

## A COMPARATIVE CULTURAL STUDY OF GENDER AFFECTED PERCEPTIONS IN MUZAFFARABAD CITY AND QUETTA CITY

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the perceptions about gender and workouts like aerobics and yoga associated with specific gender group in a multicultural societal setup. This is a comparative analysis on metropolitan cities of Muzaffarabad and Quetta and conducted a survey through questionnaires. The data was collected from randomly selected men and women who regularly visit gyms for health fitness. The findings of the study showed that there seemed no glaring difference of opinion among men and women of two cities about group-based exercises. The men and women of both cities, despite different geographical and cultural scenario, accept the culturally set norms about gendered workouts. It was observed that group exercise like aerobics and yoga are particularly chosen and preferred by women. The group exercise classes are not reported to be arranged for men in both Muzaffarabad and Quetta city due various reasons.

**Keywords:** Gender, Perception, Workout, Group, Exercise.

### INTRODUCTION

Exercise is a strategic, organized and repetitive corporeal movement that is performed to tone up the body within particular standards and requirements for appropriate fitness (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (2010). Exercise is bodily movement and suitability or a physical activity that allows muscular shrinkage and enlargement by releasing energy. Fitness is the competency to fulfil everyday actions and responses to various everyday confrontations with energy. For this, gyms are popular sites for people to visit regularly to exercise. Gyms are equipped with up-to-date machinery and trainers to provide services at various fee scales and services include guidance for solo exercises and group workouts. Solo workouts do not necessarily need guidance or trainers, but the formalities of group exercises cannot be met without a leader-cum-trainer. The International Dance Exercise Association (IDEA) offered the consequences of various studies on gyms and other options for exercise opportunities and found that an average of 38 types of cardiovascular and strength-based group exercise classes are available on a weekly basis, with an average of 16 members in every class. Yoga and Pilates classes are popular group exercises were popular (International Dance Exercise Association,

2010). It has been reported that 44% of health club consumers exercises in groups (International Health, Racquet, and Sports club Association, 2009).

Although, group exercise classes are available in almost every gym, gender differences still exist in group exercise classes, as the participants who favor the option are only females (Randell et al., 2004). It is important to know why the group exercise participants were females. These limitations are caused by the lack of data collection on the gender of participants among the group fitness classes in gymnasiums and studios that privately provide health and fitness programs. Consequently, gender and gender-preferred group exercises face a lack of research leading to the purpose of the present study. Thus, the present study sought to understand differences among the behaviors of male and female exercises and group exercises, as well as the preferences that are gendered inspired in two geographically and culturally variant cities of Pakistan.

### **Literature Review**

#### **History of group exercises:**

The physician Kenneth Cooper researched on exercises for fit bodies through aerobic activity in the 1960s. The Greek word aerobic refers to air, aerobic movement that promotes cardiovascular suitability to increase the flow of oxygenated blood through the body (Aerobics, 2010). Running and cycling are aerobic activities. It was in 1960-1970, that Jacki Sorensen, a life-long dancer, developed an exercise program for U.S. Air Force officers' wives on television with a closed circuit, which termed as aerobic dance. Aerobic dance classes became a means of deliberate workouts in 1980s (Kennedy-Armbruster & Yoke, 2009). In the early 1980s, The Aerobics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA) and the International Dance Exercise Association (IDEA), were developed as fitness associations to certify and educate aerobic dance instructors. However, at high impact, aerobic dance causes serious injuries (Kennedy-Armbruster & Yoke, 2009). Therefore, the initiative for a low-impact aerobic dance endorsed the aerobic benefits with a strong effect of aerobic dance lacking danger of wounds, as the workout was conducted in a small space. Therefore, Pilates and yoga were developed as step aerobics. These new classes involved rhythmic dance moves or aerobic exercises led by instructors. Aerobic dance is regarded as a dated term that attracts both genders and ages (Schroeder, 2008).

