”*

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