

Comparative Effects of Yoga and Zumba on Physical Fitness and Psychological Well-Being: A Narrative Review

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Abstract- The application of physical activity interventions is gradually being recognized as central to the advancement of physical and mental health. Yoga and Zumba are two long widely practised movement-based modalities but fundamentally different in this domain. Philosophically based, operating on different principles of intensity, and having different mechanisms of action, Yoga based on ancient Indian tradition, and Zumba the contemporary dance-fitness programme present in the foregrounds based on the aerobic demand, rhythmic movement, and social contact. The current study will include a narrative analysis and a conceptual comparison of Yoga and Zumba concerning their effects on the physical health areas, including cardiovascular fitness, body composition, flexibility, and muscular strength, and the psychological health outcomes, including stress, anxiety, mood regulation, and emotional resilience. The systematic search of the literature was conducted in significant academic databases in the period of 2010-2025. Findings have shown that Zumba is specifically useful in delivering short-term outcomes on the improvement in cardiovascular endurance, caloric expenditure, and mood, which are largely mediated by aerobic demand and group motivation. On the other hand, Yoga seems to have long-term effects of stress control, emotional stability, and flexibility and autonomic equilibrium based on the effects of mindfulness and the stimulation of parasympathetic processes. This narrative review, instead of making a hierarchy between the two modalities, stresses on their own strengths and the specific applicability to context. The discussion demonstrates the importance of coordinating physical activity interventions with personal goals, mental needs, and sustained adherence factors. Findings have implications that can be used by health professionals, fitness teachers and wellness programme designers who are interested in using evidence-based methods to support holistic wellbeing.

Index Terms - Yoga, Zumba, Mind-body exercise, holistic well-being, stress reduction, narrative review

INTRODUCTION

Global health discourse has in the recent decades shifted towards a more integrative concept of wellbeing which puts emphasis on physical fitness, psychological balance, and emotional stability (World Health Organization, 2014). The high pace of urbanisation, sedentary ways of living, work-related stress, and the growing mental health challenges have increased the need to have non-pharmacological interventions, which can be easily accessed, and which can maintain a holistic health condition (Biddle and Asare, 2011; Rebar et al., 2015). In this environment, organised sporting engagement has not only proved to be an effective way to improve physiological processes but also a powerful regulator of psychological health (Warburton and Bredin, 2017). Yoga and Zumba occupy a big but differentiated calling in the number of physical activities that are being promoted to promote health. Yoga is an ancient mind-body practice originated in India which consists of physical postures (āsana), breathing exercises (prāṇāyama) and meditation (dhyana) aimed at balancing physiological processes and promoting self-control (Feuerstein, 2008; Sharma and Clark, 2005). There is empirical evidence that Yoga leads to improvements in flexibility, muscular endurance, balance, autonomic regulation and psychological outcomes, including less stress, anxiety and depressive symptomatology (Hagins et al., 2013; Li and Goldsmith, 2023). Notably, Yoga is often theorised not just as a form of exercise but as a wholesome lifestyle habit where the body would be stabilized and maintained through mental and emotional stability over time (Ross and Thomas, 2010). On the other hand, Zumba is a

