PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS, SOCIAL NETWORKS AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES ON EXERCISE IDENTITY OF EXERCISE ENTHUSIASTS IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

AJANI RASAQ (Ph.D)
Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education
University of Ilesa, Ilesa
Email: rasaqajani60@gmail.com

&

RAIYEGBEMI SHINA SEGUN
Department of Kinesiology, Health Education and Recreation
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria
Email: segunshinaraiyegbemi@gmail.com

Abstract

The study investigated the forms and patterns of exercises preferred by exercise enthusiasts in Osun State. It also determined the relationship between psychological factors (self-efficacy, body image) and exercise identity of exercise enthusiasts in the study area. In addition, the study assessed the relationship between social network (pear influence, social status) and exercise identity of exercise enthusiasts in Osun State.The study employed the cross – sectional research design. The population for the study comprised all exercise enthusiasts in Osun State with a sample size of 300 exercise enthusiasts. Multistage sampling procedure was adopted for the study. Two instruments were used for this study, one adapted and the other self – developed. They are (i) Exercise Self-efficacy Scale (ESES) by Thilo kroll, Mathew Kehn, Pei-Shu Ho and Suzane Groah (2007) and (ii) a self-develop questionnaire titled Psycho Exercise Identity Scale (PSEIS). The result showed that walking was the predominant form of exercise with 254 (84.7%) of the total responses while a significant portion 2.03±0.96 exercise regularly. There was a significant relationship between the forms and patterns of exercise preferred and exercise identity of exercise enthusiasts. Finally, the result showed that age ($\beta=1.10$, $p<0.05$), gender ($\beta=0.50$, $p<0.01$), and religion ($\beta=0.19$, $p<0.02$) interacted meaningfully with psycho-social factors to influence exercise identity. The study concluded that psycho-social factors (self-efficacy and peer influence) and demographic factors (age and gender) positively influenced exercise identity with self-efficacy having the greatest influence on exercise enthusiasts in Osun State, Nigeria.

Key Words: *Body image, Demographic Influence, Exercise, Exercise Enthusiasts, Exercise Identity, Physical Exercise, Physical Fitness, Psychological Factors, Self-Efficacy, Social Network*

Introduction

"Exercise identity" describes what makes a person unique when they work out compared to others who are in a similar scenario. Active people with strong exercise identities are able to solidify and strengthen their identities via physical activity. Endorsement of this exercise role identity also raises the probability that people will maintain their exercise plans going forward. People may start and keep up more active lifestyles if given the chance to develop strong workout identities. There is a wealth of literature on the topic of exercise behaviour and exercise identity. Results from this study demonstrate that exercise identity is associated with many fitness-related variables, including the amount of time spent exercising each week, how often one exercises, how much effort one feels while exercising, how long one's muscles can withstand, how much body fat one has, and how fit one is overall (Rasquinha & Cardinal, 2017).

When considering the role of exercise in the context of physical activity, it is possible to draw on the theoretical foundations of identity theory. Consequently, exercise identity would influence the reception of signals connected to exercise and the subsequent behaviour changes that occur during exercise. An important part of identity theory is that people are more likely to engage in activities that are linked to their exercise identity, like going for a walk on a sunny evening, if that identity is high on their identity salience hierarchy. Thus, physical exercise is likely to have a significant position in your identity hierarchy if you think it is a vital aspect of who you are, especially when compared to other possible roles. This increases the likelihood that one will engage in fitness behaviours that support this identity (Liardi, 2015; Liardi et al., 2023). The degree to which a person has become physically fit as a result of their exercise routine is an important component of their exercise identity. In order to keep in shape, regular exercise is essential. Weight loss, bone density, muscle strength, joint mobility, physiological health, surgical risk reduction, immune system strength, and overall wellness may all be positively impacted by regular physical activity. Fitness encompasses both health-related and skill-related aspects, as stated by de Oliveira et al. (2023).

