**Getting enough exercises**

**Background information**

I am a twenty-five-year-old female. I am not married but in a steady relationship, even though my partner lives few miles away. The behavior I seek to change is to move from a sedentary lifestyle and get more routine exercises. I have been interested in adding exercises to my routine since I was fourteen but I did not start until I was seventeen years old. Then, I often jogged around the block in the mornings, attended a basketball training and occasionally went to a gym in our block with my friend. I enjoyed many benefits that came with exercises like being physically fit, good sleep, mood, and health. My weight was often around 40-42 kilograms, and I did well in the classroom. However, two years later, I started reducing the time I spent to exercise since I took a part-time job and by the age of twenty years, I had stopped exercising. In five years, I have added over fifteen kilograms pushing my basal metabolic index to twenty-three. I believe resuming the exercising habit will greatly help me return to form and stay away from health issues related to inactivity.

I believe that I will enjoy lots of benefit through the establishment of routine exercises. First, it will help me relax from my routine daily schedule at school and work. Besides, it will protect me from various conditions resulting from inactivity. Presently, I lead a sedentary lifestyle that may predispose me to depression, heart problems and mood disorder among others. I also need to maintain physical fitness through regulation of my body weight. Therefore, I seek to change my behavior to have routine exercises to stay healthy and boost my self-image.

**Literature review**

Exercise is an activity in which an individual makes a physical effort to promote health and fitness. Yamada & Sone, (2014) describes four types of exercises like dancing, swimming, walking, running and jogging, but lists of exercises extend far beyond this. Various studies have been done to show the differences between individuals doing exercises with those who do not. Many studies show that leading routine daily exercises has numerous benefits to an individual both mentally and physically. This part summarizes the various literature on the behavior change in exercises and benefits of exercises to the body and the brain.

Existing studies show that people who opted for exercise life enjoyed happier lives than those not doing exercises. According to a study by Diamond & Adams (2015), exercises boosted respondent’s mood thus reducing symptoms such as feelings of stress, depression, and anxiety. Hamdorf & Andrews (2017) and Walker & Krause (2015) attribute exercise alteration of mood to changes in endorphins in the section of the brain that control stress. Kenny & Wells (2014) articulates the sensitivity of the brain in the elevated mood of n exercising person to increase for the hormones norepinephrine and serotonin thus relieving of depression. Another study by Wenger & Bell (2016) showed that the exercise of any intensity could reduce depression through acting as a distractor to the stressors.  In this, Exercise changes the moods of a person fast through prevention of depression. Besides, exercises play a significant role in boosting personal feelings. A study by Hamdorf & Andrews, (2017) showed that exercises increased the release of endorphins contributing to an individual developing positive feeling. Finally, a study by Wenger & Bell (2016) showed that exercise reduces symptoms of anxiety making people suffering from anxiety realize their state and practice distractions. Therefore, exercises play a grand role contributing to tranquility and improving the moods of individual contributions to the development of happiness (Kramer & Gross, 2016; Walker & Krause, 2015; Wigers & Vogel, 2016). Doing routine exercise will protect an individual from depression and anxiety that affect happiness contributing to their general wellbeing.

Besides, studies show that exercise reduces some undesired effects of patients receiving medications. According to Kramer & Gross (2016), daily 30 minutes exercises play a significant role to reduce chronic fatigue associated with the long-term ailment and medication.  Besides, a study by Diamond & Adams (2015) revealed that individuals participating in a reduce cases of fatigue by up to 60% as compared to those not doing exercises. A study by Baker & Brophy (2014) showed that taking part in exercises increased the level of energy in patients with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Wigers & Vogel, (2016), Hamdorf & Andrews (2017), Kenny & Wells (2014), and Walker & Krause (2015) agree that exercises are more efficient in reduction of chronic Fatigue as compared to seeking over the counter medication. Therefore, exercises are more important for such a person than therapies like stretching and relaxation. A study by Chelly & Shephard (2014) showed that people exercising had a decreased medication toxicities as compared to those not exercises but taking the same medications. Adding exercises to patients receiving treatments from cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS can add their energy if they do simple routine exercises.

