

*A comparative, qualitative study to determine what factors motivate men and women
in Durban to exercise at gym.*

by

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I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the HPSY414 degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

SIGN:

Abstract:

Many men and women have gym contracts, but do not always feel motivated to workout at gym. There are several motivational factors which motivate men and women to workout at gym, of which, this study aims to identify. The current literature available on what factors that motivate men and women to exercise at gym is minimal in the South African context. Therefore, this study attempts to contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of sports psychology, in regard to what motivates South African men and women to workout at gym. As this study is qualitative, the sample consisted of four participants, two men and two women residing in Durban, South Africa, in order to gather data through semi-structured interviews. From the data collected, it can be noted that men are more intrinsically motivated, including their health and accomplishment, where women are more motivated by extrinsic factors, such as physical appearance and accountability to others. Due to this study using a purposive sampling method, it is encouraged that further research is done on a wider demographical group of individuals from different racial groups, age groups, and socio-economic backgrounds as this study included urban area, Durban based participants only.

Key words: Motivation, motivational factors, gym, continuous, ongoing, participation, physical health, comparative, men, women

Table of contents:

Title.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Contextualisation.....	1
1.2. Rationale.....	1
1.3. Problem Statement.....	2
1.4. Purpose Statement.....	2
1.5. Research Questions.....	3
1.6. Objectives.....	3
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	4
2.1. Theoretical Foundation.....	4
2.2. Review of Literature.....	5
2.2.1. Theme1: Motivation.....	5
2.2.2. Theme2: Commitment to accomplish personal goals.....	8
2.2.3. Theme 3: Health benefits.....	9
2.2.4. Theme 4: Social environment.....	10
2.2.5. Theme 5: Gamification and incentives.....	11
2.3. Conceptualisation.....	12
3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....	14
3.1. Research Paradigm.....	14
3.2. Conceptual Approach.....	15
3.3. Research Design.....	15
3.4. Population.....	16
3.5. Sampling.....	16
3.6. Data-collection methods.....	18
3.6.1. Application of data collection method.....	20
3.7. Data analysis method.....	21
3.7.1. Application of data analysis method.....	23
3.8. Trustworthiness.....	24
4. FINDINGS.....	27
4.1. Presentation of Findings.....	27
4.1.1. Theme 1: Motivation.....	27

4.1.1.1. Sub-theme 1: intrinsic.....	27
4.1.1.1.1. Accomplishment.....	27
4.1.1.1.2. Routine.....	28
4.1.1.1.3. Health.....	28
4.1.1.2. Sub-theme 2: Extrinsic.....	28
4.1.1.2.1. Competition.....	28
4.1.1.2.2. Social environment.....	29
4.1.1.2.3. Accountability.....	29
4.1.1.2.4. Physical appearance.....	29
4.1.1.2.5. Rewards.....	29
4.2. Interpretation of findings.....	29
4.2.1. Theme 1: Motivation.....	30
4.2.1.1. Sub-theme 1: Intrinsic.....	30
4.2.1.1.1. Accomplishment.....	30
4.2.1.1.2. Routine.....	30
4.2.1.1.3. Health.....	30
4.2.1.2. Sub-theme 2: Extrinsic.....	31
4.2.1.2.1. Competition.....	31
4.2.1.2.2. Social environment.....	31
4.2.1.2.3. Accountability.....	32
4.2.1.2.4. Physical appearance.....	32
4.2.1.2.5. Rewards.....	33
4.2.2. Findings in context.....	33
5. CONCLUSION.....	35
5.1. Research questions, problem, Objectives Addressed.....	35
5.2. Ethical Considerations.....	36
5.3. Limitations.....	36
5.4. Heuristic Value.....	37
5.5. Conclusion.....	38
Reference List.....	39
Annexures.....	48
Annexure A – Research Report Summary Document Table.....	48
Annexure B – Ethics Clearance Letter.....	49
Annexure C – Ethics checklist.....	51

Annexure D – Consent form to participate in interview.....	52
Annexure E – Consent form for audio recording.....	54
Annexure F – Participant interview schedule.....	55
(Annexure G – Originality report).....	(Attached)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Contextualisation

Numerous men and women have gym contracts, but do not always feel motivated to workout at gym. This poses a problem regarding the unhealthy lifestyle many adults succumb to as a result of minimal physical activity, which may present an increase in health risks (Molanorouzi, Khoo, & Morris, 2015). In order to increase men and women's motivation participate in physical activity, it is important to understand the factors that have the biggest influence on these motivational levels. This study builds on this understanding from an interpretivist perspective and therefore uses a qualitative approach in order to gain subjective understanding of the factors that motivate people to exercise at gym.

A person's motivation is seen to be influenced by their unique life experiences (Maree, 2020), thus, this study has employed a comparative design to identify and describe the potential differences between men and women. The literature available on motivation in non-competitive activities in a South African (SA) context is minimal, with the main focus being on competitive activities. Therefore, this study is conducted to contribute to the body of knowledge in the sports psychology field to address this lack in SA literature, as well as to aid in the understanding of motivational factors to attempt to improve the motivation of men and women in SA. Six key concepts are identified to be understood in this research study: motivation; commitment; gym; physical activity/exercise; incentives; and gamification.

1.2. Rationale

Due to the decrease in physical activity amongst men and women over the previous number of years (Rosenfeld, 2017; Warburton & Bredin, 2017), people are at higher risk for physical health issues, including heart-related diseases (Tylka & Homan, 2015; Roberts *et al.*, 2015). The researcher is therefore interested in understanding how men and women perceive motivation, specifically relating to continuously exercising at gym to increase the physical activity rates of men and women in SA. By increasing the

physical activity, men and women's risk of developing these health issues may drastically decrease (Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015).

This study is relevant as it adds to the body of knowledge from a South African context, whereby there is minimal literature available. The researcher will compare potential differences in motivational factors of men and women in order to reinforce the subjective variances between the factors that best motivate each gender. Due to minimal knowledge in this field, South African organisations, such as gyms and medical aid companies may not implement strategies that effectively motivate all their members. This may be a reason for the decrease in physical activity amongst men and women, which refers to amotivation (Rosenfeld, 2017; Cheon & Reeves, 2015). Therefore, if these organisations effectively increase their customers' motivation levels, their customers may have less health issues and subsequently may not need to claim medical costs as often. This also benefits the company, as they would not need to pay out as many client medical cost claims (Rosenfeld, 2017). Gyms could also benefit as, if people are effectively motivated to exercise, they are less likely to cancel their gym memberships and more people may be more motivated to become gym members.

1.3. Problem Statement

Men and women often do not keep up a sufficient physical activity level as they are unable to keep motivated to continuously exercise. This could negatively impact the person's physical health (Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015). The literature available on motivation in non-competitive physical activity, such as exercising at gym in the South African context is also minimal, as the main focus is on competitive activities. This therefore provides minimal information to aid companies such as medical aid companies or gyms to better understand effective ways to motivate their clients.

1.4. Purpose Statement

This study's purpose is to improve the understanding of men and women's personal perceptions on continuous motivation in non-competitive activities, such as exercising at gym. This study is also being conducted to establish whether there are any

differences or similarities between the two genders in what type of motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) best motivates them to exercise at gym. Due to the minimal literature available on motivational factors in non-competitive activities in a South African context, this study's purpose is also to add further information to the body of knowledge in order to increase the South African literature available in the sports psychological field. This Information may be useful to increase the physical activity levels of men and women in SA, and therefore attempt to decrease the high physical health risk levels in the country (Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015).

1.5. Research Questions

1.5.1. Primary research question

- What factors motivate men and women to exercise at gym?

1.5.2. Secondary research questions

- What intrinsic factors motivate men and women to go to gym?
- What extrinsic factors motivate men and women to go to gym?
- Does motivation to workout at gym differ between men and women?

1.6. Objectives

- To describe the factors which motivate men to exercise at gym on an ongoing basis.
- To describe factors which motivate women to exercise at gym on an ongoing basis.
- To determine whether there is a difference in what factors motivate men compared to women to exercise at gym on an ongoing basis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Foundation

Self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985) considers three types of motivation: intrinsic, extrinsic and amotivation, which separate the different types of factors that motivates a person to better themselves (Standage & Ryan, 2018; Ryan & Deci, 2017). All three of these motivation types are relevant to this study as it attempts to identify the factors that motivate people to workout at gym. Intrinsic motivation refers to inherent factors that influence an individual's personal motivation (Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015). Van Heeden (2014) concurs as he defines intrinsic motivation to include an individual's desire to feel proud and capable in an activity. Therefore, a person that is intrinsically motivated is driven to participate in an activity as they find personal value and satisfaction when doing so, with no external reward or reassurance needed. A person that is intrinsically motivated may therefore exercise at gym due to the feeling of being personally challenged to better their fitness levels, for example, which fulfils the need to feel autonomous and competent in their personal achievement (Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015).