The term "fitness" encompasses a wide range of physical abilities, including cardiovascular health, strength training, flexibility, and body composition. Physical exercise has different benefits for different people. While most people do see a small improvement in endurance from aerobic exercise, some may see a twofold increase in oxygen uptake and still others may see no change at all. These differences in response to training are quite large. When people lack a distinct sense of self when it comes to exercise, it might be challenging for them to self-regulate their physical activity. Strachan and Whaley (2023) state that identity is a self-construct that evolves over time, influenced by our social interactions and the broader society (Biber, 2020). According to their definition, our identities are the result of a structured yet intricate assemblage of our beliefs, values, and actions. Cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and certain cancers are

among the more than 25 chronic medical issues linked to regular physical activity (PA) (Rhoders et al., 2017; Kraus et al., 2018). The Canadian government has set exercise guidelines, but adults there don't follow them (Clark et al., 2019). Despite the well-documented benefits of exercise on health and well-being, this persists. This alarming figure is not unique to Canada; in fact, it is more than a third of the global population that is considered to be inactive, as reported by Gutho et al. (2018). Because of this, public health officials continue to prioritise getting more people moving, which necessitates finding ways to get more people to exercise on a regular basis. The majority of what is known about current exercise-related habits is based on studies that used the social cognitive framework. Among the most well-known ideas that might be found within this paradigm is the Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1998). Some examples of comparable theories are the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and the Transtheoretical Model (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982). Although these theories look at behaviour changes from different angles, they all agree that changes in behaviour are caused by a convergence of three factors: perceived capabilities, normative influences, and utility expectations.

Nevertheless, by considering physical activity from many angles, we may enhance our present understanding of behaviour change as it pertains to exercise. Just recently found research suggests that identification has predictive value when it comes to physical activity-related behaviours. A person's identity both gives significance to previous experiences and guides their actions moving forward. Individuals are more likely to act in accordance with their identities when those identities are more visible, according to the identity theory (Strachan, et al., 2013; Burke & Stets, 2022). A person's sense of self may be structured according to the theory of identity, which suggests that it can take on several forms, including that of a parent, a student, and an exerciser (Burke & Stets, 2022). People who exercise more often and are more likely to reach their exercise objectives are more inclined to exercise, even if they do not necessarily identify as exercisers (Paziraei, 2021). Concurrently, research by De Bruijn and Van den Pute (2012) found that those with stronger exercise identities were more likely to exercise and exercised for longer durations each week. Researchers have shown that exercise identity is related to how often, how hard, and for how long people exercise. Even if exercise identity has been under-researched, this remains true. The predictive value of the exercise behaviour model is enhanced when exercise identity is included with other variables, according to research by de Bruijn and van den Putte (2012) and Gillman, Stevens, and Bryan (2021). Therefore, it may be possible to enhance the promotion of physical activity and encourage sustained involvement among the population by analysing physical activity behaviour via alternative frameworks (such as identity theory) in conjunction with conventional social cognitive constructs. How much confidence a person has in their own skills to carry out tasks and achieve objectives is one measure of self-efficacy.

A strong sense of self-efficacy enhances human success and personal happiness in several ways. Confident people see challenging tasks not as threats but as opportunities to learn and grow. An insatiable appetite for discovery and a passion for hands-on learning are fostered by this perceptive perspective. In the future, they remain steadfast in their dedication to accomplishing their ambitious objectives. Despite all that stands in their

way, they keep pushing forward and never give up. Their sense of efficacy and self-confidence is swiftly restored after experiencing setbacks or defeats. According to their view, failure is caused by not trying hard enough or not having enough knowledge or skills. Because they believe they can handle risky situations, they intentionally put themselves in harm's way.

Personal achievements, stress levels, and the risk of depression may all be positively affected by maintaining an optimistic outlook (Bandura, 2006). Researchers have shown that those with greater levels of self-efficacy are more likely to stick to their fitness programs (Picha & Howell, 2018). Several health behaviours, including smoking cessation, weight management, stress reduction, dietary guideline adherence, and regular exercise, are more likely to be successful for those with greater expectations of their own self-efficacy (Van Pay, 2018).

What motivate this study is to capture a holistic view of what drives people to strongly identify with exercise, blending psychological, social, and demographic perspectives.

Statement of the Research Problem

Exercise is a planned, structured, and repetitive physical activity that plays a crucial role in personal development; it enhances physiological and mental functioning and fosters feelings of physical, psychological, and social competence. The most effective method for achieving physical fitness relies on adherence to exercise standards, which is contingent upon self-assessment of exercise identity. This self-evaluation may be affected by self-esteem and self-efficacy, as exercise impacts individuals differently and often requires more time than anticipated to yield desired results. Despite numerous psychological theories and research, the development and maintenance of self-identification or identity in the realm of physical activity requires further scrutiny. Self-definitions of physical activity pertain to elements of the self-concept associated with voluntary engagement in exercise, sports, or recreational activities.

