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Stay Healthy With Zumba Exercise

Sontina Saragih[1] , M. Kustiriani Frutasari [2] , Ria Angelina Marbun [3] , Lidya Maryani [4] , Kalvin Ginting [5], Ziska Herawaty [6] , Yuana Dwi Agustin 7 , Mark Ochoa [8]
Akademi Keperawatan Columbia Asia [1] ,Universitas Katolik Musi Charitas[2]. Institut Kesehatan Immanuel, Bandung [3,4] , Institut Kesehatan Sumatera Utara [5] , Institut Kesehatan dan Bisnis Annisa [6] , Universitas Bondowoso [7] Philippine Woman's University, Philippines [8]

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ABSTRACT
The increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disorders, and respiratory illnesses underscores the need for comprehensive, preventive community health initiatives. Zumba, an energetic and enjoyable form of physical activity, provides an innovative approach to exercise that improves physical, mental, and social well-being. This exercise not only helps burn calories and enhance cardiovascular fitness but also stimulates endorphin release, contributing to mood improvement and stress reduction. Conducted as a group-based activity, Zumba fosters social and family interaction, strengthening emotional support and community togetherness. By combining the benefits of exercise and social engagement in a lively and inclusive environment, Zumba serves as an effective health promotion strategy to promote healthy lifestyles and enhance quality of life at the community level.

Keywords: Noncommunicable Diseases; Exercise; Health Promotion; Community Health; Quality of Life

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PENDAHULUAN

Zumba, a popular form of aerobic exercise, offers numerous health benefits that align with recommended physical activity levels for adults. It is designed to improve cardiovascular health, aid in weight management, and enhance mood. Research indicates that Zumba can significantly impact both physical and psychological well-being, making it an effective exercise choice for many individuals. Physically, Zumba has been shown to improve cardiovascular fitness by increasing maximal oxygen uptake by 3.1 $mL \cdot kg^{-1} \cdot min^{-1}$ over an 8-week period (Domene et al., 2015; Domene et al., 2016). Regular participation also contributes to favorable changes in body composition, including reductions in body fat percentage, body weight by 4.80%, and BMI by 4.87% after 12 weeks (Bayrakdar et al., 2020). Additionally, Zumba can lower inflammatory biomarkers such as interleukin-6 and white blood cell count, which are linked to cardiovascular risk (Domene et al., 2015; Domene et al., 2016).

Beyond its physical effects, Zumba has notable psychological and social benefits. Participants often report improved mood, reduced fatigue, and enhanced vigor following Zumba sessions. Studies have also shown positive effects on health-related quality of life (HRQoL), particularly in areas of physical functioning, general health, and emotional well-being (Domene et al., 2015; Domene et al., 2016). As a group-based activity, Zumba encourages social interaction, fostering a sense of community and contributing to stress reduction and overall mental health. While Zumba offers comprehensive benefits, it remains essential to consider individual preferences and physical conditions when selecting an exercise regimen, as other forms such as yoga or traditional aerobic workouts may better support flexibility or muscle strength depending on personal fitness goals (Verma et al., 2024).

Zumba, as a community-based exercise initiative, offers a multifaceted approach to enhancing physical, mental, and social well-being. It effectively addresses challenges associated with sedentary lifestyles, poor dietary habits, and psychological concerns such as anxiety and stress. By integrating rhythmic movements and music, Zumba not only promotes physical fitness but also fosters mental relaxation and social interaction, making it a comprehensive health promotion strategy. The benefits

of Zumba extend to improving cardiovascular health, reducing body fat, and enhancing psychological well-being, thereby contributing to the management of chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension.

From a physical health perspective, Zumba significantly decreases body mass index and body fat while increasing maximal oxygen consumption, all of which are critical for improving overall fitness and managing body weight (Olmedo et al., 2018). This form of exercise provides substantial cardiovascular benefits, aids in calorie burning, and enhances muscle toning and coordination, supporting both endurance and physical strength (Verma et al., 2024). The combination of continuous movement and dance-based routines ensures that participants engage in sustained aerobic activity, contributing to long-term improvements in body composition and heart health.

