



The Benefits of a Trauma-Informed Aquatic Wellness Program: A Pilot Study

Bianca Callier, OTS; Zipporah Brown, OTD, OTR/L; Gretchen Swanson, DPT, MPH

West Coast University - Center for Graduate Studies

DESCRIPTION OF SITE & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Pools of Hope

- Indoor aquatic facility located in North Long Beach
- Serving the community for over 55 years
- Two 91-degree therapeutic pools
- Group exercise, swim lessons, veteran's program, community events
- Mission: To provide a warm water facility promoting whole life wellness in our community.

Needs Assessment

- Increase knowledge of wellness and wellness opportunities within POH and the community
- Increase community awareness of Pool's of Hope
- Incorporate a Trauma Informed Care Approach throughout programs & staff



BACKGROUND

- As each of the 8 Dimension's of Wellness do not need to be balanced, it takes a client centered approach to help one develop positive routines through a balance unique to them to optimize health and well-being (Levasseur et al., 2019; Stoewen, 2017).
- Utilizing a wellness approach will increase habit formation and establish health promoting daily routines, promote a personalized plan of care, and increase self-awareness of an individuals' habits and routines (Clark, 2014; Stoewen, 2017).
- Exposure to traumatic stress is very common in low income populations. (Bassuk et al., 2017).
- A growing body of evidence reports the negative health outcomes of those exposed to trauma and individuals of economically disadvantaged communities, as they commonly experience disparity due to lack of access (Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, 2014).
- Training health care staff on the usage of a universal design and using a trauma-informed care approach to treatment despite if a client is a trauma survivor or not, may lead to positive health outcomes (Bassuk et al., 2017; Green et al., 2016).
- Water based exercise has also been found to increase cognitive functioning which include cognitive flexibility, mental-processing, attention, and memory functions (Ayan, Carvalho et al., 2017).

PURPOSE

To increase wellness services at Pools of Hope by providing an aquatic wellness program to improve overall QOL in an underserved community.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- By the end of the DEI, I will justify the effectiveness of an aquatic therapy program on the improvement of women's overall occupational wellness and QOL.
- By the end of the DEI, I will show my ability to create and implement educational in-services directed towards staff and community organizations, on the topics of wellness and trauma-informed care approach.
- By the end of the DEI, I will demonstrate advanced knowledge of the development, implementation, and facilitation of a trauma-informed wellness program within the context of Pools of Hope.

METHODS

Design: The study utilized a mixed methods approach.

Participants

- Wellness Evaluation N= 50
 - Inclusion criteria (1) male and female (2) current members of Pools of Hope
 - Individual 1:1 appointment
- Women's Wellness Group N=30
 - Inclusion criteria (1) identify as a female (2) over 18 years old (3) current member of the pool

Data Collection

Quantitative data was collected from surveys and pretest/posttest scores from the WHOQOL-BREF. Qualitative data was collected from surveys and focus group, audio recorded and transcribed.

Data Analysis

JASP statistical software was used to analyze the quantitative data. Data gathered from surveys and WHOQOL-BREF were analyzed using a paired samples t-test and descriptive statistics.

Qualitative data was transcribed using thematic coding to identify themes and then triangulated to eliminate for bias.