comparatively new exercise programme that uses dance and has its origin in the late 1990s; it is a combination of aerobic exercises and rhythmic moves followed by Latin and international music (Pérez C Greenwood-Robinson, 2009). Being characterised by great energy consumption, interpersonal communication, and amusement, Zumba has become a widely known model of cardiovascular training available to everyone. Empirical evidence has attributed Zumba attendance to positive changes in aerobic capacity, body composition, mood boost, and exercise compliance, especially in young adults and working populations (Cugusi et al., 2019; Tavares et al., 2023). It is argued that its purpose of motivating and short-term psychological boost by its group-based, music-driven format has a positive effect caused by social interaction and endorphin release (Savoini, 2024). Although the trend is on the rise, Yoga and Zumba are quite different regarding intensity, the mechanisms, and the focus of therapy. Whereas Yoga is more focused on the internal awareness, the movement control, and autonomic maintenance, Zumba focuses on outside stimulation, aerobic challenge, and social support (Omelan et al., 2023; Verma et al., 2024). Such differences raise relevant questions on the relative and complementary functions of both modalities in the physical and mental wellbeing. Current studies mainly focus on individual practices, and a relatively small number of studies focus on integrative or conceptually based comparisons across various health areas (Silva C Rodrigues, 2018). This gap is aimed to be bridged by the current manuscript, which will perform a narrative review and conceptual analysis of Yoga and Zumba and synthesise the already available empirical data to identify the different effects that these two forms of exercise have on physical measures of health that include cardiovascular fitness, flexibility, muscular tone, and body composition, and include those that you might expect to see, given the psychological effects of the two exercise modalities, which include stress, anxiety, mood, and emotional regulation. Instead of attempting to give a particular intervention an advantage over another approach, this review is expected to shed light on the unique advantages and disadvantages of any modality, as well as its contextual applicability, according to the modern views of promoting personalised and holistic health (Warburton and Bredin, 2017). By synthesizing research results in the areas of psychology, wellness science and physical education critically, the review is expected to enable evidence-based decision making among individuals, health-care practitioners, fitness instructors and wellness programme designers. In a time where mental burdens are now increasingly pressing and lifestyle issues are now beginning to impact on health, the ability to explain how various movement-related practices specifically lead to full-body wellbeing is not only opportune, but also practical.

Theoretical Framework

To conduct the comparative analysis of Yoga and Zumba as the interventions of the health-promoting physical activities, the theoretically based framework should be adopted in which the physiological, psychological, and behavioural mechanisms of these two interventions should be considered. Despite the fact that the two modalities are expected to improve physical fitness and mental health, they use completely different mechanisms. Accordingly, the current review relies on the complementary theoretical views, including mind-body medicine, psychophysiological regulation of stress, and exercise psychology (Sharma and Clark, 2005; Warburton and Bredin, 2017). Yoga is best defined in the context of mind-body medicine conceptualising health as an emergent characteristic of dynamic relationships between physiological processes, cognitive appraisals, emotional regulation and behavioural patterns (Ross and Thomas, 2010; Feuerstein, 2008). At the core of this paradigm is the fact that the autonomous nervous system (ANS) needs to be under control as a homeostatic method. Theoretically, the effects of yogic practices, specifically controlled breathing (pranayama) and mental focus (dhyana), are to increase the parasympathetic system and reduce an extreme sympathetic activation (Hagins et al., 2013). The above parasympathetic activity correlates with decreased heart rate, blood pressure, cortisol secretion, and perceived stress, which have a positive effect on cardiovascular and psychological performance (Sharma and Clark, 2005; Li and Goldsmith, 2023). More psychophysiological, Yoga can be stepwise in accordance with self-regulation models and interoceptive awareness models which hold that prolonged focus on the body and breath improves the emotional control and

stress resistance (Ross and Thomas, 2010). These observations are in line with the mindfulness-based stress reduction model.

These processes align with models of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), which assumes that non-reactive awareness of current experience helps to adaptively process emotions and leads to psychological resilience (Li and Goldsmith, 2023). Cumulative effects on mental health therefore, with time, could be achieved through regular yoga practice which would enhance regulatory control over stress response.