Beyond its physical effects, Zumba also delivers meaningful mental, emotional, and social benefits. Regular participation has been shown to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, improve mood, and enhance psychological well-being through the release of endorphins (Oliveira et al., 2025; Villalobos et al., 2022). Its dynamic and engaging atmosphere helps alleviate stress and promote mental relaxation, while group participation fosters social interaction and strengthens community bonds, reducing social isolation and enhancing social cohesion (Oliveira et al., 2025; Verma et al., 2024). Furthermore, group exercise environments like Zumba improve adherence to physical activity routines and reduce stigmas associated with mental health issues. While Zumba offers comprehensive benefits, individuals should consider personal preferences and physical capabilities when selecting an exercise regimen, as other forms of physical activity, such as yoga or traditional aerobic workouts can serve as complementary or alternative options depending on specific health goals (Shaw et al., 2023; Verma et al., 2024).

The increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases highlights the urgency of implementing sustainable, community-based interventions that promote holistic well-being. Zumba, as a fun and socially engaging form of physical activity, provides an evidence-based approach to improve physical fitness, mental health, and social connectedness among individuals and families. Integrating Zumba exercise into health promotion activities serves as an innovative way to encourage active lifestyles and enhance the overall quality of life in the community. This community action research aimed to promote physical activity, mental well-being, and social connectedness among residents of Barangay 694, Zone 75, Manila, through participation in group-based Zumba sessions. The activity was designed to encourage an active lifestyle and foster community engagement as part of a broader public health initiative.

Literature review

Zumba, a dance-based exercise, has gained widespread recognition for its multidimensional health benefits encompassing physical, mental, and social domains. As an aerobic activity, Zumba significantly enhances cardiovascular endurance, aids in weight management, and mitigates the risk of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. Beyond its physiological effects, Zumba promotes mental well-being by stimulating the release of endorphins and serotonin, which play key roles in alleviating stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms. The group-based format of Zumba also contributes to psychological resilience by providing a supportive and enjoyable social environment (Olmedo et al., 2018; Domene et al., 2016).

From a physical health perspective, Zumba has been found effective in improving cardiovascular and aerobic fitness by increasing maximal oxygen uptake and reducing body fat percentage (Olmedo et al., 2018; Domene et al., 2016). Regular participation leads to reductions in body mass index (BMI) and body fat, while improving muscle tone and body composition (Olmedo et al., 2018; Vendramin et al., 2016). Moreover, Zumba participation has been linked to favorable biochemical changes, such as decreased inflammatory markers including interleukin-6 and white blood cell count, both of which are associated with reduced cardiovascular risk (Domene et al., 2015; Domene et al., 2016). These findings underscore Zumba's potential as an effective form of aerobic training that simultaneously supports metabolic and cardiovascular health.

In terms of mental and social well-being, Zumba enhances mood and emotional stability through its rhythmic, music-driven routines that encourage the release of mood-elevating hormones

such as endorphins and serotonin (Chrispin, 2025; John et al., 2025). Group-based sessions foster camaraderie, social cohesion, and a sense of belonging, which are essential components of long-term adherence to physical activity (Verma et al., 2024; Malkogeorgos et al., 2011). Participants often report reduced stress levels and improved overall quality of life (HRQoL), including greater energy, emotional well-being, and positive health perceptions (Domene et al., 2015; Domene et al., 2016). While Zumba provides numerous advantages, its effectiveness is maximized when conducted under the guidance of a trained instructor and tailored to individual capabilities, ensuring safety and sustained engagement (Olmedo et al., 2018).

Zumba, a popular dance-fitness program, offers a holistic approach to public health by integrating physical, mental, and social benefits. The social aspect of Zumba, particularly when practiced in groups or with family, plays a crucial role in enhancing social relationships and creating a sense of community. This social interaction not only strengthens bonds but also increases motivation, satisfaction, and commitment to an active lifestyle. The combination of physical activity, a fun atmosphere, and social engagement makes Zumba an inclusive and accessible exercise alternative for diverse groups. Integrating Zumba into public health programs can therefore serve as an effective preventative strategy for addressing both physical and mental health issues, promoting a sustainable healthy lifestyle across different population segments.