Majority of the studies also show exercise contributed to weight loss since exercise burns excess fats. Exercise versus inactive theories shows that individuals are staying inactive increase their chances of gaining weight and developing conditions like overweight and obesity. According to Yamada & Sone, (2014), the relationship that exists between the expenditure of energy and exercise shows that more exercise reduces weight since rigorous exercises utilize energy in muscle activity, digestion of food, breathing, and heartbeat (Diamond & Adams, 2015). Therefore, it is good for a person to eat foods that have low calories to slow down the rate of metabolic reaction, which will lower the loss of weight. However, according to Kramer & Gross (2016), when one takes exercise regularly, the metabolic rate will increase leading to burning of more calories hence, loss of weight. Likewise, it is good to mix resistance training and aerobic exercise to reduce fats and maintain the mass of the muscles (Diamond & Adams, 2015). Doing this daily is very important because the weight will be reduced.

In addition, studies have linked exercises to development, maintaining and building strong bones and muscles. Muscles can be built if one lifts weight and take protein in the required quantity (Diamond & Adams, 2015). According to Wigers & Vogel (2016), this is because frequent exercises contribute to release of hormones that increase the absorption of amino acids into the muscles promoting their growth and reducing the rate at which they break. Furthermore, Hamdorf & Andrews (2017) argues that exercise can be good when one is approaching old age because muscle functioning reduces with increase in age. To avoid disability and injuries, it is good to exercise regularly. Kenny & Wells (2014) found that routine exercise plays a vital role in building strong bones preventing the development of osteoporosis in the future life. Exercises play a significant part in the development of bone density. A study by Hamdorf & Andrews (2017) showed that high impact exercises promote the development of high bone density protecting it from ductility. These exercises are described as running and gymnastics.  A study by Diamond & Adams, (2015) showed that whereas exercises of odd impact like basketball and soccer do not build bones of high density, they greatly contribute to the development of muscle strength.

Regular and routine exercises play a role in reducing risks associated with chronic disease. According to Baker & Brophy (2014), taking part in exercises improves body composition, cardiovascular fitness, and sensitivities to insulin. Moreover, it reduces the level of fats in blood and blood pressure. According to Walker & Krause (2015), people with low activity level and those that do not exercise regularly have a higher risk of increasing fat belly as compared to those that do not exercise. The result is the increase in the chances of early death, type two diabetes, and heart diseases (Kenny & Wells, 2014). Therefore, having a routine exercise daily to reduce fats in the belly and reduce chances of developing diseases  (Diamond & Adams, 2015). In addition, exercises can also help in reducing debilitating chronic pain. According to Diamond & Adams (2015), treatment of chronic pain is being shifted from earlier approaches where inactivity and rest treated the chronic pain but to regulated activity that has shown to be effective to treat chronic pain (Hamdorf & Andrews, 2017; Yamada & Sone, 2014). This has helped many people by increasing their lifespan. According to Wigers & Vogel (2016), pain resulting from various health conditions like those of back pain, shoulder disorder, and fibromyalgia has been controlled better by exercises. Besides, as one takes part in the exercise, he or she forgets perception of pain and raise the perception of pain (Hamdorf & Andrews, 2017; Kramer & Gross, 2016; Wigers & Vogel, 2016). However, it is important to note that some exercises may make muscle and joint pain worse.

In addition, a lot of exercise helps in maintaining the body skin. Too much oxidative stress damages the skin. According to Chelly & Shephard (2014), oxidative stress happens when antioxidant defenses fail to repair damaged cells. Cells can be damaged by the free radicals causing deterioration of the skin. According to Walker & Krause (2015) Intense exercise damages oxidative exercises should be practiced moderately to increase production of natural antioxidant that protects cells in the body. Besides, Chelly & Shephard (2014) argues that blood stimulation is also facilitated by exercises that induce adaptations of the skin cells that delay aging. Therefore, having exercise will improve individuals resting pattern by quality sleep.

Likewise, exercise boosts the functioning of the brain and protects thinking and memory skills. Exercises increase heartbeat enhancing the floor of blood and oxygen to the brain. It also facilitates production of hormones that promote the development of brain cells. As someone takes part in the exercise, chronic diseases are prevented, and in the end, the brain is protected since its function can be affected by chronic diseases. Exercises are known to moderate the size of the hippocampus. Hippocampus is a section of the brain that is very important for learning and memory. This increases mental working in the elderly. Exercise reduces changes that cause schizophrenia and Alzheimer.

