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- Bowersox, Donald J., Closs, David J., (1996), "Logistical Management." Tata McGraw, Hill, New Delhi.
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ONLINE RESOURCES
- Always indicate the date that the source was accessed, as online resources are frequently updated or removed.

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- Garg, Bhavet (2011): Towards a New Natural Gas Policy, Economic and Political Weekly, Viewed on July 05, 2011 http://epw.in/user/viewabstract.jsp

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A STUDY ON ATTITUDE OF WOMEN TOWARDS FITNESS CENTRE IN RAMANATHAPURAM, TAMILNADU

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ABSTRACT

This article is an outline of the study conducted on the topic" A Study on Attitude of Women towards Fitness Centre in Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu". The main objectives of the study are to find out the level of awareness of the women towards fitness centre, to analyze the purpose of going to fitness centre and to examine the attitude of the women towards fitness centre. The present study has been confined to Study the level of awareness and attitude of women towards fitness centre. The present study is an empirical research based on survey method. The researchers have collected primary data by comprehensive interview schedule and Secondary data have been collected from websites, books and journals with regard to the fitness centre. The study will cover only from the point of women who are going to the fitness centre. This study was carried out for a period of two months. The data which were collected from the respondents were analysed by using percentage analysis. Five point scales that are Likert's scale analysis, weighted average ranking and chi-square test. In Ramanathapuram Town Women have low level of awareness and low level of attitude towards fitness centre.

KEYWORDS
Awareness, Attitude, Fitness Products, Gym and Health Club

INTRODUCTION TO FITNESS CENTRE
Fitness centres also known as a fitness or health club and commonly referred as a gym. It is a place which houses exercise equipment for the purpose of physical exercise. Most health clubs have a main workout area, which primarily consists of free weights including dumbbells, barbells and exercise machines. This area often includes mirrors so that exercisers can monitor and maintain correct posture during their workout. A gym which predominately or exclusively consists of free weights like dumbbells and barbells as opposed to exercise machines is sometimes referred to a black-iron gym, after the traditional color of weight plates. Most new health clubs offer group exercise classes which are conducted by qualified fitness instructors. Many types of group exercise classes exist, but generally these include classes based on aerobics, cycling, boxing, high intensity training, regular and hot yoga and muscle training. Fitness center with swimming pools often offer aqua aerobics classes. Some health clubs offer sports facilities such as swimming pools, squash courts or boxing areas. In some cases, additional fees are charged for the use of these facilities. Newer health clubs generally include health-shops, snack bars, restaurants, child-care facilities, member lounges and cafes. It is not unusual for a sauna, steam shower, or wellness areas to be present. Health clubs generally charge fee to allow visitors to use the equipment, courses, and other provided services.

PROFILE OF RAMANATHAPURAM
Ramanathapuram is a municipality town in Ramanathapuram district in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. It is the administrative headquarters of district. Of the 2001 India census, Ramanathapuram had a population of 61,976. Males constitute 50% of the population and females 50%. It has an average literacy rate of 79%, higher than the national average of 59.5%: male literacy is 84%, and female literacy is 74%. The town is located on south east Tamil Nadu and connected by NH49 connecting Kochi to Rameswaram and NH 210 connecting Trichy and Ramanathapuram. East Coast Road is the major costal road in east Tamil Nadu; this road also connects Ramanathapuram with Chennai, Pondicherry, Tuticorin and Kanyakumari. The town is connected well by railroads with major cities in India through Madurai Junction and Trichy Junction from Rameswaram. The nearest airport is the Madurai Airport about 125 km away from Ramanathapuram. Ramanathapuram is a famous historical place where Hindu holy place Rameswaram is situated (65 km).In Ramanathapuram there are six fitness centres such as Spectrum health centre, Master Jim, Royal Jim, yoga Jim, Warriers fitness centre and Ayra vaisiar health club.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
In ancient times, there were no modern means of technologies replacing human work and so people had more physical work. Therefore there was no fitness centre those times. Due to globalization we have more advanced technology now. But now-a-days majority of the women do not have physical work resulting in bad fitness and health condition. To avoid such type of bad health condition and to improve their body fitness the fitness centers have been started. But majority of the women are not much aware of fitness centre. Hence the researchers made an attempt to study the attitude towards fitness centre among women in Ramanathapuram Town. This study also tries to find out the purpose and the factors influencing the women for going to fitness centre.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
➢ To find the level of awareness of women towards fitness centre in Ramanathapuram Town.
➢ To overview the purpose of going to fitness centres.

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➢ To examine the attitude of women towards fitness centre.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

There are numerous studies having been undertaken in areas related to this topic. The following studies have been reviewed.