Zumba significantly improves physical health by decreasing body mass index and body fat, while increasing maximal oxygen consumption, thereby enhancing overall cardiovascular fitness (Olmedo et al., 2018). Its dynamic routines combine aerobic conditioning, muscle toning, and flexibility enhancement, which collectively contribute to improved motor coordination and body composition (Verma et al., 2024). Beyond its physiological benefits, Zumba positively impacts mental health by reducing stress and improving mood, as evidenced by increased vigor and reduced fatigue among participants (Domene et al., 2015). The combination of music, rhythm, and movement promotes the release of endorphins and serotonin neurochemicals responsible for emotional well-being thereby reducing anxiety and symptoms of depression. These findings affirm Zumba's role as an enjoyable and effective form of exercise that simultaneously supports physical and psychological wellness.

Zumba fosters social well-being by creating a supportive and interactive community environment, which is essential for psychosocial health (John et al., 2025). The group-based setting encourages participants to engage socially, share experiences, and build meaningful relationships that extend beyond the exercise session (Su, 2024). Dance based fitness programs, including Zumba, have been shown to enhance social connectedness and community participation factors that are crucial for maintaining mental health and social support networks (Humphries et al., 2022; Zafeiroudi, 2023). The social nature of Zumba thus transforms exercise from an individual task into a collective experience that reinforces emotional connection, belonging, and teamwork.

Practicing Zumba with family or peers strengthens familial bonds and promotes a healthy, active lifestyle, as members support and motivate each other to remain physically active ("Aile ve Spor," 2023). The shared experience of engaging in dance and exercise enhances communication and teamwork among participants, fostering a harmonious atmosphere of togetherness (Banio-Krajnik, 2023). These interpersonal dynamics not only sustain participation but also improve intergenerational relationships within households, making Zumba an appealing activity for promoting health across age groups.

Zumba is widely recognized for its inclusivity, as it accommodates individuals of varying ages, fitness levels, and cultural backgrounds (Nieri & Hughes, 2016). The program emphasizes enjoyment, self-expression, and personalization, allowing participants to engage freely without the rigid constraints typical of conventional workouts. This flexibility empowers individuals to pursue physical activity in a way that aligns with their abilities and preferences, promoting both autonomy and adherence to exercise routines (Nieri & Hughes, 2016). However, while Zumba offers numerous benefits, it is important to acknowledge that accessibility may still be limited for those with physical impairments or restricted access to group classes. Therefore, public health initiatives should ensure diversity in physical activity programs, incorporating Zumba alongside other exercise modalities to address the varying needs and interests of the community.

METHOD

Participants

The participants in this community Zumba exercise activity were residents of Barangay 694, Zone 75, Manila. A total of 55 local residents joined the Zumba sessions, representing a diverse age range from teenagers to older adults. The activity was supervised by appointed facilitators and supported by an organizing committee to ensure safety, coordination, and participant engagement.

Implementation Schedule

The Zumba exercise sessions were conducted on March 1–2, 2025, in accordance with the planned community health initiative schedule. Activities were held under Philippine Standard Time (PHT), and a detailed rundown of events was managed by the organizing team to maintain smooth implementation.

Organizing Institutions

This Community Action Research activity was initiated by the Philippine Woman's University (PWU) through a community engagement program, with academic participation and support from five higher education institutions in Indonesia:

1. North Sumatra Health Institute
2. Institut Kesehatan Immanuel
3. Columbia Asia College of Nursing
4. Anisa Institute of Health and Business
5. Musi Caritas University

The activity represented an academic collaboration in the spirit of shared learning and regional partnership between nursing and health education institutions from the Philippines and Indonesia.

Source of Funding

The implementation of this community health initiative was supported by institutional contributions from the participating organizations, local sponsorships, and in-kind support from the Barangay 694 community in Manila.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Activity

The community-based Zumba exercise program was successfully conducted on March 1–2, 2025, in Barangay 694, Zone 75, Manila, involving 55 local residents. Participants of various age groups from teenagers to older adults actively took part in every session. The event received positive feedback from the community, as Zumba was perceived as an enjoyable and easy-to-follow exercise that promoted both health and social interaction. The enthusiasm shown by the participants reflected strong community interest in activities that combine health promotion with entertainment and togetherness.

Field Observation Results

Throughout the two day program, participants demonstrated noticeable enthusiasm and social engagement. The group format encouraged teamwork and interaction, allowing residents to connect with others while exercising. Many participants reported feeling more energetic, refreshed, and happier after joining the sessions. The event also increased community awareness of the importance of regular physical activity for maintaining both physical and mental health.