While regular exercise is widely promoted for its health benefits, sustaining a strong exercise identity where individuals see themselves as committed exercisers; remains a challenge. Research has shown that multiple factors contribute to the development and maintenance of exercise identity, yet there is limited understanding of how psychological factors (e.g. self-efficacy, body image), social networks (e.g. peer influence, social status) and demographic variables (e.g. age, gender, religion) interact to shape this identity.

Despite the growing number of fitness communities and public campaigns, many individuals struggle with maintaining long-term exercise habits. This suggests that external influences and personal psychologic attributes play a crucial role in reinforcing or weakening exercise identity. However, existing studies often focus on one dimension-either psychological, social, demographic-without integrating these perspectives into a comprehensive framework.

Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by examining how these three factors collectively influence the exercise identity of enthusiasts. Understanding these relations could provide insights into effective interventions for fostering long term exercise commitment and improving public health strategies.

However, very few individuals are aware of its benefits. Also, negative body image perceptions; peer influence social status and feeling of incapability of individual have prevented many from getting involved in exercise and physical activity. Furthermore, there is dearth in research of the joint effect of psychological, social network and demographic variable of exercise identity in the study area, hence this study.

Research Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant relationship between psychological factors (Self-Efficacy, Body Image) and exercise identity of exercise enthusiasts in Osun State, Nigeria.
2. There will be no significant relationship between Social Networks (Peer Influence, Social Status) and exercise identity of exercise enthusiasts in Osun State.
3. There will be no significant joint effect of psychological and social factors on exercise identity among exercise enthusiasts in Osun State, Nigeria.
4. There will be no significant moderating effect between Age, Gender, Religion on psycho-social factors and exercise identity.

Methodology

Across-sectional research design was adopted for this study. The population for the study comprised all exercise enthusiasts in Osun State, Nigeria with a sample size of 300 exercise enthusiasts drawn using multistage sampling procedure. Two Senatorial Districts (out of three) were purposively selected based on their diverse representation of fitness enthusiasts. Within these SDs, two local government areas (LGAs) with the highest concentration of fitness centres were selected. Simple random sampling was used to select 10 fitness centres, and convenience sampling was employed at the participant level due to accessibility constrains. The study utilized two research instruments: The Exercise Self-Efficacy Scale (ESES) and the Psycho-Social Exercise Identity Scale (PSEIS). The ESES originally developed by Kroll et al (2007), was adopted for the study to align with local fitness activities and terminologies, and to elicit information on the exercise preferences of enthusiasts. The PSEIS was self-developed because no existing instrument adequately captured the combine psychological and social dimensions of exercise identity, it was used to elicit information of exercise identity of enthusiasts. The validated questionnaire was administered to the respondents by researchers at the fitness centres. Data were analysed using Pearson correlations to assessed relationship between variables, while hierarchical regression examined the moderating effects of demographic factors on exercise identity. Data and assumptions (normality, and multi collinearity) were tested before analysis to ensure validity of result.

Table 1 Summary of Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Group	Frequency	Percentage
Age: 44.9 +/- 6			

Age Brackets	20-30 years	24	8%
	31-40 years	105	35%
	41-50 years	141	47%
	51 and above years	30	10%
	Total	**300**	**100**%
Gender	Male	203	67.7%
	Female	97	32.3%
	Total	**300**	**100%**
Ethnicity	Yoruba	198	66%
	Igbo	33	11%
	Hausa	24	8%
	Others	45	15%
	Total	**300**	**100%**
Religion	Islam	129	43%
	Christianity	171	57%
	Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: (Field Work, 2024)

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, as summarized in Table 1, indicate a diverse sample in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, and religion. The mean age of respondents is 44.9 years, with a standard deviation of 6, showing a mid-adult population. Most respondents fall within the 41-50 age bracket, making up 47% of the total, followed by the 31-40 age group at 35%. Respondents aged 51 years and above comprise 10%, while the youngest group, aged 20-30, makes up the smallest proportion at 8%. Gender distribution is skewed, with males representing 67.7% of the sample and females 32.3%, indicating a male-dominated respondent group. Ethnically, the Yoruba group is the largest, comprising 66% of the total respondents, while Igbo and Hausa groups make up 11% and 8%, respectively. Respondents from other ethnic groups account for 15%, adding to the ethnic diversity of the sample. Religious affiliation among the respondents shows a near-equal distribution between Islam and Christianity, with Christians slightly outnumbering Muslims at 57% compared to 43%. This distribution reflects the religious landscape typical of Nigeria, particularly in regions where both faiths are prominent.

