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Abstract

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the self-reported physical activity of employees in the fitness industry in Cork, Ireland. Convenience sampling was used to distribute Baecke Habitual Physical Activity questionnaires to health clubs in the Cork area. Of the 300 surveys distributed, 107 were completed correctly and returned for analysis (36%). Respondents were grouped by gender, (male: n = 50; female: n = 57), by employment position (manager: n = 38; fitness instructor: n = 52; aerobics instructor: n = 8; personal trainer: n = 9), and by facility type (private: n = 84; public: n = 23). The data was used to produce activity indices broken down into Work, Leisure, Sport and Total. Chi squared analysis and cross tabulations were carried out to investigate if there was a significant relationship between self reported habitual physical activity and employment type, gender and employment position. The data indicated that 28% of the population sampled does not habitually undertake any physical activity outside of work. Results also show that 69.3% of the participants currently undertake less than thirty minutes per day of habitual walking and/or cycling. This is concerning as the very group of individuals who would act as role models appear not to have adopted a consistent physical activity habit. The impact of this is that the general public who look to health and fitness professionals for advice and motivation may not perceive the health and fitness industry as worthy role models to follow. This may have a negative effect on participation and adherence rates in physical activity thus compounding the growing health and obesity crisis. Recommendations include developing a standard of health and fitness for employees of the fitness industry in order to ensure that the proponents of physical activity are not adopting a “Do as I say, not do as I do” approach to physical activity promotion.
“This work is original and has not been submitted previously in support of a degree qualification or other course”

Signed: ________________    Date: _____________
David McGillion
Table of Contents

Chapter One – Introduction 1

Exercise and Health Benefits 3
Physical Activity and Body Composition 4
Minimum Amount of Physical Activity required for Health Benefits 6
Exercise Behaviour 8
Habitual Exercise and advice given by professionals 12
Exercise Habits of other Proponents of Exercise 14
Role Model Status 15
Irish Health & Fitness Industry 18
Study Details 19
Aims and Objectives 20

Chapter Two – Method 21

Procedure 21
Participants 23
Design 24
Research Tools 25
Statistical and Data Analysis 27

Chapter Three – Results 28

Work related habitual physical activity 29
Sport related habitual physical activity 29
Leisure related physical activity 30
Total Activity Indices 31

Chapter Four – Discussion 35

The Effect of Role Model Status on Physical Activity of General Public 36
Physical Activity by position 40
Public vs. Private health club 42
Gender Difference 43
Conclusion 45
Recommendations 47

List of tables

Table One – Activity Indexes by Position 13
Table Two – Demographic Details of Participants 28
Table Three – Number of Minutes spent Walking and/or Cycling per Day 31
Table Four – Mean Activity Indices by Gender 32
Table Five – Mean Activity Indices by Facility Type 33
Table Six – Mean Activity Indices by Employment Position 34
List of Appendices

Appendix One: Letters of permission from Health Club Manager
Appendix Two: Letter of Approval from University of Chester Faculty of Applied Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Appendix Three: Sample Baecke Habitual Physical Activity Questionnaire
Appendix Four: Recruitment Letter
Appendix Five: Scoring Procedures for Questionnaire
Appendix Six: Schematic View of Study Process
Appendix Seven: Participant Information Sheet
Appendix Eight: Table of Studies where Baecke Questionnaire used
Appendix Nine: Representative Sample of Actual Questionnaires completed
Appendix Ten: Raw Data
Appendix Eleven: SPSS Outputs
Glossary of Terms

**Aerobics Instructor**
Individual employed to provide group exercise classes (not just traditional aerobics) in a safe and motivating manner.

**Educator**
Person with responsibility for developing, managing or delivering learning resources.

**Fitness Industry**
Global term used to encompass all aspects of health and fitness in the public domain.

**Fitness Instructor**
Individual employed to advise clients on matters of physical activity and nutrition while also providing motivation and support.

**Manager**
Individual employed in the capacity of manager is responsible for the overall performance of a health club.

**Personal Trainer**
Individual whose responsibility is to advise clients on matters of physical activity and nutrition on a one to one basis while also providing motivation and support. These individuals usually have higher level of qualifications than Fitness Instructors and may be employees or self-employed individuals.

**Teacher**
Certified or licensed individual responsible for instruction – group exercise etc.