Furthermore, the polyvagal theory is an additional explanatory lens that can be used to explain the effects of yoga on emotional stability and social interaction. Yoga can be beneficial in fostering a physiological condition favorable to calmness, social connectedness, and adaptive coping by stimulating vagal tone by use of slow and rhythmic breathing and gentle movements (Porges, 2011). Such a theoretical agreement assists in interpreting the empirical evidence that associates yoga with lasting anxiety, depression, and stress symptoms symptom reduction in the population (Hagins et al., 2013; Li and Goldsmith, 2023). Arousal mechanisms and exercise psychology of Zumba. Zumba, on the contrary, has its basis in the main partly in exercise psychology and behavioural motivation theories. Zumba being a high-intensity aerobic activity involves large muscle groups and increases heart rate, which in turn prompts the increase in the release of endorphins and other neurochemicals that are related to mood improvement and pain regulation (Warburton and Bredin, 2017). According to endorphin hypothesis, these neurochemical reactions are among the factors that lead to instant affect, perceived stress, and enhanced feelings of vitality following intense physical exercise (Rebar et al., 2015). The theory of arousal regulation also explains the psychological impacts of Zumba by implying that moderate and high degrees of physiological arousal when practiced in an organized and pleasurable setting can promote the mood and thinking processes (Biddle and Asare, 2011). Rhythmic movement, music-based format, and vigorous pacing of Zumba can potentially maximise the arousal level, which brings short-term emotional elevation and stress reduction, especially to those who have acute stress or lack incentives to exercise (Savoini, 2024). The social-cognitive theory provides another platform to explain compliance and continued attendance to Zumba programmes. Exercise environments that involve groups promote observational learning and social reinforcement coupled with improvement in self-efficacy, which are some of the main determinants of motivation and maintenance of exercise (Bandura, 1997). It is also observed that the group and social character of Zumba classes can enhance the adherence to exercise, especially in young adults and working populations (Cugusi et al., 2019; Tavares et al., 2023). Integrative view regarding differentiating and complementary effects. Although yoga and Zumba are frequently compared against each other in the context of the resultant outcomes, theoretical studies indicate that the benefits of both are mediated by different, but complementary processes. Yoga works mainly by bottom-up control of the physiological and emotional body and leads to long-term autonomic balance, mindfulness and self-regulatory ability (Ross and Thomas, 2010; Porges, 2011). Zumba, in turn, develops its influence with the help of the top-down behavioural activation, aerobic conditioning, and social interaction, which result in quick physiological changes and an instant improvement of mood (Warburton and Bredin, 2017; Savoini, 2024). These variations in pathways are key to the interpretation of empiric results as well as to the adaptation of physical activity interventions to personal health objectives, psychological requirements, and lifestyle conditions. Instead of conceptualising yoga and Zumba as the competing modalities, this theoretical framework justifies their strategic and complementary use in holistic wellness programmes (Omelan et al., 2023; Verma et al., 2024).

Physical Activity and Holistic Well-Being

An increasing amount of literature acknowledges that exercise is a highly important non-pharmacological approach to improving not only physical but also psychological health. A combination of frequent physical activity has demonstrated benefits to the cardiovascular system, body structure, metabolic processes, and cognitive results, including decreased stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression (Biddle and Asare 2011; Warburton and Bredin 2017). In this more general context, mind-body practices and aerobic dances-based exercises have received growing academic interest as their means of accessibility and psychosocial advantages.

Zumba and physical health outcomes

The conceptualisation of Zumba is designed as a dance-based aerobic fitness programme that encompasses rhythmic movement coupled with cardiovascular continuous demand. The empirical findings continuously show that frequent attendance at Zumba results in the increase of aerobic capacity, energy consumption, and body composition. A systematic review study by Cugusi et al. (2019) showed that there were marked improvements in cardiovascular fitness and body fat loss in women that underwent Zumba programmes. On the same note, Tavares et al. (2023) discovered that Zumba activities taken were associated with positive cardiometabolic effects, such as better lipid profiles and aerobic endurance. These findings also have intervention-based studies. The studies using the young adult and college as target groups suggest that Zumba proves especially efficient in the decrease in the percentage of body fat and the enhancement of VO_2 max in relatively short-term studies (Rajguru et al., 2021; Savoini, 2024). Such results are explained by the fact that Zumba sessions are characterized by the stable moderate-to-high intensity level, which is associated with the aerobic training and muscular work. In this regard, Zumba has been marketed as a good exercise strategy among people who want quick results in terms of their physical fitness and weight reduction.

