

**Body Image and Ideas of Fitness: Case Study of Youth Clients of  
'The Gym' Povorim, North-Goa**

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## **DECLARATION BY STUDENT**

I hereby declare that the data presented in this Dissertation report entitled, "Body Image and Ideas of Fitness: A Case Study Of the Youth Clients of 'The Gym' Porvorim, North- Goa" is based on the results of investigations carried out by me in the Department of Sociology at the D. D. Kosambi School of Social Science and Behavioral Studies, Goa University under the Supervision of Dr. Arvind N. Haldankar and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree or diploma by me. Further, I understand that Goa University or its authorities will be not be responsible for the correctness of observations / experimental or other findings given the dissertation.

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## **COMPLETION CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the dissertation report "Body Image and Ideas of Fitness: A Case Study Of the Youth Clients of 'The Gym' Porvorim, North-Goa" is a bonafide work carried out by Ms. Reha Rama Kerkar under my supervision in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master's in Discipline Sociology at the D. D. Kosambi School Of Social Science and Behavioural Studies, Goa University.

  
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Date: 19/04/2024

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## **PREFACE**

This dissertation explores the intricate relationship between fitness and society, the perception of body image, and ideas of fitness in today's youth. It will also help in delving into the societal, cultural, and psychological factors that shape individuals' views of their bodies and their pursuits of physical and mental health. It will help people to know the increasing number of gyms in society and why people choose to go there. It seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge in the field of sociology, particularly within the realm of body image studies and exercise science.

The impetus behind this study comes from a deep interest in how people's perceptions of their bodies affect their behavior, social well-being, and quality of life in general. Given that in today's social media-dominated era, where illusions of beauty and fitness prevail, it becomes increasingly important to study the impact of such representations on individuals' self-concepts and health and fitness-related behaviors,

The methodology adopted for this study involves a case study method involving qualitative methods, interviews, and participant observation. A sample size of 20 people under the age group of 18 to 30 who are clients of The Gym was selected to give a larger point of view on the research problem. The timeline for the research, as outlined in the preface, was diligently followed to ensure the completion of each phase within a given period.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

My heart fills with great joy and emotion as I take a moment to thank all the fantastic people who have encouraged and helped me in my dissertation study. First of all, I owe my gratitude to Ganapati Bappa for his blessings and for giving me the strength to complete my work. I would like to express my deepest gratitude towards my guide and mentor, Dr. Arvind N. Haldankar, who has helped me in all the possible ways and guided me so well. I extend my sincere gratitude to Prof. Ganesha Somayaji, Dean of DDKSSSBS, for his guidance and encouragement. I am extremely thankful to the proprietor of The Gym, Samir Bhaip, for being available to have a conversation with me despite his busy schedule, and I am also very grateful that all my respondents were very kind and helpful towards me.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 FITNESS AND SOCIOLOGY**

Fitness and society, therefore, share an intricate and dynamic relationship that has evolved. The interplay between individual health practices and societal norms has led to shaping perceptions, behaviors, and trends that are associated with fitness. Societal transformations—be they based on technology, culture, or economics—are reflected in the way that fitness is part of broader social dynamics. The way an individual engages in fitness activities, physical well-being's importance, and how society looks at body image are very representative of broader social trends.

This complex relationship between fitness and society reveals the profound impact of collective values, cultural shifts, and societal structures on pursuing healthy and active living. In this light, investigating the interrelationship between fitness and society offers valuable insights into the evolving nature of health consciousness, body ideals, and the impact of societal factors on individual well-being

#### **1.2 BODY IMAGE IS A CONCERN FOR TODAY'S YOUTH**

Concerns about body image among today's youth in society indicate a complex problem influenced by several variables. Teenagers' perceptions and assessments of their bodies are greatly influenced by societal, cultural, and media influences, as well as evolving beauty standards.

Though they are distinct from one another, physical activity, exercise, and physical fitness are all related. However, it frequently occurs that both names are used interchangeably, and occasionally the words are even used backward. Any voluntary, muscle-driven action of the body that uses energy is considered physical activity and is measured in kilocalories. Daily chores, walking, working out, and other daily



activities can all be classified as forms of physical activity. Exercise is a type of physical activity that is well-planned, structured, and repetitive with the enhancement or maintenance of physical fitness as a primary or secondary goal. An assortment of factors that are related to physical fitness

### 1.3 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

There is no information about the date when formal exercise entered the human lifestyle. The earliest records say that the Egyptian family adopted acrobatics and physical training approximately 2000 BC, or almost 4000 years ago. Kung Fu, combined with a breathing practice and organized fluid movements, is thought to have originated among the Chinese people. Exercise, credited to the Chinese and Egyptians, however, only attained social acceptance after the Greeks started rigorous training for competitive athletes. At this point, it was introduced in educational institutions and was viewed as being important for the development of martial arts skills like fighting and the healing of the mind, body, and spirit. Exposure to idealized body images in mainstream media, like magazines, advertisements, and social media platforms, can provide an unhealthy frame of beauty and influence a distorted view of one's own body.

The applications of photo-editing tools and filters on social media platforms could, therefore, contribute to distorted perceptions about a young person's self. Social media platforms, particularly through peer comparisons, constitute an environment where young people compare themselves to their peers, influencers, or celebrities. This constant comparison may lead to dissatisfaction with one's body and a desire to conform to perceived societal ideals. There can be vast variations in cultural norms and expectations regarding beauty and body shape. Youth can be

bound to certain standards in their particular cultural context, and this often results in problems with body image.

Peer pressure, in addition to societal expectations regarding appearance, especially in adolescence, may have a great influence on body image. The urge to fit in and get accepted socially may sometimes propel young people towards prescribed body styles. Instances of body shaming or bullying that revolve around physical appearance can have long-lasting effects on the self-esteem and body image of young people. Negative remarks, which may be made face-to-face or online, do contribute to the development of body dissatisfaction. Gender-specific expectations of body image can be greatly expressed. Each gender will face pressure to conform to preconceived notions of masculinity or femininity, respectively. Poor body image closely correlates with various mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression, and eating disorders. Understanding the link between body dissatisfaction and mental health is a vital step towards the well-being of today's youth. Family dynamics and values can significantly influence a young person's perception of their own body.

The emergence and development of gyms in India, which are frequently seen as cultural imports from the West, have roots in shifting societal norms, cultural changes, and a growing awareness of fitness and health. This change is due to adopting the Western approach and developing an international fitness culture that is not restricted to geography.

In the early 20th century, the influence of British colonialism brought about changes in lifestyle and physical activities. The British introduced sports and physical training as part of their education system and established gymnasiums in schools and military institutions. These early organized physical training efforts laid the

groundwork that eventually led to the broad acceptance of fitness-related practices in Indian society.

#### 1.4 HOW GYMS IN INDIA STARTED

Post-independence era: With the attainment of independence in 1947, society went through a lot of societal changes. Urbanization, industrialization, and globalization in subsequent years influenced shifts in lifestyle and dietary patterns. India has been more connected to the global community, and the perception of health and fitness has gained traction, influenced by Western ideas.

Fitness centers emerge: With the acceleration of industrialization in the 1980s and 1990s, India's health and fitness scene has gained a lot of attention. The liberalization of the economy and exposure to Western media led Indians to change their views regarding well-being, body aesthetics, and exercise forms. It was in this period that modern fitness centers sprung up in metropolitan cities.

Globalization, lifestyle change, and diet changes: Through the process of globalization, changes in dietary habits, sedentary lifestyles, and an increase in lifestyle-related diseases, the Chinese process of globalization led to changes in dietary habits, sedentary lifestyles, and the rise of lifestyle-related diseases. As health consciousness spread among urban Indians, the realization that regular exercise helps maintain good health and avoid disease grew in importance. Fitness centers, each fitted with modern machines and run by trained personnel, provided space for individuals looking forward to a healthier lifestyle.

Acceptability and changing attitudes: How gyms are seen in India has undergone a drastic transformation. Starting as places for bodybuilders and the elite, gyms became more community-friendly in the long run. As more people understood the positive effects of physical fitness on health, acceptance of the gym environment

transcended social class and economic status. Many Indians started focusing on physical fitness as a social norm, embracing it to build their physical fitness routine.

Media influence: Media, especially films' impact, radiated the fitness culture in India. The fitness-oriented Bollywood films started portraying actors fit with bodies like superstars; influencing people's perceptions of an ideal physique. Athletes and movie stars endorsing certain fitness regimes further fueled interest in gym workouts and gym attendance.

Urbanization and modernization: India's urbanization and modernization brought an increase in demand for gym fitness services. In major cities in the nation, one could come across a variety of gym premises tailored to every taste, including weight training, cardio workouts, yoga, and many others. This attraction is characterized by the convenience and effortless accessibility with which gyms attempt to reach their target audience.

Wellness trends and holistic health: A growing emphasis on holistic health and wellness in Indian society has been witnessed in recent years. The gyms, once associated with physical fitness, now feature aspects related to mental well-being, nutrition, and overall lifestyle choices. This change reflects a global trend, in which fitness is considered more than just physical but involves both mental and physical dimensions. The gym culture in India thus represents a sample of global fitness trends, which indicates a universal aspiration of health and well-being that goes beyond geographical and cultural boundaries.

## 1.5 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The researcher in this dissertation is trying to get a better understanding of social dynamics in the gymnasium environment and is also looking into whether social interaction and relationships impact people. This research will give in-depth

information on sociological factors influencing the choice of gym membership, including demographic considerations, social class, and community influence.

researcher is trying to get a better understanding of the pros and cons of physical activity and healthy living. Finally, this dissertation will give a full picture of what we know about exercising and healthy living. It's relevant to both young people and can be used as a resource for school nurses or public health nurses to teach and motivate them.

## 1.6 OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the reasons facilitating the membership of individuals in the age group of 18 to 30 into the gym
2. To know the strategies and means employed by gyms to attract people
3. To discern the implications of fitness to their physical, mental, and social wellbeing
4. To know how gym is emerging as a popular fitness culture in Goa.

## 1.7 AREA OF RESEARCH

Porvorim was historically focused on the village market at the intersection of the Panaji-Mapusa highway and the Socorro-Sangolda road. It used to be the last vādo of the village of Socorro. The parish church was Nossa Senhora do Socorro in Zosvaddo, Socorro, while Porvorim was served by the Candelaria Chapel near the market and the Holy Family Chapel (now an independent church) further up in Alto Porvorim.

Alto Porvorim (2) village, where we live, was established in the 1970s, over four and a half centuries after the Portuguese invasion of Goa. It is located in Bardez, one of the four 'Velhas Conquistas' (Old Conquest talukas) during Portuguese

dominion, with Ilhas (Tiswadi), Salcete, and Mormugao. There are many Hindus and Catholics here.

In an article published by Preeti Padgaonkar, one of her respondents mentioned that “The place was a forested area,” he says. “As you come from Panjim, right from the bridge up to Porvorim, it was all forest. There were a few houses on the left side. There was a place called Teen Building; there were three buildings over there, but there were no houses on the right side. Slowly, the Housing Board Colony came up, and things changed. Now this place is full of houses. In those days, wild animals were moving around. There were jackals, wild boars, and different types of birds. Slowly as the population increased, the animals had to move to other places and they slowly disappeared. I don’t see any of those animals now as there are houses everywhere and people have come to stay.”.

Porvorim (pronounced [pu:rvorĩ]) is the de facto legislative and executive capital of the state of Goa, as both the Goa Legislative Assembly and Secretariat operate from the same complex in the district of Alto Porvorim in Porvorim. Alto is a Portuguese word that means "high" or "upper." It also serves as the de facto judicial capital of Goa. The Bombay High Court at Goa (Bombay High Court - Panaji Branch) has relocated to a new building complex overlooking the Mandovi River. Previously, it operated from the Lyceum facility in Panaji. Porvorim is located on the right bank (north bank) of the Mandovi River, while Panaji, the de jure capital of Goa, is on the opposite bank. Porvorim is regarded as an expensive residential hub because it is located on the Mumbai-Goa highway NH66. Mall De Goa, Goa's largest retail center, is located here.

The researcher will be conducting her research study on individuals who are gym enthusiasts and who are members of ‘The Gym’ which is located in Porvorim,

North- Goa. This gym is situated behind L.D.Samant Memorial High School is also known as Vidya Prabodhini College of Commerce, Education, Computer & Management.

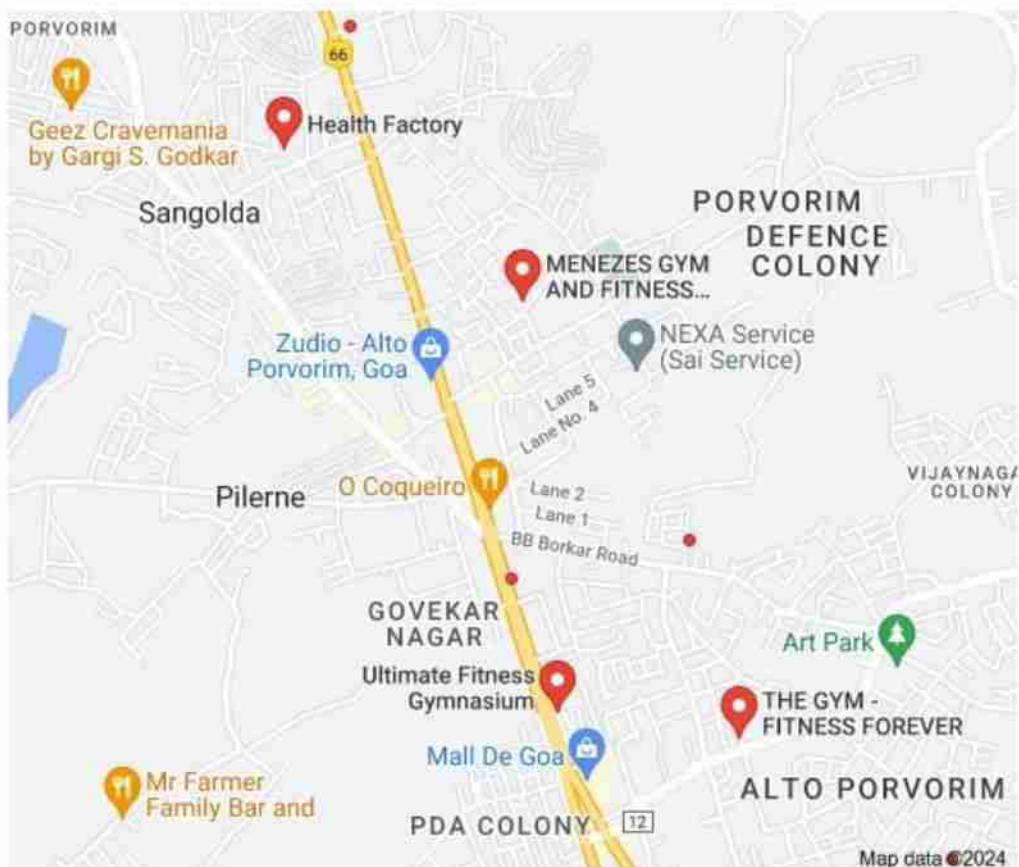
## 1.8 SCOPE

Sociological research on body image and fitness provides a multidimensional lens through which to view the intricate interactions between personal experiences, institutional structures, cultural norms, and individual expectations. Social and cultural constructs, formation of identity and socialization, social, disparities and self-perception, well-being and health, practices of body modification, and institutional effects are some of the aspects of studying body image and fitness in sociology.