➢ Women fitness centre has few takers' by R. Srikanth in The Hindu has reported in his article that the fitness centre for women by the Chennai Corporation at Kosapet remains vacant or closed due to lack of awareness and poor attitude of the people though this centre is equipped with best machines and other facilities .The Hindu- Feb 20, 2011.

➢ Women's Fitness Gym Workout by Thanate Tan has mentioned in the article that women who visit fitness centre say that it is worth the money they pay. Also the fitness centre provide the perfect workout for the busy woman who visits the centre to lose weight, to tone up, relieve stress etc. which experience a much higher quality of life.

➢ A Study on the satisfaction of the members on the services rendered by the women fitness club in Madurai is a dissertation submitted by Lavanya in the department of commerce at The American College. The main objective of her study is to find out the various services offered by the fitness centre and the satisfaction level of the women. She concluded that the people of Madurai are not much aware of the advantages of being fit. So the fitness centre does not like to offer many services to the people.

But however none of the studies has made any attempt to probe into the women attitude towards fitness centre. Hence, the researchers has undertaken the present study Titled "A Study On attitude Of Women Towards Fitness Centre In Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu" as a pioneering approach to find out the level of awareness of various factors and level of attitude towards fitness centre.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study has been confined to Study the level of awareness and attitude of women towards fitness centre. The study will cover only from the point of women who are going to the fitness centre.

PERIOD OF THE STUDY

The survey for collection of primary data was conducted during the month of April and May 2011

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

➢ **Awareness**

Awareness refers to the knowledge about a particular product or services

➢ **Attitude**

Attitude is an expression of inner feelings that reflect whether a person is favourably or unfavourably predisposed to some 'object' (e.g. brand, a service). As an outcome of some psychological process, attitudes are not directly observable, but must be inferred from what people say or from their behaviour. An "Attitude is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given object".[1]

➢ **Fitness Products**

Fitness product includes Cycle, Twister, Stepper, Rope, Tread mill and so on.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is an empirical research based on survey method. The researchers have collected primary data by comprehensive interview schedule and Secondary data have been collected from websites, books and journals with regard to the fitness centre.

PRE-TESTING

The interview schedule prepared for the respondents have been pre-tested by the researchers' in person. Comments on the question were noted and after careful analysis necessary modification have been made in the interview schedule. Pre-testing was conducted on 10 respondents. The researchers interviewed two respondents each at Chettiar Street, near new bus stand, Salai Street, vasantha nagar and D-Block in Ramanathapuram. In the course of the interview, the researchers had experienced some difficulties in getting answers to some of the questions raised and suitable changes have been incorporated before finalizing the interview schedule.

SAMPLE DESIGN

A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from a given population. It refers to the technique or the procedure, the researchers would adopt in selecting items for the sample. The study area covers Ramanathapuram Town, based on demographic, economic and other conditions as centre for the study in order to measure the awareness and attitude of women towards fitness centre. The sample size consist of 80 women respondents who were selected on the basis of convenience sampling method from Ramanathapuram Town. This study is both descriptive and analytical.

FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

With reference to the objectives of the study, various factors are taken into consideration such as age of the respondents, educational qualification of the respondents, Occupation of the respondents, marital status of the respondents and monthly income of the respondents. The data which were collected from the respondents were analysed by using percentage analysis. Three point scale that is Likert's scale analysis and chi-square test. This study also uses comparison table as tool in order to study the various factors.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

REASONS FOR GOING TO FITNESS CENTRE

The researchers have classified the reasons for preferring fitness centre by the respondents.

TABLE NO.1: REASONS FOR GOING TO FITNESS CENTRE

Reasons	Number of respondents	Percentage
To keep body fit & healthy	49	61
To reduce weight	26	33
To reduce stress	5	6
Total	**80**	**100**

Source: primary data

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[1] Leon G. Schiffman and Lestie Lazar Kanuk. Consumer Behaviour, p.270.

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The respondents were asked about the purpose of going to fitness centre. It was observed that 49(61%) of the respondents go to keep their body fit and healthy. 26(33%) of the respondents were going to reduce their weight and only six percentage of the respondents were going to reduce their stress. Unmarried students who are very much concerned about their body fit, healthy and physical appearance form the major part in using fitness centre.

AWARENESS TOWARDS FITNESS CENTRE

In this study the respondents are asked to give their opinion about fitness centre. The response observed for each of the items in the schedule have been scored and tabulated on a master sheet. The scoring factor is based on Likert's method. To secure the total score weights were given by the researchers to the following factors four points for friends, three for relatives, two for doctors and one for advertisements. Thus the total score were obtained.