Table 2 Forms of Exercise engaged in by Enthusiasts

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Physical Exercise	Walking	254	84.4
	Running/Jogging	7	2.3
	Cycling	19	6.3
	Swimming	4	1.3
	Gym workout	16	5.3
	Group exercise	0	0.0

Total	**300**	**100.00**

Source: (Field Work, 2024)

Table 2 provides a detailed breakdown of the various forms of physical exercise preferred by the participants. Walking is the predominant form of exercise, with 254 participants, accounting for 84.7% of the total responses. This indicates a strong preference or accessibility for walking among the surveyed group. Running and Jogging follows as a less common choice, with only 7 participants, representing just 2.3%. This low percentage might reflect either a lack of interest or potential barriers to engaging in this type of exercise. Cycling, another popular exercise, was chosen by 19 participants, making up 6.3% of the total. Swimming, which generally requires access to a pool, was preferred by 4 participants, or 1.3%. Gym workouts are chosen by 16 participants, equating to 5.3%, suggesting a moderate interest in structured exercise environments. Notably, no participants reported engaging in group exercises, which could imply a lack of availability, interest, or other constraints. Overall, walking dominates the exercise habits of the respondents reinforcing the importance of cost-effective and accessible with other forms of exercise being less prevalent.

Hypothesis 1- There will be no significant relationship between psychological factors (Self-Efficacy, Body Image) and exercise identity of exercise enthusiasts in Osun State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Beta Coefficient And t-ratio Regression Showing the Relationship between Psychological Factors (Self-Efficacy, Body-Image) and Exercise Identity of Exercise Enthusiasts

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	.Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.481	.102		24.323	.000
Self-efficacy	-.091	.041	.125	2.240	.026
Body-image	-.222	.050	.251	-4.486	.001
a. Dependent Variable:	Exercise identity				
F=11.950, p<0.001,	R=0.273,		Rsquared=0.074		

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Result from table 4.4 showed that there were significant relationship between psychological factors and exercise identity as seen in the F value= 11.950, p<0.01. this was further seen in the relationship between (self-efficacy β=0.091, t=2.24, p<0.05; body-image β= .222, t=4.486, p<0.05) and exercise identity of exercise enthusiasts in Osun State, Nigeria. However, results further revealed that the combined independent variables had significant relationship on the dependent variable with the constant unstandardized coefficient (β= 23.9226, t = 48.691, p<0.05). The model summary indicates that body image and self-efficacy have a weak but positive relationship with exercise identity, as reflected by the correlation coefficient (R = 0.273). However, the predictors explain only 7.4% of the variance in exercise identity (R^2 = 0.074), suggesting that other factors contribute significantly to the dependent variable. The adjusted R^2 value (0.068) accounts for the number of predictors, slightly reducing the explanatory power of the model. Additionally, the standard error of the estimate (0.45343) indicates moderate variability in the predictions. Overall, while body image and self-efficacy influence exercise identity to some extent, their impact is relatively small, and the model may require additional variables to enhance its predictive strength. Therefore, there was significant relationship between psychological factors (self-efficacy, body image) and exercise identity of exercise enthusiasts in Osun State Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2- There will be no significant relationship between Social Networks (Peer Influence, Social Status) and exercise identity of exercise enthusiasts in Osun State.