#### **Group exercises**

A group of people led by an instructor participant s in group exercises (Dolan, 2008). These exercise instructors are usually certified and educated in workout science to lead the group into oriented exercise classes in groups (Brehm, 2003). These classes aim to fulfil and meet the participants' goals by strengthening cardiorespiratory power, increasing muscular strength and endurance, and promoting stretch and balancing power (Kennedy-Armbruster & Yoke, 2009). Group exercise classes started with warm up and active bounces to increase the heart rate. It proceeds with exercises that are intended to be conducted in form of an organized class. Lastly, the group classes are wound up with a cool down that lessens the heart rate with a stretch of the body. Group exercises provide multiple benefits, such exercising in a harmless and beneficial way, with an incentive for good health and fitness in a communal setting (Thompson, 2008). The exercise participants'

are of the opinion that group workouts are assistants for them to follow the exercise program because it takes place according to a preset day, time, and venue. Moreover, in group exercises the participants obtain instant responses from the instructor on the kind and accomplishment of an exercise to avoid wounds and inspire an influential workout (Annesi, 2001). However, some people desire to complete their workouts on their own time and terms. Group exercises are not designed for everyone, as exercising is a personal preference. Additionally, sex variances in group exercise need to be examined.

#### **Changes in group exercise**

The fitness industry undergoes frequent changes over time. In this scenario, aerobic dance classes have emerged as group exercises. There are many gymnasium schedules that do not even mention female group workout classes, but females still participate in group exercise (Antrim, 2005). It is important to know why men hesitate to join group exercise along with some females and men said that they did not like choreographed dancing and coordination (Freytag, 2008). Additionally, men are reported to feel conscious of themselves frightened, and obstinate in group exercise classes (Horton, 2010). A constant theme suggested that the word aerobics stirred the reflection and imagination of dancing females in various gestures, which cast men. Popular media, however, suggests that men should try group classes such as, camping, cycling, yoga, and Pilates (Nathan-Gardner, 2010). Men can avoid choreography by engaging in sports and athletic-inspired exercises, without music. Although, men's exercise participation has increased, it is still not equal to that of female participation.

#### **Gendered Masculinity and Femininity in Exercise Behaviors**

An obvious variance in exercise movements and preferences among males and females were reported in gymnasium scenarios. Hence, mostly males were reported in the weight room, and most females were reported to be present in the group exercise rooms. This male and female divide is dependent on the social standards of gender and stereotyping that date back to group exercise history (Block, 1991). Therefore, it is important to identify the gender in strength and exercise actions.

### **Male and female body ideals**

Standards of masculinity against femininity develops gender. Corporeal looks and activities describe gender (Courtenay, 2000). Masculine or feminine contemplations that are socially and culturally constructed are rather, unstable (Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006). A slender and well-developed masculine physique is powerful and dominant (Brown & Graham, 2008). Other ways of proclaiming masculinity are through lack of engaging in healthy living and in risky behaviors (Mahalik, Burns, & Syzdek, 2007); the absence of emotions and reluctance to pursue assistance (Davies, et al., 2000); and through competitive determination and violence. By contrast, feminine individualities include expressive, inactive, non-competitive or aesthetically pleasing.

#### *History of masculine and feminine ideals*

In sports, physical activity has conservatively been essential to masculinity (Courtenay, 2000), although resources of working out and descriptions of fit figures have been altered for both males and females (Block, 1991). For example, in post-World War II, males enjoyed the shared option to indulge in sports activities, but there was no such activity or option for females. Today, both males and females play sports (Gill & Kamphoff, 2010). Likewise, the history of group exercises, such as aerobic dancing, has also changed too (Antrim, 2005). However, there is still a lack of male participation in workouts in group classes. Davies et al. (2000) discovered that the desire for knowledge or misinformation was a blockade that prohibits male involvement in health-related activities.

### **The Gendered Spaces**

The individualities of manliness and womanliness are physically founded and separated at the gym. Males pursue workouts and actions that can increase their muscular physique (Block, 1991). In contrast, females are considered the best option for aerobic group exercise classes, and this workout is considered a female's sphere. Aerobic dance began as a group exercise. Therefore, dancing was regarded as purely female movement that lacked the spirit of competition and promoted an activity, whereas other competitive sports were for males. Females are activated in shaping their muscles, but not in building them. The reason behind is not to lose the female shape of the body.

The aerobic dance and yoga did not challenge much, although they emerged as a gender-neutral fitness set-up. Thus, females lead group exercise classes, and males engage in extra types of exercise. Johansson (1996) asserted that gendered spaces aid gym-goers to outline their bodies and individualities as per their being female or male at the gym. Thus, these gendered spaces at the gym assist females to look womanlier, and males to appear more masculine as per set communal standards, as females avoid the addition of muscle to their forms. Thus, disobeying gendered spaces can lead to a social ridicule. Therefore, men participating in a group exercise class or a woman lifting weights are disliked by the opposite gender, as it threatens the gender order and comfort zone. Moreover, to build muscles, a man preferred to go to the weight room rather than a group exercise class. This is also because there were not many males in the group exercise classes. Similarly, the dread of being ridiculed motivates a woman to exercise a group in which females have the body she desires (Herrmann, 2012).