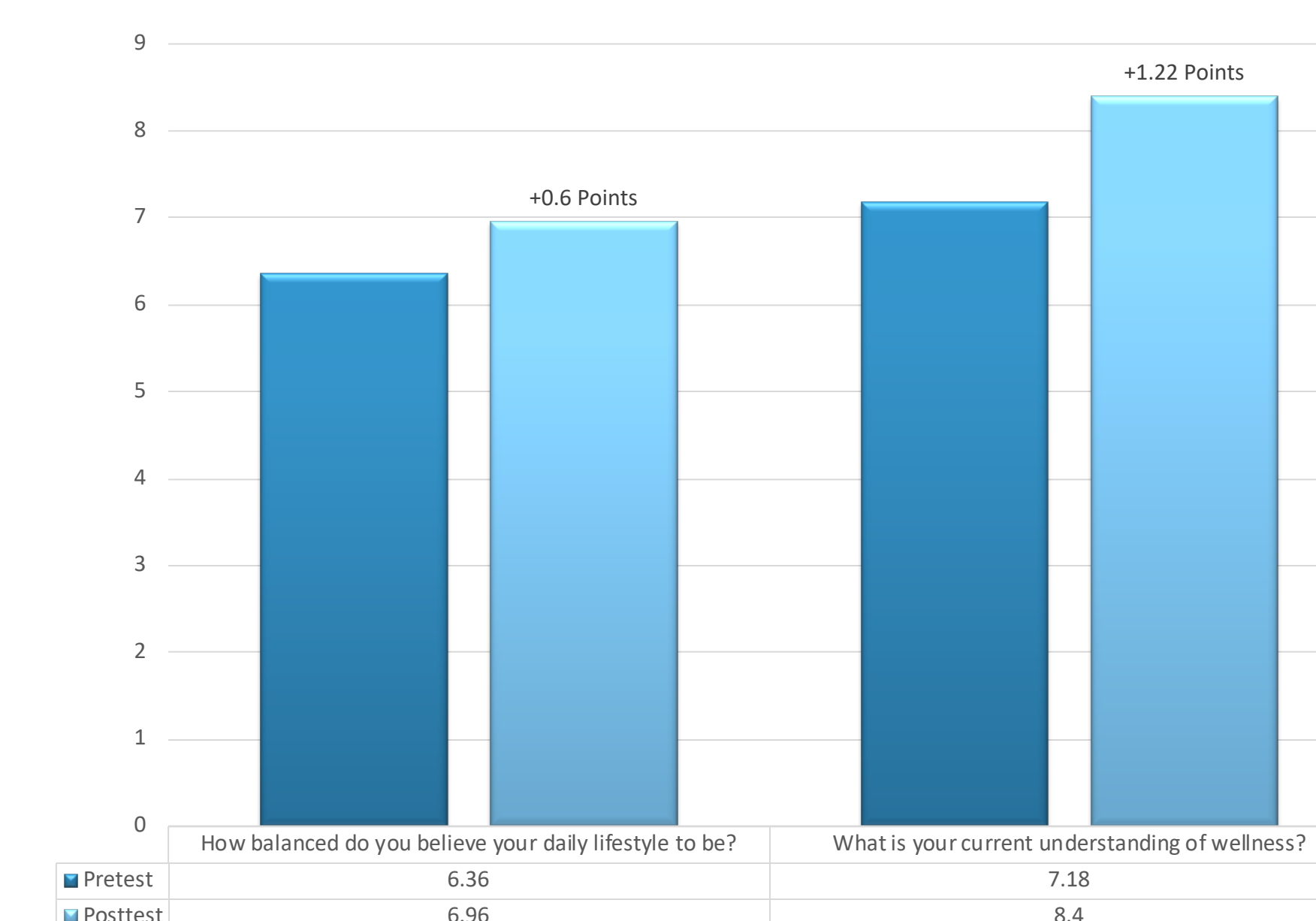


RESULTS

Wellness Evaluation

Survey Results

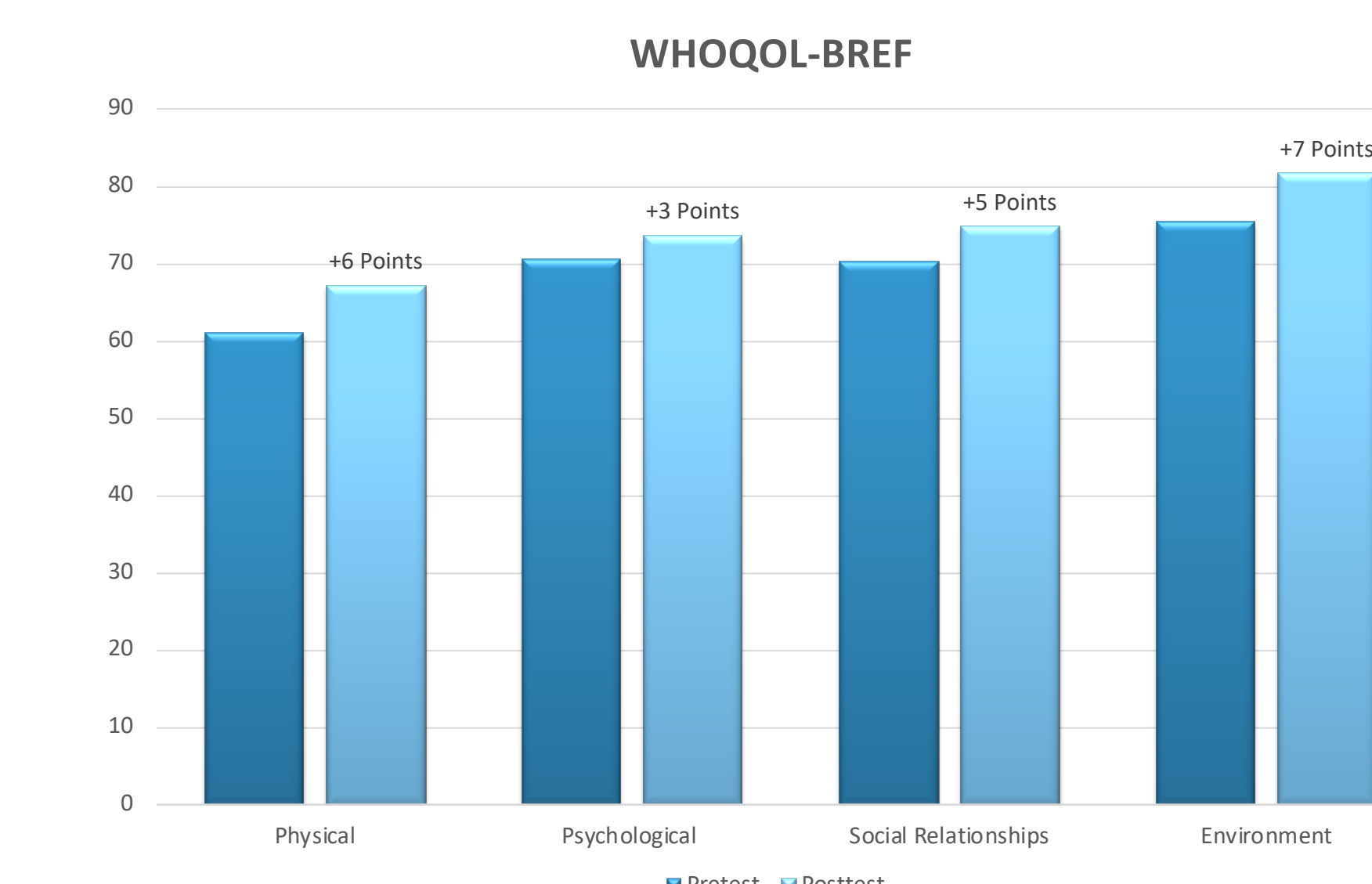
- (N=50) 4-Male 46-Female
- Paired-Samples T-test
- Q1: Pretest (6.36) - Posttest (6.96); $p < 0.001$
- Q2: Pretest (7.18) - Posttest (8.4); $p < 0.001$
- Identified Themes:
 - Increase in self-reflection of gained insight into their daily habits and routines