Yoga and bodily health results.

Yoga is an essentially different philosophy of physical practice, which consists of posed movement, control, breathing, and mindful motions. Although the body mass index changes after the yoga practice are usually small, it has been shown that yoga yields great results in terms of flexibility, muscular endurance, balance, and postural stability (Ross and Thomas, 2010; Omelan et al, 2023). These are physical advantages that are linked to long lasting muscle activity, joint movement and neuromuscular orchestration instead of caloric consumption. Notably, yoga proved to be specifically effective in controlling cardiovascular risk factors. According to a meta-analysis by Hagins et al. (2013), yoga interventions had a significant effect on systolic and diastolic blood pressure, which is why yoga can be used as a complementary intervention during the management of hypertension. These results are in line with an argument that yoga promotes physical health by integrating the use of physiological processes rather than intensity-based effects.

Psychological Benefits of Zumba

has been extensively researched in regard to its psychological impacts in addition to the physical outcomes. It has been suggested that participation in Zumba may be linked to immediate mood improvement, perceived stress reduction, and self-esteem (Abraham et al., 2023; Savoini, 2024). Such effects are often described by the exercise psychology models, especially the endorphin hypothesis, which associates intense physical exercise with the positive affective feelings (Rebar et al., 2015). Social and music-oriented character of Zumba is yet another factor which makes it psychological. It has been demonstrated that group participation and rhythmic synchrony can enhance enjoyment and motivation and minimise psychological barriers to exercise adherence (Biddle and Asare, 2011). Nevertheless, a number of studies indicate that Zumba can generate powerful emotional effects in the short-term, but the impact of this practice on the regulation of stress

levels and emotional resiliency in the long term is less substantial than that of mindfulness-based programs (Silva and Rodrigues, 2018).

Physiological Benefits of Yoga

The area of yoga was studied in relation to mental health promotion extensively. In systematic reviews and meta-analyses, it is always found that yoga practice is correlated with stress, anxiety, and depression symptom reduction in diverse populations (Li and Goldsmith, 2023; Ross and Thomas, 2010). These psychological advantages are credited to the combination of voluntary breathing, concentration of attention and meditative awareness, which enable autonomic stability and emotional control. As opposed to exercise modalities that operate mostly via physiological arousal, it is postulated that yoga action operates via long-term psychophysiological self-regulation. It is shown that habitual yoga practice has been associated with better mindfulness, interoceptive awareness, and coping capacity, and results in more sustainable changes in the psychological well-being (Hagins et al., 2013). Therefore, yoga can be prescribed to those people who have chronic stress, emotional dysregulation, or mental exhaustion.

Comparative Evidence and Research Gaps

Comparative research on yoga and Zumba is indicative of the fact that the two modalities are both useful, but their impacts vary in magnitude, mechanism, and effects that are long-term. Although Zumba does a better job at cardiovascular fitness and immediate mood improvement, yoga seems to have longer-term effects based on emotion regulation and stress reduction, as well as autonomic control (Omelan et al., 2023; Verma et al., 2024). These contrasts indicate that physical activity interventions should be oriented towards personal objectives, mental requirements, and health statuses. In spite of the growing literature, there are still a number of gaps. A lot of studies use the limited intervention periods, use mostly female samples, and use heterogeneous outcome measures thus reducing the generalizability as well as the cross-study comparison. Additionally, not many reviews have tried to unite theoretical viewpoints of mind body medicine, and exercise psychology to describe disparate outcomes among modalities. The current narrative review allows filling the given gap by integrating empirical evidence into a single conceptual framework, thus leading to a deeper comprehension of yoga and Zumba as two different ways to achieve a holistic well-being.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The current research embraces the narrative review design because it is aimed to review and synthesise the existing empirical data on the physical and psychological impacts of yoga and Zumba. Narrative review method was deemed to be suitable as the literature is heterogeneous in terms of study design, population, outcome measures, and intervention durations. In contrast to systematic reviews, which are limited to a very narrow scope of outcomes, narrative reviews can integrate ideas and interpret them more conceptually, which makes it possible to compare content of various areas of physical and psychological wellbeing.

