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**A STUDY OF A COMMERCIAL FITNESS  
CENTRE DURING ITS FIRST THREE YEARS OF  
PROVIDING A CLIENT SERVICE**

**Stakeholder perspectives on the characteristics,  
developments and changes**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Business Studies  
in  
Management

Massey University Albany  
Auckland, New Zealand

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2000

## ABSTRACT

Physical exercise and leisure is an integral part of New Zealand society. The scale of the fitness centre industry today and its continual growth has been influenced by an increase in public participation over the past 100 years. With an increase in demand for greater access and availability of leisure and fitness activities, the progressive development of commercial and non-profit fitness centres has occurred.

The objective of this study was to examine the characteristics, developments and changes within a fitness centre in its establishment phase of providing a client service. The underlying assumption of the research was to assist the fitness centre industry, as there was concern about the significant number of fitness centres in the Auckland region that closed within five years of establishing their operation.

A mixture of quantitative and qualitative research methodology was used to access the fullest range of relevant data within one particular fitness centre. The mixed methodology consisted of interviews and questionnaires in order to elicit stakeholder perceptions. The data was progressively subjected to the process of grounded theory, which formulated significant categories and properties of the characteristics, developments and changes of a fitness centre. This in turn generated a comprehensive set of theoretical propositions.

The theoretical propositions became the basis for a model on organisation development and the impact of change. In this setting the model illustrates that the operational effectiveness of the fitness centre is dependent on the planned developments and consequential changes that occur. The model is also seen as relevant to other service organisations besides the fitness centre industry.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to my partner, Kelly-Anne Marie Jeffcoat, who has provided personal support and endured personal sacrifices during my five years of studying. Her understanding nature was my inspiration to complete this thesis. My sincere thanks.

I must pay special tribute to my parents, Barry and Cushla and my brothers Vaughan and Leighton for their interest in my academic studies and for setting the standard for individual excellence. I would also like to thank my extended family, my grandmother Doris Pearl Hunt, sister-in-law Justine Hunt and close personal friends Mike, Lorraine, Alistair and Bronwyn Jeffcoat for their interest and unwavering support.

In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Margot Edwards whose academic support, constant availability and advice have guided me in my journey in completing this thesis. I am sincerely grateful.

I would like to acknowledge the co-operation and assistance of the owners of this study's fitness centre and all the participants involved in the research process, the management staff, fitness centre employees and the current and former members. Special thanks are due to Clive Green, Maureen Oliver and Sue Olason for their contribution to the literature review and various libraries for their provision of research literature. My thanks go especially to Dennis Styles for the hours of commitment in the editing of this thesis. Thanks also to David Wyeth for providing computer equipment and technical assistance.

Finally, I would like to thank Professor Robin McConnell who has provided academic stimulation as a lecturer, friend and mentor. It is a great compliment to have had his constructive criticism and support. His dedication to sport and his students are invaluable.

## CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
List of figures	vii

### PART A: INTRODUCTION

#### **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1	Background to the study	1
1.2	Research objectives	4
1.3	Research sequence	5

### PART B: LITERATURE REVIEWS

#### **CHAPTER 2 PHYSICAL EXERCISE AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES IN NEW ZEALAND**

2.1	Introduction	8
2.2	Pre-European physical exercise and leisure activities	8
2.3	Early European physical exercise and leisure activities 1840 to 1900	16
2.4	Physical education in New Zealand schools 1850 to 1950	22
2.5	Summary and review	33

#### **CHAPTER 3 THE HISTORY OF GYMNASIUMS AND FITNESS CENTRES IN NEW ZEALAND 1853 TO 1960**

3.1	Introduction	35
3.2	The establishment of a new industry 1853 to 1900	35
3.3	The fitness and recreation movements 1900 to 1960	40
3.4	Summary and review	52

#### **CHAPTER 4 THE COMMERCIAL FITNESS CENTRES 1960 TO 2000**

4.1	Introduction	53
4.2	The early development of the commercial fitness centre	54
	4.2.1 The Silhouette American Health Studio	55
	4.2.2 The locality of fitness centres in the Auckland region	58
	4.2.3 The fitness industry boom 1980 to 2000	61

4.3	The growth of the commercial fitness centre industry	63
4.3.1	The reasons for the growth in fitness centres	64
4.3.2	The development of the corporate market	66
4.3.3	The unstable fitness centre industry	67
4.4	The research setting	82
4.5	Summary and review	83