The levels of awareness has been classified in three categories namely, high level, medium level and low level for analytical purpose, while the score value $\geq \bar{x}+\sigma$ and score value $\geq \bar{x}-\sigma$ have been classified as high level and low level of awareness respectively, the score value between $\bar{x}-\sigma$ and $\bar{x}+\sigma$ are classified as medium level of awareness. $\bar{x}$ and σ are the arithmetic mean and standard deviation calculated from the score value of 80 respondents Based on the mean and standard deviation, the levels were classified as below. $\bar{x}+\sigma$ is (7.9) – above 8 – high level, $\bar{x}-\sigma$ is (3.1) – below 3 – Low level and ($\bar{x}-\sigma$) to ($\bar{x}+\sigma$) is between 3 and 8 – Medium level

Table 2 highlights the cross tabulation between the personal factors of the respondents and Level of awareness of the respondents towards fitness centre. The researchers have made an attempt to study the level of awareness among women towards fitness centre. The factor is classified as high level, medium level and low level. This factor has been cross tabulated with other factors like age, educational qualification, occupation and marital status.

TABLE NO. 2: LEVEL OF AWARENESS AND PERSONAL FACTORS

Personal factors		Level of awareness			
		High	Medium	Low	Total
Age	Below 20 years	5	7	22	**34**
	20-40 years	3	14	29	**46**
	Total	**8**	**21**	**51**	**80**
Educational Qualification	HSC	-	18	17	**35**
	UG	2	3	26	**31**
	PG	6	-	8	**14**
	Total	**8**	**21**	**51**	**80**
Marital Status	Married	-	10	17	**27**
	Unmarried	8	11	34	**53**
	Total	**8**	**21**	**51**	**80**
Occupation	Students	7	6	29	**42**
	Home maker	-	12	-	**12**
	Employees	1	3	22	**26**
	Total	**8**	**21**	**51**	**80**

Source: Primary Data

It is observed that out of 80 respondents, 29 respondents are having low level of awareness are under the age group of 20 and 40 years. Only six post graduates have high level of awareness. Eight respondents having high level of awareness are married women. Out of 42 female students 29 students have low level of awareness. All the 12 respondents having medium level of awareness are home makers. The study disclose that majority of the women have low level of awareness towards fitness centre because fitness centre organisation fail to create health and body fitness awareness programmes among the women especially to the married women and homemakers

CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS- AWARENESS TOWARDS FITNESS CENTRE

Following are the results for chi-square test between demographic factors of the respondents and level of awareness towards fitness centre

To find out whether there is a significant relationship between these two factors, the following null hypothesis is framed. The frequency of cell value is less than 5. Hence Yates Correction is applied in chi- square test.

Ho – There is no significant relationship between the personal factors of the respondents and their level of awareness towards fitness centre.

The table value of x^2 for degree of freedom 2 at 5% level of significance is 5.991. The calculated value of x^2 is less than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant relationship exists between the **age** and the **level of awareness** regarding fitness centre.

The table value of x^2 for degree of freedom 4 at 5% level of significance is 9.488. The calculated value of x^2 is more than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected that there is a significant relationship exist between the **educational qualification and the level of awareness** regarding fitness centre.

The table value of x^2 for degree of freedom 2 at 5% level of significance is 5.991. The calculated value of x^2 is more than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected that there is a significant relationship exist between the **marital status** and the **level of awareness** regarding fitness centre.

The table value of x^2 for degree of freedom 4 at 5% level of significance is 9.488 The calculated value of x^2 is more than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected that there is a significant relationship exist between the **occupation and the level of awareness** regarding fitness centre.

ATTITUDE OF WOMEN TOWARDS FITNESS CENTRE

In this study the respondents are asked to give their opinion on the basis of three level of satisfaction namely satisfied, neutral and dissatisfied. The response observed for each of the items in the schedule have been scored and tabulated on a master sheet.

The scoring of factor is based on Likert's method. To secure the total score the researchers had allotted three for satisfied, two for neutral and one for dissatisfied.. Thus the total score were obtained.

The levels of attitude has been classified into three categories namely, high level, medium level and low level for analytical purpose, while the score value $\geq \bar{x}+\sigma$ and score value $\geq \bar{x}-\sigma$ have been classified as high level and low level of attitude respectively, the score value between $\bar{x}-\sigma$ and $\bar{x}+\sigma$ are classified as medium level of attitude. $\bar{x}$ and σ are the arithmetic mean and standard deviation calculated from the score value of 80 respondents Based on the mean and standard deviation the levels were classified as below.

