



## Factors Influencing College Students' Perception on Participating in Swimming Activities

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**Abstract** – *The purpose of this research is to determine the variables influencing college students' engagement in swimming activities, as well as the significant themes that often appear in these occurrences. A descriptive research design was used to identify the factors influencing college students' perception of participating in swimming activities. Descriptive research is a type of nonexperimental study that aims to describe the features of phenomena as it occurs. It was found out that participating in swimming activities provides various benefits, some of these include helping build endurance, muscle strength, and cardiovascular fitness, enhanced swimming skills, and maintaining a healthy weight. As a result, the implementation of active recreational activities in schools must be reinforced, not simply for the purpose of participation, but also because students are driven to do so. And these activities must be carried out not just on school grounds, but also at home and in the community.*

**Keywords:** College Students, Swimming Activities, Participation, Physical Activities.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Swimming is a well-known sport in the Philippines. Throughout history, humans have embraced sports as a means of demonstrating social interaction, entertainment, skills, and physical fitness with others. Despite the many health and well-being, mental and social health benefits that result from participating in recreational sports activities such as different swimming activities, college students have

shown indifference to engaging in these recreational activities (Costill D. L., et al, 2012). Swimming is also a pleasant way to unwind after a long day at work. The contact with the water is beneficial and helps to loosen up the body and the mind. The constant rhythm of the stroke, absorption in the water, and attention to the technique rapidly seem like a pleasant water meditation. Swimming can improve your overall health. It's an ideal workout for your heart and circulation, as you are using your whole body to swim (M. Korogul & K. Yigiter, 2016). Thus, your heart has to pump blood harder than it normally would to your arms and legs. Furthermore, endurance swimming is beneficial to your lungs because it pushes you to breathe more deeply and rhythmically. Swimming is also a very social sport. When you start to go to the pool, you quickly get to know like-minded regulars. It's a lot of fun to talk about different subjects and swap swimming tips and tactics while relaxing in the water. The pool is also a location where you can talk with individuals of all ages, which is becoming more unusual in our culture (M. Korogul, K. Yigiter, 2016). For most people, health and mental well-being improve, and problematic behaviors are reduced, though the incidence of mental disorders, such as depression, increases (Petrescu, S., 2014). Both with emerging adulthood and young adulthood, physical and sensory capabilities are excellent, the factors related to lifestyles, such as nutrition, obesity, exercise, sleep, smoking, and drinking or substance abuse, can influence health and survival. Compared to younger or older individuals, middle-aged people are more likely to have major mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety, agitation, and feelings of worthlessness (Papalia D. P., et al, 2010).



The low percentage of adolescents who are skilled in swimming is disheartening, given the number of initiatives that encourage and promote swimming. For example, during the twentieth century, national organizations such as the American Red Cross, the YMCA, and the Boy and Girl Scouts of America all established and extended their programs (American Red Cross, 2004). Further, the charter of the International Life Saving Federation publicizes and encourages the implementation of effective drowning prevention measures (International Life Saving Federation, 2007). Despite efforts, around 400,000 or more individuals worldwide drown each year due to several factors, including an inability to swim (Bierens, 2006; International Life Saving Federation, 2007). Because learning to swim is an individual effort that is likely to result to anxiety, self-efficacy however may play a key part in pool success (Starek & McCullagh, 1999). Furthermore, a person's fear of drowning or anxiety caused by prior water activities may be directly tied to her or his degree of effectiveness. Due to their impact on task choice, effort, perseverance, and resilience, self-efficacy beliefs are a crucial component of motivation in juvenile sports and physical exercise (Bandura, 1994). Children who have a stronger sense of self-efficacy are more likely to engage in physical exercise than those who have a lower sense of self-efficacy (Chase, 2001). The capacity to learn to swim as a youngster and the availability of swimming pools as a child appears to be substantially connected to older students' swimming performance. As a child or beginner, the more time a person devotes to practicing a particular activity (for example, swimming), the more successful they are and the more comfortable they are in their surroundings (Newell & Rosenbloom, 1981). As a result, the fewer experiences youngsters have in a swimming setting, the fewer opportunities they will have to improve their swimming abilities, which may result in a diminished degree of comfort. Lack of opportunity to practice fundamental swimming skills may lead to a fear of drowning and a loss of swimming self-efficacy, especially in females, since

