



Sport and leisure behaviour of fitness club participants

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Abstract

The aim of the study upon which this paper is based was two-fold: firstly, to determine what motivates individuals to join a fitness club, and secondly, to determine their sport and leisure behaviours. This is done in an industry that is growing but in which very little research has been conducted in the past from a South African perspective. A quantitative research approach was followed. Data collection took place at Virgin Active clubs in Gauteng, South Africa. A probability sampling, namely random sampling, was conducted. Questionnaires were distributed among Virgin Active members at three different fitness clubs. In total, 474 usable questionnaires were obtained, after which three factor analyses were conducted. For the first-factor analysis (reasons for exercising or being a member of a fitness club), five factors were identified; for the second-factor analysis (type of sport participating in), four factors were identified; and for the third-factor analysis (leisure time participation), three factors were identified. The research firstly revealed that the primary motives for being a member of a fitness club are for health reasons, part of my lifestyle, and to improve my quality of life. Secondary motives are interaction and being sociable, as well as being goal orientated. The second finding of the research is that traditional sport codes such as rugby, tennis, netball, and soccer remain the most popular sports to participate in. Lastly, the research proposes the CAP (creative, active and passive) leisure typology needs to be tested in future research in this field. This is the first time that these aspects (motives, sport and leisure behaviour) have been tested at fitness clubs in South Africa.

Keywords: Gymnasiums, leisure activities, sport activities, recreation, motivation, South Africa

Introduction

Globally, there is greater emphasis on a healthier lifestyle, which implies that people do some or other form of physical exercise. One of the reasons is that physical inactivity is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality and is estimated to cause 6% of deaths worldwide (WHO, 2013). In addition, 30% of global atherosclerotic heart disease burden, 21% of breast and colon cancer, and 27% of diabetes are attributed to inactivity. This has led to more people participating in physical exercise, especially from the early 1980s, when a boom in aerobic training was experienced, led by a well-known personality and film actress, Jane Fonda.

South Africa, like most other countries in the world, has also experienced a significant increase in the number of gymnasiums, which was fuelled by an important number of people who want to train or exercise and who thus needed a suitable venue. However, gymnasiums have evolved from an establishment that catered primarily for body-building and specific sports programmes (athletes who trained for competitions) to fitness clubs that cater for the needs of everyone, from the young to the old. Universally gymnasiums have also undergone a paradigm shift from just offering weight training to offering customers a variety of options such as swimming, running, yoga, cycling, spinning, aerobics, squash, circuit training, specialised tests to improve specific aspects of the athlete, dieticians, and biokineticists. Even fitness equipment such as treadmills, ellipticals, studio bikes and water rowers improved significantly, and today one can measure different aspects electronically, for example heart rate, cadence, fat burned, calories burned, and blood pressure, while participants listening to music or watch television.

This brings one to the following important questions: Why do people train or exercise in fitness clubs? A fitness club according to Alam and Hossain (2012) is a place where people try to attain their physical fitness through generally repetitive modes of exercise. However these authors also state that people join fitness clubs for different reasons, and it is these reasons that we would like to determine. Another important question is what type of sport do they participate in, if indeed any? Another pertinent question is what type of leisure activities do they participate in? The purpose of this paper is thus two-fold: firstly, to determine what motivates individuals to join a fitness club, and secondly, to determine the sport and leisure behaviour of fitness club members. Saayman (2009) alludes to the fact that leisure and sport all overlap, since most of the activities take place during one's leisure time. Leisure time's most basic definition is 'time free from work' (Godbey, 1989). Some of these activities are also referred to as 'recreational activities'; recreation, on the other hand, entails the positive usage of one's free time (Saayman, 1993).