$\bar{x}+\sigma$ – Above 23 – high level

$\bar{x}-\sigma$ – Below 14 – Low level

($\bar{x}-\sigma$) to ($\bar{x}+\sigma$) –Between 14 and 23 – Medium level

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The researchers have made an attempt to study the level of attitude of the respondents. The factor is classified as high level, medium level and low level. This factor has been cross tabulated with other factors like age, educational qualification, occupation and marital status. Following are the factors to find out the level of attitude of respondents towards fitness centre are Quality of Training, Equipment Availability, Maintenance, Environment, Fees Charged, and Additional Services respectively

Table 3 shows the cross tabulation between the personal factors of the respondents and Level of attitude of the respondents towards fitness centre

TABLE NO. 3: LEVEL OF ATTITUDE AND PERSONAL FACTORS

Personal factors		Level of attitude			
		High	Medium	Low	Total
Age	Below 20 years	4	10	20	**34**
	20-40 years	1	4	41	**46**
	Total	**5**	**14**	**61**	**80**
Educational Qualification	HSC	4	8	23	**35**
	UG	1	4	26	**31**
	PG	-	2	12	**14**
	Total	**5**	**14**	**61**	**80**
Marital status	Married	3	7	17	**27**
	Unmarried	2	7	44	**53**
	Total	**5**	**14**	**61**	**80**
Occupation	Students	4	6	32	**42**
	Home maker	-	6	6	**12**
	Employees	1	2	23	**24**
	Total	**5**	**14**	**61**	**80**

Source: Primary data

It is observed from the above table 3 that the level of attitude towards the fitness centre is very much low under the age group of 20-40 years. The respondents in each of the Under-graduation and Post-graduation educational category opined that they have very low level of attitude whereby it shows that they are not satisfied with the fitness centre. In case of the unmarried respondents the level of attitude is very much low while compared to the married. In the Occupational category, employees and students opined that they have very low level of attitude towards the fitness centre. By and large, the overall opinion of the respondents have resulted to the low level of attitude towards the fitness centre and this is due to the poor quality of training by the trainer in the centre, lack of equipment availability during rush hours, poor maintenance of equipment, locality of the centre in congested area, exorbitant fees charged by the centre and no additional services provided by the centre like rest room, lockers, parking zone, etc. These are the factor which leads to the dissatisfactory level of attitude.

CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS- ATTITUDE OF WOMEN TOWARDS FITNESS CENTRE

Following are the results for chi-square test between demographic factors of the respondents and level of attitude towards fitness centre

To find out whether there is a significant relationship between these two factors, the following null hypothesis is framed. The frequency of cell value is less than 5. Hence Yates Correction is applied in chi- square test.

Ho: **there is no significant relationship between the personal factors of the respondents and their level of attitude towards fitness centre.**

The table value of x^2 for degree of freedom 2 at 5% level of significance is 5.991. The calculated value of x^2 is more than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected that there is a significant relationship exist between the **age** and the **level of attitude** regarding fitness centre.

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The table value of x^2 for degree of freedom 4 at 5% level of significance is 9.488 The calculated value of x^2 is more than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected that there is a significant relationship exist between the **occupation and the level of attitude** regarding fitness centre.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

➢ Majority of the women have low level of awareness towards fitness. To increase the level of awareness. The fitness centre has to create awareness among women by advertisement through Television, News paper, Poster and also they should conduct meetings and camp.

➢ Majority of the fitness centre have offered additional services like changing room and health advice but the respondents expect more additional services. So fitness centre must offer more services like child care, aerobic training, yoga, and refreshment and so on.

➢ As regard to the attitude towards fitness centres, it is low. To convert the low level into high level the fitness centre should provide effective services regarding exercises and high tech environment.

➢ In fitness centre trainers are appointed to give training to the respondents regarding exercise. But majority of the respondents opined that they are not giving training effectively. To increase the level of attitude towards fitness centre among women. 54% of the fitness centre maintain records of customers' body weight and compare it after a month for further improvement and they recommended special diet to reduce their weight. They have to give quality training and maintain their records of weight, body condition and so on.

CONCLUSION

Women fitness centre will help every woman to set and achieve the goal of an active life for a healthy living. The key to transforming an overweight or average body is proper diet and exercise techniques. Mickey Mehta, India's holistic health guru, explains, "The fundamental basis of a high intensity workout is that the exercises need to be intense, done at high effort levels that can promote fat loss, boost metabolism and improve strength, stamina and tone". Thus every woman must aware on the importance of following a well balanced fitness regime.

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