## PART C: METHODOLOGY

### **CHAPTER 5    METHODOLOGY**

5.1	Introduction	85
5.2	Research question	86
5.3	Research design	87
5.4	Qualitative research	89
5.4.1	The research setting	90
5.4.2	Interviews	91
5.5	Quantitative research	93
5.5.1	Questionnaires	94
5.6	Research considerations	97
5.6.1	Mixed methodology	97
5.6.2	Triangulation	98
5.6.3	Validity	99
5.6.4	Ethical considerations	101
5.7	Grounded theory	103
5.8	Summary and review	105

## PART D: RESEARCH PHASES

### **CHAPTER 6    CURRENT MEMBERS**

6.1	Introduction	107
6.2	Background information	109
6.3	Current member perceptions	119
6.3.1	Fitness instructor characteristics	119
6.3.2	Fitness instructor developments and changes	126
6.3.3	Receptionist characteristics	132
6.3.4	Receptionist developments and changes	136
6.3.5	Fitness programme characteristics	138
6.3.6	Additional service characteristics	142
6.3.7	Fitness programme and additional service developments and changes	145
6.3.8	Fitness equipment characteristics	146
6.3.9	Fitness centre's layout characteristics	150
6.3.10	Value for money characteristics	153
6.3.11	The impact of developments and changes on the current members' experience	158

6.4	Current member preferences, objections and suggestions	160
6.4.1	Current member preferences	160
6.4.2	Current member objections	162
6.4.3	Suggested changes	166
6.5	Current member categories and properties	170
6.6	Summary and review	171

## **CHAPTER 7 FORMER MEMBERS**

7.1	Introduction	175
7.2	Background information	176
7.3	Former member perceptions	183
7.3.1	Former member preferences	183
7.3.2	Former member objections	184
7.3.3	The impact of developments and changes on the former members' experience	186
7.3.4	Renewal issues	187
7.3.5	Former members additional comments	190
7.4	Former member categories and properties	191
7.5	Summary and review	192

## **CHAPTER 8 SUBORDINATE EMPLOYEES**

8.1	Introduction	193
8.2	Background information	194
8.3	Employee perceptions	197
8.3.1	Fitness centre's work environment	199
8.3.2	Fitness centre's remuneration structure	201
8.3.3	Employee training	202
8.3.4	Management supervision	204
8.3.5	The impact of developments and changes on the subordinate employees' experience	205
8.4	Subordinate employee categories and properties	206
8.5	Summary and review	207

## **CHAPTER 9 MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES**

9.1	Introduction	210
9.2	Background information	210
9.3	Organisational culture	211
9.4	Organisation's systems and structure	215
9.5	Management positions and employee training	220
9.6	Employee issues	226
9.7	The fitness centre's marketing	232
9.8	Management employee categories and properties	234
9.9	Summary and review	235

## PART E: SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH

### **CHAPTER 10 DISCUSSION: FROM DATA TO PROPOSITIONS**

10.1	Research background	237
10.2	Master list: categories and properties	239
10.3	Theoretical propositions	244
10.4	Discussion	257
10.4.1	Fitness centre characteristics	257
10.4.2	Fitness centre developments and changes	281
10.5	A model for developing an effective fitness centre	290
10.6	Summary and review	293

### **CHAPTER 11 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.1	The research question	294
11.2	Reflections on the research	295
11.3	Conclusions	296
11.4	Recommendations	301
11.4.1	Recommendations for fitness centre managers	301
11.4.2	Recommendations for further research	304
11.5	Concluding statement	305

### **APPENDICES**

Appendix A.	Fitness centres in the Auckland region 1960 to 2000: Auckland Yellow Pages telephone directory	307
Appendix B.	Information sheet for interview	324
Appendix C.	Interview consent form	326
Appendix D.	Interview questions	328
Appendix E.	Questionnaires	332
	E1. Current member questionnaire	333
	E2. Former member questionnaire	340
	E3. Subordinate employee questionnaire	344
Appendix F.	Covering letter	350
	F1. Current and former member cover letter	351
	F2. Subordinate employee cover letter	353