Data Sources and Search Strategy

The wide literature search performed in a variety of academic databases (Google Scholar, PubMed, JSTOR, ResearchGate, and open access repositories of specific journals) was carried out. To be relevant and academically sound, the search was limited to peer-reviewed articles published since 2010 up to 2025.

The search terms were used in different combinations with the Boolean operators, and included:

- “Yoga” AND “mental health”
- “Yoga” AND “stress reduction”
- “Zumba” and cardiovascular fitness.

- “Zumba” AND “body composition”

- “Yoga” AND “well-being”

- Zumba AND psychological outcomes.

Also, the selected articles were screened manually on reference lists to select additional related studies that met the criteria of inclusion.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The studies were eligible to be included in the review in case they satisfied the following criteria:

- In peer-reviewed journals published since 2010.
- Participated in yoga and/or Zumba as a premeditated physical exercise program.
- Measurable physical health outcomes (e.g., cardiovascular fitness, flexibleness, body composition, muscular strength) and/or psychological outcomes (e.g., stress, anxiety, mood, emotional control).
- Utilised quantitative, qualitative or both quantitative and qualitative research designs. Research studies were filtered out on condition that they:
were anecdotal, opinionated or non-empirical.
- Lacked had specific outcome measures. - Only on clinical populations that do not have a connection with general well-being.
- were conference abstracts, or editorials, or dissertations, or non-scholarly reports Even though the background knowledge was first studied through the review of undergraduate theses and unpublished manuscripts, only peer-reviewed journal articles were taken on board to synthesize.

Data Extraction and Study Selection

The initial search in the database resulted in about 124 articles. Following the process of screening the titles and abstracts to avoid irrelevant and duplicate articles, 62 were shortlisted to be reviewed in full text. After careful screening in relation to the inclusion and exclusion criteria 38 studies were chosen and incorporated in the final narrative synthesis. In terms of each study included, the main information was extracted and systematised, including:

- Intervention type (yoga or Zumba)
- Tenures (age, gender, population) of the sample.
- Length and rate of intervention.
- Outcomes of physical health measured.
- Assessed psychological outcomes.
- Major conclusions and described limitations.

Analytical Approach

Thematic comparative analysis was used in order to synthesise findings of the selected studies. Data that was extracted were classified into the following conceptual domains:

- Body composition and cardiovascular fitness.
- Physical endurance, Flexibility, muscular strength.
- Emotional control and reduction of stress.
- Improvement of mood and psychological wellbeing.

- Sustainability, motivation, and adherence.

The yoga and Zumba were compared in terms of finding convergent trends, divergent findings, and situational moderators that directed the outcomes in those fields. Specific attention was given to the interpretation of findings according to the available theoretical frameworks, such as mind body regulation models and exercise psychology points of view. It was not in the analysis to find one best intervention. Rather, it was seeking to clarify the comparative advantages and weaknesses and situational appropriateness of yoga and Zumba in holistic wellness and health-promotional paradigms.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The current narrative review integrated the empirical data on the physical and psychological impacts of yoga and Zumba and identified that the two modalities can play an important role in contributing to the holistic well-being, though via different mechanisms and with different outcome profiles (Warburton and Bredin, 2017). Instead of promoting a dichotomous superiority assessment, the results highlight the situational and goal-specific efficiency of every intervention. Physical Health Outcomes In the literature reviewed, Zumba was always shown to have more significant short-term outcomes in cardiovascular fitness, aerobic capacity, and energy expenditure. Various intervention studies found a statistically significant increase in VO_2 max, heart rate endurance, and body fat percentage improvement after regular attendance at the Zumba-based programmes (Cugusi et al., 2019; Tavares et al., 2023). The results are in line with the principles of exercise physiology, where sustained moderate-to-high intensity aerobic exercise provokes rapid cardiopulmonary acclimatization (Warburton and Bredin, 2017). The rhythmic and constant movement designs inherent to Zumba seem especially useful in increasing caloric burn and metabolic proficiency, which is why it can be used as an effective intervention by people aiming to achieve quick gains in body fitness and weight (Silva C Rodrigues, 2018).