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, refers to external, or environmental factors that motivate an individual's behaviour (Molanorouzi *et al.* 2015). A person whom is extrinsically motivated is therefore motivated by punishments or rewards received from aspects in their environment, such as competing to be better than other individuals, for participating in an activity (Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015). For example, a person may therefore train in a public gym pool to become a faster swimmer because their coach is pressurising the individual to achieve a specific time. therefore, the extrinsic factor is their coach, not their own achieving pushing them to achieve the goal of a better time.

The third type of motivation being amotivation, refers to a person not seeing participating in a particular activity as satisfying, and therefore the person does not feel motivated to partake in the activity (Aicher & Brenner, 2015). In this study, amotivation may be a reason many people do not start, or continue exercising at gym, as the value in exercising is no longer acknowledged. Amotivation is therefore what

poses this study's problem statement, as it is one of the main reasons why people do not partake in physical activity, potentially leading to an increase in health risks as a consequence.

Additionally, according to Aicher and Brender (2015), SDT identifies three main needs that apply to the above three types of motivation, as well as to this study. These needs may play an important part in explaining why people feel enthused to participate in certain activities (Aicher & Brenner, 2015) such as exercising at gym. The first need is autonomy, which refers to the need that people have to not feel forced into participating in an activity such as exercising at gym, but rather that they have the freedom of choosing whether to participate and support the activity (Aicher & Brenner, 2015). Therefore, people do not feel motivated if they feel that they do not go to gym out of personal choice, but rather to satisfy someone else's demand, for example, a coach, personal trainer, or the person's parents. People whom are extrinsically motivated to participate often do not find their autonomous needs to be met when participating in the activity (Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015).

The second need, Competence, which signifies the feeling people strive to achieve whereby they feel self-reliant and confident when participating in an activity (Aicher & Brenner, 2015), such as exercising at gym.

The third need is relatedness, involves the need for interpersonal interaction social connection (Aicher & Brenner, 2015). For example, many people go to gym in order to socialise with other gym members, and often members form routines to train at the same time each day and therefore tend to form connections with other members that they see at the gym on an occurring basis due to their routine.

2.2. Review of Literature

2.2.1. Theme 1: Motivation

According to Standage and Ryan (2018), motivation refers to the factors that galvanise people to behave or take action in an intended direction. Buckley and Doyle (2016) add that motivation is a multi-dimensional, theoretical construct, which varies between

individuals based on their degree and sort of motivation the individual has for a particular activity. This is relevant to individuals whom exercise at gym, as each individual holds a different level of motivation to exercise, with differing motivational factors to that of other individuals exercising at gym. Therefore, meaning that a motivational factor for one person to become more physically active to reduce health risks may not motivate other individuals.

In SDT, three types of motivation are observed: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation (Ryan & Deci 2017). Standage and Ryan (2018) proposed, in a study on SDT, that motivation to exercise is recognised to be based on the personal purpose the activity fulfils for each individual. The interaction people have with their environment also plays an important part in motivation, as a person's need to feel confident in the specific activity needs to be met (Standage and Ryan, 2018). Therefore, it is possible to assume that people exercising at gym are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, and amotivation refers to those individuals whom do not hold value in exercising at gym, and therefore lack motivation.

Similarly to Standage and Ryan, Van Heerden (2014) states that individuality and proficiency in an activity are two main factors contributing to individuals' intrinsic motivation to continuously participate in physical activities. Therefore, Van Heerden (2014) proposes that if a person finds pleasure in the activity, they will be motivated to participate in it. Thus, in individuals whom exercise at gym, if the individual finds the activity to be enjoyable, then he/she will be more likely to continue exercising at gym regularly. Therefore, if companies are able to create a way to make exercising at gym more enjoyable, more people would be motivated to exercise at gym regularly.

Another study, conducted by Aicher and Brenner (2015), makes mention of motivation being intrinsic or extrinsic, whereby intrinsic motivation is based on personal pleasure found in taking part in an activity, for the sake of gaining a new skill, or the satisfaction in trying something new, or the satisfaction of being stimulated. Therefore, exercising at gym is physically stimulating and thus can be seen as a motivating factor for people to continuously exercise at gym.

A study by Molanorouzi *et al.* (2015), as well as another study by Pope and Harvey (2015) both suggest that extrinsic motivational factors are important when a person is first entering a physical activity. However, in order for this participation to be consistently continued, intrinsic motivation needs to be present. Egli, Bland, Melton, and Czech (2011) as cited in Molanorouzi *et al.* (2015), proposed that extrinsic factors are more motivational than that of intrinsic factors. Although, Lauderdale *et al.* (2015) opposed this by stating that undergraduate students whom are intrinsically motivated are more likely to participate in exercise than others whom are more motivated by extrinsic factors.

A study by Molanorouzi *et al.* (2015), on “Motives for adult participation in physical activity: type of activity, age, and gender”, found that there is a difference between adult’s motivation that is dependent on the type of physical activity the participation is in. For example, a person’s participation in solo sports is motivated by the person’s pleasure and a feeling of personal capability (intrinsic motivation), whereas motivation to exercise is better based on physical body-related achievements (extrinsic motivation) (Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, this study states that people are motivated by their appearance (extrinsic factor), more so than that of the pleasure in exercising.

The factors which motivate people to participate in an activity differ between men and women (Van Heerden, 2014). Egli *et al.* (2011), as cited in Molanorouzi *et al.* (2015), proposed that men are mainly motivated by intrinsic factors that are concerned with personal contest and physical strength. Whereas women’s motivation to exercise is explained to be mainly based on extrinsic factors such as controlling their bodyweight (Egli *et al.*, 2011, cited in Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015). According to Lauderdale *et al.* (2015), men tend to explain the motivational factors of exercising to include more focus on mental gains associated with physical activity such as satisfaction and contest to do better. Men are also identified to find more pleasure in physical activity, whereas Lauderdale *et al.* (2015) states that women tend to find motivation to exercise in regards to their overall health and appearance, and the pleasure aspect of exercising is explained to last for a shorter period of time. Roberts *et al.* (2015), on the other hand, stated that appearance was not identified to be as important as indicated by Lauderdale. To sum up the findings of these studies, men are most commonly

motivated by intrinsic factors, as these studies show that personal growth is a major motivator for men to partake in physical activity. Whereas women are presented to be most commonly extrinsically motivated, as these studies show that most women are motivated by their appearance.

2.2.2. Theme 2: Commitment to accomplish personal goals

As stated in the previous theme, and supported in a South African article by Van Heerden (2014), a person's motivation to partake in an activity is dependent on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. In order for a person to be motivated to participate in activities such as physical exercise, whereby competition is not an end goal, Van Heerden (2014) explains that intrinsic motivation plays a major role, as this refers to the pleasure the person feels when committing and continuing in an activity to better themselves. This therefore motivates them to continue participating without the external rewards or punishments of extrinsic motivation (Van Heerden, 2014).

Another study, by Koumpoula, Tsopani, Flessas, and Chairopoulou (2011) on the motivation of rhythmic gymnasts participating in training in a competitive versus non-competitive context, states that competition plays a major role in the type of motivation, and therefore the motivational factors responsible for driving the participation of these athletes (Koumpoula *et al.*, 2011). The results of this study show that participants whom compete are driven more by extrinsic motivational factors, such as competing with other competitors to win (reward) (Koumpoula *et al.*, 2011). Whereas, individuals whom participate in gymnastics on a non-competitive level are shown to be motivated more by intrinsic factors, as they participate for the enjoyment of the activity, and are committed to accomplish their own personal goals (Koumpoula *et al.*, 2011). Moore, Scott, and Moore (2008), stated that men and women's commitment to continue in an activity differ depending on different factors the activity provides. For women, extrinsic factors such as "sociability, relationships, and cooperative interactions" are important to commit to an activity (Moore *et al.*, 2008). Whereas for men, "activity achievement" is an important, intrinsic factor that influences how committed men are to an activity (Moore *et al.*, 2008).

This literature is applicable to this study, as it explores motivation to partake in physical activity without a competitive end goal of winning. Due to exercising at gym being a continuous activity, a person would need to find motivation to commit to going to gym for an indefinite amount of time, there is not a specific end goal such as in a sport, whereby the end goal would be winning a match against another team, for example. Men are also more likely to commit to exercising at gym to improve themselves, whereas women are more likely to need an external motivation to continuously feel motivated to exercise at gym.

2.2.3. Theme 3: Health benefits

The decline in the majority of people's physical activity in the last number of years has negatively impacted health statistics (Rosenfeld, 2017; Warburton & Bredin, 2017; Roberts *et al.*, 2015). Specifically referring to higher risks of developing severe medical conditions such as obesity, which poses extended threat to other diseases such as diabetes (Rosenfeld, 2017). A source by Warburton and Bredin (2017) supported this and additionally stated that inactivity increases the mortality rate. Therefore, physical activity referred to in both of these articles can be applied to exercising at gym and if men and women were to feel motivated to consistently exercise at gym, the risk of diseases such as obesity or heart-related diseases may decrease (Tylka & Homan, 2015). Another article by Hedge and Solomon (2015) found that physical activity lowered levels of blood pressure, therefore decreasing the risks associated with changes in bodily inflammation, stress on the arteries, insulin levels and renal functioning.

