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Emergence of Fitness Constructs among Young Adults as Determined by Gender

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ABSTRACT - The perceived impact of fitness may differ from one person to another based on their perceptions, degree of importance assigned to the concept and practice, and their understanding of its importance. Considering the fluidity of social interaction, meanings of fitness may vary in relation to context and age of a person. Therefore, the constructs of fitness among young students might affect the process of coming up with the best fitness program because of these constructs' volatility. This study aimed: 1) to determine the association of the categories of a physically fit young adult with their attitude toward exercise (i.e., whether they like or hate exercise); and 2) to determine the relationships between fitness goals and gender. A quantitative method was used in this study. A total of 300 respondents were randomly selected among students enrolled in a general physical education (PE1) course during the first semester of academic year 2012-2013. The chi-square test for independence was applied to two categorical variables from a single population in order to assess whether paired observations were independent of each other. Weight loss and increased muscle definition in the categories of reasons for liking exercise have p -values greater than $\alpha = 0.05$, indicating an association between the two constructs and gender. On the other hand, with the 6 constructs pertaining to reasons for disliking exercise, "body sweat" was calculated to have a p -value=0.007 and a Cramer's V value of 0.2160, indicating moderate association between gender and disliking exercise because of body sweat. In the cases of weight loss and toned muscles, gender influenced the choice of fitness goals.

Keywords: environment, fitness, gender, social constructs, toned muscle, weight loss