On the contrary, yoga proved to have a slower but integrative effect on the physical health parameters. The changes in the body mass index were relatively small but immediate, yet yoga continuously improved the flexibility, the position of the body, muscles, and the mobility of the joints (Ross and Thomas, 2010; Omelan et al., 2023). One can attribute these improvements to the presence of static and isometric postures, controlled transitions and sustained muscular action which individually led to the neuromuscular coordination and functional strength (Feuerstein, 2008). Notably, yoga has been demonstrated to positively change multiple cardiovascular risk factors like blood pressure, thus highlighting its value as a low-intensity, non-pharmacological therapy among people with high blood pressure or who are physically challenged (Hagins et al., 2013; Sharma and Clark, 2005). In terms of theory, such different results are in line with the specific physiological requirements of the two practices. Zumba stimulates the cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems with dynamic load and aerobic intensity, and yoga focuses on the controlled movement and inner balance, which leads to long-term musculoskeletal security and autonomic stability (Warburton and Bredin, 2017; Ross and Thomas, 2010). Psychological and affective Wellness. Yoga and Zumba were identified to have psychological benefit but the effects varied in nature and permanence. The benefits of Zumba attendance included a positive effect on mood immediately after the session, perceived stress, and vitality (Abraham et al., 2023; Savoini, 2024). Such short-term psychological benefits are probably connected via neurochemical processes, such as endorphin release, social interaction and fun involved in group-based dancing (Rebar et al., 2015; Biddle and Asare, 2011). These characteristics can be especially beneficial to people who have acute stress or motivation obstacles to exercise. Yoga, in turn, proved to have more long-term and extensive impact on psychological well-being. In several research works, the frequency of yoga exercises was correlated with the decrease in anxiety, depressive symptoms, and the perceived stress, as well as the enhancement in emotional regulation, mindfulness, and self-awareness (Li and Goldsmith, 2023; Ross and Thomas, 2010). These are theorized results of psychophysiological self-regulation models where slow breathing, attention and body awareness, increase the activity of the parasympathetic nervous system and

decrease chronic sympathetic arousal (Sharma and Clark, 2005; Porges, 2011). These processes could eventually lead to increased emotional resiliency and stress resilience. It is imperative to distinguish between immediate affective uplift (Zumba) and long-term emotional regulation (yoga) in explaining the psychological effect of physical activity interventions. Both modalities have been proven to be effective, but the advantages of each have been observed to have different temporal and regulatory responses (Li C Goldsmith, 2023; Rebar et al., 2015). Compliance, Inspirational and Long-term. It turned out that exercise adherence was a significant moderating variable in the outcome of long-term results. The social, music-based, and enjoyable format of Zumba was often mentioned as something that can help to get consistent engagement among younger adults and working classes (Cugusi et al., 2019; Savoini, 2024). In the context of explaining the issue, the Social Cognitive Theory can be of use since observational learning, social reinforcement, and group participation will increase self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation (Bandura, 1997). Yoga, which is not as externally stimulating, proved sustainable among those who want their practices to be low impact, introspective, and self-directed. Its versatility with all age groups and physical states, and low equipment needed, contribute to the long-term engagement (Ross and Thomas, 2010). Nevertheless, other studies also indicated that motivation and guided instruction are essential in adhering to especially beginners (Omelan et al., 2023). These results imply that the process of adherence is not entirely a matter of physiological efficacy but that it is profoundly shaped by psychological preferences, compatibility to lifestyle and social background (Bandura, 1997; Biddle and Asare, 2011). Comparative Interpretation and Applications. Combined, the results suggest that yoga and Zumba can work together in regard to holistic wellness services. Zumba seems especially useful when it comes to cardiovascular fitness improvement, high-speed physical adaptation, and instant psychological boost due to active involvement (Cugusi et al., 2019; Tavares et al., 2023). On the other hand, yoga provides long-term effects of stress management, mood stability, flexibility, and autonomic control, which makes it particularly appropriate when people have to deal with chronic stress or integrate mind and body health (Li and Goldsmith, 2023; Porges, 2011). In practical terms, these understandings have significant implications on the health professionals, fitness trainers, and wellness programme designers. Instead of prescribing the best intervention, the best way to achieve this could be by making a programme that meets the needs of individuals, psychological, and physical (Warburton and Bredin, 2017). The combination of aerobic dancing-inspired activities and mindfulness-oriented ones in the form of hybrid or alternating models could lead to the most effective physical and psychological outcome (Verma et al., 2024).