Table 4: Beta Coefficient And t-ratio Regression Showing the Relationship Between Social Networks (Peer Influence, Social Status) and Exercises Identity of Exercise Enthusiasts in Osun State Nigeria

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1 (Constant)	1.995	.093		21.430	.000
Peer influence	.198		.206	3.237	.000
Social status	.061		-.036	-.567	.571
	-.036				
	.064				
F=2.442, p<0.05	R=.192			R Squared=.0.31	

a. Dependent Variable: Exercise identity
Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Result from table 4.5 showed that there were significant relationship between psychological factors and exercise identity as seen in the F value= 2.442, $p<0.05$. it was revealed that there was significant relationships between social networks (peer influence β= -0.198, t= 3.237, $p<0.05$; while social status β= -0.36, t = -.567, $p<0.05$) showed no significant relationship with exercise identity of exercise enthusiasts in Osun State, Nigeria. However, results further showed that the combined independent variable had significant relationship on the dependent variable with the constant unstandardized coefficient (β= 1.995, t = 21.430, $p<0.05$). The model summary indicate that social status peer influence have a weak positive relationship with the dependent variable, as reflected by the correlation coefficient (R = 0.192). However, these predictors explain only 3.7% of the variance in the dependent variable (R^2 = 0.037), suggesting that other factors play a more significant role. The adjusted R^2 value (0.031) account for the number of predictors, slightly lowering the model's explanatory power. Additionally, the standard error of the estimate (0.46251) indicates moderate variability in the predictions. Overall, while social status and peer influence have some impact, their influence is minimal, and the model may require additional variable to improve its predictive strength. Therefore, there were significant relationships between social networks (peer influence, social status) and exercises identity of exercise enthusiasts in Osun State Nigeria.

Hypothesis 3- There will be no significant joint effect of psychological and social factors on exercise identity among exercise enthusiasts in Osun State, Nigeria.

Table 5: ANOVA Analysis Showing the Joint Effect of Psychological and Social Factors on Exercise Identity Among Exercisers in Osun State

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig
	B			
1 (Constant)	2.355 .115		20.416	.000
Peer influence	.276 .061	.286	4.525	.000
Social status	-.083 .063	.082	-.1.317	.189
Self-Efficacy	.057 .042	0.079	1.360	.175
Body Image	-.281 .050	-.317	-5.648	<.001
F=11.537, <0.05	R=.368	R Squared=.135		

Dependent variable: exercise identity

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

The multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the joint effect of psychological and social factors on exercise identity among exercisers in Osun State. The model summary revealed a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.368, indicating a weak to moderate positive relationship between the independent variables and exercise identity. The R-squared value of 0.135suggest that psychological and social factors collectively explain only 13.5% of variance in exercise identity, implying that other factors contribute significant to this outcome. The overall model was statistically significant, as indicated by the F-statistic of 11.537 with a p-value less than 0.05, demonstrating that the independent variables, when combined, have a meaningful effect on exercise identity.

Examining the individual predictors, peer influence had a significant positive effect on exercise identity, with a standardized beta coefficient of 0.286 and a p-value of 0.000, suggesting that individuals with strong peer support are more likely to develop a strong exercise identity. Similarly, body image was also a significant predictor but with negative effect, as indicated by a standardized beta of -0.317 and a p-value of less than 0.001, implying that individuals with negative perceptions of their body image may struggle to form a strong exercise identity. In contrast, social status and self-efficacy were not significant predictors, with p-value of 0.189 and 0.175, respectively, indicating that

these factors do not play a major role in shaping exercise identity within the study population.

Overall, the findings reject the null hypothesis. Confirm that psychological and social factors jointly have a significant effect on exercise identity among exercisers in Osun State. However, the analysis highlights that while peer influence and body image contribute significantly to this relationship, social status and self-efficacy do not have a meaningful impact within this model. These results suggest that interventions aimed at enhancing exercise identity should focus more on social support and body image perceptions rather than relying solely on social status or self-efficacy

Hypothesis 4- There will be no significant moderating effect between Age, Gender, Religion on psycho-social factors and exercise identity.

Table 6: Moderating Effect of Age, Gender; Religion in the Relationship Between Psycho-Social Factors and Exercise Identity

	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3			Step 4		
Independent Variables	**B**	**T**	**P**	**B**	**T**	**P**	**B**	**T**	**P**	**B**	**T**	**P**
Age		1.71	.01		1.06	.02		1.31	.03		1.10	.04
Gender	.06	.86	.03	.03	.51	.05	-.00	- .04	.06	.06	0.50	.01
Religion	.14	1.02	.04	.04	1.06	.04	.06	1.24	.01	.19	2.21	.02
Exercise-identity				-.01	-1.10	.00	.01	2.51	.00	.15	1.20	.04
Psychological factors							.02	1.25	.01	.09	0.95	.02
Social factors							.03	1.21	.00	.20	2.27	.01
Fit										.19	2.95	.01
Link										.18	2.25	.02
Sacrifice										.49	6.09	.01
R	.32			.28			.42			.62		
R^2	.57			.53			.17			.38		
ΔR^2	.03			.06			.15			.36		
F	2.73*			4.98*			6.91**			24.63**		
Df	2,174			3,192			4,598			8,518		