Although several studies that focused on communities' recreation and leisure activities have been conducted in South Africa (see De Man, 1992; Fourie, 2006;

Horn & Booyesen, 1992; Mogajane, 2005; Saayman, 1993; Saayman, 2004; Saayman & Du Plessis, 2003; Wilson, 1992), reasons for people going to fitness clubs, as well as the choice of sport and leisure activities that they participate in have, to the best of the authors' knowledge, not been investigated before in a South African context. This is despite the fact there has been a significant growth in the in the number of fitness clubs in the country for example the Virgin group of fitness clubs established 138 clubs in South Africa and this does not include other privately owned clubs and health centres. Answers to the questions raised above will hopefully assist fitness clubs or gymnasiums (particularly in marketing and product development), and recreational sport clubs can also benefit from this research in gaining greater understanding of the sport and leisure behaviour of participants. In addition, Calitz (2005) and McDonald (2005) clearly showed that South Africans' sport and recreation trends have changed significantly over the past 25 years. A study in Asia also showed that fitness club trends are changing rapidly due to greater health and fitness awareness (Wang *et al.*, 2008).

Literature review

The fitness industry globally is big business from a financial and economic point of view. For example, in India, it is estimated at \$34 billion and in the United Kingdom (UK) it is estimated at £2,66 billion (Alam & Hossain, 2012). In Australia fitness centres contribute approximately \$872.9 to the economy (Fitness Australia, 2009). In the United States of America (USA), fitness clubs contribute approximately \$11.6 billion to the US economy, whilst the market for health products accounts for more than \$440 billion in sales (Devine & Lepisto, 2005). When one looks at statistics concerning fitness clubs in Africa and South Africa specifically, very little data is available which confirms the statement by Crossley (2005) that despite the size and impact of this sector very little empirical work has been carried out which is one of the reasons for undertaking this research which thus fills a gap in the knowledge field (Monaghan, 1999, 2001; Klein, 1993). According to Crossley (2005) most of the research conducted at fitness clubs focused on body-building hence it is an area that requires great research.

The literature review revealed several reasons or motives for people participating in physical activities. Generally, motivation refers to a person's drive to a specific behaviour (Alam & Hossain, 2012). According to Guay *et al.* (2010) motivation refers to the reasons underlying a person's behaviour. Iso-Ahola (1980) indicated that participation in activities can be explained by using an iceberg analogy to help illustrate the layers of differing motives. The tip of the iceberg (i.e. what is visible) represents expressed motives, whereas the overwhelming majority of the iceberg, which remains unseen below the waterline, accounts for the underlying motives, for example those pertaining to socialisation and personality factors (Gibson, 2004).

Furthermore, it has been suggested that motives do not act independently, but are rather combined into a collective of intended (primary and secondary reasons) or unintended reasons of motivation (Saayman, 2017). This is also referred to as the intended/unintended theory of motivation. In studies of leisure and sport and recreation, three classic motivational theories predominate (Gibson, 2004). These include Murray's theory of Personality in terms of needs (1938), Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory (1943) and Berlyne's Optimum Stimulation Level theory (1960). The assumptions underlying all these theories are that needs or motives underpin all human behaviour and are rooted in the basic psychological and socio-psychological needs and wants of humankind.

The needs mentioned above are also dynamic in that they rise and fall over time, as some needs are satisfied and others not due to a range of constraints. Thus, the same person may choose the same behaviour for different reasons at different times. Murray identified 12 psychological (viscerogenic) needs that he regarded as primary needs, including water, air and security. He also identified 28 secondary or psychogenic needs that are related to mental and emotional states, such as autonomy, affiliation or achievement. Other theories include the theory of Allen (1982), who identified personality types that are attracted to leisure activities. However, Weed and Bull (2004) indicated that there are also some very specific motives that are particular to sport, for example a need to compete, a desire to win and the opportunity to develop a person's current skill levels. These motives tend to be linked to achievement behaviour and incorporate some theoretical positions, including the need achievement theory, test anxiety, expectation of reinforcement, and cognitive and social cognitive approaches (Roberts, 1992).