A study by Lauderdale *et al.* (2015), on physical activity in college students stated that women are less motivated to participate in physical exercise, and therefore are at higher risk of developing medical conditions. Another study, by Hongwei, Kim, and Ebinger (2020) identified that men are at higher risk of cardiovascular diseases such as high blood pressure. Therefore, men may be more motivated to exercise at gym due to knowing the risk they are facing if they are not physically active. Egli *et al.* (2011), as cited in Molanorouzi *et al.* (2015), identify women to be mainly motivated to exercise in order to decrease bodyfat. Thus, due to women being motivated by their bodyweight, it is applicable that they are motivated to exercise at gym to decrease the

risk of obesity. However, Roberts *et al.* (2015) found that, although appearance is a motive for women to participate in physical activity, such as exercising at gym, it was not identified to be as important as a study by Lauderdale *et al.* (2015) stated it to be. Rather, Roberts *et al.* (2015) states that there are more important factors which influence motivation, including the person's attitude concerning exercise, their goals, and potential incentives available. To sum up this literature, many men and women are shown to be motivated to partake in physical activity in order to improve their health. Although, women tend to want to improve their health based on physical, or external aspects, such as their body fat, whereas more men are shown to be motivated by internal physical health factors instead, such as to improve their cardiovascular functioning.

2.2.4. Theme 4: Social environment

DiMenichi and Tricomi (2015) suggest that social competition in physical activity equates to increased motivation in that activity. Therefore, it is assumed in this study that, due to exercising at gym being a non-competitive activity, this may decrease the motivation levels individuals have to continuously exercise. However, in contradiction, DiMenichi and Tricomi (2015) proposed that although competition does increase motivation when an individual is in an environment where there is a known competitor, the power of competition in an activity is based on whether the person possesses a competitive personality. However, if a competitive person is not faced with a competitor, the person's motivation for that activity is not based on their competitive characteristic (DiMenichi & Tricomi, 2015). This is relevant to the study in that when a person is motivated by competition in a competitive environment, it can therefore be assumed that in a gym context whereby competitiveness (in terms of punishment and reward from extrinsic motivational factors) is not present, the individual is still able to be motivated by other factors.

DiMenichi and Tricomi (2015) also assessed gender differences regarding motivation levels and social competition, and it was suggested that men favour a competitive environment, and are more motivated to perform better in physical activity in a competitive environment than women. A study on college athletes and their motivation in sport based on their gender, by Warner and Dixon (2015) supported the knowledge

of DiMenichi and Tricomi. Although, it further explained that women are tend to be more motivated by internal competition, thus bettering themselves, whereas men are more motivated by social competition, and strive to be better than another person. A study by Chaudhury *et al.* (2016) found that adults were more likely to engage in physical activity when other people were present. This study explains that the participants whom were around friends and family whilst taking part in physical activity were visibly more motivated to participate in these activities, compared to the participants whom were not exposed to a social environment (Chaudhury *et al.*, 2016). This is relevant to the study, as it is crucial to know the different environments in which men and women are best motivated in. Due to this study being based on people whom exercise at public gyms with multiple members, it is relevant to identify whether being around the other members in the same environment play a role on an individual's motivation.

This literature therefore states that men are more motivated by social factors, as they want to look or perform better than another person, whereas women are not as competitive with other individuals and their motivation levels therefore do not increase as much when in a social environment.

2.2.5. Theme 5: Gamification and incentives

Richter, Raban, and Rafaeli (2015) state that often, companies use gamification as a means to promote interaction with their product or service in forms of earning product price discounts or free product rewards. Therefore in this study, organisations such as gyms and medical aids use the same concept in order to motivate people to exercise at gym. When certain goals are achieved, such as a member reaching a certain number of points based on their physical activity or gym visitations, their members earn discounts on their gym memberships, smoothies or discounts at other affiliated stores or airlines (DHMS, 2020; Momentum Multiply, 2019).

A contradictory study by Weman-Josefsson, Lindwall, and Ivarsson (2015) states that these interventions often prove to be unsuccessful in motivating people to exercise on a continuous basis. This is evident in the rapid decrease in men and women's exercise over the previous years, even with these strategies being implemented (Rosenfeld,

2017; Warburton & Bredin, 2017). From this it possible to assume that, although there are incentives offered by medical aids and gyms, this does not mean that the majority of gym members are continuously motivated to exercise at gym.

According to a study the effects of gamification on employee motivation by Codish & Ravid (2017), the type of gamification used differs between men and women. Women tend to refrain from competitive-based gamification, and are more motivated by straight-forward, lengthy relationship building strategies (Codish & Ravid, 2017). Whereas men are more interested in competition and do not refrain from a more complicated layout of achieving goals in the game (Codish & Ravid, 2017). A study which looked at how effective incentives were on men's creativity, as opposed to women's creativity found that men are more effected by incentives than women are and therefore men are more productive when offered incentives (Erat & Gneezy, 2015). Incentives and gamification are therefore shown to be an effective motivational factor for the majority of individuals. This is appropriate for this study, as it is a main motivational strategy used by most of the gyms and medical aids in SA. Although the incentives and gamification strategies used need to be relevant to the target market, as men and women are not all shown to be interested in the same types of incentives or gamification, and therefore may lose interest quicky if these strategies are not developed in relation to these gender differences.

2.3. Conceptualisation

2.3.1. Motivation

Standage and Ryan (2018) identify motivation to involve intrinsic and extrinsic factors that inspire individuals to participate in taking particular action, therefore the intrinsic, referring to personal or internal factors, and extrinsic factors, referring to environmental factors which inspire individuals to exercise at gym. Another factor, amotivation, therefore refers to the absence of inspiration to participate in an activity (Cheon & Reeves, 2015).

2.3.2. Commitment

The reasons in which individuals continue to participate in an, specifically referring to continuously exercising at gym, in this study. When looking at the sport commitment model, individuals may continue participating in a sport due to several internal (enjoyment, personal goal achievement) and external (social interactions, competition, rewards) reasons (Scanlan *et al.*, 1993). These reasons may be similar to that of the commitment to participate in non-competitive physical activities such as exercising at gym.

2.3.3. Gym

Public facilities in which men and women participate in physical activity/exercising such as group classes, or individual weight sessions, as well as other activities such as swimming. Individuals can therefore practice their capability in this activity, and work towards goals which motivate them (Tulle & Dorrer, 2012). For example, physical appearance-related goals.

2.3.4. Physical activity/ exercise

The bodily movement of an individual to increase cardiovascular or respiratory levels, or to work on strength training (Jean, Pierre, & Frédéric, 2015) for a minimum of 45 minutes. Consistent bodily movement in this sense can have remarkable health benefits (Conchar, Bantjies, Swartz, & Derman, 2016).

2.3.5. Incentives

Medical aids and gyms offer rewards, for example, free smoothies, discounted gym rates, or discounts for various affiliate companies or airlines in order to motivate members to stay active and achieve certain goals (Discovery Health Medical Scheme [DHMS], 2020; Momentum Multiply, 2019).

2.3.6. Gamification

An extrinsic motivational factor, whereby game strategy components are introduced in activities that are not game-based, in order to motivate individuals to continue participating in the activity (Richter *et al.*, 2015) with the use of an intriguing end-goal of achieving an external reward.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Paradigm

The paradigm used in this study is interpretivism, which views reality as subjective to the experiences of the individual. Therefore, by using this paradigm, this study follows a qualitative research approach as it recognises that people create their own connotation of the world around them based on these personal experiences. This study recognises the variance between different people's responses regarding the different motivational factors to exercise at gym. (Maree, 2020)

The Ontology refers to reality as being socially constructed and therefore based on subjective understanding (du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis, & Bezuidenhout, 2014; Ryan, 2018) and thus embraces the view that factors which motivate people to exercise at gym are not the same for everyone, instead they are influenced by their own personal reality construct.

The epistemological position of this study uses an empathetic understanding of the knowledge people create through their personal experiences. Specifically in this study, this knowledge is analysed in order to make sense of people's subjective motivations to exercise at gym in their personal context.

Finally, the axiological position states that value is placed on a person's individuality and their subjective understanding of reality. This subjective construct of reality is therefore what influences the specific factors the individual finds to motivate them personally. How these motivational factors will differ based on personal perspectives is therefore also valued. (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014).

It is therefore important for the researcher to be open to receiving various answers when identifying the factors that motivate people to exercise at gym, and the researcher should not believe in correct or incorrect answers, but rather focus on the meaning behind the answers received (Ryan, 2018). Understanding that motivation is subjective is crucial in identifying the most accurate factors that motivate men and women to exercise at gym, and thus minimise the related health risks.

