

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

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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 participate 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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