Map 1.1: Map of Porvorim

Source: Google Maps



Map 1.2: Map where The Gym is located

Source: Google maps



## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

A literature review is a summary of scholarly papers and discussions about one particular topic. It provides conceptual coverage by synthesizing key studies, theories, and findings, with gaps and patterns identified. Important for research, it places a study in its contextual history as existing knowledge, assists in formulating research questions, and justifies the significance of new investigation. The literature review portrays the understanding of the subject by the researcher and helps build a theoretical framework and contribution toward advancing knowledge in the field.

Walter Toraski's (January 2023) work, "Society: Sport, Fitness & Wellness," detailed five themes: Sports, as a mirror of social conditions, The research takes into account the fact that sport mirrors broader social conditions, capturing both positive and negative aspects.

Fitness sports trends: Fitness sports are recognized as a relatively new genre of sports that represent the ideals and motivations of the modern era. In fitness sports, the pursuit of physical attractiveness, health, and well-being converge, reflecting societal ideals and desires.

The research done by Diane E. Taub, and Kimberly R. Greer (July 1998) titled 'Sociology of Acceptance Revisited: Males with Physical Disabilities Participating in Sports and Physical Fitness Activities' discussed the following themes, stigmatization and social interactions: widespread devaluation that people with physical disabilities endure, highlighting how commonplace ambiguous social interactions. These people are frequently marginalized as a result of societal attitudes.

**Sociology of acceptance:** An increasing number of sociologists are calling for a paradigm change in favor of a "sociology of acceptance." **Research focus and Methodology:** The article centers on the perceptions of individuals with physical disabilities within the realm of sports and physical fitness. In-depth, tape-recorded interviews with 19 males, aged 20 to 41, form the primary methodology, offering a nuanced exploration of their experiences.

**Masculinizing Sport Outcomes and Minority Group Membership:** It appears that masculinizing sports results is a coping strategy, implying that physical accomplishments help people with disabilities have a positive self-image. Membership in a minority group also helps to create a collective identity that acts as a barrier against internalizing unfavorable attitudes from society.

According to Christina Gjestvang, Runar Barstad Solberg's (December 2020) work, "Mirror, Mirror: Does the fitness club industry have a body image problem?" discussed themes like **Longitudinal analysis of body image:** The study fills a vacuum in the literature by providing longitudinal data on changes in body image during the first year of gym attendance. Long-term evaluations offer insightful information about how novice exercisers' body image changes over time.

This comparison would bring out the potential impact that can be affected by the constant involvement in a gym on the perception of body image.

**Methodology:** Another methodology used is conducting an online questionnaire from inexperienced exercisers in 25 fitness clubs located in Oslo, Norway, which amounts to 1,561 participants. A thorough representation of the study population is ensured by the high response rate, which lends credibility to the findings.

Findings: During the first year of gym attendance, certain subscales like appearance satisfaction and BASS show positive changes at various intervals. These complex results advance our knowledge of how different facets of body image change over time.

Positive changes in specific subscales: At various points during the first year of gym attendance, certain subscales—like appearance satisfaction and BASS—show positive changes. These nuanced findings add to our understanding of how different aspects of body image change over time.

According to Anna Urban, Monika Bąk-Sosnowska's (September 2017) study titled "Body image in women practicing yoga or other forms of fitness" discussed themes like,

Comparative analysis of body image: The study aims to compare the body image of women engaged in yoga (group A) with those participating in other forms of fitness (group B). The comparative approach provides insights into how different physical activities may influence body image perceptions. group fitness classes, specifically, those of group A are practicing yoga, and the other fitness forms are practiced by the participants of group B. The focal group which includes participants doing various forms of physical activity lets the whole focus on what potential differences in body image outcomes could be.

Physical activity and body image discussion: It is reiterated that physical activity will impact the outcome of body image but in different ways. This highlights that physical activity is more dependent on its nature in interpreting its impact on body image.

Julia's research in this respect significantly contributes to exploring sociologically the understanding of youth, the body, and health in discovering how the body is understood, constructed, and negotiated under socio-cultural pressures. Her work can be set within a broader framework of sociological approaches that stress the social dimensions of body image, particularly within Western societies like Australia. This paper sets out a literature review, where key concepts and perspectives in this area are discussed

**Sociological Construct of Body Image:** As literature and works suggest, there is the perspective that social construction emphasizes the idea of how body image is socially constructed through societal expectations and cultural ideals. Such an understanding emphasizes that individuals actively interact with social norms in defining their body identities with sociological theories like symbolic interactionism and social constructions<sup>7</sup>.

**Consumer Culture and the Body:** That a societal force such as consumer culture can so dramatically mold how young people perceive their bodies is touched upon by Julia's work. Moreover, research in consumer culture sociology brings out the impacts of marketing, advertising, and commodification on the kind of beauty practices that then become ingrained in the consciousness of the youth, leading to cosmetic surgery and appearance management.

**Identity, Gender, and Body Work:** Julia's exploration of 'body work' practices aligns with sociological literature on identity formation and gender studies. The body is seen as a site where identity is actively produced through affective relations, challenging the notion of the body as a passive object for inscribing social and cultural meanings.

Body image concerns among youth: evident from this literature are Julia's findings about the significance of body image as a consideration for young Australians. Sociological studies on youth health find the complex way in which such pressures are woven into social contexts, such that boys and girls find it difficult to feel comfortable with their image. Wellbeing and Society: Sociological perspectives concerning well-being involve the potential direct correlation between body image and its impact on well-being, much in line with more broad-based discussions on health and society.

Experts and Agents: Julia's understanding of youth as experts and agents in their issues draws on empowerment theories in sociology. Literature stresses the active capacity of young people to be contributors and experts in their own experience. Education and Wellbeing Programs: Julia's postdoctoral work on the Learning Partnerships Project accords with sociological research on education and well-being. Research has consistently indicated that educational interventions, like role-playing activities, positively impact well-being by addressing issues to do with help-seeking and support. This resonates well with sociological perspectives on global health that underscore the need to recognize and respect cultural diversity in understanding and addressing health issues.

Julia's engagement in a UNESCO program targeting vulnerable populations in South Asia and the Pacific connects her with global approaches within the field of sociology. Sociological perspectives on global health stress that the international movement to research and address health issues should take into account diverse cultural contexts.

Collaborative research and participatory methods fit well with collaborative and interdisciplinary sociological trends. Participatory methods enable the participants in the process of research to directly take part in the process of research, thereby assisting in the fuller appreciation of the experiences of the individuals.



Picture 4.1: *Structure of 'The Gym'*

Source: Researcher

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **WHY GYM?**

Exercise has been shown to have positive effects on people's physical and mental health. Particularly, studies have shown that exercise lowers the risk of chronic disease, improves memory and brain function, increases energy levels in both healthy and ill people, and decreases anxiety and sadness. But for some people, there's a thin line between fun and healthy exercise and compulsive exercise, which interferes with everyday life and is frequently done to an unhealthy extent. Crucially, obsessive exercise is a common sign of several eating disorders, most notably bulimia and anorexia nervosa (the purging variety). (Juncal Ruiz-Turrero, 2022)

The psychological impacts of physical exercise are primarily dictated by the reasons for engaging in it. Exercise is frequently done for aesthetic purposes as well as health-related ones, such as controlling body type, weight, and muscularity. Compared to people who exercise for health promotion, those who exercise to manage their weight and shape are more likely to develop obsessive exercise habits. Exercise is mostly driven by weight and shape control in women, which has been linked to decreased body satisfaction. Likewise, several studies presented proof that exercising solely for physical beauty was linked to decreased levels of self-worth, body satisfaction, and body esteem. The obsessive and compensatory aspects of exercise were more indicative of eating disorder diagnoses and disordered eating than exercise that was excessive in quantity. (Juncal Ruiz-Turrero, 2022)

According to eighty-three percent of American women, they are unhappy with their bodies, and there is evidence linking body dissatisfaction to both disordered eating and overexertion. Furthermore, a clear relationship exists between overall subjective well-being and body dissatisfaction, as well as between self-esteem and



body dissatisfaction. There is a reciprocal relationship between body image and physical activity: while having a positive body image is linked to more physical activity (and having a negative body image to less physical activity and sports), participating in physical activity and sports also has an impact on one's body image. The relationship between certain exerciser subtypes and body satisfaction, body image, and self-esteem is less evident, though.

Beyond the absence of body dissatisfaction, positive body image refers to attitudes and actions that show a healthy acceptance and appreciation for the body. This concept gives the study of embodiment, which has historically concentrated on problematic attitudes and behaviors, a wider viewpoint. Because it informs clients and practitioners about body-related attitudes and behaviors to aspire toward rather than just what to avoid, research that examines the correlates and traits of positive body image has significant implications for prevention and treatment. In their most recent handbook, Kristin J. Homan and Tracy L. Tylka (2014) reflected on the significance of positive body image and stated that it is "essential to the future of the field."

While positive body image has only recently been discussed in academic literature, research indicates that it is a complex concept that includes satisfaction with one's physical abilities, internal orientation toward one's body, and appreciation of one's own body. Body appreciation is the expression of unwavering respect and approval for the body. (Nichole L Wood-Barcalow, February 2010)

People who value their bodies understand that they are special and accept both their qualities and shortcomings. By tending to their physical needs, adopting healthy habits, and mentally rejecting cultural messages that perpetuate unattainable ideals of thinness, they demonstrate respect for the body. Focusing on the capabilities and

sensations of the body rather than its appearance is known as internal body orientation (Frisén & Holmqvist, 2010; Wood-Barcalow et al., 2010).

Those with an internal body orientation are more concerned with comfort than they are with their appearance. Lastly, functional body satisfaction is defined as contentment and approval of the body's physical capacities. (Nichole L Wood-Barcalow, February 2010)

Oddly, not much research has looked at the relationship between exercise and having a positive body image, even though there is strong evidence that physical activity helps women feel better about their bodies. Numerous approaches have shown this relationship, such as ecological momentary assessment (Lepage & Crowther, 2010), self-report correlational studies (Hausenblas & Fallon, 2002), quasi-experimental designs (Davis, 1990) that compared exercisers and non-exercisers, and experimental designs (Vocks, Hochler, Rohrig, & Legenbaugher, 2009).

According to three significant meta-analyses, one of which examined pre- and post-test experimental designs, exercise is regularly linked to a decrease in body dissatisfaction. (Heather A. Hausenblas, 2006) Given the consistently negative correlation between exercise and body dissatisfaction, it stands to reason that exercise also enhances women's positive body image perceptions. However, as noted by Fredrickson (2001) and Tylka (2011), enhancing positive traits does not equate to decreasing negative ones (like body dissatisfaction), and as of yet, no research has experimentally investigated this possible advantage of exercise. Three qualitative studies offer oblique backing. First, consistent exercise was frequently cited by women with positive body image as a means of fostering body care and general well-being (Wood-Barcalow et al., 2010).

Rather than seeing exercise as a means of losing weight, these women saw it as a means of decompressing, having fun, and improving their health. Additionally, most of the teenagers (93%) who had a positive body image had no trouble considering themselves to be active. They engaged in many sports and other physical activities, such as dancing and jogging, and considered exercise to be a "natural part of life" and a "joyful and health-promoting" experience (Frisén & Holmqvist, 2010, p. 208). Merely 20% of the teenagers stated that they worked out to maintain or alter their appearance. Third, collegiate female athletes expressed pride in their well-developed, robust bodies (Krane, Choie, Baird, Aimar, & Kauer, 2004).

They appreciated how their strength aided them in their sport and concentrated on the use of their well-developed muscles. Despite how the female athletic body deviates from the cultural ideal of femininity, they acknowledged that it still possesses unique, desirable features. There may be a link between physical activity and positive body image because many of the emotions and attitudes that these athletes have described are similar to those of positive body image. Exercise and a positive body image have also been linked in two quantitative studies (Langdon & Petracca, 2010; Swami & Tovée, 2009). Street and modern dancers showed a higher body appreciation than non-dancers and college women. Different women may benefit from exercise in different psychological ways. It has been demonstrated that a variety of the exerciser's attributes, such as pre-existing body image disturbance, enjoyment of the activity, and cognitions during the activity, mitigate the psychological effects linked to exercise (Blanchard, Rodgers, & Gauvin, 2004; Lepage & Crowther, 2010; Raedeke, 2007; Vocks et al., 2009).

Compared to the control group, those in the exercise condition showed increases in positive affect (such as revitalization and positive engagement)

participants. The effects were mediated by the participants' cognitions; when they concentrated on the exercise (e.g., breathing), their gains in positive affect were less than those who let their thoughts wander during the running session. These kinds of results suggest that a variety of participant characteristics can affect how exercise affects their mental health. The reason behind an individual's exercise motivation could be a significant moderator.

