


# Perception of Exercise as Psychogenic Aids in the Improvement of Cardiovascular Health: Implications to Sports Administration among Young Academic Staff of Unizik Awka

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**Abstract:** The study was carried out to examine the perception of young academic staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka (UNIZIK) on Exercise as psychogenic aid for improvement of cardiovascular health, its implications in the administration of sports among these class of people generally. Exercise whether it is performed as recreation or in a mild or high intensity competitive form, aims at the overall cardiovascular health improvement of the participants or beneficiaries. Hence a better perception of exercise as psychogenic aid in the improvement of cardiovascular health of an individual would lead to increased participation void of much coercion or persuasions, hence paving way for easier sports administration and management. The design of the study was the descriptive survey research. The population of the study comprised of male and female young academic staff from six faculties namely Education, Social Sciences, Management Sciences, Arts, Engineering and Law. The simple random sampling technique was utilized to select 17 samples from each of the 6 faculties. The research instrument was the modified Likert – type questionnaire with four point rating scales of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The instrument was pilot-tested on 20 young academic staff of faculty of Health Sciences Nnewi Campus which did not form part of the population for the study, and yielded a reliability index of 0.81. The analysis of the data, utilized the inferential statistics of chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study revealed that these young academic members of staff perceive that active/regular participation in exercise has significant impact on the improvement of the cardiovascular health of an individual. Recommendations were made.

**Keywords:** Psychogenic aid, administration of sports cardiovascular health, perception, young academic staff, mild competitive form, high intensity competitive form, coercion, persuasions. Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka (UNIZIK) psychogenic, cardiovascular health related diseases, exercise level of intensity, psychological benefits, physiological benefit

## Introduction

Exercise is good for the maintenance of good health. It is also appreciated for increase in strength, endurance, sense of well-being, quality of life and enhances longevity (Asagba & Setonj, 2007). However the present modern way of living tend to have reduced man's active way of living, whereby machines perform most functions that otherwise would have enabled man live actively. According to Alagbu (2011) he said that originally from creation, God built the human body (machine) specifically for movement (locomotion), which explains why throughout history, man had to be

physically active in order to procure his daily food, defend himself etc. He went further to say that present improved standard of living had led to decreased emphasis on physical fitness and locomotive power inherent in man; and that one of the major health problems of man today is, "physical-in-activity".

Alagbu, (2011) further more described in-activity as an undesirable lifestyle which represents a risk factor for good health, thereby implying that up to 95% of the Nigerian populace (which includes staff and even undergraduates, (university students), need one form of exercise of the other. Furthermore



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he went on to say that most people consider themselves to be healthy, unless they experience some overt signs of illness. Some “perceived” healthy people unknown to them, have some form of chronic degenerative diseases such as coronary heart disease (CHD), Smoldering and progressively approaching the point of causing major health complications, including sudden death.

According to Anejor (2006) he said that the gradual but steady automation and mechanization on the lives of most Nigerians today, undoubtedly could be said to be a type of blessing, however the physical in-activity accompanying this development brings disastrous effect or consequences on both youths and young adults especially the sedentary workers.

Furthermore Alagbu (2012) observed that from history the ancient Greeks (where education took its roots) believed that the main idea of educating a man was to produce an individual that would be mentally and physically well balanced. According to him the Greeks believed that regular physical exercises through recreation, were not only necessary for the development and maintenance of optimal level of health, but it also contributes to youthful appearance, increase in physical work-capacity and decreases early disability and sudden death. According to Adebayo & Omaye (2007) they said that in the United States of America alone, that there are as many as 250,000 deaths per year which are attributable to lack of regular physical activity.

They went further to say that in addition that studies that followed large groups of individuals for many years, have documented the protective effects of physical activity for a number of non-cardiovascular chronic diseases, such as non-insulin dependent diabetes, hypertension, osteoporosis and colon cancer. They said that in contrast we see a higher death rate in those individuals with low levels of physical fitness. They went further to say that it is both psychologically and physiologically healthy to incorporate a daily regimen of exercise into our daily life-style, and listed such activities like jogging (running) cycling & swimming, which they said results to increased blood flow to the heart, lowered resting heart rate, increased the capacity of the lungs to deliver large quantities of oxygenated blood to all parts of the body, lowered both blood pressure, and blood lactate levels. According to Akinkugbe (2001) he noted that the greatest killer disease among ages 15 and above in Nigeria is heart disease. He went further to say that it was in realization of this fact that the Nigerian Heart foundation on annual basis, organize annual walk and Golf (tournaments to emphasize the

importance of physical exercise, noting, that many Nigerians don't exercise regularly.

According to WHO (2006) they observed that regular participation in physical activities help children and young people (youths) to build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints, helps to control body weight, reduce fat and develop efficient functioning of the heart and lungs.

Prentice (1999) stated that among adolescents, the more often they participate in physical activities, the less likely they are to use tobacco. It has also been found that children who are more physically active perform better academically (Who 2006, Fahey et al 2003)

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses guided the study:-

H01 Perception of exercise as psychogenic aid in the improvement of cardiovascular health will not significantly influence the level of sports (exercise), participation among young academic staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, (UNIZIK) Awka.

H02 Perception of exercise as psychogenic aids in the improvement of cardiovascular health of an individual will not significantly reduce level of persuasion or coercion of young academic staff to participate in sports exercises more actively/regularly.