3.2. Conceptual Approach

A cross-sectional, qualitative research approach was used in this study, as qualitative research is most effective for capturing a subjective understanding of people's perceptions. These perceptions are shaped by personal life experiences, and attempt to explain why people view aspects of the world in different, subjective ways, and how these views influence individuals' behaviour and emotions (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). In this study, a small sample size has been used in order to attempt to identify the subjective factors in which individuals find the most effective at motivating them to workout at gym. These factors, as they are personal, are not able to be generalised to explain the population as a whole, as each person's perceptions and experiences will differ. This is also a cross-sectional study, as data are collected from participants at one point in time (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014).

3.3. Research Design

This study followed an inductive direction, as the results were identified from data gathered entirely from the subjective experiences of the participants in which the researcher selected and interviewed. The researcher used thematic analysis, to analyse the raw data collected whereby new themes were identified (Ryan & Bernard, 2003), of which relating to, and therefore to attempt to answer this study's research questions (Azungah, 2018). These themes were therefore to provide the motivational factors that motivate men and women to exercise at gym.

This study is comparative, as the factors that motivate men and women to exercise at gym are to be identified and compared to recognise both the similarities and the

differences between the two genders (Maree, 2020). The comparison between genders is important in order to analyse how an individual's personal factors such as their gender, influences their perception of motivation.

3.4. Population

The population of this study includes all South African men and women between the ages of 20 and 30 years old, who continuously exercised at gym, at least three times a week, for a minimum of six months before the COVID-19 pandemic. Both men and women were included in the population in order to depict the differences and similarities between the two genders regarding the factors which motivate them to exercise at gym. This specific age group was selected, as most people have not yet started a family and are still working towards building a career and are therefore more focused on bettering themselves with fewer distractions such as family factors. SA as a whole was included in this study's population, as there is limited literature based on the motivational factors to exercise at gym available for the South African context.

3.5. Sampling

The unit of analysis included individuals whom continuously exercised at gym before the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in SA, in order to identify their personal motivational factors to workout at gym. Individuals were analysed using an interpretivist perspective, in order to identify the unique motivational factors which are influenced by each person's unique life experiences. (Maree, 2020)

Sampling refers to a process implemented by a researcher to methodically select a smaller group of individuals or items to collect data from, which represent a larger, pre-specified population in a study (Sharma, 2017). This representative group is selected based on definite characteristics of the specific population and it is crucial for the individuals selected to accurately represent the population being studied in order to produce reliable, accurate, and valid results (Sharma, 2017). Maree (2020) states that a sample of a particular cultural group, which presents specific characteristics does not necessarily need to include a large number of participants, as long as each of the participants are a true reflection of the population being studied.

The sample used in this study included two men and two women, living in Durban metropolitan area, SA, whom were between the ages of 20 and 30 years old, and therefore successfully represented the population stipulated (thebmj, 2020). An equal number from each gender group was selected to provide an adequate amount of information to show the similarities and differences between the genders. A small intended sample size for this qualitative study was selected due to the complexity of analysing the subjective factors of each of the participants (Devers & Frankel, 2000), and relates to the epistemology from an interpretivist viewpoint. Braun and Clarke (2006) also state that a small sample is used in qualitative research, as the process of reading through subjective data is a time-consuming process. These four participants were able to contribute sufficient knowledge to allow the researcher in depth, empathetic, and subjective understandings of numerous motivational factors to exercise at gym, and how they differed between individuals and genders, as it was a comparative, qualitative study.

A non-probability method is based solely on the researcher's decision (Sharma, 2017), and the participants in the sampling pool did not all have equal chance of being chosen. Therefore, some participants had greater chance of being chosen to participate than others (Etikan, 2016). There are four main techniques recognised as non-probability sampling, namely: quota, purposive, self-selection, and snowball sampling (Sharma, 2017).

A non-probable, purposive sampling method was used for this study. This method of sampling involves the selection of participants in a sample based specifically on whom will maximise the data produced in line with the information needed to answer the researcher's research questions. Thus, these participants are based purely to fulfil the particular purpose of the researcher's study. (Sharma, 2017)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, participants were not easily accessible to the researcher, due to gyms being closed at the time of data-collection as per request of the South African government's laws and regulations (Sibanyoni, 2020; South African Government, 2020). The researcher therefore actively selected participants (Maree, 2020) based on the study's population parameters and whom were able to each

provide the researcher with data that contributed to answering the study's research questions. The participants selected therefore included men and women between the ages of 20 and 30 years old and whom continuously exercised at gym before the national lockdown. These participants were men and women that the researcher was familiar with prior to the study. This sampling method not being randomised, was appropriate for this study, as the focus is on understanding the unique factors that motivate individuals to exercise at gym, and therefore the identified motivational factors from each participant are not representative of the population as a whole, as these subjective factors cannot be generalised (Etikan, 2016).

3.6. Data-collection methods

Qualitative research refers to research that is based on human's subjective understandings of different aspects, rather than that of measurable, numerical material which quantitative research is based on. Qualitative research involves the meaning behind how individuals perceive situations based on their own life experiences. (Flick, 2018)

There are several data-collection methods in a qualitative research study. These include focus groups, participant observation, and interviews (Moser & Korstjens, 2017). Interviews involve the research participants being asked numerous questions by an interviewer, relevant to the study at hand. Interviews are specifically used to gather subjective information through participants' answers which are based on their personal life experiences. Meaning is therefore drawn from these subjective answers (Moser & Korstjens, 2017). Interviews also make building a relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee easier in order to allow for easier communication flow and therefore allowing more information to be shared (Codó, Dans, & Wei, 2008). This also enables participants to discover motivational factors in which they may not have been aware of that influence their motivation to workout at gym (Moser & Korstjens, 2017). Interviews also allow for questions and answers to be clarified if either are not presented with enough detail for either the researcher or the interviewee (Codó *et al.*, 2008). Interviews can be conducted face-to-face, telephonically, or online, which also involves new media (Moser & Korstjens, 2017), over video call using Skype.

Interview questions may follow various structures, such as open-ended or unstructured, semi-structured, and structured interviews (Maree, 2020). Semi-structured interviews, specifically, involve some of the interview questions being pre-determined and therefore used as baseline prompts (Maree, 2020). Follow-on questions are then asked during the interview depending on the subjective answers in which the participant gives (Moser & Korstjens, 2017). These follow-on questions therefore are not pre-planned, and are asked to gain extra information that could be used to answer the research questions, as the interview unfolds (Maree, 2020). The questions asked are specifically developed to fit the research requirements and to allow the participants to answer with detailed explanation on their understandings of the question (Howitt & Cramer, 2017). These questions are included in an interview schedule (Annexure F), which the interviewer used as a base of what they wanted the questions to roughly include in order to gather essential data for this study (Howitt & Cramer, 2017).

All participants' were required to give signed consent (Annexure D) to participate in the study prior to data collection, as well as all participants were provided with all of the appropriate information about the study (Howitt & Cramer, 2017). This information included the expectations and specific protocol of the researcher, as well as what the individual should expect. The participant's rights, such as their right to reject participation, as well as the right to withdraw participation in the study at any time without any consequences (Howitt & Cramer, 2017). Furthermore, the consent form included the purpose of the study, any possible consequences the participants may be subject to by taking part in the study, and any factors of the study that may have influenced the individual's willingness to partake in the study (Howitt & Cramer, 2017). Participant(s) were made aware of their identity security and confidentiality, and how these aspects, as well as the data collected will be secured by the researcher. Participants must be given contact information of whom they may contact if they require further information pertaining to the study. Another consent form granting permission for the researcher to audio record the interview (Annexure E) was also required to be read, understood and signed by each participant and returned back to the researcher before the interview could be carried out (Howitt & Cramer, 2017).

3.6.1. Application of data-collection method

The data for this study was collected by means of individual, semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions. Each of the four participants took part in a once-off interview over Skype call. Open-ended questions were asked by the researcher in order to enable personal narratives about the individual's subjective perspective, and to give the participants the opportunity to give their own responses. A semi-structured format was used to allow the researcher to ask follow-on questions that were adapted depending on the participant's personal answers to the previously asked questions. The reason for these interviews being conveyed over Skype was due to the lockdown regulations implemented by the South African government in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic at the time of data collection (South African Government, 2020). The duration of each interview varied between 30 and 45 minutes, which allowed the researcher enough time to get an adequate amount of information from each participant. This enabled the researcher to gain understanding of the participant's subjective motivational factors, and allowed the participants enough time to answer the questions with the amount of detail they felt was necessary to get their experiences across to the researcher. Interviews were used as the most suitable form of qualitative data collection to gather subjective information about each individual participant's motivational factors, and why they are best motivated by these factors to workout at gym.