Moreover, exercise helps people to relax and sleep well. Here good sleep comes because as one exercise, there is depletion of energy that causes facilitation of recuperative processes (Baker & Brophy, 2014). It is also during the exercise that body temperatures increase leading to a decrease as one sleeps. For instance, research by Diamond & Adams (2015)revealed that when one spends up to 150 minutes in exercise, the person is likely to improve quality of sleep to sixty-five percent. Therefore, regular exercise benefits the elderly very much since they are the ones with sleep disorders. Body flexibility depends on the type of exercise one takes (Walker & Krause, 2015). It can either be a combination of aerobic exercises and training resistance or aerobic exercises alone.

Lastly, many exercises improve the drive for sex. This occurs due to improved circulation of blood, system of cardiovascular, tone muscles and promotes flexibility (Kenny & Wells, 2014).  According to Hamdorf & Andrews (2017), better performance in the field results in better sexual participation. Studies by Kenny & Wells 2014, Walker & Krause 2015 and Wenger & Bell  (2016) showed that women in their 40s experience orgasms when they take part in strenuous activities. They include weight training, sprints and boot camps. Research conducted by Diamond & Adams, (2015) on  178 men, revealed that those who spend more time doing exercise, functioned well sexually. Another research conducted by Wenger & Bell (2016) on 78 men; found that their sexual behavior was improved by 6 minutes of walking each day. Borrowing from these, it is evident that sexual drive is greatly affected by activity or inactivity with those doing exercises having a good drive and performance.

**Application of theory**

**Social Cognitive Theory**

This theory describes the methods and psychosocial changes that enhance and influence dynamics health behaviors. The theory has various constructs used to delineate behavior change in human namely, reciprocal prototypical, dynamics and triadic among others. According to the theory, environmental, individual and health aspects play a significant role in installing behavioral change in an individual. Adopting this theory to change a behavior depends on the ability of a person to put a behavior into symbols, the capability of a person to visualize the results of participating in a certain behavior and to be in a position to learn through observation. Other factors include; gaining enough courage that can help the person participate in behavior, being in a position to control the behavior and lastly, to analyze and reflect on the experiences one undergoes in changing the behavior. The theory has been used by scientists and health educators in coming up with procedures that can provoke the above personal factors to cause changes in the behavior of a human.

The Social Cognitive theory constructs have huge application in my behavior change of getting enough exercises. The first construct is the social cognitive theory environmental construct. According to Baranowski, Perry, & Parcel, (2016), environmental construct refers to touchable factors outside the person that provides social support and opportunities for an individual to achieve the desired change. One of these construct in my change is a local gym that I plan to spend a total of 4 hours a week.  The gyms will be a good avenue for aerobic exercises and moderate muscles building. The gym has an instructor who I will utilize to devise desirable exercises that will fit my routine. The second environmental aspect is neighborhood running track. I believe the positive utilization of the two avenues will be significant for me to achieve my goal I plan to utilize this track for a 30-minute morning run at least five days a week.  I learned that personal factors and the environmental factors interact to cause changes in behavior. Utilizing the situation construct, I see my environment as an enabling factor to achieve my defined goals. In doing exercises, one needs an avenue to utilize, and I believe the tracking track and the gym will be the avenues.

Another way that social cognitive theory will guide me is through the expectancy and expectation constructs. Baranowski et al., (2016) defines expectation construct as an anticipated outcome from a specific behavior implying the positive outcome from a behavior designed to promote health. My intervention has many components in this construct. On the other hand, Baranowski et al., (2016) defines expectancies refer to the values individual places on a specific outcome.  This implies the present outcome of a specific change with a functional meaning.  First, through engagement in exercises, I anticipate that I will regulate my weight to the desired level of my height. From this expectation, my expectancies will be to prevent lifestyle disease like diabetes, hypertension, and obesity among others that affect people with increased body weight.  Secondly, I expect that through participation in exercises I will strive to boost my immunity and hormonal balance necessary for normal body functioning.  The positive outcome of this expectation is improved health free from mood disorders, good sleep and increased functioning to achieve higher cognitive functions.