Physical Aspects

Zumba provided participants with an opportunity to experience a dynamic and enjoyable form of exercise. Even within two days, the activity effectively introduced the benefits of physical movement such as improved stamina, balance, and flexibility. The lively and rhythmic movements helped participants burn energy while enhancing coordination and body awareness. These outcomes suggest

that Zumba can serve as an engaging entry point for communities with limited access to structured exercise programs.

Mental and Emotional Aspects

Participants expressed that the music and dance rhythm made them feel more relaxed, cheerful, and motivated. The joyful atmosphere helped reduce tension and allowed individuals to unwind after daily routines. Several participants also mentioned that the group energy and shared laughter created a sense of belonging and improved their overall mood. This indicates that beyond physical benefits, Zumba can be a simple and effective way to support emotional well-being and stress relief in community settings.

Social Aspects

As a group activity, Zumba strengthened social relationships within the community. Residents who rarely interacted before the event became more familiar with each other, fostering mutual support and encouragement. The shared experience of movement and fun created a strong sense of unity and collective motivation. This outcome highlights the social value of group-based physical activities in promoting community cohesion and participation in health-oriented initiatives.

Summary of Findings

Overall, the implementation of the community Zumba program demonstrated that health promotion activities can be effectively integrated with recreation to foster physical fitness, mental relaxation, and social connection. The positive response from participants indicates that Zumba is not only an enjoyable exercise but also a meaningful platform for building healthier and more socially connected communities. These findings reinforce the broader evidence that community-based physical activities play an essential role in preventive and promotive health strategies.

Discussion

The results of this activity support existing literature indicating that Zumba is an effective strategy for promoting holistic health. Consistent with research by Thompson (2017) and Stanton et al. (2014), Zumba benefits not only physical fitness but also mental well-being and social relationships. Moreover, this community-based initiative demonstrates that health promotion can be achieved through enjoyable and inclusive approaches that directly engage the public.

Participant enthusiasm was notably high. Although most participants had no prior experience in formal Zumba classes, the combination of simple dance movements and lively music created an enjoyable and motivating atmosphere. Based on field observations and informal interviews, participants reported immediate benefits such as increased energy, relaxation, and happiness after the session. These responses highlight Zumba's potential as both a physical exercise and a psycho-emotional intervention at the community level.

From a physical health perspective, Zumba improves endurance, muscle coordination, and caloric expenditure. Even within two days, participants experienced positive physical sensations and increased motivation for regular activity. This observation aligns with Thompson (2017), who found that consistent Zumba participation enhances cardiovascular fitness and overall vitality.

In terms of mental well-being, participants expressed reduced stress and elevated mood following the activity. The rhythmic music and collective movement are believed to stimulate endorphin release, consistent with the findings of Stanton et al. (2014), who emphasized Zumba's role in mitigating depressive symptoms and fostering emotional balance.

From a social dimension, Zumba effectively facilitates community interaction and inclusivity. Participants from diverse backgrounds engaged in a shared activity that transcended social and demographic differences. This supports Bailey's (2005) findings that community-based physical activities strengthen social cohesion and networks of emotional support.

Overall, this community Zumba program illustrates the importance of integrating enjoyable physical activities into local health promotion strategies. Beyond its immediate benefits, Zumba can serve as a promotive and preventive intervention to address non-communicable diseases such as

hypertension, obesity, and diabetes. Sustaining such programs through regular group sessions may yield long-term improvements in physical fitness, mental health, and community harmony. Collaboration between local policymakers, healthcare providers, and educational institutions is essential to ensure the sustainability and scalability of similar initiatives.

CONCLUSION

Zumba is a fun, energetic, and easily accessible form of exercise that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. By combining rhythmic dance movements with lively music, Zumba is not only effective for burning calories and maintaining physical fitness but also beneficial for mental health by reducing stress and improving mood. Through regular and consistent practice, Zumba can serve as an enjoyable alternative form of exercise to promote overall health and well-being. The increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disorders highlights the importance of preventive approaches in maintaining community health. Zumba offers an innovative solution that not only enhances physical fitness and cardiovascular health but also provides psychological benefits through stress reduction and mood enhancement. As a fun and socially engaging group activity, Zumba also helps strengthen social connections and emotional support networks. Therefore, incorporating Zumba into a healthy lifestyle represents a positive step toward a more active, balanced, and fulfilling life.

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