Most research confirms that people exercise for health reasons, which include lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels, as well as lowering the occurrence of cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, osteoporosis and even colon and breast cancers (Schutzer & Graves, 2004; Haskell, Lee, Pate, Powell, Blair, Franklin, Macera, Heath, Thompson & Bauman, 2007; Thompson, 2009; Dacey, Baltzel & Zaichkowsky, 2007; Alam & Hossain, 2012; Crossley, 2006; Wang *et al.*, 2008; Louw, Van Biljon & Mugandani, 2012; Vartanian, Wharton, & Green, 2012; Molanorouzi, Khoo & Morris, 2015). Mead, Morley, Campbell, Greig, McMurdo and Lawlor (2009) and Potgieter (2003) added that physical exercise could also reduce psychological ailments such as anxiety, stress and depression. It also improves a person's mood and promotes better sleep (Youngstedt & Klein, 2006). Another important benefit is that it improves self-esteem (Spence, McGannon & Poon, 2005, Egli, Bland, Melton & Czech, 2011) and body image (Zajac & Shier, 2011).

A study conducted by Awruk and Janowski (2016) found four key motives for people going to the gymnasium, namely social approval dependence, appearance improvement, training pleasure and physical performance. In their research, Awruk and Janowski (2016) also identified three clusters based on the motives

listed above and labelled them 'high motivation – social approval', 'medium motivation – training pleasure' and 'low motivation – physical performance'. In a study conducted by Dragosavljević, Tešanović, Bošnjak and Živković (2014), the researchers found the key reasons for participating in activities to be health improvement, rest and relaxation, prolonging life and work life, the fun and pleasure factor and to 'look good'.

A study by Louw *et al.* (2012) found the top six reasons to be improvement of general health, maintaining fitness, feeling good, developing strength and endurance, to feel more energised and for enhancing one's appearance. Research by Caudwell and Keatley (2016) also confirm that in the case of men's motivation to attend a fitness club or gym today appearance plays a major role especially losing weight. Ingledew, Markland and Strömmer (2014) found eight factors in a factor analysis that was done on motives. These factors are affiliation motives (to be with other people who exercise), affiliation gain (the chance to spend time with family and friends), appearance motive (to look good), appearance gain (to look younger because of training), the challenge motive (to work towards personal challenges), challenge gain (giving participants goals to work towards), the positive health motive (to have a healthy body) and positive health gain (because of exercising, a healthier body is obtained). Research by Alam and Hossain (2012) also identified passing one's leisure time as a reason for a person to join a fitness club. The research of Ingledew *et al.* (2014) was based on the Self-Determination theory (SDT) of Deci and Ryan (2000), who indicated that regulatory motives are the perceived loci of causality of individuals' behavioural goals. They have made a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic regulation. 'Extrinsic regulation' refers to the engagement of an individual in an activity as a means to attain some separable outcome such as obtaining an award or reward. 'Intrinsic regulation' refers to the inherent satisfaction that one derives from participation for pleasure or fun and when the activity is alluring (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Ingledew *et al.* (2014) noted that motives have also been related to the type, stage and extent of exercise participation.

A study by Ingledew and Markland (2008) group motives for participation into four categories, namely body related (weight and appearance), health fitness related (endurance and strength), social engagement related (affiliation and challenge) and enjoyment related. Participatory motives, according to Strömmer and Ingledew (2015), are those which individuals seek to attain or avoid by engaging in a particular domain of behaviour or activity. One also finds that participation in a competitive group motivates exercise and increases levels of performance. Spinning is one such an activity. Motivation is a psychological construct that gravitates an individual towards the desired goal and is considered a psychological force that reinforces action (Schacter, 2011). In this context, Quindry, Yount, O'Bryant and Rudisil (2011) state that exercise is motivated by age dependent factors which highlights the role that age plays in one's decision to

participate in activities. This type of research has been the cornerstone of recent sport, leisure and recreation research.