According to earlier studies, women who exercise mainly for physical appearance are more likely to have higher rates of eating disorder symptoms, such as body dissatisfaction, depression symptoms, and low self-esteem. (Jonathan M Mond, Phillipa Hay, Bryan Rodgers, Cathy Owen, 2006)

Conversely, there was a negative correlation found between exercise and eating disorder symptoms, such as body dissatisfaction, among women who participated in physical activity for health and enjoyment (DiBartolo et al., 2007). Exercise motivated by health and enjoyment was correlated with lower pulse, systolic blood pressure, and salivary stress hormone levels, while exercise motivated by weight was unrelated to these physical measures (DiBartolo et al., 2007). Even the physical health effects of exercise appear to depend upon exercise motivation. Taken together, these results suggest that exercise motivated by weight or shape is qualitatively different from exercise unmotivated by appearance.

#### 4.1 OBJECTIVE OF JOINING THE GYM

To understand the different reasons that led gym attendees to the gym, the researcher got some feedback from these attendees in a few of the above discussions. One participant stated that regular gym visits were necessary for maintaining overall health. Yet another participant claimed that the main objective was weight loss. These motivations, thus uncovered by the researcher, show that many factors push

individuals into frequenting fitness facilities. For one, there was a commitment to attending the gym as a way of maintaining general health. The other reason that was articulated by the respondent was that the major aim was to hunt for weight loss goals.

A negative opinion or dissatisfaction with one's own physical appearance or body image is referred to as body dissatisfaction. It involves emotions of discomfort, discontent, or displeasure with different parts of one's body, including features, weight, size, and shape. This dissatisfaction can result in low self-esteem, psychological distress, and the adoption of unhealthy behaviors, like disordered eating or excessive exercise, to change one's appearance to fulfill one's own or perceived standards of society. People of all ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds frequently experience body dissatisfaction, which can have serious effects on mental health and general well-being.

Charles Cooley originally coined the term "looking-glass self" to elucidate the concept wherein an individual's perception of self and social identity is constructed based on how they are perceived by others. Cooley's theoretical framework drew upon his observations of children's social development.

A respondent in this study exemplified the application of this theory, recounting her motivation for attending the gym. Having endured bullying during her teenage years due to her slender physique, she harbored discontentment with her appearance and adopted a self-critical stance. She admitted having given more weight to other people's opinions than to her own before, and afterward, the embarrassment in public situations resulted from the revelation. This dissatisfaction led her to go to gym activities, eventually restoring her self-confidence.

The researchers sampled 20 individuals frequenting the gym, with an equal split between 10 males and 10 females, for the study.

The majority of respondents highlighted the positive impact of gym attendance on various facets of their lives. Specifically, they expressed that regular gym sessions enhanced their physical strength. Regular gym sessions have helped them boost their physical strength. They've been hitting the gym consistently, putting in the effort, and it's paying off.

They feel stronger, able to do more stuff, and feel even more confident about their physical abilities. They realize that having this protection factor more than cures confidence and make them more polished socially. The incentives remain better because they do not only look good but also feel the best while handling life's challenges more energetically and to a large extent. Another respondent, who is a working woman, has characterized the study positively about how being in a gym makes her move and carry out her daily life minus all frustrations and anxieties. What works best is doing some kind of brisk walking, sweating their gym routine, or even just simple stretching—all of which contribute to her de-tensing worries and tension of the day. It is her meditative remedy to clear their minds and be more collected and peaceful.

Besides this, most of the respondents noticed major cardiovascular fitness improvements during the study. Exercise is good for their cardiovascular performance, which is evident every time they engage in physical activities. Any workouts they do—jogging, cycling, or dancing—get the heart involved too. With time, their heart strengthens and becomes more able to pump blood around their whole body. They can sense improvements on a larger scale. They have more stamina, strain harder, and recover faster during their workouts. Besides, they are

aware that by remaining physically active, the distance to getting healthy and living a long life increases.

Two female participants reported improved internal health conditions owing to their exercise regimen. Other associated benefits reported by them include social interaction improvement. The other benefits reported by them are improved social interactions. Every time they enter the gym, they have opportunities to meet people; make some talk; and make new friends too. Whether it be talking to a gym-goer while waiting for a machine or in a group fitness class, it seems that there is much camaraderie inside the gym. They said that they felt good about having more exposure to new people, and also boosted self-confidence in sharing their photos on social media platforms. Endorsement went high as a result of the minimization of anxiety levels due to this particular exercise routine.

#### 4.2 WHY 'THE GYM'?

During conversations with individuals, they further referred to why they chose to pick "The Gym" among all the options available at Porvorim. For instance, according to Samir Bhaip, the owner, there are a total of 17 gyms in the area. Among the 20 people interviewed, 13 mentioned proximity and convenience to their residence as the primary factors influencing their choice, which is very much in line with their schedules. For them, proximity is the key factor when choosing a gym. Having a gym close by makes it so much easier to stick to their workout routine. They appreciate the convenience of popping in for a quick session without having to travel far. It removes any excuses they might have for skipping a workout because, let's face it, when the gym is just around the corner, it's hard to say no. Plus, being close to home means they can squeeze in a workout whenever it fits into their busy schedule, making their fitness journey more manageable and sustainable.

Two people are opting for "The Gym" because of the spaciousness and good vibe around the place. For them, the main reason to opt for "The Gym" as their go-to fitness spot is the spaciousness and positive vibe that surround the place. Stepping into "The Gym" feels like a walk into a sanctuary of wellness. The ample space allows for a huge amount of space in terms of moving without any hindrance or restriction during workouts. This, in turn, gives a sense of freedom and comfort. It is not crowded or cramped, and that makes them focus only on the exercise instead of being distracted by other things happening in the gym.

In addition, there is a positive atmosphere within "The Gym," which is attractive. From welcoming the first guests to shaking hands with all of the other working-out enthusiasts, there's a sense of positive energy and motivation in the air. Whatever workout they are undergoing or whatever milestone they have reached, they know they are part of a group of people who are all driven toward their objectives. It positively influences the morale of those individuals, thus they consistently choose "The Gym" as the best option to be fit and healthy.-

One participant praised the professionalism of the gym staff, which served as a motivating factor for her attendance. Every interaction with the staff, from the front desk to the trainers, speaks volumes about their prowess and expertise. Knowledgeable, thoughtful, and always ready to assist with any questions or concerns she may have, they are all on top of their profession.

She feels great because of this professionalism; it creates a warm, supportive atmosphere in every single session of the workout. This builds her self-confidence, so she can attend every session knowing she's under competent and committed hands. This builds up an environment where she feels recognized and respected as a member and further fuels her commitment to visit "The Gym" consistently. On the other hand,



a different participant is drawn by the broad classes offered, such as dance, Zumba, judo, MMA, and CrossFit, showing a larger customer demographic with different tastes in fitness. Another respondent mentioned that the gym is well-maintained and offers affordable rates.

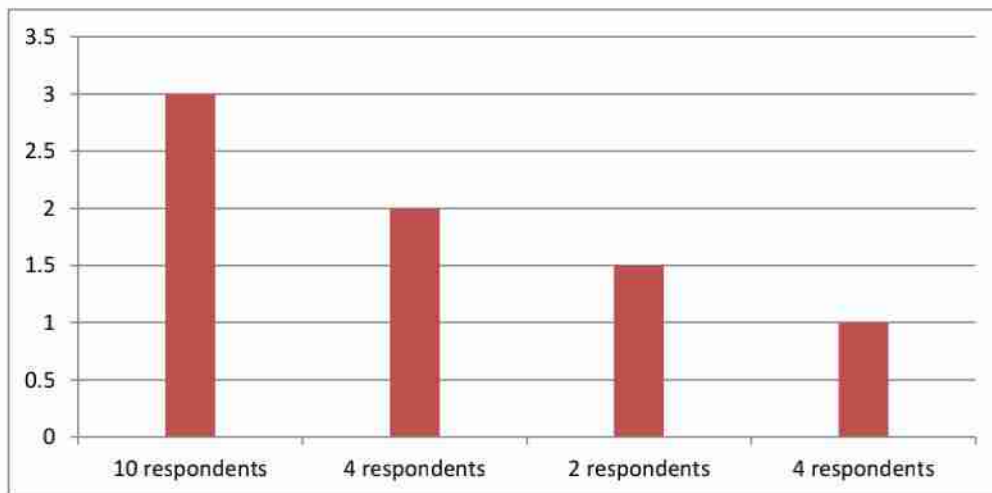


Figure 4.1: *Period in 'The Gym'*

Source: researcher

They also cited as to how they came to know about 'The gym'.

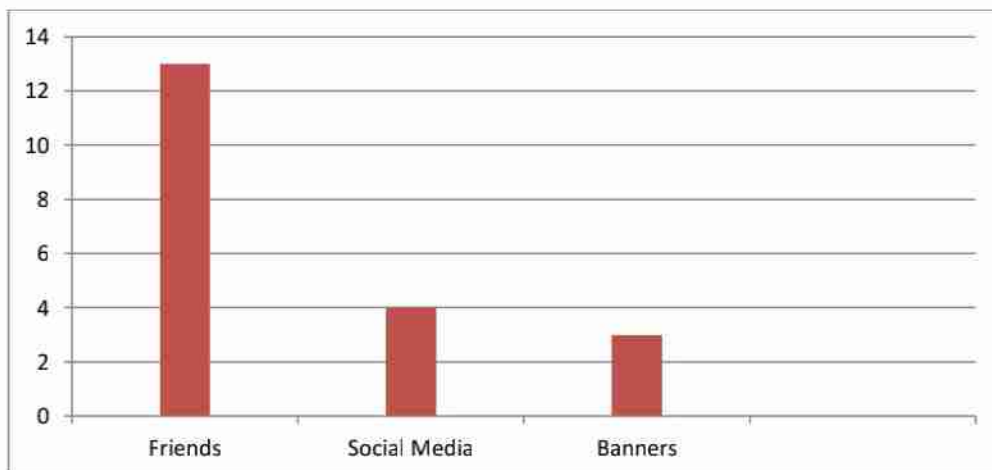


Figure 4.2: *Sources that led to the gym*

Source: researcher

The above graph shows that out of twenty respondents, thirteen of them were informed about this gym by their friends, four of them came to know about it through social media, and the remaining three joined the gym by seeing the banners on the roadside. All the respondents were also aware of the other gyms in Porvorim.

#### 4.4 EDGE OVER THE OTHER GYMS

Another respondent lauded the location of the gym since it is in a good location and exactly next to his abode; yet another respondent has declared it "The Gym" since it's conveniently positioned. However, yet another respondent was making sure to stress the excellence of the quality of equipment at the gym and has gone so far as to compare it with other fitness facilities within the area and deem that it's worth it. Indeed, at "The Gym," it is not just about the sweat; it is about the tools that help members transform their bodies and minds.

The equipment present in "The Gym" is of a quality few can match in the area. Whether state-of-the-art cardio machines that make you feel like you are running on air or precision-engineered weightlifting equipment to help push your limits safely, each piece has been painstakingly crafted. But it is not the fancy tools but what they provide the members to achieve. The solid benches, the smooth pulley systems, and the ergonomic grips all add up to help members pay attention to what is meant to be done during the workouts without being slowed down by any distractions or hindrances. It's like having a private playground to make you push yourself hard and see improvement on a day-to-day basis.

It is not about the equipment itself but about the way it makes the members feel about themselves. When you enter with such great-quality gear around you, it causes some sort of drive to satisfy that expectation. You're no longer just working

out; you're working towards greatness, and "The Gym" comes with the tools to get there. It's just like being in the kind of place where you enter feeling motivated and exit feeling unstoppable, knowing that every rep, every lift, and every step gets you closer to your goals.

The client further referred to the exercise sessions, including Crossfit, which he said were very engaging. The next respondent thinks that membership fees are affordable. He argued that "The Gym" cannot be costly because the membership has a range of classes, including dance, Zumba, strength training, and weight loss programs. Membership fees at "The Gym" look like heaven for anyone who wants to get in shape without emptying their bank accounts. Some of its competitors in the field of fitness may offer premium features, but at such exorbitant prices, it is practically impossible for the average person to afford them. However, affordability is not just about the amount but also the kind of worth one gets for their money.

For example, at 'The Gym,' quality and amenities are high regardless of the low price paid for membership here. Professional trainers, equipment of world-class quality, supportive community—all these things are available to the members at a much more affordable price than what one normally pays elsewhere. This only proves further that you do not have to pay such a high price for such a premium fitness experience. Inclusivity and accessibility, more than just for the affluent or the powerful, are offered here. It opens the doors for anyone and everyone willing to make health and wellness a priority, irrespective of their economic status. Such an affordable neighborhood beacon, "The Gym," really stands out with these offerings of a budget-friendly gym. Another respondent pointed out that what makes "The Gym" special and stands out from most of its competitors is its specialization in powerlifting.

## 4.5 WORKOUT PLANS

All of them acknowledged their training regimens when questioned about them. One person claimed to be a cross-fitter, while another stated she lifts weights to build strength. The person who self-identifies as a CrossFitter engages in a functional fitness regimen that combines cardiovascular conditioning, weightlifting, and gymnastics at high intensity. Workouts at CrossFit usually consist of a range of high-intensity exercises, with a focus on functional movements that resemble everyday tasks. CrossFitters prioritize functional strength, endurance, and overall agility to improve their performance on a variety of physical tasks. This person probably wants to improve strength, agility, and cardiovascular fitness through a demanding and dynamic fitness experience, which is why they are doing CrossFit.

The person who uses weightlifting to gain strength adheres to a more concentrated training schedule to gain muscle mass and enhance strength and endurance. Lifting progressively larger weights during strength training encourages muscular growth and adaptability. This method places a strong emphasis on resistance training activities that target particular muscular regions to encourage hypertrophy and strength increases, such as squats, deadlifts, bench presses, and overhead presses. Strength training is generally prioritized by those who want to increase muscular definition, avoid age-related muscle loss, and improve physical performance. This person probably incorporates weightlifting into their routine to reach their fitness objectives through organized and progressive training, enhance body composition, and develop functional strength.