Many studies have conducted on corporeal movement. A study conducted on college students discovered that college males chose athletic and strength actions, whereas college females favored aerobics, dance, and yoga (Keating, Guan, Pinero, & Bridges, 2005). Research on adult populations in the United States rediscovered that males favor weight lifting and golf, and females favor aerobics (Simpson, et al., 2003). Riemer and Visio (2003) found aerobics to be feminine activities, whereas football and wrestling were masculine activities. Burke, Carron, and Eys (2006) found that college males enjoy exercising alone or with somebody but not in a group. On the other hand, college females preferred workouts with someone or exercising in a class setting and rarely exercised by themselves or alone.

The literature review presented a lack of research on the perceptions of people who are frequent visitors of gymnasiums about exercise and group workouts in the Pakistani scenario. These perceptions reflected the thoughts and opinions were culturally influenced and created. Regular gymnasium visitors possess a culturally based gender opinion about the types and influences of exercises, and the culturally affected gender perception influences the approach to group exercises such as yoga and aerobics. Thus, the research ventured to determine the perceptions of men and women about exercise and to explore their

opinions about exercising in groups as well. This exploration depicts the influence of culture and society on building gendered notions and pre-based opinions on exercise.

### **Methodology**

The methodology of the study comprises theoretical framework and data collection techniques and processes:

#### **Theoretical framework**

#### **The Theory of Planned Behavior and Exercise Behavior**

The present study understands gender differences in exercise and group exercise behavior through the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 2010). TPB rests on a person's attitudes, perceived control of behavior, and social influence. Collectively, these elements affect a person's intents to conduct definite conduct.

Attitude refers the beliefs about a behavior. This suggests that if the behavior will be useful or destructive, relaxed, tough, etc., and if the consequences or result of a certain behavior will be helpful or damaging. The evaluation of outcomes emerges from indulgent behavior. The consequence can either be beneficial or harmful, and can either comply with individual targets. Consequently, opinions and assessment of results formulate a person's attitude. In the realm of workout, if a person trusts that exercise could lead to a specific consequence, such as a healthy form, he or she would probably have an optimistic attitude toward exercise. Thus, positive intentions lead to engagement in the actual exercise.

Subjective standards include the opinions of people who mean something to an individual through inspiration to stand and adhere to the meaning of something. For instance, if one's peers suggest that exercise is important, the individual creates a subjective standard that exercise is also important. A person's awareness of what others trust makes one's clarification, incentive, and wish to follow. Thus, the same applies to the workout conduct of friends, which might also lead to genuine exercise.

Lastly, perceived behavioral control consists of some basics and perceived factors, both individual and environmental that possess the capability to comfort or compel involvement in a behavior, such as the location of fitness services, work plan, and family requirements. Possessing power over these variables means achieving a perceived ability to overcome

control variables. For example, if there is no time for an individual to exercise, he might feel lack of control over the situation. However, when finding time to exercise, the individual confronts a sense of control in the situation.

Thus, this study ventures to discover by comparing male and female attitudes (the first construct of the TPB) about exercise, group exercises and whether or not the engage in a group exercise class. Subjective norms (second construct of the TPB) may play a role in the influence of social norms in which females or males utilize group exercises such as aerobics and yoga. These social norms produce subjective norms (friends' opinions affect individuals). Thus, this study seeks to explore male or female intent to engage in group exercise, since the behavior is regarded as male or female enough by the norms of their subjective standards. Finally, perceived behavioral control (the third construct of the TPB) may lead to a lack of intention among males or females of engaging in group exercise. Males may experience private and societal issues that obstruct their intent to exploit group exercises. For example, a male could be only single in the group exercise class or not acquainted with anyone in the group exercise class, which leads to a sense of no control, incapability, or absence of consideration.

Therefore, this study explored the gender gap in group aerobic classes using the Theory of Planned Behavior as a framework. So, the research objectives are, to find gender differences in attitude concerning aerobic group exercise; and to find out gender differences in subjective norms regarding aerobic group exercise; and to find out gender differences in perceived control regarding aerobic group exercise.