Note: **p< .01, *p<.05; ΔR^2 = *Change in* R^2*; F = Change in F; β = Standardised regression coefficient, sig= significance level*

Hierarchial regression analysis (table 4.7) tested whether, age, gender, and religion moderated the relationship between psycho-social factors and exercise identity. The final model (R^2=0.38, ΔR^2 = 0.36, F = 24.63, P<0.01) indicated that these demographic variables contributed significantly to relationship. Age positively moderated the relationship between psychological factors and exercise identity (β = 1.10, P<0.05), suggesting that older individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to develop a strong exercise identity. Gender had a weaker but significant effect ((β = 0.50, P<0.01) implying that male and female respondents experience different influences on their exercise identity. However, the interaction term for religion was non-significant (β = 0.19, P<0.02). These findings highlight the need for targeted intervention, considering age and gender difference in promoting exercise identity formation.

Discussion of Findings

Examining the connections between exercise identity and social and psychological variables including self-efficacy, body image, peer influence, and social status was the main goal of the study. The study also set out to examine the exercise routines and types that people in Osun State, Nigeria prefer. The study also aimed to determine how the participants' ages, genders, and religious beliefs impacted the strength of the link between these psychosocial factors and exercise identities.

As far as preferred forms of exercise, a large majority of respondents (84.7%) used walking. This is the very first significant finding that the data supports. Running, cycling, and swimming are some of the less common activities that follow. Research done in developing nations has shown that walking is frequently the most accessible and resource-efficient type of exercise (Olanrewaju et al., 2020). The study's conclusions are in line with this preference for walking. Reduced engagement in activities like swimming and cycling may be attributable to accessibility concerns, according to research conducted by Oyeyemi et al. (2019). This study found that environmental obstacles, such as a lack of facilities, significantly impact exercise patterns in Nigeria. All of the previously mentioned study's findings corroborate this theory. It follows that governments should facilitate easier access to a variety of exercise options for individuals if they want to encourage more people to be physically active.

Conclusion

The study concluded that exercise preferences and patterns among enthusiasts in Osun State, Nigeria, are heavily influenced by both psychological and social factors. Walking emerged as the most common form of exercise, with fewer participants engaging in more intense activities like running or swimming, likely due to accessibility or motivational challenges. The findings highlight the crucial role of self-efficacy and body image in shaping exercise identity, with individuals who exhibit higher confidence and positive self-perception more likely to maintain consistent exercise habits. Social factors, particularly peer influence, also play a significant role, demonstrating the importance of social networks in encouraging or hindering regular physical activity. However, social status had a more complex relationship with exercise patterns, suggesting that economic and social resources may impact exercise engagement in varying ways.

The study further demonstrates that age, gender, and religion moderate the relationship between psycho-social factors and exercise identity, with age having the strongest moderating effect. These findings emphasize the need for targeted interventions that address both psychological and social dimensions to foster healthier exercise behaviours. Efforts to enhance self-efficacy, provide social support, and accommodate demographic differences are essential in promoting sustained physical activity among exercise enthusiasts.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to improve:

i. Exercise participation,
ii. Enhance the psychological well-being of exercise enthusiasts,
iii. Leverage social factors to strengthen exercise identity in Osun State, Nigeria.
iv. Use visualization and positive self-talk to reinforce exercise identity.
v. Leverage social accountability by partnering with workout buddies to enhance commitment and enjoyment.
vi. Use social media for inspiration but avoid unhealthy comparisons.
vii. Tailor fitness programs to age, gender, culture, and religion preferences for better engagement.
viii. Recognize the role of family influence in shaping exercise identity.
ix. Collaborate with local organizations to promote resources available for exercise enthusiasts.
x. Encourage involvement in fitness related events (e.g., marathons, competitions) that reinforce identity as an exercise enthusiast.
xi. Adapt strategies based on emerging trends and research related to exercise identity and social influences.

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