 - Increase in understanding of the concept of wellness
 - Positive reaction to goal writing



Women's Wellness Group

WHOQOL-BREF

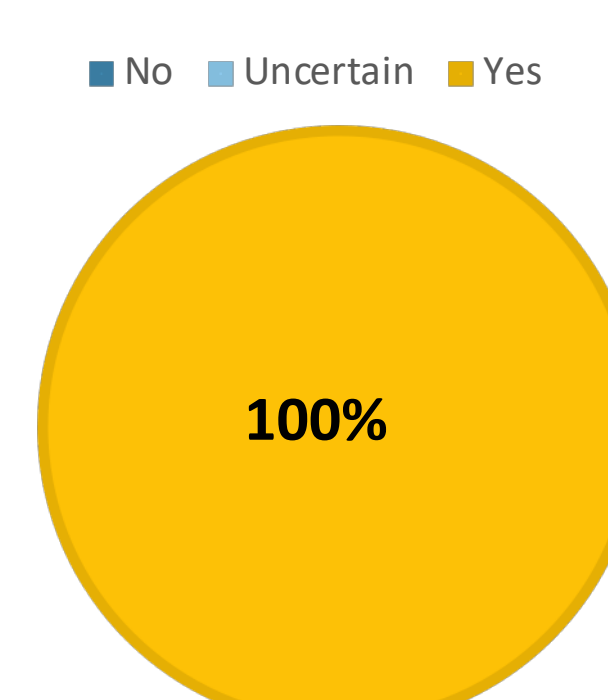
- N= 29 Female
- Paired-Samples T-test
- WHOQOL-BREF Pretest vs posttest results:
 - Physical ($p = 0.087$); Psychological ($p = 0.228$); Social Relationships ($p = 0.133$); Environment ($p = 0.045$)