The researcher contacted all four participants through phone calls to ask if the individuals would be willing to participate in the study. Due to the participants having been chosen through purposive sampling, and the researcher having known the four individuals prior to this study, the researcher already had their telephone numbers to contact each participant personally. Once the individuals agreed to participate, the researcher emailed through consent forms, to each person's secure, private email address that were obtained over the telephone calls. These consent forms (Annexure D) were signed by all four participants as were the audio recording consent forms (Annexure E), before being emailed back to the researcher. Dates and times of the Skype interviews were arranged between the researcher and participants over text message.

Each interview had a brief introduction whereby the researcher thanked the individuals for their participation in the study and a short explanation of the purpose and aims of the study. During each interview, the researcher asked questions which were pre-determined in the interview schedule (Annexure F). Follow-on questions were asked which built on the already set questions, and on the participants' previous personal answers. The participants were given enough time to explain their personal experiences in their answers to each question. The researcher took few notes, other than as reminders to build on specific questions later in the interview. Once the researcher had completed all the questions and felt that there was sufficient data collected to answer the research questions, the researcher asked if there were any further comments or questions that the participant wanted to add that may not have been covered during the interview.

3.7. Data-analysis method

Thematic analysis, through line-by-line coding was used to analyse the data captured in this study. Each line of data was closely examined to identify the meaning intended, and how that specific line potentially differed from other participants' data (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). A variety of codes and meanings that came up consistently in the data collected were used to create themes throughout the data. This analysis method is appropriate to this study as it is flexible (Braun & Clarke, 2006), allowing for various themes to be identified from the qualitative data, without having to abide by strict method guidelines that may influence the interpretation of the unique data. Therefore, the analysis was able to identify in-depth information provided by the subjective knowledge of the participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Braun and Clarke (2006) identify six stages of the thematic data analysis process. The first stage involved the researcher becoming acquainted with the data, in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subjective information. It is necessary that verbal data collected is transcribed into written data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Usually this acquisition of understanding is through reading over the data numerous times in order to form patterns or themes that are important in the specific study (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The second stage refers to identifying the first themes. This involves identifying particular pieces of data that the researcher finds interest in, in relation to the study at hand. This is used to categorise the data into relevant groups of information. These themes are based specifically on the study's research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The third stage involves finding broader themes within the initial themes. It is also important for the researcher to acknowledge that some data may fit into more than one identified theme, and this needs to be noted. Diagrams or tables may be used to help organise these themes into broader groups, and the data that do not fit or are not seen of benefit to include in the themes is removed. (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

The fourth stage is where the themes are reviewed and refined by the researcher to ensure that all the themes are necessary, or whether it is possible to further combine similar themes. There are two sub-steps involved in this phase, whereby step one involves the themes being refined from the coded level to ensure all codes in the theme are consistent. If the codes are not consistent within the theme, it means that the researcher will need to create a new theme or relocate the coded data to fall under better suited themes. Only once the coded data are all consistent with their designated themes, can the researcher move onto the second sub-step in this phase. The second sub-step refers to the validity of the theme when related to the entire data set in order to identify if it supports the study's objectives. (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Stage five involves naming and explaining the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This phase is concerned with the specific feature each theme focuses on from the data that the researcher finds interesting in relation to the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Each theme was then analysed to identify how it would be useful in relation to the overall research objectives, and how it would be used to answer the research questions. Potential sub-themes were identified in this phase which were used to help the researcher further understand the theme and what it included (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The final stage involved constructing a report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By this phase, all the themes are finalised and clearly defined and therefore a detailed report on the thematic analysis will be produced in relation to the overall study. This report explains

both the themes individually, as well as in relation to each other in order to explain the purpose of the study. Detailed examples of the findings should also be included in the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.7.1. Application of data analysis method

The researcher implemented Braun and Clarke's (2006) six stages of thematic analysis, as explained in the previous section, to analyse the data collected from the four individual interviews in this study.

In the first stage, due to the data in this study having been collected through interactive means and the researcher collected the data themselves, the researcher was first exposed to the data during the interview process. The researcher became more familiar with the data by listening to the interview recordings before starting transcription and any data analysis. Whilst transcribing the data collected, the researcher listened to the recordings numerous times in order to ensure that all the information was typed into a Microsoft Word document, and no details were left out. The researcher then read over the transcribed interviews to further familiarise themselves with the data, to make sure there were no errors in the typed-up information, and to identify common themes within the data collected.

In the second stage, the researcher used line-by-line coding, whereby each line was read and re-read to identify different codes that pertained to the themes identified in the literature review, or any new information that did not fit into the pre-determined themes, but still answered the research questions. The information which fell into identified themes were highlighted using different colour codes. Each potential theme was coded with a specific colour in the word document with a note attached to the highlighted data to visibly depict the themes.

In the third stage, the multiple codes that were identified in phase two were narrowed down to fall into broader themes. The themes in which the researcher identified from the data in this study are routine, social, health, physical appearance, competition, and incentives. The researcher used a table designed on Microsoft Word in a separate document to arrange the codes into these overall themes, and the codes in which did

not fit into any of the main themes and did not seem to be of importance were discarded.

In stage four, the researcher first went over the codes identified in the data to ensure that they were in line with the theme in which they were placed in, as well as to make sure that they were important in understanding the factors in which the individual found motivation in to exercise at gym. Once the researcher had reviewed the codes within each theme had aligned with the themes they were placed under, the researcher then moved onto the second sub-step to ensure that all the themes that were identified in the data collected supported the objectives of the study, in that to identify the motivational factors of the individuals to consistently exercise at gym.

In stage five, the researcher re-read the coded data in each theme in order to identify the core aspects of each theme in relation to what value the theme brings to explaining the study. Each theme was critically analysed and this analysis was explained and written down in detail. The themes were also analysed collectively in order to explain how all of the themes identified have been used to gain more understanding of the factors which motivate people to exercise at gym.

Lastly, in stage six, the researcher wrote up a detailed thematic analysis on the themes identified in the data collected. This report explained each theme, as well as how they work together to answer the research questions. The report explains the comparison between the motivational factors of men to exercise at gym to that of women, showing both the similarities and the differences in the factors of the two genders. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors of men and women were identified and the findings were explained concisely with clear examples of these factors and how they compared between the genders.

3.8. Trustworthiness

This study proves its trustworthiness through four aspects; credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Shenton, 2004). Credibility is established through implementing conventional methods and procedures in the study (Shenton, 2004), such as using interviews with relevant questions to gather subjective information in

this qualitative study and then using appropriate data analysis methods such as thematic analysis to analyse the data collected in a way that does not undermine the subjective meanings required. Another way in which credibility is insured is through strategies implemented by the researcher to warrant participants answering truthfully in the interviews. These strategies include allowing the participants to decline their involvement in the study at any given time throughout the study duration (Shenton, 2004). Ensuring that the participants genuinely want to participate in the study, and ensuring that the participants feel comfortable that their answers are not judged on 'right or wrong', and are confidential will also be used to confirm their answers are truthful (Shenton, 2004).

This study is open to consistent critical observation from academics throughout the study duration, whom provide advice on the credibility of the study (Shenton, 2004). Another way in which this study will be made more credible is through regular member checks. These checks include accuracy of the information being checked, as well as the four participants reading through the transcribed data to ensure the information from their interviews has been captured accurately without misinterpretation from the researcher regarding their subjective meaning (Shenton, 2004). By this providing an in-depth explanation of all the aspects involved in this study, such as the research design and plan, research aim, questions and proposal, as well as the ethical considerations, limitations and anticipated contributions, this study can be seen to be more credible. Without this amount of detail, future readers may not be able to clearly identify whether all these aspects were used appropriately for the type of study being qualitative with an interpretivist viewpoint (Shenton, 2004). Finally, this study proves that it is credible and therefore trustworthy through the examination of previous literature used to ensure that the results of this study are consistent with that of previous studies (Shenton, 2004).

Dependability is achieved in this study in that the processes carried out by the researcher to determine the factors that motivate men and women to exercise at gym are explained so thoroughly in detail, that if another researcher were to attempt the same study again, it would yield the same results (Shenton, 2004).

Transferability refers to the extent to which the results of a study can be used to explain other scenarios (Shenton, 2004). Although the subjective data concerning each participant's personal reasonings for being motivated to exercise at gym cannot be generalised to explain motivational factors of the population as a whole, these participants do portray some similarities of the major population, such as that they are all interested in exercising at gym. This therefore means that the data collected can contribute to understanding the whole population to an extent (Shenton, 2004). Therefore, this study can be seen to have transferability, as the greater population, although with differing personal motivational factors, they are able to adapt, and therefore transfer the data found in this study to better their understanding of their own motivation to exercise at gym. This study will enable transferability by explaining the motivational factors of the participants so that these factors are relatable in a gym context, even if the factors themselves are not specifically shared by the reader. The researcher will also provide an in-depth explanation of the context of this research. It is important to look at the South African context used for this study, as factors such as inequality (Ataguba, Day, & McIntyre, 2015) in the country make it difficult to transfer the findings and methods to studies carried out in another country. This will therefore be omitted by a clear explanation of the limitations of this study to define what can or cannot be applied to another study.