Methodology

A quantitative research approach was followed and the collecting of data was done by using a structured questionnaire. A letter was sent to managers of Virgin Active clubs in Gauteng Province in South Africa to ask for permission to conduct this research. Three clubs responded and were willing to partake in the research and ethical aspects were applied as per university rules. Aspects considered included the anonymity of the respondents. Club members were solicited for the research, and after their approval was gained, the research began. A probability method, namely random sampling, was used and questionnaires were distributed among Virgin Active members at the three different clubs, using random sampling. For this research, every third person who entered the club and was willing to complete the questionnaire was selected. If not willing, the next person was asked. The respondents agreeing to participate were advised that they would not be incentivised in any way and that they were free to withdraw at any time they felt the need to do so. Furthermore, their anonymity was guaranteed. The survey was conducted during the months of February and March 2016. The questionnaires were distributed by trained fieldworkers at the following Virgin Active clubs: Horizon View Virgin Active Health Club (140 completed questionnaires); Menlyn Virgin Active Health Club (141 completed questionnaires); and Sandton Virgin Active Health Club (193 questionnaires completed). In total, 474 usable questionnaires were obtained. According to Cooper and Emory (1995), a total of 451 (n) questionnaires would be needed for the data in this study to be statistically valid and to enable a statistically sound analysis. The questionnaire was developed by the researchers, based on the work of Ingledew *et al.* (2014), Louw *et al.* (2012), Alam and Hossain (2012) and Thompson (2009). Questions were used to measure the independent variables and to obtain socio-demographic information. The questionnaire consisted of the following two sections: Section A, which contained socio-demographic information (home language, gender, age, marital status, occupation, annual gross income, the highest level of education, and visiting places during vacation time); and Section B, which addressed motives for exercising in fitness clubs, as well as participation of respondents in sport and leisure activities.

Results

The results section consists of two parts, namely the descriptive results and the factor analyses.

Descriptive results

The descriptive results determined each respondent's demographic profile, which includes gender, age, marital status, annual income, home language, occupation

and level of education. 58% of the respondents were male and 42% female. The average age of respondents was 34 years, with 44% of the respondents in the category 20-29 years of age. 39% had an annual income of more than R500 000, 49% were married, 36% had a degree or diploma and 35% were professionals. This profile is similar to studies conducted at fitness clubs in other parts of the world (see Alam & Hossain, 2012).

Factor analyses

The rotation method used for the principal axis factoring analysis was oblimin with Kaiser normalisation. Factor analysis is used to establish latent variables or factors among observed variables (Tustin *et al.*, 2005); in other words, the technique is used to reduce the data (Malhotra, 2010). The interpretation of a factor analysis is facilitated by identifying the items that have sufficient loadings on the same factor (Field, 2013). For the first factor analysis, five factors were extracted for *reasons for exercising*, four factors for *type of sport participating in* and three factors for *leisure time activity participation* (Tables 1, 2, and 3). These were labelled according to similar characteristics and accounted for 60%, 61% and 41%, respectively, of the total variance. Average inter-item correlation coefficients also implied internal consistency for all factors. Moreover, most items loaded on a factor with a loading greater than 0.35; these relatively high factor loadings indicated a reasonably high correlation between the factors and their component items. All factors had Cronbach alpha values that were larger than .600 (Field, 2013), except for two, which were .583 and .570, respectively. As this was exploratory research, the values were still acceptable (Field, 2013).

Table 1. Reasons for exercising

| 60% variance explained | Factor 1: Quality of life | Factor 2: Interaction and being sociable | Factor 3: Goal orientated | Factor 4: Lifestyle | Factor 5: Health reasons |
|---------------------------------|--|---|--|--------------------------------|---|
| Cronbach alpha | .877 | .819 | .563 | .735 | .583 |
| Mean value | 3.75 | 2.55 | 3.41 | 4.21 | 3.89 |
| Inter-item correlation | .512 | .398 | .307 | .442 | .327 |
| It lowers anxiety | .823 | | | | |
| It boosts my memory | .783 | | | | |
| It boosts my confidence | .760 | | | | |
| To give me a better posture | .750 | | | | |
| It brings about better sleep | .723 | | | | |



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|--|------|------|
| To improve my mood | .603 | |
| It boosts my energy levels | .515 | |
| To find my soul mate | .804 | |
| To avoid being alone at home | .748 | |
| It is a great way to meet new people | .690 | |
| To socialise | .687 | |
| To earn loyalty points | .679 | |
| It gives me something to do in my spare time | .464 | |
| To get away from my normal routine | .392 | |
| To improve my athletic ability | .760 | |
| To train for a specific sport or event | .549 | |
| Exercising is fun | .455 | |
| I feel better after doing exercises | | .814 |
| Health reasons | | .788 |
| It is a great way to relieve stress | | .683 |
| It is part of my lifestyle | | .549 |
| So that I can live longer | | .623 |
| To build muscle mass | | .605 |
| To look good (weight loss) | | .418 |

Extraction method: Principal component analysis. Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalisation.