One more respondent trusts the advice of the coach. One respondent thinks that going to the gym consistently and experimenting with different routines are

important. He exercises both aerobics and strength. One other person said she exclusively practices cardio to lose weight.

The respondent's statement that they trust their coach's recommendations shows that they rely on outside counsel and knowledge to guide them on their fitness path. This person probably appreciates the individualized guidance and responsibility that a certified fitness coach or trainer offers. By putting their faith in their coach's advice on goal-setting, technique, and workout programming, this respondent hopes to maximize their training results and accomplish their intended outcomes more successfully. This method places a strong emphasis on the value of getting expert advice and assistance to manage the complexity of fitness and make long-term improvements.

To achieve fitness goals, the respondent, who stresses the significance of consistency and experimenting with various routines, understands the relevance of both continuity and diversity. Through consistent gym attendance and experimentation with different workout techniques, this person places a high value on flexibility and receptivity when it comes to their fitness regimen. An all-encompassing and well-rounded exercise program that addresses several facets of physical fitness, such as cardiovascular health, muscular strength, and endurance, is made possible by striking a balance between aerobic and strength training activities. This method encourages curiosity, drive, and adaptability in the process of identifying and improving training techniques that suit personal preferences and goals.

The person who uses only cardio exercise to reduce weight approaches their fitness regimen in a focused and particular way. When paired with a healthy diet, cardiovascular exercise—such as riding, jogging, or utilizing elliptical machines—is

well-known for its capacity to burn calories and aid in weight loss. This person prioritizes aerobic exercises to reduce body fat and establish a calorie deficit to reach their weight loss objectives. Cardiovascular exercise is a useful tactic for losing weight, but for long-term health and well-being, it's critical to acknowledge the supplementary advantages of strength training and general physical fitness.

#### 4.6 GYM FACILITIES AND TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

When respondents were asked about the gym and its amenities, they stated that "The Gym" has the best exercise equipment, competent and professional trainers a well-maintained, although occasionally crowded facility, excellent training facilities, a welcoming atmosphere, and socially engaged people. In the area of training gear, "The Gym" is described as having the best, which goes to show how much the members appreciate the investment. Modern, cleanly kept equipment can improve the safety and effectiveness of workouts, meaning a visit to the gym becomes more of a pleasure than a hassle.

The fact that "The Gym" has knowledgeable, trained trainers shows it takes a keen interest in giving its members expert advice and support. Professional trainers can help a person attain their fitness objective much faster and more effectively by providing personalized evaluation, a workout plan made to suit the person and instructional techniques. What is attributed to "The Gym" as a well-maintained facility emphasizes how the provider's dedication is to general maintenance, cleanliness, and good health. The cleanliness serves to create a pleasant, enjoyable gym environment, which boosts motivation towards workouts.

The respondents claimed that "The Gym" gets very busy at times, but their positive reviews indicate that the advantages of the facility would be able to outweigh

any drawbacks relating to crowded times. Members, presumably, will find such hectic times as palatable as the gym's features—the equipment, trainers, and environment—are too good, whether during crowded times. The fact that "The Gym" is stated to have top-notch training facilities means that it has many facilities and resources to guide its members toward achieving fitness goals. This could include sections meant for functional training, classrooms used for group fitness classes, weight training, cardio facilities, and specialized equipment designed for certain exercises or modes of operation.

Creating a friendly environment at "The Gym" indicates an upbeat, inclusive culture that encourages a sense of community and belonging among participants. An amiable and exciting atmosphere that encourages motivation and enjoyment can raise enjoyment and accountability, keeping users back and working toward objectives.

Socially active individuals at "The Gym" highlight just how critical friendships and teamwork are within the fitness atmosphere. This is because interacting with other members, trainers, and staff gives users a sense of accountability, support, and camaraderie. It elevates the entire experience of working out and encourages long-term commitment to an exercise routine.

When asked the question, "What is the role of media disseminating about 'The Gym'?" one of the respondents pointed out that media, like publications, social media, and advertisements, frequently feature athletes, fitness enthusiasts, and celebrities displaying their training routines and results. These portrayals further the idea of raising awareness of the gym and fitness culture while establishing the thought that routine exercise is attractive, achievable, and advantageous to one's health and well-being. Instructive content on fitness-related subjects can be garnered from media

resources such as articles, podcasts, videos, and Internet materials. They give individuals the advantage of gaining access to valuable knowledge that they can use to set their fitness goals, craft their workout plans, and make healthy lifestyle decisions.

Another respondent highlighted that fitness influencers, coaches, and celebrities have surged ever since social media platforms. They discuss their fitness experiences, workout routines, and wellness advice with huge audiences. They contribute to the common goal of making exercising, eating healthily, and maintaining self-care schedules accepted by spreading the message that fitness is attractive, doable, and beneficial to health and wellbeing via popular culture figures. Furthermore, there are endorsements of fitness products, gym memberships, and wellness products by famous people.

Media outlets also popularize the latest fitness challenges, movements, and trends that will capture the public's attention and encourage involvement. Social media is full of challenges, to which people can respond with their photos, videos, or updates, as well as participate in the workout programs shared on other platforms on social media.

#### 4.7 ROLE OF MEDIA

I was asked the question, "What is the role of media disseminating about 'The Gym'?" According to one of the respondents, media outlets, such as publications, social media, and advertisements, frequently display athletes, fitness enthusiasts, and celebrities exhibiting their training regimens, successes, and body changes. These portrayals raise awareness of the gym and fitness culture while reinforcing the notion that regular exercise is attractive, doable, and advantageous to one's health and well-



being. Media outlets offer instructional content on fitness-related subjects, such as workout regimens, nutrition guidelines, and health advice. Articles, podcasts, videos, and other internet resources provide people with useful knowledge that they can use to set and achieve fitness objectives, create efficient workout plans, and make healthy lifestyle choices.

Another respondent mentioned that fitness influencers, coaches, and celebrities have become more prevalent thanks to social media platforms. They share their fitness experiences, training regimens, and wellness advice with vast audiences. These influencers promote the advantages of physical activity, a balanced diet, and self-care routines by acting as role models and inspiration for their audiences. The correlation between fitness and aspirational lives is further strengthened by celebrity endorsements of workout gear, gym memberships, and wellness goods.

Fitness challenges, movements, and trends that pique the public's interest and encourage involvement are made popular by media outlets. Through social media challenges that promote particular exercises, fitness objectives, or viral workout routines, people can interact with the gym and fitness culture, share their progress, and connect with like-minded peers online.

Not to mention, every response expressed how strongly they advocated for their friends to join the gym. In a similar vein, they stated that customers should schedule their visits in advance because the gym gets crowded during rush hours.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **OWNER'S VOICE**

Private health clubs and fitness gyms are now a massive global industry, and fitness has evolved into a popular movement (Andreasson & Johansson 2014: 91). In Romania, sports practice is low, with only 40% of Romanians participating at least occasionally (ihrsa.org). This percentage is significantly different between urban and rural locations. Sport is becoming more popular in urban areas, with 31% more individuals participating in 2014 than in 2013. This trend is observed across all age categories (20–65). In this portion, the majority of sports practitioners are aged 25 to 34. However, 37.9% of people still do not participate in sports (one, 2015).

Small businesses in the sports sector are adapting to changing customer lifestyles and preferences to capitalize on increased demand for sports. In Romania, this tendency is visible not just in the number of sports grounds but also in the number of fitness facilities. The value of the private sports market remains unclear due to dispersion among sports centers, facilities, clubs, fitness gyms, and specialist sports halls (Mirea 2015).

The fitness industry's marketing budget is predicted to reach \$19.4 billion by 2027. So, as a gym owner, you realize the value of remaining competitive in a developing industry. Even if your gym is excellent, it might be difficult to maintain a consistent flow of people.

What's the most effective approach to stand out and attract new customers? Proven results-producing tactics. Employing a marketing approach that communicates the value of your gym attracts more customers, increases revenue, and boosts your profits. Sounds simple, but it requires a lot of effort and forethought.

The tactics accessible to fitness clubs are separated into two categories based on the scope of the resources they relate to in general (overall) and in particular to marketing mix parts. The first category differentiates tactics based on competitive position (relative market share) for leaders, challengers, followers, and specialists. Porter's (1980; 1990) model emphasizes cost leadership, distinctiveness, and concentration. Ansoff's (1965) product-market matrix with four methods is widely used. The next section presents the general strategies employed by the four groups of rivals. It's important to note that gyms' methods of marketing may change depending on their market position and strategy.

Market leaders control the other players and take the initiative to alter costs, offer novel services and goods, distribute them, communicate with them, promote them, and alter physical proof, staff, or procedures (Kotler & Kettler 2012, p. 321). But they have to be vigilant at all times to competitive acts that can jeopardize their market position (Dunning 2008, p. 72), particularly in an industry where investors are increasingly becoming globalized. Companies may choose to increase their market share by drawing in new clients who aren't athletes for a variety of reasons, such as exorbitant costs, a bad location, limited business hours, or to draw in non-athletes. They can do this by offering new or already-existing services and facilities more often.

They could also attempt to grow their market share by introducing new services, facilities, or locations, as well as creative means of distribution, pricing modifications, etc., or they might aim to preserve their present market share through effective defensive and offensive strategies. Attacks on the market leader, comparable-sized businesses with financial difficulties or other issues (excessively high pricing, out-of-date amenities, services, or facilities), or smaller businesses are

some of the tactics that competitors may employ. The tactic used by followers is to mimic the leader. This technique has the apparent benefit of minimizing costs through innovation, buyer familiarization, and related risks. The techniques employed by specialists pertain to the effective handling of the specific niche markets they target. As a result, they are tasked with protecting, expanding, and creating niches while utilizing superior customer knowledge. Regardless of location, standing out from rivals using any aspect of any fitness club that wants to succeed over the long run must continue to use the marketing mix.

The components of the marketing mix, or a combination of them, are taken into consideration by certain tactics. Fitness centers might anticipate new product and service introductions or competitive copying in terms of basic and supplementary services. No, in any case, it is wise to make an effort to set oneself apart from rivals. Market leaders frequently employ criteria like quality, selection, customization, and adaption of services. The quality of the physical evidence (machines, equipment, interior design, staff training), as well as the image that the gym wishes to project to the public, are often linked to the price points of memberships (Cheben 2006).

It might be difficult to determine the ideal price-to-offer ratio and its appropriate level, and frequently the price needs to be set, particularly in light of the competition. Fitness centers' entire business plan, expenses, and profit margin price may be set at the same level, above or below the competition, depending on the state of the market. Local and smaller malls are obliged to rely on location and pricing to draw consumers if larger malls, those that are part of a national or worldwide chain, can afford to set prices at a higher level. As a result, they might attempt to provide the lowest price available or the best price-to-service ratio.

Distribution techniques include things like making it easier to purchase gym memberships, reserve a spot for a training session, see how full a sports program is, etc. To do this, gyms have begun utilizing automated reservation platforms in addition to their current workforce. Fitness centers' marketing budgets are correlated with their sizes. Small, neighborhood sports gyms are forced to rely on word-of-mouth advertising as well as other guerilla marketing techniques, such as fliers, social media sites, visibility from respectable commercial venues, own webpages, sports TV shows, and point-of-sale advertisements. Sports gyms strive to get expert equipment, create a welcoming and useful environment, and supply the right ambient factors (sound, lighting, humidity, temperature, and fragrance) to signal internal and external spaces.

"Servicescape" refers to vital factors in determining a fitness facility's quality (Nickson et al. 2002, p. 17). When it comes to staffing, gyms must first hire skilled employees or supply the required instruction. Even though there may be a significant staff turnover rate, hiring young, dynamic individuals is recommended. In addition, training ought to cover customer service, collaboration orientation, active participation in the creation and execution of quality policy, and communicating the expectations of the business to staff members (Sharma & Karub, 2014).

Studies conducted in the field (Fawcett, Rhoads, Burnah 2004; Lloyd 2005) did not discover any relationship between the abilities of the staff and the gym's standing as a high-quality facility, with facilities and ambiance being deemed more crucial. According to Rubio & Aragon (2009), managers of SMEs need to concentrate on human management and using quality, innovation, and technology will yield the anticipated outcomes.

The researcher enjoyed herself greatly during the discussion about "The Gym," and as a result, she gained insightful knowledge about the facility. The Gym was founded in 2014 by Samir Bhaip, the proprietor. The owner of the gym responded, "It was my dream since childhood to open one fitness center to promote fitness and healthy living," when the researcher questioned him about why he opened a fitness facility. In addition, I used to compete in bodybuilding, and I'm interested in fitness. He also mentioned how active he was in school and college, having played basketball, football, and cricket for his team.



Picture 5.1: *Researcher interviewing the owner of the gym 'Samir Bhaip'*

Source: Researcher

"I don't want to make money, as all the gym owners have only one mission: to get more and more clients," he said in response to a question about the gym's goal and vision. However, we have seen many individuals who have been members of our gym for at least eight years. Since they pay us money and we depend on them for our daily needs, I want every single one of my clients to have an amazing workout and leave feeling satisfied. It's acceptable if I make a little less money as long as all of our

clients are happy with the training we give them, the atmosphere of the gym as a whole, and their level of comfort. This is our primary goal. He also provided the researcher with an exact count, revealing that Porvorim has 17 gyms in total. In the course of talking about this subject, he also brought up the fact that "Sculpt Fitness," which opened its doors in 2009, was Porvorim's first gym.

Additionally, he mentioned that "The Gym" has five trainers, and the owner interacts with clients every day. Every trainer has a degree and is a certified fitness trainer. The professional fitness trainer certificate is owned by the proprietor. He manages the finances of the gym. In the owner's absence, a manager oversees the gym, and under him are additional trainers.

When having a conversation, the owner mentioned that there are no such categories of enrollment or criteria for selecting clients. People should have the will to do physical fitness with dedication and should enjoy the sessions. He also mentioned that there are special people with some disabilities who also work out in the gym, and he said anybody, even a child, can come to the gym and do cardio. He said there are also children aged 10 working out in the gym who are very comfortable in the gymnasium environment.