#### **Data collection method**

This comparative study used a focus group to gather the data. This comparative study aims to highlight variances and widen the scope of various issues by bringing forward data from different groups and sources (Pickvance, 2005). Thus, comparative analysis stressed on the "explanation of differences, and the explanation of similarities" (Azarian, 2011, p.2) to create relations amid two or more singularities for effective explanations. After gaining participant consensus, the focus groups provided an overall comprehension of gender variances among female and male group exercise participants. Quantitative data was collected from an authorized Theory of

Planned Behavior survey (Rhodes, Courneya, & Jones, 2003).

The questionnaire endeavors to determine variances in attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control of males and females regarding aerobic group exercise. Forty female and 40 male participants were requested to complete the questionnaire from Muzaffarabad City and 40 males and 40 females from Quetta city. In Muzaffarabad city the participants used the gymnasium facilities at the sports complexes Jalalabad, Muzaffarabad, University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Challah campus, University of Azad Jammu and Muzaffarabad, King Abdullah Campus and Chattar Klass in Quetta City, the participants used workout facilities at the Quetta Club, the Musa Stadium gymnasium, and the gymnasium facilities available at Toghi Road. The selection was more of self-selection, as the participants offered to fill in the questionnaire with a curiosity in the area of research. The gym visiting participants are not necessarily those who exercise in groups, but are randomly chosen, whether or not they exercise in groups or not, but spend at least 300 minutes of exercise per week.

### Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from Herrmann et al, (2012). It consists of three appendices; 1<sup>st</sup> appendix collected the demographic information. The 2<sup>nd</sup> appendix focused on sex and exercise and the 3<sup>rd</sup> appendix covered the area of exercise and aerobic group exercise survey. The questionnaire for the focus group covers the attitude that indulged the importance, attitudes, and perception of exercise and group exercise, their being feminine, masculine, or gender-neutral behavior. The questions about subjective norms focused on the effect of peers on exercise and group exercise behaviors, and feelings and experiences of adjustment within the group exercise classes. Lastly, focus group questions about perceived behavioral control inquired about feelings and experiences of success or non-success, which is linked to solo exercise and group exercise and features and elements that affect the sense of achievement. Other focus group questions inquired about the intention, comfort, and changes in group exercise classes for a healthy contribution. Due to lack of time on behalf of the participants, an interview or oral discussion regarding gender and gender specified exercise was not conducted.

### Data analysis procedure

For the purpose of sharing the paper with participants who filled out the questionnaire, the researcher aimed to keep the paper results as simple as possible by presenting the data in percentage.

### DATA ANALYSIS

In both targeted cities, it took approximately four months' to collect the data. In Muzaffarabad, 60 males and 60 females were asked to complete the questionnaires. Six males and nine females refused to participate, three and five forms from each group were not returned, 11 forms by males and six by females were returned incomplete, and out of these, two from each group were personally requested to complete the questionnaire to meet the required number. In Quetta City, sixty males and sixty females were completed the questionnaires. Five and eight forms from each group were not returned. Seven males and six females refused to participate, eight forms by males and six by females were found to be incomplete and two from each group were personally requested to complete the questionnaire to meet the required number.

Forty males and 40 females from Muzaffarabad and 40 males and 40 females from Quetta, who were all regular visitors to the gym, filled the questionnaire. The results from both cities were combined into two groups of males and females and presented as percentages to comparison perceptions of gender and exercise, solo exercise, group exercise among the two gendered groups. The results are as follows;

### APPENDIX A: Demographic Sheet

Table 1 presents the data from Muzaffarabad detailing the intensity of exercise level and hours spent per week by males and females.

**Table: 1**

Muzaffarabad			
Questions	Level	Males 40	Females 40
1. Intensity of exercise	Moderate	15%	60%
	Moderate and vigorous combination	30%	40%
	Vigorous	55%	2%
2. Hours per week	0-10	60%	95%
	10-20	28%	

	20-30	12%	

Table 2 presents the data from Quetta detailing intensity of exercise level and hours spent per week by males and females:

**Table: 2**

Quetta Questions	Level	Males 40	Females 40
Intensity of exercise	Moderate	20%	67%
	Moderate and vigorous combination	48%	33%
	Vigorous	32%	04%
Hours per week	0-10	58%	95%
	10-20	32%	0
	20-30	10%	0

**Table 2**

**APPENDIX B: Gender and Exercise**

Table 3 collectively presents the data gathered on questions pertaining to gender and exercise from males and females in Muzaffarabad and Quetta. The responses were asked in options of, yes and no, and recorded as percentages.

