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The Impact of Anxiety and Knowledge in College-Aged Students on Attendance of a Fitness Facility

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Anxiety is the most common mental illness in the United States of America. On average, one in five people have an anxiety disorder. With those affected by anxiety, only 36.9% people receive treatment in the form of exercise. Exercise has been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety thus allowing subjects to become more resilient to stress levels. With exercise being a primary form of treatment for anxiety disorders, how are individuals who suffer anxiety from being in an exercise facility supposed to utilize exercise as a form of treatment? **PURPOSE:** To analyze the anxiety levels and knowledge of exercise among different majors in college-aged students. Answering the question, do higher levels of anxiety and less knowledge about exercise prevent individuals from attending fitness facilities? **METHODS:** A survey was created based on anxiety and knowledge in college aged students with attendance in a fitness facility. The researchers handed out 250 surveys on the campus of East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania. Once completed, the surveys were collected, analyzed and sorted for the results. The researchers divided the results into two groups, including health majors, and other general majors. The main question looked at for the purpose of the research is “Has any anxiety prevented you from going to a fitness facility in the past? (If yes, please explain)” **RESULTS:** 126 surveys were returned. 20.63% of the total students surveyed reported to have anxiety. 2.97% more people in non-health majors answered yes to having so much anxiety in attending a fitness facility that it has prevented them from going. 33.33% of Biology and Chemistry majors answered yes, 25% of public health, speech pathology, and teaching majors reported yes to having anxiety in attending a fitness facility. 20% of students in general studies, 18.87% of exercise science majors, and 18.18% of business majors also reported yes. **CONCLUSION:** Majors such as art, computers, biology, chemistry, teaching, business, and general studies majors are to be more anxious in going to a fitness facility than health science majors. A higher number of people in non-health majors answered yes to having too much anxiety in attending a fitness facility that it has prevented them from going. Students did not feel an increase in knowledge of exercise lowered their anxiety levels.