

Improving Health and Well-being through Online Dance Fitness Classes during the Global COVID-19 Pandemic

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PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

- Wellness and fitness programs provide coping resources for employees experiencing challenging stressors, such as those brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic (Hargrove, Becker, & Hargrove, 2015).
- Participation in dance fitness classes improves physical, psychological, and social well-being among women of all ages (Barranco-Ruiz, Paz-Viteri, & Villa-Gonzalez, 2020; O'Brien, 2016).
- When dance fitness classes were halted by stay-at-home orders, stakeholders identified online tools and mobile apps as alternatives that could mitigate the economic, physical, psychological, and social losses from canceling exercise classes.
- The purpose of our research was to use the lens of the Benefits Theory of Leisure Well-being to explore how online dance fitness classes helped improve health and well-being among participants during the COVID-19 pandemic.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Which needs could online dance fitness classes meet for participants during the global COVID-19 pandemic?
- Which adjustments were made by dance fitness instructors to effectively move their services online during the global COVID-19 pandemic?
- Which health and well-being outcomes of online dance fitness classes were experienced by participants during the global COVID-19 pandemic?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Benefits Theory of Leisure Well-Being (Sirgy, Uysal, & Kruger, 2017)

- Leisure activities contribute to satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being by satisfying basic needs and growth needs.
- Sirgy et al. (2017) surmised, "the more a leisure activity delivers benefits related to basic needs and growth needs the greater the likelihood that such an activity would contribute significantly to satisfaction in leisure life and subjective well-being" (p. 208).

Basic Needs	Growth Needs
Safety, Health, Economic, Sensory, Escape, Sensation-Making	Symbolic, Aesthetic, Moral, Mastery, Relatedness, Distinctiveness

AUTOETHNOGRAPHY METHODOLOGY

- Autoethnography was used to connect personal experiences to the questions related to leisure activity, health, and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic (Grenier, 2015).
- The research team consisted of a dance fitness instructor who taught classes online, and a participant in the classes taught during the COVID-19 pandemic when gyms were closed.
- Data were collected from the researchers' narratives and written text from other class participants.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

- During the 2-month pilot study: Zoom classes twice each week

Min	Average # of Participants per Class	Max
9	15	25

- Four critical components for implementing online dance fitness classes:

Effective Technology Usage	Reduction of Uncertainty
Compensation	Enhanced Personal Connections

- Data suggests online dance fitness classes helped participants meet their goals for physical and mental health during the stay-at-home orders.
- Online dance fitness classes met all basic needs and several growth needs during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Appears stress and burnout can be managed by participating in online fitness activities during times of uncertainty, as experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This research informs future practices for implementing online fitness programs and offering solutions to sustain and improve health/well-being.

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