The questions in this section belonged to the following categories:

**I. Questions relating to the Theory of Planned Behavior:**

*a. Attitude*

*b. Subjective norms*

*c. Perceived behavioral control*

**II. A person's reasons and preferences whether or not to involve in aerobic group exercise class**

**Table: 3**

Questions	Males 80		Females 80	
	yes	No	yes	No
Are there any intrinsic gender variance between males and females?	80%	20%	82%	18%
Exercise is an important activity	99%	1%	95%	5%
Group exercise is important	4%	96%	45%	55%
The feminine group exercise classes	aerobics, yoga, Zumba: aerobics, yoga, Zumba, dancing			

The masculine group exercise classes	weight lifting: heavy weight lifting			
The neutral group exercise classes	mat exercises, treadmill, cycling, mat exercises			
My peers effect my wish to exercise?	52	48	49	53
I feel fit in gym/exercise facility?	78	32	58	52
I feel fit in with group exercises?	18	82	78	22
I exercise with accomplishment?	79	21	67	33
I can/ can't successfully participate in a group exercise class?	13	87	75	25
I participate in activities that are comfortable for me?	97	3	92	7
The class format, day/time, and instructor effect my intent for aerobic group exercise?	12	88	88	12
Motivation by incentive persuades me to attend aerobic group exercises classes regularly?	12	88	79	21
The changes in physical environment of aerobic group exercise class could effect my purpose?	52	48	33	67
The changes to utilize aerobic group exercise could be	music, minimum dance steps, more focus on abs and muscles: Instructor, variety gadgets, timing of class			

**APPENDIX C: Exercise and Aerobic Group Exercise Survey**

This part consisted of questions pertaining to:

**Part I: Attitude**

**Part II: Subjective norms**

**Part III: Perceived behavioral control**

The responses received from both cities in this section were represented collectively in percentage:

**Part I: Attitude**

**Table: 4** Exercise is:

Option		Option	
Male	Female	male	female
Useless		useful	
03	02	97	98
Foolish		wise	
00	00	100	100
Harmful		beneficial	
04	10	96	90
Unenjoyable		enjoyable	
17	25	87	75
Unpleasant		Pleasant	
11	15	89	85
Boring		interesting	
20	22	80	78
Stressful		relaxing	
28	30	72	70

**Table :5** Aerobic Group Exercise is:

Option		Option	
Male	Female	male	female
Useless		useful	
89	9	11	91
Foolish		wise	
87	49	13	51
Harmful		beneficial	
53	24	47	76
Unenjoyable		enjoyable	
81	17	19	87
Unpleasant		Pleasant	
80	11	20	89
Boring		interesting	
80	38	20	62
Stressful		Relaxing	
72	38	28	62

**Part II: Subjective norms**

Exercise

- A) The important people in my life think I should exercise often in the upcoming two weeks.

Disagree		Agree	
13	30	87	70

- B) The important people in my life agree with my exercise often in the upcoming two weeks.

Disagree		Agree	
25	35	75	65

Aerobic Group Exercise

- A) The important people in my life think I should participate in group exercise classes frequently in upcoming two weeks.

Disagree		Agree	
90	93	10	07

- B) People who are important to me suggest frequent participation in group exercise classes in the next two weeks.

Disagree		Agree	
95	85	05	15

**Part III: Perceived behavioral control**

Note: Regular exercise is defined as at minimum of 300 minutes per week at a reasonable intensity (e.g., 5 times a week for an hour each session), (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010).

The replies are recorded in the following manner:

Option		option		Option	
Male	Female	male	female	male	Female
s	s	s	s	s	s

- A) Exercising frequently in upcoming two weeks for me would be

Difficult		Do not know		Easy	
25	27	10	44	65	29

How much control I have over exercising in upcoming two weeks?

No control		Do not know		Control	
13	23	00	14	87	64

- B) For the next two weeks, I have a regular control over exercising.

Disagree		Do not know		Agree	
15	23	07	10	78	67

Group Exercise

- A) My partaking in aerobic group exercise in upcoming two weeks would be

Difficult		Do not know		Easy	
92	12	00	06	08	83

My control in partaking in aerobic group exercise in two weeks

No control		Do not know		Control	
00	19	00	00	97	75

B) I control how much I will participate in aerobic group exercise classes over the next two weeks.