Confirmability, which refers to the level of which the researcher's biases have not influenced the study results, and rather that the information is solely based on the participants' subjective knowledge (Shenton, 2004) on what factors motivate them to exercise at gym. Confirmability is also ensured through the researcher admitting to their own biases around the decisions of the methods chosen and that these are specifically chosen for an interpretivist viewpoint in this study, and therefore limitations of the study are also identified (Shenton, 2004). It is important for confirmability that the methodology used to convey this study is explained in detail, which the researcher in this study will be doing, in order for readers and other researchers to easily identify if these choices in methodology used are appropriate for the title and research design (Shenton, 2004). An Audit trail will be used in this study to keep step-by-step documentation of what the researcher does to carry out the research (Maree, 2020).

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Presentation of Findings

The participants in this study consisted of two men and two women between 20 and 30 years old. All of the participants were white individuals, whom live within the Durban metropolitan area and are all within a healthy weight range. The following themes, and sub-themes were identified when the researcher analysed the data collected from these four participants.

In this section, participants will be represented by “P”, followed by their gender, represented by “M” if they are male, and “F” if they are female. The four participants will also be differentiated with the numbers 1, 2, 3, or 4. Two types of motivation, which are presented as sub-themes of motivation were identified in the findings.

4.1.1. Theme 1: Motivation

Motivation played a role in all four participants’ interviews and provided much understanding towards a few factors in both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

4.1.1.1. Sub-theme 1: Intrinsic

The findings showed that all four participants were intrinsically motivated, enabling them to become more motivated to workout at gym. Three intrinsic factors were identified from this study’s data, which motivate men and women to exercise at gym:

4.1.1.1.1. Accomplishment

Accomplishment in achieving personal goals was identified from the data collected. Participant (P) 3, female (F) stated *“to feel a sense of accomplishment.”* PM2 said *“I’d achieved something already in my day.”*

4.1.1.1.2. Routine

Exercising within routine time frames each day/week presented to increase ongoing motivation to exercise at gym. PM4 stated *“as long as you have a routine and you’re consistently doing something...”* PF3 said *“Just creates structure...”* when asked about why she trains at the same time each day.

4.1.1.1.3. Health

There were two types of health which were found as an intrinsic motivational factor to exercise at gym:

- *physical health*, PF3 mentioned, *“when I’m unfit and carrying more weight than... I should be, I can feel my heart takes strain.”*
- *Mental health* was also presented in the findings whereby PM2 stated *“... when I’m stressed, it helps me to destress.”* PM4 said, *“as long as I’m fit and can do what I want... and not... fall over and die.”*

4.1.1.2. Sub-theme 2: Extrinsic

This study presented with five extrinsic factors, presented by the participants’ external environment which increased motivation to exercise at gym:

4.1.1.2.1. Competition, which refers to an individual working to be better than other individuals. PF1 stated *“...see if I can do better than them”* when the researcher asked why the participant was motivated by other people in the gym. PM2 said *“for me, motivation comes from... comparing myself with other people.”*

4.1.1.2.2. The **social environment** of the gym in which all four participants exercised were found to be an intrinsic motivational factor in this study. PM2 said *“I liked going because of the people I saw.”* PF3 also said *“I enjoyed going for the friend aspect.”*

4.1.1.2.3. Accountability, referring to the participant feeling that another individual is relying on him/her to go to gym to exercise was more common in the female participants. PF3 stated *“I feel like I need to go because people will realise I’m not there.”*

4.1.1.2.4. Physical appearance, referring to exercising in order to look a certain way. PM4 states *“I enjoy seeing my own results, if someone else sees it or not it doesn’t bother me.”* PF1 states *“If I’m not seeing progress I’ll be demotivated.”*

4.1.1.2.5. Rewards, exercising in order to gain an external incentive. PM4 stated *“medical aid, so if I exercise I don’t pay for gym fees... it isn’t the primary reason I’m motivated.”*

4.2. Interpretation of findings

The qualitative data, collected from the four participants have been interpreted and show men to be more motivated to workout at gym by intrinsic factors, whereas women are more motivated to workout at gym by extrinsic factors. Although these findings do find differences between men and women to workout at gym, there are many similarities in the motivational factors between the two genders as well.

4.2.1. Theme 1: Motivation

The findings in this study identified both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors which motivate men and women to exercise at gym.

4.2.1.1. Sub-theme 1: Intrinsic

4.2.1.1.1. Accomplishment

Both the men and women participants in this study explained that accomplishing a personal goal that they set for themselves is a factor that motivates them to workout at the gym. This is presented in data collected from PF1, as this female stated “*when I start seeing progress, I push myself even harder, because I’m like, okay, this is working.*”, as well as when PM4 stated “*if I didn’t feel like I got a proper workout from them, I never went back.*” Therefore, if gyms and medical aids are able to implement gamification strategies which enable men and women to accomplish different personal goals, their members may be more motivated to workout at gym without becoming amotivated.

4.2.1.1.2. Routine

Men and women showed similarities whereby both genders are more successful at exercising at gym more regularly when they have set a time to go to gym. PF3 stated that “*mornings are better... having a routine, you know what you’re doing.*” PM2 also mentioned going to gym as “*it’s a routine...*” This may address the research problem, as it could be aid the information in marketing and advertisements. This could also be used to educate personal trainers when signing up new clients and getting their clients to continue coming back to training sessions.

4.2.1.1.3. Health

Men and women were both motivated by health, although it was found in this study that men were more motivated by the mental health benefits of training at gym, such as stress relief and endorphin release. This was evident in PM2 stating “*...as soon as I stop [going to gym], I feel like everything is falling apart.*” Men were also more

motivated to exercise to make sure they were fit enough not to allow their health to negatively impact their ability to lead active lifestyles. Whereas women were more motivated by physical health benefits and weight management. This is presented by PF1 when stating, *“I injured my lower back in horse riding. So I will then do activities that can strengthen those muscles...”* This information is also useful when communicating to medical aid or gym members about certain risks which they may be concerned about and how physical activity could help them prevent or minimise their concerns in order to motivate men and women to workout at gym.

4.2.1.2. Sub-theme 2: Extrinsic

4.2.1.2.1. Competition

From this study's findings, women are more motivated than men by physical appearance. Women feel the need to look good order to feel good about themselves and therefore are more motivated to train in order to improve their body. Most commonly, to lose weight. This was present when PF3 said *“I’ve put on weight... I want to feel comfortable like I did when we were gyming a lot.”* Whereas men have presented to be less motivated in looking good physically, but rather to feel confident and strong. This is shown when PM2's said *“... I’ve realised if I want to get much bigger and much stronger..., I’d probably have to take performance drugs and stuff which I don’t want to do...because it doesn’t make me feel good.”* Looking good and feeling good can also be used by gyms and medical aid companies in their advertising. Although, these need to be positive messages, rather than getting people to see themselves negatively and therefore workout at gym in an attempt to change their bodies.

4.2.1.2.2. Social environment

The men and women participants in this study both showed to be motivated by social aspects of training at gym. PM2 explained the reason he went to gym was for *“socialising because I don’t go out to pubs and that so for me that’s the way I socialise.”* PF1 also explained her reasoning for going to gym being due to *“I know people there... It’s more social than anything else.”* Gyms could increase its member's motivational

levels by implementing more social classes or events whereby people start to create social relationships, and therefore may feel more motivated to workout at gym more regularly.

4.2.1.2.3. Accountability

The male participants in this study did not provide information which showed that accountability was a motivational factor. On the other hand, the two female participants both showed that they would often go to gym because they felt as if they were letting someone down by not going to gym. This is expressed by PF1 when she said *“people notice that I don’t go, so I think that motivates me.”*, as well as when PF3 mentioned *“before kyle and I were living together, if he would be there I needed to be there.. I couldn’t not rock up.”* If gyms and medical aid companies encouraged individuals to create friendships in the gym, as well as encouraging training partners, more women may become more motivated to exercise at gym on a continuous basis.

4.2.1.2.4. Physical appearance

From this study’s findings, women are more motivated than men by physical appearance. Women feel the need to look good order to feel good about themselves and therefore are more motivated to train in order to improve their body. Most commonly, to lose weight. This was present when PF3 said *“I’ve put on weight... I want to feel comfortable like I did when we were gymming a lot.”* Whereas men have presented to be less motivated in looking good physically, but rather to feel confident and strong. This is shown when PM2’s said *“... I’ve realised if I want to get much bigger and much stronger..., I’d probably have to take performance drugs and stuff which I don’t want to do...because it doesn’t make me feel good.”* Looking good and feeling good can also be used by gyms and medical aid companies in their advertising. Although, these need to be positive messages, rather than getting people to see themselves negatively and therefore workout at gym in an attempt to change their bodies.