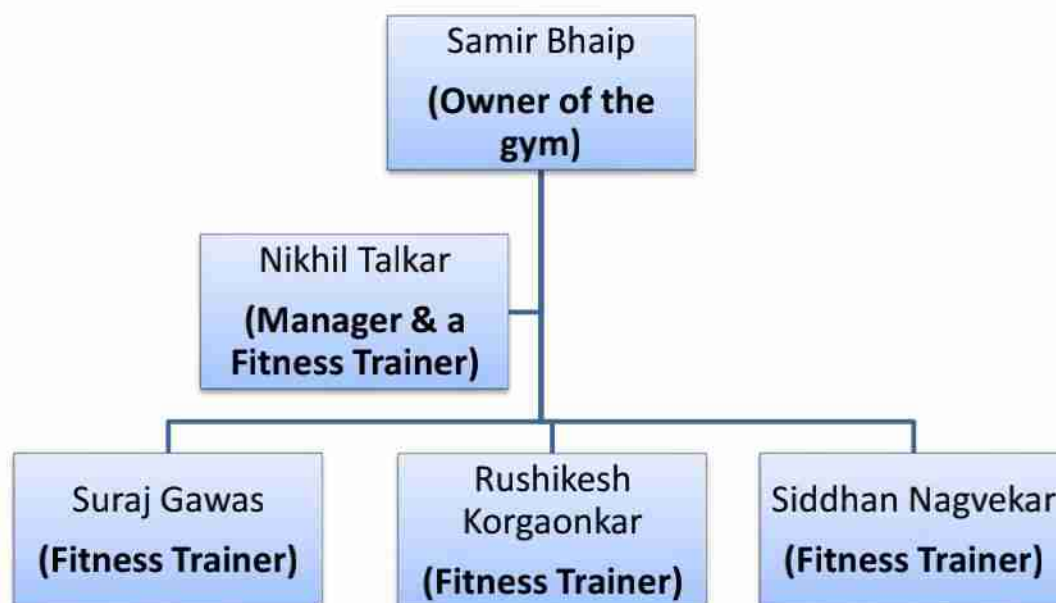


Figure 5.1: Staff members in 'The Gym'

While the researcher disseminated information about the gym, he mentioned that this is the only gym in Porvorim that is spacious. The researcher implies that this characteristic distinguishes it from other gyms in the vicinity by claiming that it's the only one in Porvorim with such spaciousness. This uniqueness could be a big draw for people looking for a large, spacious gym where they can work out without feeling crowded. It provides a more comfortable and less crowded environment for members to work out in. It may also allow for a wider variety of equipment and exercise options, reducing wait times and enhancing the overall experience for gym-goers.

Secondly, he mentioned that this is the only gym in Porvorim that has 'Crossfit' as its main element. No gyms in Porvorim have this facility. CrossFit is a high-intensity workout regimen that incorporates elements of cardiovascular exercise, weightlifting, and gymnastics. The gym is positioning itself as a specialty facility that caters to people interested in this specific fitness regimen by making CrossFit the focal point of its offerings.



This gym is taking advantage of a market gap created by the lack of other CrossFit gyms in Porvorim. Because of its singular focus on CrossFit training, this gym has become the preferred choice for locals looking for this type of training. Emphasizing cross-fit as its primary component aids in the gym's competitive differentiation. It forges a distinct persona and value proposition that distinguishes it in the eyes of prospective clients, particularly those who have a particular interest in or curiosity about CrossFit. The gym has the chance to become a leader in this particular market and possibly grow its membership base by drawing in customers looking for specialized fitness experiences because it is the only provider of CrossFit in Porvorim.

While talking about facilities and equipment, the owner replied, "We have the best fitness equipment, and we do not do much advertising; people go, but people come back.". By asserting that they have the best fitness equipment, the owner is emphasizing the gym's commitment to providing high-quality facilities for its members. This suggests that they invest in top-of-the-line equipment to ensure a positive and effective workout experience.

The statement "people go, but people come back" implies that the gym prioritizes customer satisfaction and retention. Despite not heavily advertising, the gym relies on the positive experiences of its members to attract new customers and keep existing ones coming back. This suggests that the gym focuses on providing a welcoming and enjoyable environment that encourages long-term commitment from its members.

The owner is suggesting that they rely heavily on word-of-mouth marketing by saying that they don't do much advertising. This implies that the gym has faith in

the ability of happy patrons to recommend themselves to friends, family, and coworkers. Good word-of-mouth marketing can be a very effective strategy for drawing in new clients and creating a vibrant neighborhood around the gym. It is also possible that the gym has established a solid reputation in the neighborhood, given the owner's faith in the facilities and their reliance on word-of-mouth advertising. Gaining new members without a lot of advertising is mostly dependent on trust in the quality of the gym's equipment and the positive experiences of existing members.

The researcher also asked about the workout plans that the gym offers to the clients, and the owner said, "It depends on the clients as to what they prefer; some people want to gain weight while others want to lose it. So accordingly, they carry out their workout plans." The gym's dedication to creating individualized fitness programs based on each client's unique goals and preferences is highlighted in the owner's statement. The gym understands that each client has different goals, such as gaining or losing weight, and that's why it's important to customize workout programs to meet these different needs.

It is indicative of a client-centered approach to fitness programming to emphasize that the workout plans are based on the preferences of the clients. Rather than providing universally applicable workout regimens, the gym places a high value on getting to know each individual's goals and creating personalized plans to support them in reaching those goals.

According to the owner's response, the gym is adaptable when it comes to workout regimens, taking into account the unique interests and objectives of every customer. Because of this flexibility, the fitness experience can be more responsive

and adaptive, giving clients a sense of empowerment and support as they pursue their fitness goals.

The owner emphasizes the variety of goals among gym patrons by pointing out that some clients want to gain weight while others want to lose it. This acknowledgement emphasizes how crucial it is to provide a variety of training modalities and fitness programs to successfully address a range of objectives.

Customizing exercise regimens to meet the objectives of clients increases motivation and engagement. Clients are more likely to stick with a fitness program and see long-term success when they believe it is tailored to their requirements and preferences.

The owner mentioned some standout features of 'The Gym'. The gym offers a variety of activities such as CrossFit, strength training, kickboxing, karate, judo, dance, yoga, and Zumba. The owner mentioned that these activities are not being carried out in any other gyms.

Numerous activities are available at "The Gym," such as CrossFit, yoga, Zumba, kickboxing, karate, judo, dance, and strength training. Members are guaranteed access to a variety of options to meet their specific needs and objectives, thanks to this varied assortment that accommodates a wide range of exercise interests and preferences.

The proprietor highlights the specialness and exclusivity of "The Gym's" offers by claiming that these activities are not offered by any other gyms. This establishes the gym as a unique and cutting-edge fitness destination, luring people

looking for unique and varied exercise experiences that they can't get anywhere else in the neighborhood.

The variety of activities sets "The Gym" apart from its rivals and gives it a competitive advantage in the fitness industry. In addition to drawing in a larger clientele, providing a wide range of activities distinguishes the gym as a multipurpose training facility that can accommodate a range of fitness requirements and interests.

From intense workouts like CrossFit and kickboxing to more peaceful exercises like yoga and dance, "The Gym" caters to a wide range of people with different interests, skill levels, and fitness preferences. This inclusiveness makes members feel like they belong and form a community, which adds to the gym's allure.

The breadth of activities offered by "The Gym" provides members with opportunities for exploration, growth, and ongoing engagement. Whether individuals are seeking to challenge themselves with new fitness disciplines, enhance specific skills, or simply enjoy diverse workout experiences, the gym's comprehensive activity offering ensures that there is something for everyone.



Picture 5.2: *Crossfit Section*

Source: Researcher

The owner said, "We do not target specific groups like kids or elderly people; everyone can come and perform the exercise," in response to a question regarding which demographic they most frequently target. However, if we visit the gym, we find that there are more young individuals there than old people. He went on to say that they need a wide variety of clients.

The gym's owner's claim that anyone can visit and work out there highlights the friendly and inclusive atmosphere. This mindset fosters a feeling of belonging and community, inspiring people of all ages and backgrounds to pursue their wellness objectives in a motivating environment by engaging in exercise activities. Although "The Gym" does not have a specified target demographic, the proprietor admits that a greater percentage of young people than older people use the facility. The demographic makeup of the gym's membership base is naturally reflected in this finding, which may have implications for the kinds of services, events, and programs that are provided to meet the interests and requirements of this particular group.

The proprietor highlights that "The Gym" accepts a diverse range of patrons, notwithstanding the noted demographic patterns. This acknowledgment highlights the importance of variety and the idea that a varied clientele enhances the community within the gym, encourages communication and learning, and adds to a lively and dynamic exercise setting.

The owner acknowledges the significance of retaining a diverse clientele to uphold the gym's operations and guarantee its long-term sustainability by expressing a desire for all types of patrons. This business viewpoint emphasizes the gym's dedication to meeting the varied requirements and interests of its consumers while still being consistent with its inclusive attitude.

The owner also provided the solution to the query, "What are the main factors that lead people to join a gym?" He responded by saying that people come for fitness since, in today's society, the majority of people work in corporate settings, where they sit for long periods and suffer from a variety of ailments like knee or joint discomfort. The owner highlights fitness as a primary reason for joining a gym. In modern society, many individuals work in corporate settings where they lead sedentary lifestyles, spending long hours sitting. This lack of physical activity can contribute to various health issues, such as knee or joint discomfort. Recognizing the importance of maintaining physical fitness, individuals seek out gyms as a solution to counteract the effects of sedentary behavior and improve their overall health and well-being. Other women come for fat loss because they have thyroid or PCOS-related hormonal problems.

Another significant factor driving gym membership is weight management. The owner mentions that women, in particular, may join the gym to address fat loss goals. Hormonal imbalances such as thyroid issues or polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) can affect metabolism and contribute to weight gain or difficulty losing weight. By engaging in regular exercise and adopting healthier lifestyle habits, individuals aim to manage their weight more effectively and improve their body composition.

The owner's reply highlights the importance of wellbeing and health in general as reasons to join a gym. People understand the importance of regular exercise and physical activity in increasing general health, lowering the risk of chronic diseases, and improving quality of life. This is true whether one is treating particular ailments like knee or joint discomfort or managing conditions like PCOS or thyroid issues.

When questioned about customer satisfaction surveys and feedback, the owner revealed that he occasionally gives the client a call to find out if they are enjoying the sessions. This shows that there is an open line of contact and that patrons feel free to share their opinions and experiences—whether good or bad—with the gym. Additionally, he noted

that occasionally he receives calls from clients providing comments. The owner's strategy for getting input finds a mix between active outreach and observational tracking. Through proactive client outreach and interaction, in addition to passively observing internet evaluations and ratings, the owner obtains a thorough grasp of customer satisfaction levels and opportunities for enhancement.

Additionally, he reviews the monthly customer ratings posted on social media. The proprietor can assess general sentiment and spot any reoccurring themes or publicly voiced concerns by looking through the monthly customer evaluations that are displayed on social media outlets. The proprietor's devotion to obtaining and analyzing client input is indicative of a commitment to ongoing development. Through proactive client feedback gathering and consideration, the gym owner may make well-informed decisions to improve offers, resolve issues, and guarantee a great experience for all patrons.

The gym's owner talked about its success tales. "There are infinite success stories of our gym; many people have attained their goals and are quite delighted with the gym," was exactly what he said. These success stories probably include a broad spectrum of fitness objectives, such as gaining muscle, losing weight, and improving general health and well-being. The owner demonstrates the gym's efficacy in assisting people in achieving their goals and enhances its credibility and reputation by showcasing these success stories.

The owner's statement that many customers are "very thrilled" with the gym and have achieved their goals points to a high degree of customer satisfaction and good comments. This suggests that members are reaching their fitness goals while also taking pleasure in their time at the gym, which promotes a feeling of contentment and happiness among the patrons.

He also talked about the gym members who were competing in bodybuilding. The gym's owner takes great satisfaction in the commitment, perseverance, and sporting achievements of its members who compete in bodybuilding competitions. This recognition



highlights the gym's commitment to helping people achieve their goals of competing in bodybuilding and speaks highly of the caliber of instruction and assistance offered by the facility's personnel.

The gym appears to have a strong sense of community and support, as evidenced by the owner's pride in each person's accomplishments. Through commemorating its members' accomplishments, the gym cultivates a friendly atmosphere where people are inspired, motivated, and uplifted by one another's achievements. This sense of camaraderie can make going to the gym more fun and help people stick to their fitness objectives. He expressed his pride in everyone for their tremendous accomplishments.



Picture 5.3: *Achievements in body building competition*

Source: Respondent

He also mentioned the challenges they face on a day-to-day basis. To draw and keep members in a cutthroat industry, gyms need to set themselves apart. To differentiate yourself from the competition, you might do this by providing exclusive training courses, one-of-a-kind services, or outstanding customer experiences.



Increased expenditures on rent, utilities, staff compensation, and equipment upkeep can affect the gym's bottom line. Effective cost management combined with upholding quality standards is essential for long-term viability.

Maintaining a great gym environment and providing exceptional service depends on hiring, developing, and keeping qualified staff members. To guarantee employee satisfaction and productivity, effective personnel management techniques—such as motivation, communication, and performance evaluation—are essential. To guarantee functionality, safety, and a satisfying user experience, regular maintenance of the gym's facilities, amenities, and equipment is essential. By using proactive maintenance techniques, facilities and equipment can last longer, experience fewer malfunctions, and have less downtime.

Maintaining hygienic conditions, cleanliness, and a friendly environment go beyond simple maintenance and are essential to customer pleasure and loyalty. A good gym environment can be created by putting strong cleaning procedures in place and making sure staff members follow hygiene standards. Retaining members is critical to the gym's long-term success. Personalized care, continuous support, and value-added services can foster member loyalty and motivate them to renew their subscriptions.

Attracting new members constantly is necessary for expansion and sustainability. Successful referral schemes, marketing plans, advertising campaigns, and community engagement initiatives can draw in new members and increase the gym's clientele. Building a sense of camaraderie among participants improves member engagement and retention while also adding to a positive gym culture.

Organizing get-togethers, social events, and group activities can foster relationships among members and develop a welcoming gym community.