earlier performance experiences are crucial in the establishment of swimming self-efficacy (Frank, 2001). Socioeconomic status is a prime factor in swimming proficiency because children who grow up in the middle and upper classes are more likely to have regular access to swimming facilities (Ponessa, 1992). Gender has been identified as a determinant in early swimming proficiency because some parents may be more closely involved in their son's sports activities as a youngster because they believe boys are more interested and capable in sports than girls (Harold, E., et al, 1991). Inequitable parental support for boys may contribute to fewer swimming chances and worse performance outcomes for girls. In college, the intimidation of being away from home on a college campus is quite difficult, and one can barely make friends. Joining a swim team in college is the perfect way to find a group in which you already have a common interest. Your college teammates aren't just teammates, they're family. Our teammates can assist us in overcoming the awful homesickness that comes with being a freshman. (Cristian, C., 2016).

Different factors that influence the perception of college students in swimming activities include swimming strength, especially upper body strength, which is important for successful swimming. Dynamic power is an important assessment of swimming performance. According to Agbanusi (2015), wellness enhances human potential by fostering a high level of physical fitness, good nutrition, positive relationships with others, and an interest in self-sufficiency and environmental sensitivity. Studies have shown that upper body strength or power is highly correlated with swimming speed at distances. Depending on the intensity and stroke employed, swimming requires a certain amount of energy.

Therefore, improving the quantity of the participation of college students by assessing the performance and examining how it relates to other factors such as experience, competition category, and performance is informative and helpful in terms of college students' health, engagement, and sports.



In addition, these results help provide the basis to support the quest to help college students participate in how to move safely in the water and discover other different factors hindering the college students to engage in the sport of swimming. In the light of the comments above, this study seeks to determine the Factors Influencing College Students' Perception of Participating in Swimming Activities. To this end, it was thought that the participants of the present study will increase their confidence to participate in any swimming activities.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### Research Design:

In order to determine the variables influencing college students' engagement in swimming activities, a descriptive study approach was adopted. A nonexperimental study method called descriptive research tries to characterize a phenomenon's characteristics as it happens (Schwarzkopf, N., 2008). An accurate and systematic description of a population, situation, or phenomena is the goal of descriptive research. It can answer queries about what, where, when, and how, but not why. Numerous research methodologies may be used in a descriptive study plan to examine one or more variables. In contrast to experimental research, in observational research the variables are neither controlled or altered by the researcher (McCombes, S., 2020).

### Research Instrument:

This study made use of the online platform google forms which are smartly developed to generate a summary of the results and an automated output of the respondents' answers. This study adopted the USA Swimming survey questionnaire from the study "Factors Impacting Swimming Participation and Competence: A Qualitative Report" (Layne, Todd E.; et al, 2020). It is composed of three sections; the first section is for the participants' background, the second section is the swimming background of the participant/ Swimming ability and the third section

is all about, participant participation in swimming activities

### Research Participants:

The participants of this study are college students from Saint Joseph College with 90 respondents in total. The sample was stratified across all levels of course programs and year levels:

## 3. RESULTS

This paper presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the survey, which aims to determine college students' participation in swimming activities. The data found were organized by the questionnaire used in this study.

### I. Profile of the Respondents

#### 1.1 In which neighborhood/area do you live?

**Table –1:** Frequency Distribution of the Respondents according to their area.

Area	Frequency	Percentage
Urban	41	45.6%
Rural	49	54.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100%</b>

As shown in the table, students who live in rural areas got the highest percentage which is 54.4% or forty-nine (49) respondents out of ninety (90) students. While 45.6% or forty-one (41) respondent lives in Urban areas.

#### 1.2 Sex

**Table –2:** Frequency Distribution of the Respondents according to their Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	39	56.7%
Female	51	43.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table shows the dominance of respondents in terms of sex. Of those who had been surveyed, female respondents were 56.7% with a total of fifty-one (51) out of ninety (90) college students. The percentage of male respondents ranges up to 43.3% with a total of thirty-nine (39) college student-respondents.