Disagree		Do not know		Agree	
89	69	01	06	89	69

**DISCUSSION:**

The analysis revealed that there was no glaring difference in between the results from participants of Muzaffarabad City and Quetta City. As the difference is not too much to be manipulated otherwise, for a comprehensive understanding, a combined discussion is presented below:

The first objective that explored the attitudes of men and women about exercise depicted that attitude as the first construct of the TPB presented no noteworthy sense among females and males with respect to exercise and group exercise. Likewise, both female and male positively viewed both exercise and group exercises as important. Thus, it can be argued that it was usually accredited that exercise in any form is significant. However, females and males performed various types of aerobic exercise. This is consistent with the evidence found in the popular media literature that proposed that males had an unfavorable attitude about exercising in a group. Men have been reported to confront self-consciousness, fear, and clumsy moods during group exercises (Horton, 2010). The present study showed that most males who did not exercise in the aerobic group and some females who did not participate in group exercise said they were unable to follow and thus refused to dance the choreography of the aerobic group exercise class. These people reported that they lacked the organization to follow choreographic instructions. Popular media has also proposed that lacking the harmony of coherence and coordination makes males, in particular, feel themselves useless (Freytag, 2008).

Second, the next objective to explored gendered perceptions about group exercises, and it was found that subjective norms, which were the second construct of the TPB in this study, also was significant for solo exercise and group exercise among women and men. The participants believed that they received more support from peers to be involved in solo workouts compared to group exercise. More precisely, men’s and women’s non-participation in group exercise was found to be generally due to a lack of peer support. However, for males and females who were found to participate in

group exercise, peer support was not required to be involved in either solo exercise or aerobic group exercise. Strangely, males experienced a lesser amount of peer sustenance and commendation to engage in aerobic group exercise than females. Males reported that with some peer reassurance, they could reason to partake in group exercises. Additionally, the literature presented no studies or research where a comparison was made between exercise and group exercise. However, literature depicted that subjective norm had a solid effect on health behaviors (Robinson, Robertson, McCullagh, & Hacking, 2010). However, male avoided activities that were not considered masculine or lacked peer support (Nelson, Kocos, Lytle, & Perry, 2009) and failed to capture their fitness goals. These results support Johansson’s (1996) research on gendered spaces. Thus, males with a desire for muscular bodies always headed to the weight room to work out with weights along and side by side with other males who lifted weights rather than joining group exercise classes such as aerobics. Therefore, physical activity favorites were based on gender, and males favored strength actions such as weight lifting and golf, and females selected aerobics, dance, bicycling, and yoga (Keating, Guan, Pintero, & Bridges, 2005). An Australian study depicted males’ preference for golf, cycling, and running and females’ preference aerobics, tennis, and netball (Ransdell, Vener, & Sell, 2004). Riemer and Visio (2003) found gymnastics and aerobics as group exercise preferences for women, and football and wrestling as masculine activities. Gendered spaces and social prospects influenced the gender divide in exercise behaviors. The study revealed that males choose to exercise with someone or alone rather than in a group exercise class, and females prefer to exercise with someone or in a class setting over exercising alone. Thus, the study revealed that females’ preferences involved to exercising in a group or preferred to work out with a friend or at times alone according to the available flexible workout time. In addition, few males considered and favored aerobic group exercise as a collaborative effort and support. Thus, it is inferred that females and males have certain exercise behavior tendencies that are influenced by peers and normative behaviors. Fitness facilities and exercise resources should be updated to attract new participants. An advertisement of events such as inviting a friend for free to try aerobic group exercise could be helpful to enhance the value and



significance along with the fitness capacity of the workout. This could add to the appeal and attitude of acceptance of exercise behaviors. Some participants reported that their peers did not approve of and liked the exercise type or believed it was too hard to endure. Moreover, the present study described peers' capability to inspire exercise behavior. The idea of visibility in an exercise facility needs to be kept in mind when building exercise spaces and organizing exercise equipment.