### **REFERENCES**

355



## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
2.1 The kataha or whip for casting spears (Best, 1976).	10
2.2 Surf-riding (Best, 1976).	12
2.3 The start of the jazzercise/aerobics movement (The People, Sunday May 31, 1925).	13
2.4 Military drill (Stothart, 1974).	24
2.5 Gymnastics session at Otago Girls' High School, 1905 (Cox, 1993).	27
2.6 Gymnastics class of 1912 (Wood, 1985).	28
2.7 School drill class, 1922 (Stothart, 1974).	30
3.1 Christ's College gymnasium, 1876 (Hamilton, 1996).	37
3.2 Christ's College gymnasium, 1886 (Hamilton, 1996).	38
3.3 Eugene Sandow (New Zealand Memories, 1998).	39
3.4 The Hastings YMCA, 1912 (Knox, 1995).	42
3.5 Fred Hornibrook's School of Physical Culture, 1909 (The Spectator, Saturday November 20, 1909).	43
3.6 Physical Culture for New Zealand women, 1921 (The National magazine of Health, Physical Culture and Sociology, 1921).	44
3.7 Gymnastics equipment ca1910s (Alexander Turnbull Library).	47
3.8 Millicent and Caroline Ward (Coney, 1993).	48
3.9 Matthew Alach (Alach, 1939).	50
4.1 Male and female separate training days (Cvikota, 1975).	56
4.2 Establishment of fitness centres in the Auckland region 1960 to 2000.	58
4.3 Situational factors for the location of a fitness centre (Queensland Recreation Council and Department of Local Government, 1988).	59
4.4 A comparison of the percentage of fitness centres in the Auckland region in 1980 / 1990 / 2000.	60

4.5	Number of fitness centres advertising in the Auckland Yellow Pages telephone directory	61
4.6	Number of new fitness centres advertising in the Auckland Yellow Pages telephone directory.	64
4.7	Percentage of new fitness centres listed in the Auckland Yellow Pages telephone directory that opened in the Auckland region between 1960 and 2000.	65
4.8	Number of new fitness centres advertising in the Auckland Yellow Pages telephone directory in relation to the presumed number of closures.	68
4.9	Fitness centres with multi-location facilities.	69
5.1	Visual representation of the researcher's perspective.	86
5.2	Research design map (After McConnell, 1996).	88
5.3	Quantitative and qualitative methods equal and parallel (Tashakkori and Teddkie, 1998).	97
6.1	Percentage of male and female current members attending the fitness centre.	109
6.2	Age categories of current members.	110
6.3	Residential location of current members.	110
6.4	Current member occupations.	111
6.5	Annual income of current members.	113
6.6	Comparison of annual income and gender.	114
6.7	How the current members learned about the fitness centre.	115
6.8	Reasons why the current member joined the fitness centre.	116
6.9	Comparative reasons as to why current members joined the fitness centre.	117
6.10	Cumulative reasons as to why current members joined the fitness centre.	118
6.11	Membership length of current members.	118
6.12	Rating of the fitness instructors at the fitness centre.	119
6.13	Positive perceptions of the fitness instructors.	123
6.14	Negative perceptions of the fitness instructors.	126
6.15	Fitness instructor developments and changes.	132
6.16	Rating of the receptionists at the fitness centre.	133

6.17	Positive perceptions of the receptionists.	135
6.18	Receptionist developments and changes.	137
6.19	Rating of the fitness centre's programmes.	138
6.20	Positive perceptions of the fitness centre programmes.	140
6.21	Rating of the fitness centre's additional services.	143
6.22	Negative perceptions of the fitness centre's additional services.	145
6.23	Rating of the fitness centre's equipment.	146
6.24	Positive perceptions of the fitness centre's equipment.	148
6.25	Negative perceptions of the fitness centre's equipment.	150
6.26	Rating of the overall layout of the fitness centre.	150
6.27	Negative perceptions of the fitness centre's layout.	153
6.28	Rating of the fitness centres value for money.	154
6.29	Positive perceptions of the fitness centre's value for money.	156
6.30	Negative perceptions of the fitness centre's value for money.	158
6.31	The impact of developments and changes on the current member's experience.	160
6.32	Current member preferences.	162
6.33	Current member objections.	165
6.34	Suggested changes.	170
6.35	Current member categories and properties.	171
7.1	Age categories of former members.	176
7.2	Residential location of former members.	177
7.3	Former member occupations.	178
7.4	Annual income of former members.	178
7.5	Comparison of annual income and gender.	179
7.6	Reasons why the former member joined the fitness centre.	180
7.7	Cumulative reasons for members joining the fitness centre.	181
7.8	Time period when former members first purchased their memberships.	182
7.9	Former member preferences.	184
7.10	Former member objections.	186
7.11	Reasons for not renewing.	189
7.12	Former member categories and properties.	191

8.1	Length of employment.	194
8.2	Number of hours worked per week.	195
8.3	The remuneration rate.	196
8.4	Rating of the work environment at the fitness centre.	200
8.5	Rating of the fitness centre's remuneration structure.	201
8.6	Rating of the employee training programme.	203
8.7	Rating of the fitness centre's management supervision.	204
8.8	Subordinate employee categories and properties.	206
9.1	Changes in organisation structure November 1997 to November 2000.	217
9.2	Management employee categories and properties.	234
10.1	Fitness centre model.	292