Retaining customers requires meeting their specific demands and concerns, as well as maintaining a high standard of customer satisfaction. Personalized programming, dedicated support, and first-rate customer service can foster long-lasting relationships with members and boost their loyalty.

He stated in his closing remarks that he intended to expand "The Gym" by opening additional locations both inside and outside of Goa. "The Gym" wants to expand its customer base, reach new markets, and take advantage of growth and income-generating potential by opening more locations.

Establishing outlets within and outside of Goa implies a strategy of geographical diversification. While going outside of Goa opens up new markets and prospective client bases in other areas or cities, staying within Goa allows "The Gym" to gain market share in its territory.

"The Gym" can improve its brand awareness and market penetration by branching out into other areas. The gym can meet the fitness needs of a wider population and improve its competitive position and market share by providing its services in several locations.

"The Gym's" expansion to new areas helps increase brand awareness and recognition. The gym's brand identification and reputation within the fitness sector are strengthened as it expands into other cities or areas, exposing it to a broader audience. While growing offers "The Gym" the chance to prosper, doing so also poses difficulties, like handling logistics, maintaining a high standard of quality

across several sites, and adjusting to shifting market conditions. These obstacles may be addressed, though, by strategic planning, tactical execution, and a commitment to client pleasure. Doing so will open the door to profitable growth and sustained success.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **GYM AND WELL-BEING**

Today's youth have seen significant disruptions in their living conditions due to a variety of illnesses and health problems, including physical health problems like knee pain and back pain as well as mental health problems like anxiety and depression. An important time for growth and development is adolescence. There is a rapid maturation with distinct self-contradictory traits at this time. Due to growing public education and awareness, people today have a greater understanding of the role that physical activity plays in maintaining mental health (Kushal et al., 2021).

Youth may be trained and allowed to grow holistically and fully through physical activity. It positively impacts the psychological makeup of teenagers, improving their capacity to withstand stress and deal with social issues. Additionally, physical activity has a significant impact on mental health as it can boost youth's mental capacities and intellect (Guo & Zhang, 2022).

"Free time" is the perception of leisure. But as leisure is seen as a vital component of existence, it goes beyond simply being "free time." (COŞKUN, 2022). It would be expected that leisure time—free time spent on recreational activities like hanging out outside, getting together with friends, playing, or working out—would promote the best possible state of mental wellness. In addition to being a technique of quantity and a health-promoting factor, it also participates in necessary and adequate actions. It might be seen as a factor that builds resilience under trying circumstances. Disasters are a necessary way for national and local organizations, as well as community initiatives, to promote outdoor getaways for teenagers that are rejuvenating (Cosma et al., 2021).

During the period of the exaggerated virus, changes in physical activity were associated with a higher rate of psychological problems like depression, anxiety, and stress manifestations. Another study by researchers from America found that participants who were physically inactive and increased screen time before and after COVID-19 became more likely to be depressed, anxious, stressed, and lonely. A different study's staff found that light activities had a positive impact on psychological health outcomes. These findings suggest that psychological problems, including depression, anxiety, and psychological health, were negatively correlated with moderately high levels of physical activity during the day (Pears et al., 2022).

Exercise helps lessen the symptoms of clinical depression, according to several well-designed studies (Mutrie, 2000; Lawlor & Hopker, 2001). An epidemiological study's four points of view provide evidence that people who become or stay active are less likely to experience the clinical state of depression. As per Camacho, Roberts, Lazarus, Kaplan, and Cohen (1991), the odds ratio for individuals who remained low-active was 1.22, and for those who were inactive, it was 1.61 for nine years.

In men between the ages of 23 and 27, Paffenbarger & Leung (1994) found a connection between the amount of activity and depression. Long-term participants (>2500 kcal/week) have a lower risk of depression (28%), while moderate participants (1000–2499 kcal/week) have a lower risk (17%), relative to low participants.

Numerous narratives and meta-analytical reviews exist on this topic, including those by McDonald & Hodgdon (1991), Calfas & Taylor (1994) involving teenagers, and Petruzzello, Landers, Hatfield, Kubitz & Salazar (1991).

Etnier, Salazar, Landers, Petruzzello, Han, & Nowell (1997) and Boutcher (2000) looked into how exercise affected cognitive abilities in older adults, such as memory, fluid intelligence, and reaction time. In cross-sectional research, Boutcher concluded that the results revealed older people, who were fit, did better intellectually than their older inactive counterparts—yet, the information elicited by experimental investigations still lacks clarity, with five intervention studies showing gains but no particular effect.

The research was done by Fox (2001), and Spence, & Poon (1997) to find out how exercise affected self-esteem. They concluded that there is a shaky and inconsistent relationship between overall self-esteem and physical exercise based on the findings. The meta-analysis by Spence revealed a meager mean effect size of 0.22. About half of the 44 controlled trials and 36 randomized controlled trials that Fox has found since 1971 showed improvements in self-esteem. This result, however, is in line with theoretical deductions that contend that self-esteem is a stable construct that is difficult to modify by achievement in a particular area of life.

The study conducted by Kandola, Hendriks, Lucassen, and Yücel (2016) sought to examine the impact of mental training and aerobic training on cognitive function, as well as to ascertain whether the approach produces superior results. For two months, the participant received aerobic training—walking—twice a week. Both alone and in combination, the particular aerobic exercise and mental training utilized in this study can lead to an increase in cognitive function.

To determine how a functional program of high-intensity exercise affected the ability of nursing home patients with dementia to perform balance, Telenius, Engedal, and Bergland (2015) conducted a study. The secondary objective was to study how

this exercise changed muscle strength, mobility, activities of daily living, quality of life, and neuropsychiatric symptoms. The findings of this study reveal that a functional high-intensity exercise program enhances muscle strength and balance, and reduces apathy in nursing home patients with dementia. This systematic review explores the effect of physical activity on mental health, searching both medical journals and popular articles with a careful choice of references. Twenty papers were selected after considering a lot of papers about the topic. Based on a closer analysis of the findings from each study, all the papers demonstrated that physical activity has some kind of influence on the mental health of people, regardless of age, sex, or status of health.

Validation of the positive effects of physical activity on mental health, stemming from data analysis, is provided. From this, it would be very plain to see that physical activity with any of its associated activities helps in the reduction of the symptoms characteristic of psychological disorders like depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, and a sedentary lifestyle. Mixed with mental exercises, it can be a standalone treatment for mental illness and promote quicker and more effective recovery when used in combination with other therapies. Not only should healthy people who are already physically active regularly participate in the kind of physical activities that promote mental health, but exercise should also become a key part of the care of the sick population for improved mental health. The common consensus is that engaging in physical activity improves mental health.

The primary goal of the researcher was to determine how an exercise regimen benefits people's social, mental, and physical health. One of the twenty participants in the researcher's interview said that she had been insecure about her appearance before joining a gym, but then once she started going, she felt comfortable enough to interact

with people. She was marked by depression for about two years, mostly arising from dissatisfaction with her body or self-image and not being satisfied with her body. Such negative self-views can contribute immensely to mental and emotional well-being problems that result in the emergence of low self-esteem and confidence. After joining the gym, she experienced an improvement in her social contacts as well as her self-confidence. It makes her feel more at ease—like she belongs to the gym since she has always been exercising and, in addition, being welcomed. She felt strong enough to focus on physical health and made some contacts with people who had similar fitness objectives and experiences at the gym. During this interview, it could be concluded that her experience of depression was highly influenced by body dissatisfaction and insecurity.

From this, she managed to cope with her mental and overall well-being through active involvement in the gym and setting fitness goals. This positive result implies the interaction between mental and physical health and the potential therapeutic effects that should be attributed to exercise in the management of depression and improving general quality of life. From this interview, it would be possible to derive that her experience of depression was significantly influenced by her body dissatisfaction and insecurity. However, through active involvement in the gym and setting goals about fitness, her mental and general well-being improved.

This positive outcome shows the interaction between mental and physical health, as well as the potential therapeutic properties that are to be attributed to exercise in coping with depression and improving overall quality of life. In another interview, the respondent said that she has always had better concentration and patience through regular exercise for many years. This quote means that the interviewer views continued exercise activities as one way of improving mental



qualities such as patience and focus over a long period. From the statement, one can get the impression that the interviewer believes prolonged periods of regular exercise can help to develop patience and concentration.

Continual exercise has linked an increased amount of cognitive benefit to mental toughness, focus, and attention. Additionally, it is common that exercise triggers the release of endorphins, which has positive impacts on mood, stress relief, and even increased patience. Another respondent said that she feels great within and that exercise has made her look better. This statement shows how exercise has had a positive effect on her internal and external changes. Feeling "great within" is an indication of an improvement in mental and emotional health that probably comes from the mood-boosting benefits of exercise, like endorphin production.

The reference to being "more physically fit" means that the respondent could have noted some improvements, such as better posture, less weight, or better muscular tone—all very typical outcomes of continued training. According to the respondent's statement, their perception of themselves has improved. Self-esteem and self-confidence can be increased by experiencing bodily changes and feeling "great within." People may feel more confident in many facets of their lives when they grow happier with their physical appearance and general state of health. Beyond only improving physical fitness, regular exercise has been linked to a host of positive lifestyle outcomes, such as enhanced energy, better sleep, and enhanced cognitive performance. These elements may also enhance the respondent's general feeling of health and energy.

One gym patron claimed that working out relieves stress and provides him with a chance to socialize with other members. It is well known that engaging in

physical activity causes the release of endorphins, which are natural mood enhancers and pain relievers. Furthermore, exercise lowers the body's levels of stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. Exercise regularly can therefore assist people in controlling and reducing their levels of stress, anxiety, and tension.

Gyms are frequently used as community centers where people congregate to pursue fitness objectives and share interests. Exercise in a group can promote motivation, encouragement among participants, and companionship. Developing relationships and friendships with other gym patrons can improve the experience of working out overall and promote well-being and a sense of belonging. The gym-goer emphasizes the many advantages of regular physical activity that go beyond simply the physical, emphasizing its beneficial effects on mental and emotional health as well, as fusing stress relief with social engagement.

One of the gym patrons mentioned that powerlifting has given him more confidence and decreased his stress levels. Another person at the gym said that working out has given him more self-assurance, made interacting with others easier, allowed him to carry himself with assurance in public, and that he even visits the gym in his own time. For him, leisure time is gym time. Frequent exercise can improve physical fitness, body image, and general well-being, all of which can boost self-confidence. Reaching fitness objectives and seeing one's development can boost confidence and self-esteem. Exercise can improve mood and lessen tension and anxiety, which improves comfort and enjoyment in social situations. Furthermore, communal events at the gym offer chances for mingling and forming relationships with other gym patrons. Because they exercise regularly, this person feels more confident when navigating public environments. Regular exercise can help people become more physically strong and confident, which can have a good effect on how

people carry themselves in a variety of circumstances and increase their comfort and confidence in public.

By including gym trips in their free time, the person highlights their dedication to fitness. Making time for the gym shows that you are committed to your health and well-being. This person has a strong drive to stick to their workout regimen since they associate their free time with going to the gym. Overall, this person's experience demonstrates the positive changes that consistent exercise can bring about in terms of self-assurance, social relationships, and general confidence, highlighting the all-encompassing advantages of making fitness a priority in day-to-day living.

The majority of respondents claimed that exercising had improved their endurance and strength. The capacity to maintain physical activity for a prolonged amount of time is referred to as endurance. Frequent aerobic exercise, like swimming, cycling, or running, strengthens the heart and lungs and increases the body's capacity to use oxygen effectively, which can enhance cardiovascular endurance. People who exercise regularly find that they can do tasks for longer periods without getting tired, out of breath, or experiencing stiffness in their muscles. The ability of muscles to apply force against resistance is referred to as strength. Strengthening muscles is frequently linked to resistance training, which includes bodyweight workouts and weightlifting. Muscles adapt by growing stronger and more resilient when resistance is progressively increased through progressive overload. People may experience gains in their total physical strength, power, and muscular mass as a result.

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **GYM, AS A POPULAR FITNESS CULTURE IN GOA**

Indians have been seeking greater physical and mental power since ancient times. While they primarily revere mental strength, they also realized that "*Sharirmadyam, khalu dharma sadhanam*," or "developing mental strength requires developing a strong body," is true. To create a healthy physique, that is why Hatha Yoga was created. Apart from traditional weightlifting and Hatha Yoga, gyms have grown in popularity among young people in recent years. These fitness facilities are well furnished with contemporary equipment that makes working out easier and more methodical.

These fitness facilities are ingrained in American society. Although the earliest gym facilities, also known as health clubs, originated in Europe in the 19th century, the current trend started in California in the 1940s. The word "gym" originates from the Greek word "gymnasium," which denotes a place where young men may get both intellectual and physical instruction. In English, however, the word "gym" only refers to physical education. Regular gym attendance under qualified supervision has numerous positive health impacts that go beyond increased physical strength. It has a beneficial effect on both chronic heart disease (CHD) and coronary artery disease (CAD). According to reports, those who trained with weights for at least 30 minutes a week were at a 23% lower risk than men who did not. It increases levels of endorphins, which are opiate-like substances that make people feel happy and surge throughout their bodies.

Moreover, intense exercise raises serotonin levels in the nervous system, which enhances happiness. However, many youthful gymgoers utilize anabolic steroids, protein powder, fat burners, and other medicinal substances that have several

adverse effects to quickly get a toned figure. Furthermore, erratic gym attendance, poor food, and an ineffective exercise regimen can lead to serious health issues.