The third construct of the TPB, perceived control, depicted that women and men believed that they had more control and reduced trouble indulging in solo than in group exercise. They lacked the ease or emotional state of being misfit in a group exercise class. However, females are reported to experience less control and struggle for strength exercises than men. Thus, perceived control is associated with comfort in the execution of appropriate exercise behaviors. Thus, more ease meant more control of the behavior. Therefore, a new behavior for the group exercise class resulted a lack of control. This results in an inability to complete exercises effectively in front of other people. Research by Nelson, Kocos, Lytle, & Perry (2009) recommended that an absence of assurance prohibited people from using health facilities and exercise. However, the present study also inferred that males who indulged in exercise in the aerobic group were of the opinion that males who did not participate in group exercise were misinformed and deceived about aerobic group exercise requirements and necessities; thus, they perceived it to be a female activity. The concept of exercise has changed from aerobic dance classes to gender-neutral classes such as cycling, camping, and yoga (Schroeder, 2008). The present study also indicated a lack of information or misinformation, as males cited that dance, yoga, and cycling were the only group classes with which males were acquainted. Males did not consider strength classes, camps, and sports classes as group exercise workout classes. Thus, lack of knowledge and misinformation prevented males from participating in group exercises without fitness goals. In contrast, few males who participated in aerobic group exercises shared class workouts as challenging and helpful in accomplishing fitness goals. Although, teased by their peers, they resumed exercise classes. Males who did not participate in aerobic group exercise classes said they were unable to perform exercises in a group due to a lack of perceived control.

Thus, it could be inferred that the gym needs to promote the classes to interest the males towards group exercise classes such as aerobics. The views of males on masculinity and masculine behavior affected their exercise choices. By offering gender neutral classes to males, they would perpetually confront a new experience with a reduced amount of vulnerability to engage in aerobic classes. However, it is not affirmed that advertisement and class offerings will necessarily suggest that males will attend classes as female and male standards are intensely entrenched in culture.

Lastly, the last objective was to explore the opinions that reflected the gendered perceptions about exercise that are affected by culture and society. Thus, it is inferred that Muzaffarabad and Quetta vary in culture and geographic location with differences in language, customs, food, weather, and social setup. However, the cities depicted a variety of glaring differences in the availability of gymnasiums that provided exercise facilities to both men and women, but at different time. However, the data depicted no highlighted variance of opinions, which indicated that despite cultural differences, the cities share similar attitudes and perceptions to exercise and group exercises. Men and women from both cities depicted similar attitudes toward differences in exercises for both genders; thus, they believed and categorized them as gendered exercises.

This discussion, implies that there is no glaring difference in the culturally based opinions of people regarding exercise and group workouts. Although, Muzaffarabad and Quetta are located in different provinces, culturally affected opinions on gender are almost similar. The analysis depicted that although there is a change in people's attitudes and concern for health, they try to adopt a healthy body and live by utilizing the gymnasium facilities; however, their opinions are overshadowed by specific gendered concerns that are culturally based. Thus, even when living in different provinces, men and women depict similar concerns that are influenced by their culture, company, and context. Despite being liberal about choosing to exercise in gymnasiums, they possess a specific selection to indulge in exercises that are culturally approved for each gender and hardly think of breaking the cultural rules. Thus, it is implied that an environment for acceptance and exercising gender-neutral group workouts, such as yoga and aerobics, is a far-fetched dream in the contexts of Muzaffarabad and Quetta.

### Limitations

Limitations of the present study included changing or adding a few questions to enhance the present study. Some modified questions were added to ask about exercise and aerobic group exercises. In the present study, the question of how estimation of time or duration a person spends in gym during an average week created difficulty in calculating the minutes of exercise by some participants. Another limitation is that the sample included only a small number of participants in the focus group. Furthermore, regarding peer support and control to engage in group exercise, most participants had the least experience in group exercise classes. As a result, they confronted the least experience of peer sustenance and lesser control to be involved in aerobic group exercise.

### Recommendations

A range of multiple selections for future studies to be conducted are led open with the present study. The survey from the present study can be utilized by focusing on university students. Similarly, the sample size could be increased, and the study could extend the comparison of results by race, degree or level, and exercise experience. The study could also be conducted by extending it to other exercise services and places, such as community fitness centers and gyms. Different age groups (e.g., boys and girls of certain age groups, school age children, adults, and older adults) were examined. The forthcoming research could also venture to find a connection between behavioral intention and real, actual behavioral results. For instance, males who did not avoid working out in group exercises firmly believed that yoga suited them, but it was not enough to fulfil their fitness and health goals. TPB constructs could also be investigated through intervals of days, weeks, or months in similar groups, as in aerobic or yoga classes. This study provides a variety of options for measuring TPB constructs over time.

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