Doing exercises, I will learn a lot from others in the observatory construct of social cognitive theory. Baranowski et al., (2016) defines observational learning as a behavior acquired through watching the performances and outcomes of others in the said behavior. I have several role models inspiring me for this behavior change. Through enumerating them, I believe I will attain their level or move beyond them. I have often dreamt of a slim body like the pageants and models on television. Reading their stories, exercise is one of their key component to such heights. In this construct, I will strive to observe them to develop my path in this intervention. Besides, I will watch and learn from the gym instructor at the local center who I will strive to learn as much from her expertise. Through this interaction, I hope to shed few pounds from my body to attain the best weight for my height. Finally, I will observe a group of youths who often jog in my neighborhood every day. Through observation learning, I believe I will obtain a motivation moving me to the attainment of the goals I set.

Establishing regular exercising routine and sticking to it in a long duration is challenging without adequate motivation. However, the application of the self-control and self-efficacy constructs of the social construct theory will guide me in overcoming any challenge. Baranowski et al., (2016) defines self-control construct as individuals control on goals directed to the behavior or performance they seek to change. According to Baranowski et al., (2016), the implication of self-control construct is to provide an individual with an opportunity for goal setting, decision making, self-reward, problem solving and self-monitoring. I will stay committed to my course redefine my goals and focus on the bigger objective of staying healthy and enjoying full benefits of exercising. Unlike in the past, I will strive to create time such that I meet the minimum daily hours of exercise to achieve the goal. My behavioral capability on the performance of this intervention I seek to change and the mastery I will gain in the process of training will be sufficient to see me through this journey.

The second construct to help me to overcome the challenge is self-efficacy construct. Baranowski et al., (2016) defines this self-efficacy as the inner confidence of an individual towards the performance of behavior and eliminating the challenges that may hinder one the behavior change. According to Baranowski et al., (2016), self-efficacy implies that an individual will take steps considered minor in the performance of a task to ensure that they succeed in the specific behavior or performance they seek to change. In the past, I did exercises for about three years but failed to adhere to my routine schedule due to work and school among other factors. However, I have learned from my mistakes, and I believe this is my strengths in engaging in these exercises. I do not believe that the task will be easy, but each step I will make will be a bigger lesson for the next step. I will seek to evaluate my weakness. Besides, I will evaluate on my strengths and make them count in ensuring I meet the preset goals. Capitalizing on these opportunities, I will ensure I overcome any challenge that may present along the way.

Besides, I will build on the social cognitive theory construct of reinforcement to ensure I do not abandon my goals midway. Like in the past where I started exercising and left three years later, I may be tired in the way. However, using the social cognitive construct of reinforcement, I will choose aspects to emphasize and which not. In the past, I placed school and work ahead of exercises. Whereas this time I may not overlook work or school I will minimize some aspects of these to give me additional time for sports. For instance, I will reduce the working hours to get additional time for sporting. Utilizing the approach, I will fit Baranowski et al., (2016) explanation of reinforcement as an individual response to decrease or increase activity to ensure one stick to the main goal or prevent a reoccurrence. I have an idea of many ways I can reinforce my behavior to increase exercise. For example, I can reward myself for each day I use over 1 hour or more in exercising to watching my favorite movie. Besides, I may also impose small punishments on myself each time I fail to achieve the said target. It is through a combination of these approaches that I will reinforce my behavior changing positively.

Finally, applications of the social cognitive theory construct of reciprocal determinism will effective behavior change. Exercising involves the interaction of many aspects whose correct interaction will determine the success of the behavior change. Reciprocal determinism construct promotes vibrant interaction of environment, behavior, and person on who behavior is performed (Baranowski et al., 2016). In my case, I live near the gym that I am working my aerobics and the tracking field just around home. With environmental factors nearby reciprocal determination will foster the interaction and ensure I achieve my objectives. Utilizing this approach, I will explore multiple avenues that may affect behavioral change and ensure that they are well coordinated to achieve the said goal. Therefore, the social cognitive theory aspect of reciprocal determination is the most significant part of ensuring that various aspects interact favorably to ensure I fully attain the desired behavior change.