### **Method**

The descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprises of all young male and female academic staff of six faculties of UNIZIK Awka. The total sample of (102) one hundred and two young academic staff from the various six faculties of education, Social Sciences, Management Sciences, Arts, Engineering and Law, of Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK) Awka campus were selected. The simple random sampling techniques were utilized to select 17 samples from each of the faculties.

The research instrument was a modified Likert-type questionnaire with four point-rating scales of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The instrument was pilot tested on 20 young academic staff from faculty of Health sciences Nnewi Campus, who were not part of the study, and it yielded a reliability index of 0.81.

The analysis of the data utilized the chi-square inferential statistics at 0.05 level of significance.



From table II, the  $X^2$  shows that the critical or table value is 12.59, while the calculated value is 113.05 at 0.05 alpha level, at 6 degree of freedom (df). In view of this fact that the calculated value is greater than the critical value, the null hypothesis was not accepted at  $X^2 = 113.05$ ;  $df = 6$ ,  $P > 0.05$ . This means that active participation in physical exercises is willingly done without coercion or persuasion, because the young academic staff of UNIZIK perceives it as psychogenic aid in the improvement of their cardiovascular health. The implication of this therefore is that it will result to easy administration and organization of sporting activities among these young academic staff of UNIZIK (Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka) if adequate sports facilities are provided. Furthermore, this implies that the more people are aware of the psychological and physiological benefits inherent in regular physical exercises, they will without persuasions or coercions; willingly participate in regular physical exercises, thereby leading to easier administration of sports.

### Discussion

Only 86 questionnaires out of the 102 distributed were properly filled and returned, representing 84.3%. While 16 or 15.7% were either not properly filled or returned, hence were not used for the study.

Looking at the two tables generated by the researchers in this study, they indicated that the frequencies of responses in table I showed that an average of two hundred and thirty-six (236) responses which represents 68.6% of the sample population used in the study, agreed with the statements. One hundred and eight (108) of the respondents representing 31.4% of the sample population disagreed with the statements used for testing hypothesis one.

Table II showed that the frequency of respondents responses to statements were as follows, one hundred and seventy-three (173) representing 67.1% of the sample population agreed with the statements used to test hypothesis two, while only eighty-five (85) of them, representing 32.9% of the sample population disagreed with the statements.

Based on the research findings above, the hypothesis that said that perception of exercise as psychogenic aid in the improvement of cardiovascular health will not significantly influence the level of sports (exercise) participation among the young academic staff of UNIZIK Awka was not accepted. Which means that, better perception of exercise participation as psychogenic

aid in the improvement of cardiovascular health of an individual, has significant influence on level of young academic staff participation in sports (exercises) activities, willingly without persuasion/coercion. The result of this research finding tends to be in agreement with the research work of Cullen (1980) who carried out a study on improvement in work done in Belgium. In the research two teams of workers complementarily worked a four hour shift, where one team was exposed to spending two hours on physical exercises at ergonomically designed step benches, his research revealed that there was a 25% improvement in work done by the team exposed to exercise for two hours per day, on ergonomically designed step benches. The result of this study equally corroborates the report of Okuneye (2002) who said that regular exercises improve individual health status.

This study is also in line with Alagbu (2012) who said that one of the major health problems of man today is "physical in – activity" which he described as an undesirable life-style which represents a risk – factor for good health and suggests that up to 95% of the entire Nigerian populace (which includes) young academic staff of UNIZIK, need one form of exercise or the other daily, in order to maintain a good health. The study further supports Anejo (2006) who stated that, conditioning the body through regular exercises enables the individual to meet emergencies more effectively and in turn preserve health and to avoid disability and perhaps even death.

Based on the findings from table II that better perception of the fact that exercises are psychogenic aid in the improvement of cardiovascular health, will not significantly result to reduction in persuasion or coercion of young academic staff of UNIZIK to participating in regular sports exercises, was not accepted.

Consequently this therefore means that a better perception that exercises are psychogenic aid in the improvement of cardiovascular health, will significantly result to reduction in persuasion or coercion of young academic staff of UNIZIK to participate in sports exercises regularly. This findings therefore is in agreement with Olayede (2004) and Ekpu (2006) who all stated that pleasant perception of the values of exercises, not only increased ones energy, productivity and ability to cope with tensions of life, but that it may also add some years to ones life as well. The findings of this research equally supports the submissions of Armstrong and Bridle (1991) in their research where they stated that exercises has more to

contribute to human happiness, positive mood, decreased anxiety, depression and elevated level of self esteem.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is hereby concluded that better perception of exercises as psychogenic aid in the improvement of cardiovascular health, leads to reduction in persuasion or coercion of young academic staff of UNIZIK to participating in physical exercises, which invariably implies easier sports administration and management.

Regular exercises, like in preventive medicine, could be likened to the introduction of a weak-disease-causing germ into the body system, in order to enable the body develop corresponding antigen (body soldiers) to fight the disease in future; regular physical exercises serves as body soldiers that fights against cardiovascular diseases.

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that the young academic staff of UNIZIK, though they are young, know and perceive exercise as psychogenic aid in the improvement of cardiovascular health, hence they are willing without much persuasion or coercion to participate in regular physical activities, if the necessary sports facilities are available and easily accessible.

It is therefore being recommended that government should construct better sports facilities in UNIZIK Awka. This will enable the up-coming young academic staff have sufficient sports facilities to enable them exercise themselves regularly at the end of work period each day. This in turn which will result to increased work capacity, longer years of productive service to the university, by these set of young academic staff. Thereby resulting to the emergence of future strong, viral and productive academicians even in their old age.

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