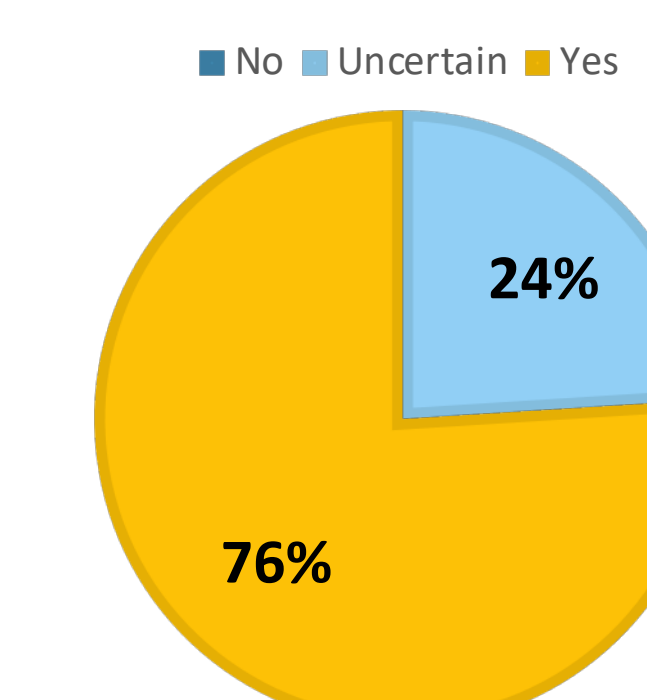
SURVEY

- N=21

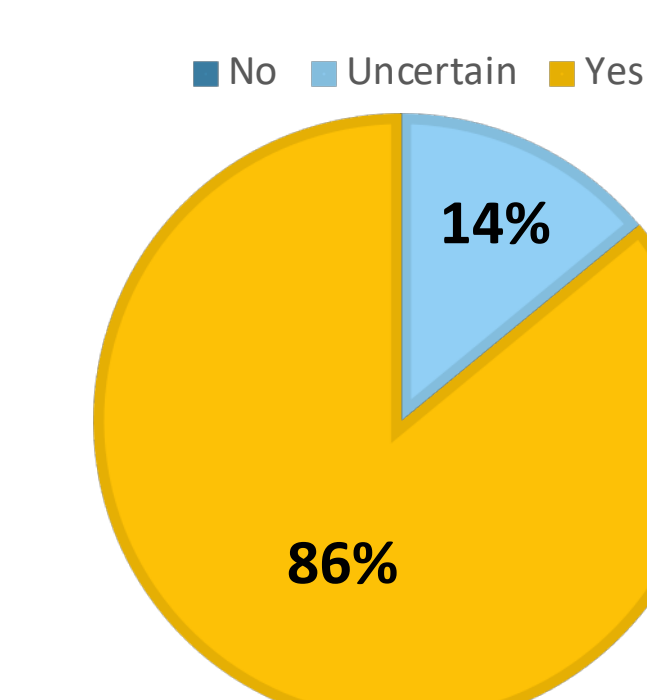
DO YOU BELIEVE THE WOMEN'S WELLNESS GROUP (WWG) HELPED YOU IMPROVE YOUR OVERALL WELLNESS?



DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE START OF THE WWG?



IF THE WWG WAS OFFERED AGAIN FOR ANOTHER 8-WEEKS, WITH NO INCENTIVE, WOULD YOU ATTEND?



IDENTIFIED THEMES

Wellness Evaluation Survey

1. Increase in Self-Reflection

"I enjoyed these questions because no one has asked me this before. I never thought about, I didn't realize how content I was till I had to think about my life."

2. Increased Understanding of Wellness

3. Positive Reaction to Goal Writing

"Putting it in writing is helpful. It is so simple but so big. It doesn't seem like a chore. These goals are something I can actually do and want to do. I'm excited."

Women's Wellness Group Survey & Focus Group

1. Increase in Awareness

2. Transfer and Generalizability

"...And I did start walking... and even arranging your financial goals and stuff, made me think more on that. And I appreciate it."

3. Personality of the Capstone Student

"And you always telling me to be patient and encouraging me to do it because you told me I could do it... But I love your personality. I love you going one on one and taking time with each person."

4. Affect on Occupational Performance

"But the wellness has enabled me to handle stress better, and more effectively..."

Scholarly Deliverables

- Wellness Evaluation form
- Wellness Goal Sheet
- Women's Wellness Program Curriculum
- Wellness Handouts
- Wellness PowerPoint with preliminary data
- Program Flyers

DISCUSSION

- Statistically significant increase in understanding wellness
- Statistically significant increase in perceived quality of life
- Increased understanding of lifestyle balance
- Increased social connection
- Overall increase in awareness of daily habits and routines through the administration of a 1:1 Wellness Evaluation and mindfulness activities in the Women's Wellness Group.
- Effective utilization of a Trauma-Informed Care Approach within program
- The program could be offered on an as need basis

IMPLICATIONS

- Increased knowledge of wellness at the community level
- Providing a safe space for women to engage in peer support and occupational wellness may be a contributing factor to client's increased perception of QOL.
- Provided an increase in awareness of daily habits and routines
- In the future, expand program to men and new pool members, provide follow up consultations after Wellness Evaluations, and have an OT on staff

REFERENCES

Available upon request

CONTACT

Scan the QR code for my contact information, or email me at: BiancaCallier@gmail.com