4.2.1.2.5. Rewards

Medical aid rewards programs were all brought up as successful motivating reward factors for all four participants. Although, all the participants showed rewards to be a motivating factor, the both of the male participants explained rewards not to be their most important motivational factor. Men do tend to find specifically, competitive gamification when rewards are earned, more motivating. Competition when achieving incentives is evident in PM4's comment of "*I like to see who can achieve the Vitality [Medical aid] goal and get their smoothie first between Nicole and I.*" Whereas the female participants found it very motivating working towards medical aid benefits, discounts at affiliated shops, and free smoothies. Women therefore tend to find physical rewards more motivating, for instance, PF1 stated that "*if I do this jog, I can have dessert.*"

4.3. Findings in context

Based on the literature review carried out by the researcher prior to the researcher's own data collection in this study, there were several themes identified from already existing research studies. The literature review presented with five themes which represented five factors that were identified to motivate men and women to continuously partake in physical. These five themes included motivation, commitment to accomplish personal goals, health benefits of exercising, social environment, and gamification and incentives as forms of motivation. The literature review presented men to more likely be motivated by intrinsic factors, such as personal achievement, whereas women were found to be more likely to be motivated by extrinsic factors such physical appearance.

This study's findings suggest several factors which influence a person's motivation to exercise at gym, as well as present a clear difference between men and women's motivational factors, although there are also a lot of shared motivational factors as well. However, the majority of this study's findings do support existing literature found in the literature review and were therefore expected, there are some findings in this study which differ from previous literature. Theme three (health benefits of exercising) in the literature review showed similar results to that found in this study's findings, as

Egli *et al.* (2011), as cited in Molanorouzi *et al.* (2015) identified men to be motivated by internal health benefits, such as cardiovascular health improvement, whereas women are more motivated by physical health, such as exercising to prevent obesity. This was also found in this study's findings, as the male participants were more concerned about their mental health and their ability to continue with physical activity and "not fall over and die" as mentioned by PM4. Whereas the female participants were more concerned about weight control. Physical appearance was also similar, as both in previous literature mentioned by Aicher and Brenner (2015), as well as this study's findings explained women to be more motivated by physical appearance than men.

Although, some of the findings in this study did not support the previous literature, such as literature on social environment. A social environment in the literature review presented to motivate men more than women, but in this study, it was found that most men and women are similarly motivated in a social environment. Accountability was presented in this study's findings, but was not identified in the literature review.

This study was conducted in alignment to the self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci and Ryan, 1985), which considers three types of motivation: intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation (Standage & Ryan, 2018; Ryan & Deci, 2017). The findings in this study successfully identified both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors in men and women, as well as identifying whether there were any similarities or differences between the types of factors which motivated each gender. Amotivation refers to the lack of motivation (Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015), which was presented by the participants expressing minimal motivation to exercise at gym when some motivational factors were absent.

Reducing amotivation by implementing intrinsic and extrinsic factors which motivate individuals is crucial for that individual to feel motivated to workout at gym on a continuous basis. Men are seen to be more intrinsically motivated, and women are more extrinsically motivated (Molanorouzi *et al.*, 2015), and this study is in support of this literature.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Research questions, Objectives, problem Addressed

This study's research objectives were met, and the research questions answered by the findings. The primary research question, "What factors motivate men and women to exercise at gym?", was answered, as this study identified both intrinsic factors such as accomplishment, health, and routine, and extrinsic factors, such as social, physical appearance, competition, and rewards to motivate men and women to exercise at gym. This is also evident in answering the secondary questions which included "What intrinsic factors motivate men and women to go to gym?" and "What extrinsic factors motivate men and women to go to gym?". The third secondary question, "Does motivation to workout at gym differ between men and women?" was also answered as there was a difference in the factors which motivate men to workout at gym compared to the motivational factors for women. Men were more motivated by intrinsic factors, such as health being an important factor. whereas, women were more extrinsically motivated by factors such as accountability and physical appearance being two of the most important.

Objective one: To describe the factors which motivate men to exercise at gym on an ongoing basis. From the findings, men are motivated by intrinsic factors (accomplishment, physical and mental health, and routine), and extrinsic factors (socialising, physical appearance, competition, and rewards).

Objective two: To describe factors which motivate women to exercise at gym on an ongoing basis. From the findings, women are also motivated by intrinsic (routine, accomplishment, and physical health) and extrinsic (competition, socialising, accountability, physical appearance, and rewards) factors.

Objective three: To determine whether there is a difference in what factors motivate men compared to women to exercise at gym on an ongoing basis. It is portrayed in the data collected in this study that there both differences and similarities in the factors that influence men compared to those of women.

5.2. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations include two written informed consent forms, one in relation to the participants' taking part in the study (Annexure C), and the other permitting consent for the researcher to record the skype interview conducted with each participant (Annexure D). These consent forms will be emailed to each participants' personal secure e-mail address, informing them of correct research protocol, whereby the participants will be required to sign the documents and then return them to the researcher over e-mail. These forms include a clear explanation of the researcher's influence in the data collected which provides confirmability, the rights participants' have to withdraw at any time from the study, and how their identity and confidentiality will be protected by use of pseudonyms to keep their anonymity to the public. Although the researcher knows whom the participants are as these participants are to be selected through purposive sampling as well as the interviewing process exposing the participants' identity to the researcher, the researcher will not include any personal or identifying information that may be associated to the participants in this study. Raw data, transcribed data and recordings will be kept on a password secured USB stick, and locked in a safe for five years and then destroyed. (Maree, 2020)

An ethical clearance letter will be sent to the Varsity College ethics committee, which will need to be approved before any data are collected from the participants. This study is also ethical in that it does not concern any high-risk groups, as this is not permitted at Honours level research.

5.3. Limitations

The COVID-19 pandemic posed several limitations for this study, whereby sample selection was restricted due to the researcher having limited access to people based on social distancing regulations and the gyms being closed. The participants available to the researcher did not include a variety of demographics, specifically pertaining to race. People also have not been able to exercise at gym in several months due to this, and therefore their perception on what factors motivate them to exercise at gym on a continuous basis as this is now based on memory. The pandemic also limited the data-collection process, as face-to-face interviews are not allowed. Instead, interviews were

conveyed over Skype video calls. Limitations around virtual calls arose, as people are often more comfortable being interviewed in person instead of using video calls. This limitation, however is mitigated by implementing extra measures to ensure the participants feel as comfortable as possible. Pre-conversation, as stated in the interview schedule (Annexure E). was used as to ease potential nerves or tension the participants may have in the video call interview setting.

Another limitation identified in this study includes potential research bias, as mentioned in confirmability when proving the study's trustworthiness. Due to the qualitative nature of the data collected for this study, the researcher may misinterpret the intentions of the participants' answers given during the interviews. This limitation will be mitigated by doing member checks, which requires the participants to read through the analysed data to ensure that what has been transcribed by the researcher correlated with the participants intended meaning (Shenton, 2004). .

Due to the researcher being familiar with the participants, this may also pose limitation in the data repertoire, as the participants may not be as comfortable sharing information with a person they may see in future, as they would with a stranger. There also stands a chance of inaccuracy in the answers from the participants in the fear of ruining the study with an incorrect answer. This is mitigated by the researcher reinforcing that there is not right or wrong answers to the questions. Bias from possible influence and interpretation of the researcher, due to the personal experiences used to shape the ideas of the researcher when analysing the data will also be minimised by member checks.

5.4. Heuristic Value

This study has successfully contributed additional insight, and created an extension of findings to the body of knowledge in a South African context. This, in relation to the field of sports psychology, broadens the understanding of what factors best motivate South African men and women to participate in physical activity, specifically to workout at gym. This study also provides a foundation for future research. Future research could include more participants in this study, or a wider demographic variation of participants. Further research on how the findings in this study, based on participants

whom went to mixed-gender gyms, may differ from the motivational factors of men or women whom go to gyms that only include their respective gender.

5.5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, men are presented to be intrinsically motivated, such as by accomplishment and health, whereas women are mostly extrinsically motivated, mostly by physical appearance, accountability, and external rewards. Although, most motivational factors are shown to motivate men and women similarly, such as social environment and competition. Identifying these factors is important to understand the most effective ways to motivate men and women in SA to exercise at gym.

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Annexures:

Annexure A – Research Report Summary Document Table

A comparative, qualitative study to determine what factors motivate men and women in Durban to exercise at gym.

