Comparison of body image and self-esteem between Yoga and Zumba practitioners of 20-40 years in selected Yoga and Zumba classes in Colombo District

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Self-esteem and body image are key parts of psychological well-being and self-perception in young adults. Positive self-esteem and body image are linked to improved emotional health, confidence, and quality of life. Physical activity, particularly mind-body exercises like Yoga and Zumba, has been shown to improve these psychological components. However, there is limited comparative research in the Sri Lankan context. The purpose of this study was to compare the impact of Yoga and Zumba on self-esteem and body image among young adults in the Colombo District to identify the most effective type of physical activity for improving body image and self-esteem among young adults. An analytical cross-sectional study was conducted among 120 participants aged 20-40 who had been practicing Yoga (n=60) or Zumba (n=60) for at least three months. Individuals aged 20 to 40 were selected due to the increased social, professional, and appearance-related pressures commonly experienced in this age group. Self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and body image was evaluated using the Stunkard Figure Rating Scale. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 23.0, with the chi-square test applied to evaluate group differences. Among 120 practitioners, the mean age was 31.13 (±6.052), and 81.6% were female. Yoga practitioners showed a significantly greater improvement in self-esteem (71.7%) compared to Zumba practitioners (33%) (p=0.005). Additionally, Zumba practitioners showed a significantly higher body image satisfaction (45%) (p=0.03) compared to Yoga practitioners. Yoga emphasizes self-awareness, promotes emotional well-being and enhances self-esteem, while Zumba, known for its energetic movements, significantly contributes to a more positive body image. Understanding the effectiveness of these exercises can guide individuals in selecting routines that best support their psychological health.

Keywords: *Self-esteem*, *Body image*, *Yoga*, *Zumba*, *Psychological well-being*