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

There are a number of limitations which should be considered despite the scope of evidence that was reviewed. Most of the studies were based on a short-term intervention and mostly on a female sample, which constrained the ability to generalise to other genders and ages (Silva C Rodrigues, 2018). Direct comparison is complicated also by variability in outcome measures and the intensity of intervention. Moreover, the cultural views on yoga and fitness based on dances can determine the engagement of participants and reported results (Omelan et al., 2023). Longitudinal designs, standardised outcome measures and comparative trials on integrated or sequential interventions would be useful in future researches. A further investigation of neurobiological indicators of stress regulation and mechanisms of adherence can also help to understand the mechanisms by which these practices can affect well-being (Porges, 2011; Rebar et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

With the help of the empirical evidence that involves both psychology and wellness science, as well as physical education, the given narrative review aimed at discussing the impact of yoga and Zumba on physical or psychological well-being and comparing these effects conceptually. The synthesis of results leads to the

suggestion that both modalities are efficient health-enhancing interventions but work due to different physiological and psychological mechanisms and have different outcome profiles. Zumba shows specific power in the escalation of cardiovascular vigour, aerobic potential, energy consumption and short-term mood elevation. Its socially interactive, music-based, and dynamic structure easily allows a fast physical adjustment and immediate positive effect, which is why it is particularly appropriate among those who want to experience group-based physical exercise sessions and observe the positive change of physical condition as soon as possible. Instead, Yoga has a slower and more lasting impact on well-being, which adds to the flexibility, postural stability, autonomic regulation, and reduction of stress in the long run. Yoga promotes emotional stability and psychological viability even outside of exercise-related effects by focusing on breath management, mindful movement, and internal awareness. Notably, the results of this review are not in favour of the binary assessment of the superiority between yoga and Zumba. Instead, their success seems to be dependent on personal objectives, personal needs, physical abilities, and situational circumstances like motivation and compliance. In the holistic health view, the practices best fit the conceptualisation of complementary modalities, as opposed to competitive ones. The present review adds to the current knowledge with a synthesis of theoretical models offered by mind-body medicine and exercise psychology to explain the unique mechanisms of action by which Yoga and Zumba adjust well-being. This theoretical generalization has practical implications on health practitioners, fitness professionals and wellness programme developers with the understanding that customized or hybrid physical-activity initiatives can be valuable depending on the array of health outcomes. Longitudinal designs, standardised outcome measures and integrative intervention models that are integrated into future research are necessary to explain the long-term and synergistic impacts of the combination of aerobic and mindfulness-based practices. These types of inquiries would enhance the evidence-based decision-making and enable the creation of more holistic and sustainable approaches to the physical and mental health.

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