Research Purpose/ Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors /Sources	Literature Review - Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data collection Method(s)	Ethics	Key Findings	References
To describe what factors motivate men and women to workout at the gym	What factors motivate men and women to exercise at gym?	Add to body of knowledge of non competitive exercise motivation Guides and gyms' understanding of how to improve people's general health through exercise motivation.	Standage & Ryan, 2018 Moanorouz , Khoo, & Morris, 2015 Dec & Ryan, 1985 Rosenfeld, 2017	Theme 1: Motivation Theme 2: Commitment to accomplish personal goals Theme 3: Health benefits Theme 4: Social environment Theme 5: Gamification and incentives	Interpretivism which involves a subjective approach to understand the actors that motivate men and women to exercise at gym Ontology Reality is subjective Motivational actors will differ between individuals as their perception of motivation is influenced by life experiences Epistemology people's knowledge about their lived experiences is subjective therefore this study will collect data to capture the subjective knowledge people have that motivates them to exercise at gym Axiology the value of the person is placed on their individuality and how their motivational actors differ based on their personal perspective. the researcher's subjectivity when interpreting the data is also valued.	A qualitative cross-sectional comparative approach to studying the subjective motivational factors regarding why men and women workout at gym Population Men & women between ages 20-30 years old that go to gym on a continuous basis in South Africa Sampling Non-probable purposive sampling due to COVID-19 restrictions (restrictions on participant availability) including two men and two women whom attend gym in Durban South Africa	Qualitative data collection method using four once-off interviews with each of the 4 participants over Skype video call Data Analysis (s) Thematic data analysis, through coding to find themes in the subjective data collected from the interviews.	written informed consent forms (participation and to record interview) to be emailed signed by participants and emailed back to researcher - pseudonyms used and personal information not to be used ensure anonymity - recorded and written data to be kept for 5 years on password secured USB and then destroyed - Ethical clearance letter to be signed by ethics committee before data will be collected - study does not include high-risk groups as not allowed or honours level research Limitations COVID-19 restricted access to participants as gyms are closed, therefore researcher used people they know. This pool did not possess a variety of demographics and therefore limits contexts - people's memory of what motivated them before the pandemic may be perceived slightly differently as time has passed. - Having to conduct interviews over video call isn't as personal and may make participants a bit uncomfortable - Potential bias from both the participants and the researcher as there is a relationship outside of the research (answers may be skewed or interpretation may be skewed)	There are both differences and similarities in motivational actors between men and women men are more intrinsically motivated whereas women are more extrinsically motivated intrinsic actors include accomplishment routine and health Extrinsic actors include competition social environment accountability physical appearance rewards Key Contribution Contributing to the body of knowledge in sports psychology, as well as specifying towards understanding motivational factors in physical activity in a South African context. Providing a foundation for future research	Braun & Clarke 2006 - du Plooy-Cilliers Davis & Bezuidenhout 2014 - Maree 2020 - Moanorouz , Khoo, & Morris, 2015 - Standage & Ryan 2018
Research Problem	Secondary Questions	Key Concepts	Key Theories							
Minimal information available on motivation in non-competitive physical activity in the South African context Not enough people motivated to exercise therefore higher health risks	What intrinsic factors motivate men and women to go to gym? - What extrinsic factors motivate men and women to go to gym? - Does motivation to workout at gym differ between men and women?	- Motivation - commitment - gym - Physical activity/exercise - incentives - Gamification	Self-determination theory includes intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors as well as amotivation							

Annexure B – Ethics Clearance Letter



20 July 2020

Student name: Kylie-Ann McCleary

Student number: 13012537

Campus: Varsity College Durban North

Re: Approval of HPS1 Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS/PGDIP ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.

Supervisor: Jarryd Byron

Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC):

Honours co-ordinator: Tracey Haselau

Annexure C – Ethics checklist



HONOURS RESE, RESM and RMET ETHICS CHECKLIST

Dear student

Please complete this checklist and include this in your proposals as an appendix:

Student name: Kkylie McCleary

Title of the research: *A comparative, qualitative study to determine what factors motivate men and women in Durban to exercise at gym.*

	Yes	No	Comment:supervisor/ navigator/lecturer
Are you using human subjects in your research?	X		
I intend to use human subjects - I understand that I will not conduct research with human subjects under the age of 18 and other vulnerable groups. - I understand I can only proceed once I receive an ethical clearance letter.			
Interviews/ Focus groups An example of the <i>written consent form</i> I intend to use is attached.	X		
I will record the interview/focus groups and the sample of the letter where I ask for permission to do so is attached.	X		
I plan to use an interview schedule: The example of my research instrument is attached.	X		
I plan to use a questionnaire: The example of my research instrument is attached.		X	
I plan to use a gate-keepers letter: The example of my letter is attached.		X	
I plan to do research on an IIE site/ with IIE students/staff/artefacts and I filled in the application for permission to do so. The application is attached. I understand I can only proceed once I receive IIE Approval for this.		X	

Signed: student: Kylie McCleary

Annexure D – Consent form to participate in interview

Explanatory information sheet and consent form for participants
To whom it may concern, My name is Kylie McCleary and I am a student at Varsity College, Durban North Campus. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of (Jarryd Byron) about the factors that motivate men and women to exercise at gym (before the COVID-19 pandemic). I hope that this research will enhance our understanding in the sports psychological field with specific reference to the most effective factors that motivate men and women to exercise at gym in a South African context. This study anticipates to improve the amount of exercise men and women do (specifically pertaining to gym exercise in this research study) in South Africa, in order to decrease the physical health risks involved with a lack of physical activity. I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.
What will I be doing if I participate in your study? I would like to invite you to participate in this research because (insert reason). If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to (explain exactly what participation will involve). You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.
Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study? Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your (insert what you are examining). If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.
Do I have to participate in the study? • Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary; • If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;

- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

Will my identity be protected?

I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Varsity College, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my IIE Bachelor of Arts Honours in Psychology. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:
Kylie McCleary

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:
Jarryd Byron

Annexure E – Consent form for audio recording

Consent form for participants	
I, _____, agree to allow Kylie McCleary to audio record my interviews as part of the research about the factors that motivate men and women to exercise at gym (before the COVID-19 pandemic) This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:	
• My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.	
• The recordings will be stored in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer.	
• Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings.	
Signature	Date

Annexure F – Participant interview schedule

*Thank you for participating in my research study.

*I just wanted to explain what my research study is about so you have a vague idea on where I am going with my questions to you

- basically I am looking at the personal reasons people feel motivated to go to gym, and then I'm taking it a step further in my research to determine if there are any similarities or differences in these motivational factors between men and women going to gym.

* I also just wanted to mention as a side note, that this is obviously based on your motivation to go to gym before the gyms closed as a result of the pandemic lockdown.

- So with all that, are you ready to answer the first question?

INTRO QUESTIONS:

1. How long had you been consistently going to gym before the gyms closed due to the pandemic?
2. How many days a week did you train at gym? Why did you choose to go that many days?
3. Is there a specific type of workout you prefer at gym?
 - How come you choose this as your preferred way to train at gym?
4. Do you have a specific time you go to the gym every day, or do you go whenever you get time?
5. Do you find that a routine helps you to keep motivated to train at gym?

- What do you think the reason for this being motivating is?

6. Did you enjoy going to gym? How come?

TH1: MOTIVATION:

7. What motivates you to go to gym?

(before lockdown)

- What reasons does that motivate you?

8. How do you think the factors that you found motivating differed to those for other people you know?

9. Would you say your relationships, meaning friends, family or a partner, influences your motivation to go to gym? How come?

10. How important is improving your physical appearance to you?

11. Does (physical motivation) looking good or (emotional motivation) feeling good about yourself motivate you to workout at gym?

- Can elaborate on physical and emotional

12. Is seeing physical improvement yourself, for example in the mirror, more motivating to you or is it more motivating if other people notice it?

- How come?

TH2: ONGOING PARTICIPATION IN NON-COMPETITIVE PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

13. How do you stay motivated?

14. Does competing with others motivate you to go to gym?

- (YES) How do you compete with others at gym?
- *How does this motivate you?*

15. Is competing with yourself a motivational factor for you to go to gym?

- What are the reasons for you wanting to better yourself by going to gym?

TH3: HEALTH BENEFITS OF EXERCISING:

16. Are there any health risks or benefits that motivate you to train at gym?

(prompt if participant isn't able to answer: For instance, maintaining a healthy weight, or losing weight to prevent obesity)

- How come you see that as a motivating factor?

TH4: GAMIFICATIONS AND INCENTIVES AS FORMS OF MOTIVATION:

17. Are there any external rewards that motivates you to go to gym?

(Prompt: for example, a free smoothie from your medical aid)

- What are the reasons this motivates you?

18. Do you have a fitness watch or device that allows you to track your workouts?

- (YES) how does this device motivate you compared to if you didn't have it?

19. What happens when you achieve your goals on your device? Do you get rewards from it?

- (YES) what reasons do these rewards motivate you to continuously train at the gym?

END QUESTIONS:

*Ask if they have any final comments or questions? Anything I may have missed that you'd like to share about your drive to go to gym?