### 1.3 Age

**Table -3:** Frequency distribution of the Respondents according to their Age

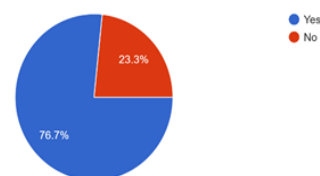
Age	Frequency	Percentage
<b>16-18 years old</b>	24	26.7%
<b>19-20 years old</b>	51	56.7%
<b>21-22 years old</b>	11	12.2%
<b>23 years Old and above</b>	4	4.4%

Table 3 shows the frequency according to their age. College students aged nineteen (19) to twenty (20) years old got the highest percentage which is 56.7% or fifty-one (51) respondents out of ninety (90) college students. The second leading is 26.7% or

twenty-four (24) respondents are between sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) years old. Meanwhile, twenty-one (21) to twenty-two (22) years old college students got the lowest percentage which is 12.2% or eleven (11) respondents. Second to the lowest is 4.4% or four (4) respondents are in the age of twenty-three (23) years old and above.

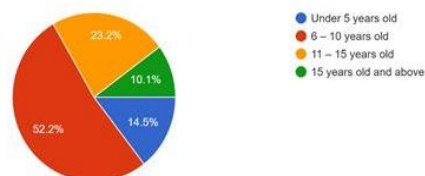
### II. Swimming Background of Participant/ Swimming Ability

1. Do you know how to swim?  
90 responses



There are 69 respondents (76.7%) who confirmed that they can swim or at least float, while there are 21 respondents (23.3%) who said they do not know how to swim.

A. How old were you when you learned how to swim?  
69 responses



The majority of the respondents 36 (52.2 %) were aged 6–10 years old as a range they first learned how to swim. There are 7 (10.1 %) respondents who learned in the later part of their teenage years ranging from 15 years old and above.

**Table -4:**

**Recurring Themes for the “YES” response**

<b>Theme 1</b>	Learning as a survival skill	<b>Yes, so</b> that I wouldn't be drowning myself when we go on beach trips...
<b>Theme 2</b>	Health purposes	Yes, ...and it's good for our health. It reduces the risk of diseases...
<b>Theme 3</b>	Fun/ Enjoyment	Yes, ... and be a lot of fun...
<b>Theme 4</b>	Mental Health	Yes, ...it can have a positive impact on mental health...

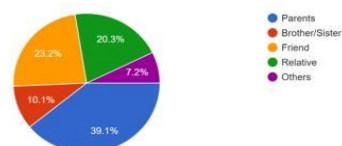
Table -5:

**Recurring Themes for the “NO” response**

<b>Theme 1</b>	Distance from the house to the swimming areas	No, because we don't go to places that often due to the distance, where we can swim, like to the sea, and the pool...
<b>Theme 2</b>	Occupied Schedules	No, ...We don't have free time...
<b>Theme 3</b>	Lack of confidence	No, ...They always encourage me to learn but it's my lack of confidence that stops me from learning...
<b>Theme 4</b>	Traumatic experiences	No, ...has a phobia or fear of large bodies of water...

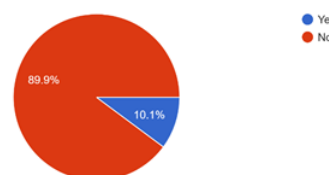
<b>Theme 5</b>	Parent's restrictions	No, ...I'm not even allowed to do outside recreational activities...
<b>Theme 6</b>	Interest and motivation	No, ...Swimming is not one of my interests as of now...

B. Who taught you?  
69 responses



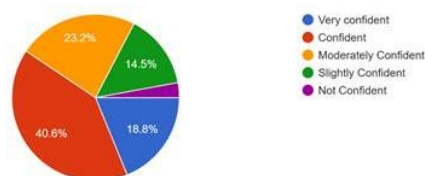
The majority of the first teachers in swimming are parents with 27 (39.1 %) responses. Followed by friends with 16 (23.2%) responses

D. Were you ever on a competitive swim team?  
69 responses



89.9% (62) respondents responded “No” to undergoing competitive swimming training while there are 7 (10.1%) respondents who answered “Yes”.