Five factors were identified from the statements measuring *reasons for exercising*, and labelled 'quality of life' (Factor 1), 'interaction and being sociable' (Factor 2), 'goal orientated' (Factor 3), 'lifestyle' (Factor 4) and 'health reasons' (Factor 5). It was found that the most important factor was Factor 4, namely 'lifestyle', consisting of aspects such as 'I feel better after doing exercises', 'health reasons', 'it's a great way to relieve stress' and 'it is part of my lifestyle'. This factor has a

Cronbach alpha value of .735. It was clear that health-related factors are the most important, namely Factors 1, 4 and 5.

Interesting to note is that ‘specific sport training’ is the fourth-most important, whereas ‘interaction and being sociable’ is the least important aspect. The factor with the second-highest mean value (3.89) is Factor 5, ‘health reasons’, and consists of aspects such as ‘so that I can live longer’, ‘to build muscle mass’ and ‘to look good’.

The factor seen as the least significant is Factor 2, ‘interaction and being sociable’, including aspects such as ‘to find my soul mate’, ‘to avoid being alone at home’, ‘it is a great way to meet new people’ and ‘to socialise’.

Table 2. Type of sport participating in

| 61% variance explained | Factor 1: Traditional sport | Factor 2: Cycling | Factor 3: Weight training | Factor 4: Endurance sport |
|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Cronbach alpha | .918 | .715 | .605 | .608 |
| Mean value | 3.98 | 3.57 | 3.67 | 3.40 |
| Inter-item correlation | .457 | .556 | .330 | .350 |
| Horse riding | .874 | | | |
| Netball | .873 | | | |
| Sailing | .835 | | | |
| Hockey | .831 | | | |
| Gymnastics | .772 | | | |
| Wrestling | .721 | | | |
| Tennis | .698 | | | |
| Soccer | .637 | | | |
| Cricket | .575 | | | |
| Dancing | .539 | | | |
| Boxing | .420 | | | |
| Rugby | .410 | | | |
| Golf | .382 | | | |
| Cycling | | .826 | | |
| Spinning | | .821 | | |
| Body building | | | .840 | |
| Weightlifting | | | .801 | |

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|----------------------|------|------|
| Athletics | .372 | |
| Gymnasium (Aerobics) | | .770 |
| Running | | .603 |
| Hiking | | .518 |

Extraction method: Principal component analysis. Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalisation.

Type of sport participating in (Table 2) revealed four factors, namely ‘traditional sport’ (Factor 1), ‘cycling’ (Factor 2), ‘weight training’ (Factor 3) and ‘endurance sport’ (Factor 4). The factor with the highest mean value is Factor 1 (3.98), making it the most important factor for *type of sport participating in*. This factor consists of aspects such as horse riding, netball, tennis, sailing, boxing, cricket and rugby, and confirms the importance of traditional sporting activities and the role that fitness clubs play in preparing these athletes.

The factor with the second-highest mean value of 3.57 is Factor 3, namely ‘weight training’. This factor consists of aspects such as weightlifting, body building and athletics; again, the traditional gymnasium activities are still highlighted as being very important and fitness clubs still have an important role to play in this regard. These factors’ Cronbach alpha value is .605, which is also above the recommended .600 (Field, 2013). Factor 2, namely ‘cycling’, is the third-most important factor (with a mean value of 3.57), followed by Factor 4, namely ‘endurance sport’, which has the lowest mean value (3.40). Both factors’ Cronbach alpha values are above .600.