However, I will not use emotional coping response construct of social determination. Baranowski et al., (2016) defines emotional as a Cumulation of tactics and strategies that a person uses to deal with emotional stimuli emanating from the activity they will engage. According to Baranowski et al., (2016), the implication of emotional coping responses is to provide an individual with basic education on ways of solving problems and managing stress that may emanate in the course of their behavior change. The construct has a low ability to be accepted into my activity given that it is more physical as opposed to emotional. Besides, it is less likely that practical physical activities are less likely to arouse emotional situations that may need to be solved by this construct. Getting enough exercises is more likely to create emotional stability as opposed to any emotional challenges

Self-determination Theory

The Self-determination theory postulates that both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation drives the urge for physical activities. In intrinsic motivation, a person takes part in physical activities because of satisfaction and innate pleasures (Ryan & Williams, 2016). Participating in physical activities makes a person feel happy and needs no rewards to be performed. Active organisms can act in their surroundings and practice their skills.  Within Self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation makes people extend and apply the skills that they possess. Any growing organisms in the world should be able to move actively, manipulate and explore with the reason of challenging oneself  (Ryan & Williams, 2016). Extrinsic motivation defines the relationship between activities and individuals. That is why every person in the world has his or her favorite activity.  The time each activity is done is also a factor. However, extrinsic motivation entails involvement in an activity with the aim of being rewarded, avoid punishment, gain recognition and to be approved. Some people participate in activities not because it is interesting or enjoyable but because of the other benefits, one is supposed to get (Ryan & Williams, 2016). This may include boosting of one’s health look younger or regain body shape to perform other duties.

My behavior change will benefit from self-determination theory in many ways. Utilizing this theory, I will seek to establish intrinsic and extrinsic factors motivate me to adopt this behavior change. Intrinsic factors include bearing appropriate weight, developing a good body image, developing strong muscles and having a stress coping mechanism among others. Extrinsic motivating factors are to have more friends and model others into exercising. Therefore, I need to develop reward and punishment system to ensure I promote my strengths and eliminate any aspects that may hinder me from adopting the exercise behavior. I seek to choose and reinforce behaviors that will ensure that I go for training every day.   On the other hand, I will establish a punishment system for any factors that may make me not participate in the field each day. The significance of this theory is that it enables me to identify factors that moved me to seek for the behavior. From these aspects, then I can isolate and strengthen my weakness as I use my strengths to achieve my set goals.

**Recommendation**

**Recommendation for research/theory**

In my refection, the social cognition theory stood up as an effective theory that can foster behavior change. Social cognitive theory application is significant in many ways to ensure one achieves their desired behavior change. First, the social cognitive theory identifies aspects that one need to monitor to ensure the desired goal is achieved. These aspects include personal efforts, environment, reinforcements and outcomes among other components that will make behavioral change a success. Secondary, the social cognitive theory makes the outcomes clear and designs approach through which the outcomes will be achieved. The social cognitive theory accommodates the fact that challenges will often be there to prevent an individual from achieving the desired behavior change. Therefore, it presents approaches through which such challenges should be addressed. Through the construct of reinforcement, people have an opportunity to increase some aspect and decrease others to accommodate challenges. In addition, self-control and self-efficacy constructs provide an individual with a chance to prevent the challenges long before they occur. Finally, the construct of reciprocal determination will ensure smooth interaction of various aspects like environment and personality to ensure the desired change is achieved.

**Recommendation for intervention**

I recommend people to change their behavior and get enough exercises. First, I exercising regularly will help them to gain physical fitness. Besides, getting enough exercises will help one to develop strong muscles and bones. Starting exercises at an early age is a behavior one should foster to prevent bone related illness like osteoporosis and rheumatism. Exercises help slows down the loss of density in bones and mass and the weight of the muscles are maintained. The duration of exercising matters when determining the quality of exercises. An individual should do at least have at least 30 minutes exercise per day ranging from light exercises to intensive. Secondly, people should exercise for them to reduce risks of developing chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes. Exercising makes, the heart stronger eliminating heart disorders and improving blood circulation. Therefore, exercises increase the flow of blood in the body increasing the amount of oxygen in the blood. Similarly, the level of sugar in the blood can be reduced if only one is taking many exercises. With the reduced amount of sugar in the blood, the insulin works better. It is in the exercise that one is able to sweat and reduce sweating at night.  Other benefits of changing to increased exercises include stabilizing mood, improving sleep quality, and improving on sexual drive. Exercise fits people of all ages except those with medical conditions forbidding them. Exercising can be done any time of the day but earlier morning exercises and evening exercise are better than midday or night exercises.

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