F. How confident are you in the water deep end of a pool?  
69 responses

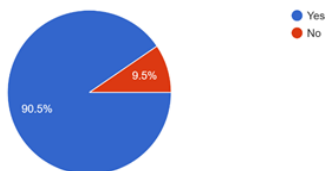


The majority of the responses are on the level of CONFIDENT with 28 (40.6%) respondents. Followed by moderately confident with 16 (23.2%) respondents.



Question: Would like to learn how to swim? Why or why not?

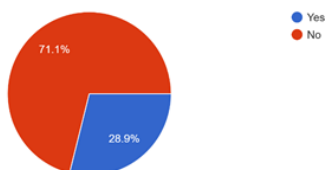
3. Would you like to learn how to swim?  
21 responses



The majority of the respondents are interested in learning swimming 90.5% while there are only 9.5% say “No” to learning swimming.

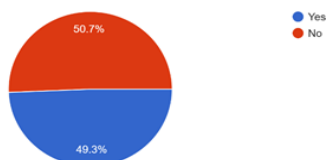
### III. Participation in Swimming Activities

2. Are you afraid of having a dark color of skin?  
90 responses



Most of the respondents are saying that they are not afraid of getting dark skin after swimming activities with 64 (71.1%) results while there are only 26 (28.9%) said they are afraid.

2. Have you ever experienced drowning in water?  
75 responses



There are 37 (49.3%) of the respondents who confirmed that they had experienced drowning.

What is the reason for your drowning experience? Please specify your answer.

Table -6:

#### Recurring Themes

Theme 1	Unaware of the geographical structure of the	...I was on the deep side of the water...
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seabed

Theme 2 Water current

...I was dragged by the water current...

Theme 3 Dragged by my friend/ companion

...My childhood friend stepped on my back...

Theme 4 Leg cramps

... Unfortunately, I got leg cramps...

Theme 5 Panicking

...I know I can just float that time, but I started panicking...

Theme 6 Strong waves

... When I'm caught in high gusts and waves...

Theme 7 Rescuing others

...I was trying to help a friend who didn't know how to swim, and I wasn't able to carry both of us so I ended up drowning...

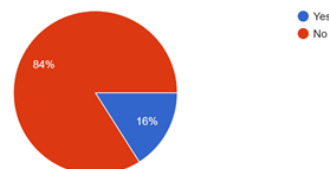
Theme 8 Exhaustion due to prolonged floatation

...I was exhausted at that time so I did not have the energy to afloat myself anymore...

Theme 9 The incorrect usage of life jacket

...the life jacket flipped over, and I couldn't hold it right away...

3. Do you have any health issues that's why you don't participate in any swimming activities?  
75 responses



Do you have any health issues that's why you do not participate in any swimming activities?

Table -7:

Recurring Themes		
<b>Theme 1</b>	Bone problem	...I have scoliosis...
<b>Theme 2</b>	Respiratory problem	... I have asthma...
<b>Theme 3</b>	Traumatic experience	... I have Thalassophobia, due to my experience when I was a kid, I am scared of deep waters. Just looking at the ocean scares me...

cardiovascular fitness

Helps you maintain a healthy weight	60	80%
Tones muscles and builds strength	45	60%
Stress Reliever	55	73.3%
Improving flexibility	46	61.3%
Improve the skill of swimming	61	81.3%
Providing a pleasant way to cool down on a hot day	46	61.3

Table -8:

4. What are the benefits that you can get from participating in any swimming activities?

Themes	No. of respondents	Percentage
Boost the confidence	35	46.7%
Builds endurance, muscle strength, and	69	92%

The majority of the respondents answered that participating in swimming activities builds up endurance and muscular strength with 69 (92%) respondents while boosting confidence was the least benefit being noted by the respondents with 35 (46.7%).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, the leading factors that directly influence the participation of college students in learning swimming include swimming as a survival skill, the health benefits it provides, the fun/ enjoyment it serves, and the purpose of mental healing. A few of the factors that affect the participation of college students being uninterested in learning swimming are the distance from the house to the swimming areas, too-busy schedules, lack of confidence, occurring traumatic experiences, parent's restrictions, and uninterested and demotivated. These are some of the recorded factors that directly and indirectly affect the will and the motivation of college students in engaging in such.



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