Table 3. Leisure-time activity participation

| 41% variance explained | Factor 1: Creative leisure | Factor 2: Passive leisure | Factor 3: Active leisure |
|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cronbach alpha | .780 | .708 | .570 |
| Mean value | 3.66 | 2.79 | 2.89 |
| Inter-item correlation | .280 | .217 | .240 |
| Painting | .815 | | |
| Knitting | .722 | | |
| Playing musical instruments | .687 | | |
| Writing | .668 | | |
| Visiting cultural locations and events | .626 | | |
| Art activities | .623 | | |
| Hiking | .441 | | |
| Visiting parks | .431 | | |
| Gardening | .404 | | |

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|--|------|-------|
| Listening to music | .682 | |
| Sleeping | .669 | |
| Internet browsing (Facebook, Twitter, & Instagram) | .663 | |
| Visiting friends and family | .658 | |
| Watching TV | .617 | |
| Going to the cinema | .399 | |
| Studying | .378 | |
| Religious activities | .332 | |
| Reading | .317 | |
| Cooking/Baking | | -.557 |
| Playing video games | | -.554 |
| Braai | | -.480 |
| Shopping | | -.400 |

Extraction method: Principal component analysis. Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalisation.

Leisure-time activity participation revealed three factors, namely 'creative leisure' (Factor 1), 'passive leisure' (Factor 2) and 'active leisure' (Factor 3). 'Creative leisure' received the highest mean value (3.66) with a Cronbach alpha value of .780. This factor includes aspects such as painting, knitting, writing, playing musical instruments, and art activities. 'Active leisure' had the second-highest mean value (2.89) with a Cronbach alpha value of .708, consisting of aspects such as cooking/baking, playing video games, braai (barbeque) and shopping. 'Passive leisure' was the third-most important factor with the lowest mean value (2.79) and a Cronbach alpha of .570, consisting of aspects such as sleeping, internet browsing, watching television and studying.

Findings and implications

The following findings were identified from the results and their implications are brought forward:

The first finding is that the combination of motives for participation in physical activities in a fitness club has not been found in the literature before. This research also confirms the notion of Gibson (2004) that motives do not act independently. According to Gibson (2004), an analysis of five factors revealed that the top three, namely 'health', 'lifestyle' and 'quality of life', can be regarded as the primary motives according to the intended and unintended theory (Saayman, 2017). These three factors showcase mainly aspects related to health (Schutzer & Graves, 2004; Alam & Hossaim, 2012; Crossely, 2006; Wang *et al.*, 2008; Haskell, Lee, Pate, Powell, Blair, Franklin, Macera, Heath, Thompson & Bauman, 2007; Thompson, 2009; Louw, Van Biljon & Mugandani, 2012; Vartanian, Wharton, &

Green, 2012). 'Interaction and being sociable' as well as 'goal orientated' can be seen as secondary motives and their focus is on the individual and his or her sport. 'Interaction and being sociable' has partly been supported in literature, in which there is some reference to going to the fitness club to socialise (Ingledew & Markland, 2008; Crossley, 2006). 'Interaction' (which includes 'to meet my soulmate' and 'to avoid being alone at home') has not been found before. 'Goal orientation' as a motive has been found previously (Louw *et al.*, 2012; Markland & Ingledew *et al.*, 2014).

The implication of this finding is that, from a marketing point of view, the focus of fitness clubs should be twofold: Firstly, on creating a healthy lifestyle. Therefore, general health services should be provided which include diet consultation, providing basic training programmes, equipment and staff who are properly trained and knowledgeable on these issues to improve the members' health. Where a fitness club does not have such qualified staff the club should at least be able to refer participants to qualified trainers or specialists who can assist them. Basic training programmes should also be made available that people can use for example a chart on different circuit training programmes. Hence the first focus is mostly health related.