Roberta Sassatelli was among the first to provide a thorough sociological examination of gyms and the then-current surge in interest in fitness and exercise in the 1990s. She used an ethnographic approach and the theories of interactionist sociology, particularly Goffman, to investigate how the diverse members of the newly emerging gyms and fitness centers created their social environments. She revisits this topic in her latest book after gathering and examining a plethora of additional material. The book is based on extended participant observation in three gyms, one in the UK and two in Italy; shorter trips to over 20 gyms in the two countries; interviews with 18 trainers and gym staff members and 49 clients; and textual analysis of the literature produced by the fitness culture at large (e.g., fitness magazines) as well as locally by the gyms seen. Sassatelli can examine the textures of gym life in great detail and consider it from a variety of unique perspectives because of these many sources. They provide her findings with sensitivity, robustness, and a solid foundation. (Nick Crossley, 2010)

I think her critique of the current consumption models is the clearest illustration of this. She can question limited definitions of consumption, such as buying, by pointing out that it requires use and that use is frequently creative and inventive. She does this by examining gym routines. She then challenges any simplistic division between production and consumption because consumption is frequently both active and productive in and of itself. Paul Willis's *Common Culture* [Willis 1990] makes similar claims about the "grounded aesthetic" of working-class consumerism, which brought to mind similar ideas. A good deal of Sassatelli's studies

show that customers consciously create an aesthetic and ethic that helps them make sense of their gym experiences.

Extending this, Sassatelli's study of gym patrons enables her to question rational choice presumptions about the consumer's fixed preferences. She contends that depending on their experiences at the gym in the meantime, what matters to and inspires gym patrons at one point in time may not matter to them at another.

Exercise is a process that not only changes the physical bodies of those who visit the gym but also completely reshapes their embodied sense of self, viewpoint, and preferences. Although these arguments are standard in interactionist sociology, they are presented here in an effective manner and have the added benefit of challenging traditional economic models. Readers are left yearning for more understanding because ethnographic studies frequently reveal more themes and concerns than they can adequately address. This book, in particular, is not an exception. Three themes stick out as needing more investigation. First, Sassatelli presents the idea of "authenticity" near the end of the book. She thinks that people who work out at gyms see their exercise regimens as legitimate means of maintaining or changing their bodies.

According to Sarah Thornton's analysis of club cultures, authenticity is a fascinating subject that appears in a variety of consuming contexts. Sassatelli briefly discusses this before continuing. She also touches on the subject of gym patrons' awareness of outside criticisms of their actions, which is important because it shapes the conversation around their practices. One of the many "voices" that gym-goers have to deal with to create a meaningful narrative about their acts and their significance is criticism. Even if Sassatelli's respondents may not have talked about

this topic in great detail, it is nevertheless a potentially important topic for further investigation. Lastly, it would have been helpful to do a more thorough analysis of the parallels and discrepancies between the gym cultures in Italy and the UK.

Although it is realistic to anticipate that there won't be any big disparities in gym culture between these two countries, there might be more noticeable differences inside particular gyms or between consumers. Maybe this is why Sassatelli gives only a cursory explanation of this point. However, it would have been interesting to learn more about this from a researcher who could have provided informative commentary. These are small details that show individual preferences and a need for more research. Scholars interested in embodiment, consumption, and the specialized field of gym research will find Sassatelli's book to be highly recommended.

## 7.1 POPULAR CULTURE

The researcher inquired about the growing influence of gyms in society from the respondent. "Yes" was the response given by all. The majority of them held the opinion that everyone is becoming more aware of their fitness and health in urban societies, especially the younger population. The respondents' unanimity in expressing agreement points to a general understanding of the significance of health and fitness. Numerous things could be to blame for this, such as more aggressive campaigns to raise awareness, easier access to information via social media and the internet, and a move in the direction of preventative healthcare.

Sedentary lifestyles, elevated stress levels, and easy availability to poor food selections are all common effects of urbanization. It is possible to interpret the rise of gyms in urban areas as an attempt to mitigate these drawbacks of city living. The focus on the fitness and health consciousness of the younger generation is indicative

of changing attitudes across generations. Compared to earlier generations, younger people are frequently more health-conscious and value physical fitness more. A desire for general well-being, social media trends, and celebrity endorsements of fit lifestyles could all have an impact on this. Numerous positive effects on physical and mental health, including a lower risk of chronic diseases, enhanced mood, more energy, and better sleep quality, have been demonstrated by science with regular exercise. The fact that gyms are becoming more and more popular may be a sign that people are realizing these advantages and want to include them in their everyday lives.

Social norms and peer pressure may also play a role in the gym's rising popularity. As working out becomes more of a social activity, people could be inspired to join gyms to meet social norms or maintain standards of physical appearance and fitness. The fact that there are more gyms in cities suggests that accessibility and convenience have improved. Many gyms have modern facilities, a variety of classes, and flexible membership options, which make it simpler for people to fit fitness into their busy schedules. The increasing impact of gyms could also be attributed to the economic affluence of urban areas. People are more prepared to invest in their health and well-being, such as gym memberships and exercise classes, when disposable wages rise.

One of the respondents mentioned that gyms are becoming popular due to the 'growing population'. This phrase depicts that to assist people in keeping active and maintaining their health, there is a growing demand for fitness centers as more people live sedentary lifestyles in urban areas. An increasing number of people are looking to use gym services and facilities as a result of population growth.



A more diverse consumer base with a range of fitness demands, tastes, and aspirations is the result of a greater population. Gyms now offer a variety of exercise programs, equipment, and amenities to appeal to a wide range of age groups, fitness levels, and interests. This is how they have adapted to meet the needs of different demographics. Increases in income and economic development are frequently linked to population expansion. Wealthier people are more likely to spend money on fitness-related services and gym memberships, as well as other investments in their health and well-being. Increased urbanization brought on by economic expansion may also raise the need for gyms in metropolitan areas. People are becoming more conscious of the value of general health and physical fitness as the population expands. People are more aware of the advantages of regular exercise thanks to the internet and social media, and they are looking to join gyms as a way to enhance their quality of life and overall health.

The development of technology has also contributed to the expansion of the fitness sector. The latest workout equipment, digital tracking tools, and customized training plans seen in modern gyms appeal to tech-savvy people who appreciate data-driven fitness solutions. Exercise has turned into a social and cultural phenomenon, with gym culture influencing society at large. Social media platforms encourage users to join gyms and get involved in the fitness community by showcasing fitness celebrities, workout challenges, and transformation tales.

Another respondent said that he gets a 'we feeling' when in the gym, and there is a sense of community where people help each other grow. People congregate in gyms as social hubs to work out, make connections, and pursue shared objectives. Members' accountability, support, and companionship are all cultivated by the sense of community that gym facilities engender. The social component of gym culture is

further enhanced by online forums, group exercise classes, and social events, which provide possibilities for networking and companionship.

One of the respondents mentioned that to accommodate a greater variety of fitness interests and skills, gyms are expanding their services. This includes providing a range of group exercise programs, including dance, Pilates, yoga, strength training, and aerobic exercises. Gyms may attract people with a variety of fitness goals and interests by offering diverse programming, which fosters a more welcoming and stimulating environment.

"The Gym" is embracing body-positive language and visuals to encourage confidence and self-acceptance. This entails showcasing a range of body shapes in promotional materials, honoring personal development and accomplishments, and promoting an environment that is accepting and encouraging. Gyms want to foster an atmosphere where everyone feels appreciated and respected, regardless of size or appearance, by encouraging body acceptance.

A gym's communication and language policies are also carefully considered to make sure that all patrons feel included and welcome. This could entail teaching employees how to speak inclusively, refraining from using language that stigmatizes particular body types or reinforces stereotypes, and responding swiftly and decisively to any incidents of harassment or discrimination.

Gyms are working to provide space for people of all requirements and skill levels. This entails offering handicapped-accessible amenities such as wheelchair ramps, adapted technology, and handicapped-accessible restrooms. Having gender-neutral restrooms and changing areas is another way that inclusivity helps to make sure that everyone is valued and at ease.

Another person noted that gyms are becoming more and more popular and provide awareness among people. The fact that gyms are becoming more and more popular indicates that more people are realizing the importance of fitness centers as necessary elements of a healthy lifestyle. Numerous factors, such as increased knowledge of the value of physical activity, shifting perspectives on health and wellbeing, and the growth of gyms in suburban and metropolitan areas, are responsible for this popularity.

Gyms are essential for increasing public knowledge of the advantages of consistent physical activity and exercise. Gyms enable people to take charge of their health and lead healthy lives by giving them access to training programs, exercise equipment, and expert advice. Furthermore, fitness centers frequently provide members with educational materials, seminars, and neighborhood gatherings to educate them on the value of physical activity, healthy eating, and general well-being.

Gyms are central locations for community health and wellness initiatives. Gyms assist people in managing stress, enhancing mental health, increasing physical fitness, and improving overall quality of life through their facilities and services. Gyms support a culture of preventive healthcare and self-care by fostering surroundings that place a high value on health and wellbeing.

Gyms offer chances for social interaction and community development, which can raise awareness of fitness and health among a variety of demographics. Members are inspired to stay motivated and dedicated to their fitness objectives by the support, accountability, and camaraderie that group fitness programs, fitness challenges, and community activities provide.

According to the respondent's statement, gyms are becoming more inclusive and accessible, appealing to a wider range of needs and interests. To make people feel comfortable and supported in their fitness journeys, gyms aim to provide welcoming spaces for people of all ages and fitness abilities. This inclusiveness motivates more people to put their health and well-being first and aids in removing obstacles to participation.

## 7.2 DAILY ROUTINE AND EXERCISE

All of them responded that they schedule their days appropriately and set aside time for the gym when asked how they balance their everyday activities with exercise. The majority of them claimed that it has become a regular part of their day, much like having breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Respondents show that they prioritize their health and well-being by making gym visits a regular part of their day, much like meals. They appreciate the value of setting aside time for physical activity to maintain general health and fitness, just as they do for necessities like eating, sleeping, and working. Respondents who arrange gym time each day are better able to stick to a regular workout regimen. Regularity encourages the development of habits, which facilitate the long-term maintenance of motivation and adherence to exercise objectives. Recognizing gym sessions as non-negotiable appointments strengthens the routine and reduces the possibility of missing exercises because of conflicting demands or other distractions.

Setting up workout routines calls for strong time management abilities. Despite other obligations, respondents show that they can effectively prioritize work, distribute resources, and plan their calendars by setting out certain times for exercise. They can maximize their time and strike a balance between business, personal, and

fitness-related activities thanks to this methodical approach. Exercise regularly has been demonstrated to lower stress, elevate mood, and improve cognitive performance. Respondents who regularly include gym time in their daily routines proactively control their stress levels and foster mental health. Being physically active may be a great way to decompress, clear the mind, and feel proud of yourself. This can help you be more productive and satisfied in other aspects of your life.

Considering gym sessions as essential parts of their everyday routines demonstrates a holistic commitment to fitness and health. Respondents recognize the significance of physical movement for preserving their physical, mental, and emotional well-being, and they effortlessly incorporate it into their lifestyles rather than viewing it as an optional or distinct activity. This change in perspective encourages a long-term, sustained commitment to healthy living and provides a good example for others.

### 7.3 LIFESTYLE

They also mentioned that working out and exercising have impacted their overall lifestyle in a better way. One of the respondents mentioned that regarding physical health, the impact of gyms may be the most evident. Frequent workouts at the gym can help you maintain a healthy weight, strengthen and extend your muscles, and improve your cardiovascular health. People who make regular gym visits a part of their lifestyle are more likely to live longer, be in better physical shape, and have a lower chance of developing chronic illnesses like diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.

Additionally, gyms are very important for mental health. Because exercise releases endorphins, which are neurotransmitters that encourage emotions of enjoyment and relaxation, it has been demonstrated to lessen the symptoms of

anxiety, sadness, and stress. Frequent gym attendance can increase self-esteem, enhance the quality of sleep, and offer a healthy way to release tension and emotions. Furthermore, the camaraderie and sense of belonging that gym environments promote can help prevent feelings of loneliness and isolation and promote general mental wellness.

Including trips to the gym in a daily or weekly routine requires efficient time management. Gym-goers who make self-care a priority show that they can manage conflicting demands and find time for self-care in the middle of hectic lives. Goal-setting, organization, and discipline are encouraged by this practice, and these traits can help one succeed in other spheres of life as well as increase productivity.

Fitness centers frequently advocate for holistic methods of health and wellness, which may involve offering dietary and hydration advice. Many people who go to the gym often become more aware of what they eat, choosing healthy foods that help them achieve their fitness objectives. It's also important to stay hydrated to ensure peak performance during exercise and to support general health. This emphasis on hydration and a nutritious diet can benefit a person's entire existence, not just while they work out at the gym.

Gyms give people the chance to network and engage socially, connecting them with others who have similar fitness and health objectives. Developing ties with other gym patrons, instructors, and staff members can broaden one's social support system and offer support, responsibility, and inspiration to stick to a regular workout schedule. These relationships can strengthen a person's sense of belonging and improve their social life outside of the gym. Reaching fitness benchmarks and advancing toward individual objectives at the gym can increase self-assurance and

empower oneself. It can be empowering to overcome obstacles, test physical limits, and see increases in one's strength, endurance, and physical appearance. Greater assertiveness, resilience, and a desire to take on new challenges and possibilities might result from having more self-confidence in other spheres of life.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **CONCLUSION**

The information acquired through interviews with gym patrons illuminates the complex reasons why people visit exercise centers such as "The Gym." Among the wide range of variables influencing their decisions, several identified maintaining general health and aiming for weight loss as their significant motivations. Moreover, the conceptualization of body dissatisfaction—shaped by cultural norms and attitudes—added an aspect whereby self-assurance and positive self-image come into play in motivating gym attendance. Other related areas for which the benefits of consistent gym attendance are seen include improved cardiovascular fitness, social interaction, stress alleviation, and physical strength.

Participants have appreciated the close location, ease of access, and welcoming environment in "The Gym," and other aspects that add to their happiness and loyalty include the facility's spaciousness, professionalism of the staff, variety in class options, and reasonable prices. The results emphasize that, for the customization of fitness programs, every fitness enthusiast needs to consider his or her needs, preferences, and goals. "The Gym" effectively positioned itself as a leading choice for health and wellness solutions that require an inclusive environment and well-equipped facilities and services.

The researcher explored the unique benefits of "The Gym" over other training centers in Porvorim through talks with gym patrons. This investigation uncovered several crucial elements that support its allure and competitive advantage in the neighborhood exercise market.

First and foremost, responders frequently complimented "The Gym" staff members' warm and inviting disposition, highlighting the pleasant environment they



helped to create. This feature enhances the entire experience that members have at the gym by creating a helpful and encouraging environment.

The gym's advantageous location was also emphasized, as it is close to residential areas, which makes it easy and convenient for members to fit gym trips into their daily schedules. Members can prioritize their exercise goals without any practical obstacles because of this accessibility element.

Another participant went all in on appreciating "The Gym" for having fine equipment. The upscale amenities and thoughtfully constructed machines are dedicated to offering members state-of-the-art resources with the promise that they will enhance the safety and efficacy of workouts, which obviously will enhance the training experience as a whole. Additionally, "The Gym" sets itself apart with a wide range of services, such as exciting CrossFit sessions and a selection of classes including Zumba, dance, strength training, and weight reduction plans.

Members' diverse interests and exercise preferences are catered to by this diversity, which guarantees that there are solutions that meet everyone's needs. Respondents praised "The Gym" for its wallet-friendly membership fees and flexible payment plans, citing affordability as a crucial factor.

Because "The Gym" maintains high standards of quality despite its affordable pricing, members get exceptional value for their investment in fitness.

Last but not least, the gym's emphasis on powerlifting was mentioned as a distinctive quality that distinguishes it from rivals and draws customers with particular interests in strength training and fitness objectives. "The Gym" is a top fitness destination in Porvorim because of several attributes, such as a warm and inviting environment, a handy location, top-notch equipment, a wide range of services, affordability, and a specific emphasis on powerlifting. All of these benefits

work together to make it the go-to option for people looking for a complete and satisfying workout experience.

Several responders' training plans and approaches to fitness are described in the text. One person participates in high-intensity functional exercise that combines weightlifting, gymnastics, and cardiovascular training; they call themselves CrossFitters. Another emphasizes progressive resistance training routines that target muscle growth and strength, with a concentration on weightlifting as a means of gaining strength. One respondent also expressed confidence in their coach's suggestions, underscoring the need for professional help in reaching fitness objectives. Another highlights how crucial it is to balance strength and cardio training in the gym for overall fitness, as well as the significance of constancy and experimentation. Last but not least, a single person prioritizes cardiovascular exercise over other forms of exercise to burn calories and reach their weight loss objectives. Overall, the various methods used by the respondents highlight the importance of individualized approaches when pursuing fitness goals.

The facility's excellent aspects were underlined by the responders in their opinion regarding "The Gym." They highlighted the value of professional advice and assistance in reaching fitness objectives and complimented the gym's excellent training equipment and knowledgeable trainers. The great workout facilities and well-maintained facilities were also mentioned, adding to the enjoyable and inspiring gym experience. Members praised "The Gym's" great vibe and sense of community despite its occasional crowding, highlighting the importance of social interaction and companionship in a fitness environment. All things considered, "The Gym" received praise for its commitment to offering a friendly setting and tools to support members in their pursuit of physical fitness.

The respondents highlighted the significant role of media in disseminating information about "The Gym" and promoting fitness culture. media, such as publications and social media platforms, often presented athletes, fitness enthusiasts, and other celebrities showcasing their training regimens and successes, raising awareness of the gym and reinforcing the rewards of regular exercise. Meanwhile, the media have instructional content on fitness-related topics such as workout regimens and nutrition guidelines, which avails valuable knowledge for setting and achieving fitness goals.

Besides, there was an emphasis on the impact of fitness influencers, coaches, and celebrities on social media platforms who share their experiences related to physical fitness and encourage others to engage in this practice. This practice is further heightened by the endorsement of workout gear and gym memberships by celebrities. Moreover, the media has popularized fitness challenges, movements, and trends that engage the public and encourage involvement in gym and fitness culture. Social media challenges and viral workout routines help individuals interact, share progress, and connect with like-minded peers online. They further stated that encouraging friends to join the gym was important and advised clients to book their visits in advance because of the probability of crowds during rush hours. Overall, customers, through their responses, highlighted the multi-dimensional impact media has on promoting "The Gym" and encouraging engagement in fitness activities.

The researcher also had a nice conversation with "The Gym" and felt enlightened about the whole setup of the place. The proprietor, Samir Bhaip, founded the gym in 2014 to promote fitness and healthy living. Since his childhood dream was to open a fitness center where sports and fitness fit into his school and college

backgrounds, Samir's main focus is on the satisfaction of his clients rather than making a profit.

He values long-term relations with his clients and develops very high-quality and refined workouts, as well as a gym atmosphere where fitness-oriented customers can enjoy themselves. Despite being in Porvorim, "The Gym" is distinguished from the others in the sense that it is more centered on client welfare and satisfaction than on financial gain. Samir stated that "The Gym" has six professionally qualified fitness trainers with certifications, and many of them hold degrees in the field of fitness. He manages client contacts and monitors the gym's finances, ensuring quality service delivery. In case he's not there, a manager looks after operations in his absence with the help of other trainers.

Firstly, he highlights the inclusive nature of the gym, welcoming individuals of any age or physical capability, including people with disabilities. It is the only spacious gym in Porvorim, giving ample room for the members to be able to work out comfortably. In addition, it is the only gym in Porvorim that specializes in CrossFit.

Secondly, the owner highlights the unique features that make "The Gym" stand out from other gyms in Porvorim. This gym has the largest number of rooms where people can work out comfortably, and it has nothing like this. Further, the owner stated the gym is the only gym in Porvorim where CrossFit is specialized, where the person gets interested in the exercise through that format. He also added that their prime goal is very much about using high-quality facilities and ensuring customer satisfaction at their gym. Membership in the gym relies more on satisfactory word-of-mouth, as compared to a lot of efforts made by them in terms of advertisement. Further, the owner points out the personalized workouts formulated for every client according to his individual preferences and requirements. This client-

centered approach increases motivation and involvement, making them committed to goals that eventually provide the desire for long-term success. Finally, "The Gym" is unique for various outdoor activities, including CrossFit, yoga, Zumba, kickboxing, karate, judo, dance, and strength training. Having a variety of activities attracts many members to be part of this wide, spacious, and friendly fitness destination that takes care of the community among its members.

In this context, an extract from the owner's point of view concerning his vision towards various aspects, such as setting up, mission, gym facilities, clients, and strategies for success, is concerned. The owner further discusses "The Gym"'s commitment to setting up a welcoming environment that will take care of all those who come into the gym, irrespective of their age and background, with particular emphasis on the gym's huge spaciousness and different varieties of training such as CrossFit, yoga, and martial arts.

The owners and the rest of the staff, in this case, make sure to create personalized workout plans for every customer, depending on preferences and goals. Such qualities remain in place for client feedback, community engagement, and overall customer satisfaction, ensuring that the gym can stay on top of the game. Furthermore, the owner enumerates the challenges, including competition in the fitness industry, cost management, retention of employees, regular maintenance of facilities, and retention of customers.

These challenges' solution has as its underpinning this expansion and maintaining the success of the gym long-term, including growth strategies such as opening new branches both within and outside Goa. This expansion strategy allows geographical diversification, allowing the gym to tap new markets while also strengthening its position at home. This expansion enables "The Gym" to increase

brand visibility, meet the fitness demands of the broader segment, and strengthen its competitive position. While the growth opportunities present challenges, like logistical difficulties or expanded competition, as the business expands, it is more about how successful the business will be in delivering on these new demands.

Management and maintaining quality standards across multiple locations is the priority for being profitable and having long-term success. Strategic planning and focusing on customer satisfaction are the primary goals and objectives to enable the gym to achieve profitable growth and long-term success. The researcher's primary purpose was to look into how exercising can influence social, mental, and physical health. One participant said that joining a gym alleviated insecurities about appearance, leading to improved mental well-being and social interaction.

Another participant highlighted how following a consistent routine of exercising over the years improved concentration and patience, which would probably suggest that long-term physical activity has cognitive benefits. Another respondent stated that exercising makes one feel wonderful from within and outside since it helps to improve mental perception and physical appearance. Besides, one gymgoer elaborated on how exercise relieves stress and promotes socialization, citing that these advantages were derived from the release of endorphins and reduction in stress hormones experienced during physical activity. All these testimonials impress upon the multi-pronged nature of benefits derived from exercise to holistic well-being, inclusive of mental, emotional, and physical aspects of health.

Gyms are community centers where individuals come together to set fitness goals while connecting with others. It would be quite a plus for one to join the other folks in some group exercise that motivates, supports, and promotes socialization, hence rendering an enhanced workout experience leading to improvement of well-

being. One gym member said how powerlifting increased his confidence and relieved him from stress, while another person said that exercise brought self-confidence and made social interactions simpler, with public confidence. Conducting gym visits within leisure time shows dedication to one's health and fitness pursuits, with most respondents having experienced improvement in endurance and strength.

Overall, these experiences show how fitness can bring together great advantages in someone's daily life, encompassing both physical and mental well-being and even social connections. The researcher found that all respondents agreed on the growing significance of gyms in society, which is especially noticeable in urban areas, where there is heightened awareness of health and fitness, in particular among the younger demographic. Reasons behind this trend include aggressive awareness campaigns, accessibility of information on social media, and shifting trends towards preventative healthcare.

Therefore, the rise of gyms in urban settings can be viewed as a reaction to changes in lifestyles, increased stress levels, and detrimental dietary practices associated with urbanization. Changes in attitudes across generations also play a part; for example, younger generations are more aware of the importance they place on health and fitness than previous generations. In addition to these, social media trends and celebrity endorsements further fuel this transition to leading a healthier lifestyle. This includes better accessibility, improved facilities, and flexible membership options that enable integration into a routine. Moreover, economic affluence in urban areas contributes to the growing popularity of gyms, as people are more willing to invest in their health and well-being.

Population growth is another driving factor behind the rising demand for gyms, as more people desire to maintain their fitness level and health. This has led to

a broader customer base with varying fitness needs and perspectives. The accelerating influence of gyms reflects the changing dynamics of society toward prioritizing health and well-being, highly influenced by technological advancements, yet more commensurate with the sense of community within fitness spaces.

"The Gym" refers to body-positive language and imagery used for branding purposes, promoting confidence and self-acceptance amongst its clients. This aims to exhibit diverse body shapes within promotional materials, celebrate personal achievements, and offer an environment of acceptance and encouragement to all in terms of how one will look at themselves. The objective here is to ensure that everyone should be valued and respected no matter their size or appearance, increasing awareness that promotes body acceptance.

The promotion of body acceptance, aside from visual representation, is also integrated into inclusive communication policies by gyms to make sure that everyone feels included and welcome. This includes training employees to use inclusive language and ensuring that there is no promotion of messages that criticize some body types. Incidents of harassment or discrimination that take place are also dealt with swiftly. The gyms are working towards providing facilities that help cater to the needs of all individuals, including those who are disabled. This includes providing wheelchair ramps, technology adjustments, and a gender-neutral restroom and changing rooms to ensure that everyone feels included and comfortable.

The surge in popularity of gyms indicates a burgeoning awareness amongst the people regarding the importance of fitness centers in promoting a healthy lifestyle.

The gyms give ample room and space for the establishment of the public's knowledge of the benefits of routine physical activity and exercise; they also give access to training programs, equipment, and expert guidance. It can be rightfully said



projects, that gyms act as central hubs for community health and wellness projects where they are opened up to doing a lot of stress management, mental health, and getting healthy.



Picture 8.1 *people working out*  
Source: researcher



Picture 8.2. *Trainer motivating clients*  
Source: Researcher

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## **APPENDIX I**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE PROPRIETOR**

*Dear respondents,*

*This Interview Guide is part of my Dissertation titled “**Body Image and Ideas of Fitness: A Case Study of the Youth Clients of ‘The Gym’ Porvorim, North- Goa**”. I am collecting the information in relation to my research so I request you to kindly co-operate. Your valuable response will be kept confidential and will be used only for research purpose.*

*Thank you for your time, cooperation, and valuable inputs.*

**Reha Kerkar**

**Student, DDKSSSBS, Goa University**

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1. When was the gym established?
2. Explain the vision and mission of the gym.
3. Could you share information on gyms in Porvorim?
4. What is the number of staff/trainers employed in the gym? Present a brief profile of the same.
5. What is the enrollment and criteria for selecting clients?
6. How do you disseminate information about the gym?
7. Comment on the facilities and the equipment provided.
8. What are the workout plans offered by the gym?
9. Which workout plans are generally preferred by the clients?
10. Are there any stand-out features or best practices adopted by the gym?
11. Do you focus your plans on any target age groups? And why?

12. What are the primary reasons for people's enrolment in the gym?
13. Do you have a system or a mechanism to assess the fitness parameters?
14. Do you conduct any customer satisfaction surveys/feedback? If any, please explain.
15. Can you share any success stories about the gym?
16. Comment on any challenges confronted in the day-to-day functioning of the gym.
17. Comment on the prospective plans for your gym.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE CLIENTS**

*Dear respondents,*

*This Interview Guide is part of my Dissertation titled “**Body Image and Ideas of Fitness: A Case Study Of the Youth Clients of ‘The Gym’ Porvorim, North- Goa**”. I am collecting the information in relation to my research so I request you to kindly co-operate. Your valuable response will be kept confidential and will be used only for research purpose.*

*Thank you for your time, cooperation, and valuable inputs.*

**Reha Kerkar**

**Student, DDKSSBS, Goa University**

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1. Mention your name, age, and place of residence.
2. How long have you been a member of the gym?
3. How were you informed about the gym?
4. Explain the reasons/objectives that facilitated joining the gym.
5. Are you also aware of gyms in Porvorim?
6. How does the gym hold an edge over the other gyms?
7. Mention the workout plan you chose and explain its nature.
8. Comment on the gym facilities and the training environment.
9. How does the workout plan help your physical, mental, and social well-being?
10. Is the gym culture becoming popular in society? If yes, among whom, and how?

11. What is the role of media in disseminating information about gyms in Porvorim?
12. Are there any popular fitness plans or workouts people choose?
13. How do you manage your daily routine with the gym activity?
14. How likely are you to recommend membership to a friend?
15. What improvements in services would you like to suggest?
16. Do you have any suggestions for improving the gym experience? If any, please suggest.
17. How has the gym impacted your overall lifestyle?
18. Where do you think the future of gym culture is heading?