Secondly, the focus should be on a strategy to address specific sport needs for the members who are actually participating in organised sport, such as advice on training programmes, diets, and equipment. In addition, it seems that there is a need to socialise and interact with other people, which could also imply having events, workshops and get-togethers at the fitness clubs for those who would like to meet other people or who have a greater need for socialisation due to unfulfilled aspects in their normal environments

Since 'lifestyle' has the highest mean value, it also confirms that exercising should be seen as a lifestyle; this implies that fitness clubs should try to engage young people or high school learners to become members and develop a healthy lifestyle from a very young age. Some fitness clubs start with pre-school kids and offer them different games to improve basic skills as an introduction to the world of fitness clubs. By doing this it also encourages the parents to become members. Here discounts to scholars and students can be a useful tool in growing this segment.

The second finding is that popular and established sport codes such as rugby, tennis, netball, horse riding, soccer and boxing remain the most popular sports that respondents participate in. These are also the sports that are well supported and watched in South Africa (see Fourie, 2006; Mogajane, 2005; Saayman, 2004; Saayman and Du Plessis, 2003). The implication is that fitness clubs must continue to provide services in order to address those athletes' specific needs as indicated in finding one above. This research also confirms that the traditional activities offered by gymnasiums, namely weight training and sport coaching,

remain popular. Another interesting finding is the research's confirmation of results by Calitz (2005), McDonald (2005) and Wang *et al.* (2008) that even though traditional sport remains important, trends have changed (for example cycling in different forms that has become very popular).

The third finding is, contrary to popular belief, namely, that those who are physically active also have a need for creative leisure activities. This research revealed that a new typology for leisure activities can be used and should be tested in future research, namely the creative, active and passive (CAP) leisure typology. The CAP leisure typology indicates the leisure needs and activities of respondents. Although it is not expected of a fitness club to address all the leisure needs of members, it is useful to understand these needs, since some of these activities can even be offered as events (such as hiking and painting) and this would also give respondents the opportunity to socialise and interact with one another. This is recommended based on the fact that fitness clubs are changing from just being a gym to offering a greater variety of services to different markets. These activities could become part of what these clubs can additionally offer members. Leisure activities could be used to attract people who would not generally enrol in a fitness club; and do not want to change their body image or level of fitness; it could also be used to attract children to an exercising environment that could also be used as family activities. In addition, fitness clubs could assist their members by giving them advice on leisure time activities. They would, therefore, be able to address members' free time in a more holistic way and this would result in improved quality of life and wellness.

Conclusions

The primary aim of this innovative research was to determine sport and leisure behaviour, as well as motives for people to become members of fitness clubs. It is clear from the literature review that the fitness industry makes a significant contribution to respective countries' economies. It is also clear that trends are changing from what was originally seen as a gym to what is now known as a fitness club.

The latter is an establishment that offers much more to a greater variety of needs than in the past. It is for these reasons that this type of research is required. Based on the results, the research makes the following contributions: To the best of the authors' knowledge, it is the first time that such a survey was conducted at fitness clubs in South Africa, especially in determining members' sport and leisure activity participation. The research therefore makes a unique contribution to the literature on physical exercise, sport, leisure, recreational needs and activities but also to fitness club managers, and thus fills an important gap. The latter can use this type of information in, or to market these fitness clubs but also to provide better products or combinations of products and services. The importance of physical exercise as a lifestyle choice is confirmed; in addition, interaction as one of the

motives for becoming a member of a fitness club has not been found in the literature before. This stresses the role that fitness can play even perhaps as a vehicle via which one can ultimately meet one's soul mate.

Another important contribution is the new proposed CAP leisure typology, which needs to be tested among the greater South African population as well the rest of Africa. It would also be important to conduct similar research among athletes who do not belong to a fitness club in order to validate or reject the motives, leisure and recreational needs of participants. Areas of research could include to quantify the amount or the economic impact of fitness clubs and the fitness industry as a whole to the economy of South Africa. Women's perceptions of training in a male dominated environment are also an area that deserves more research. It is also be important to determine why people start going to a fitness club and then after a short period they drop out. Another area that deserves more research is how homosexuals and lesbians view gym attendance. Lastly one could also conduct a similar study amongst people with disabilities. The greatest limitation to this study was the lack of fitness club managers to allow us to conduct this research at more fitness clubs.

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