

Word count: 1068

### **1) Two More Credible Sources**

#### **a) Why I chose these two texts**

I chose two new peer-reviewed articles which help me conclude my research about gym culture and literacy. The research by Andreasson and Johansson (1996) in “Gendered Spaces” investigates how social gender norms create organizational structures in gym facilities. The text maintains its value because it demonstrates the distress new social group members face when they encounter hidden social rules. Kristensen et al. The 2021 article by “Tracking Towards Care” examines how fitness technologies and self-tracking practices transform gym environments and create new social dynamics. The research technique demonstrates the connection between traditional social literacy in gym settings and contemporary digital social practices. The two sources are peer-reviewed and relevant to my project because they establish connections between cultural rules and confidence building which aligns with my research question.

#### **b) Summary and Connections**

The research by Andreasson and Johansson (1996) employs ethnographic methods to study how gender affects the gym environment. The authors states that gym culture operates as an active system which supports specific masculine behaviors yet creates social exclusion for women and new members. The example shows that gym literacy requires knowledge of both athletic techniques and social norms that exist within the gym environment. Kristensen et al. (The study by (2021) investigates Danish gym members to understand how self-tracking technology (apps, wearables, heart-rate monitors) integrates

into the social dynamics of fitness centers. These tools generate new methods of care and responsibility but they create barriers for people who lack experience with technology. The two texts show how gym literacy develops through the interaction of physical culture gendered norms with digital culture tracking and metrics systems.

When compared to my earlier two sources, these connections become stronger. Rapport et al. (The study by (2018) investigated university gym facilities to determine which participation approaches and communication strategies enhance student motivation.

Lamarche et al. (The research by (2018) analyzed male body image perceptions in university fitness centers which found that gym settings create both positive and negative effects on self-assurance levels. The four texts present an intricate understanding of gym culture rules which beginners must navigate through social comparison and gendered expectations and communication patterns and technological integration. This body of research demonstrates that confidence and long-term participation in fitness cannot be separated from the literacy of gym culture itself.

## **2) Advice for Peers**

The search for relevant studies became successful because I followed important article references to find relevant studies. Rapport et al. (2018) led me to studies of gym ethnographies that I would not have discovered otherwise. Students should use UCF library filters to find peer-reviewed articles while focusing on sociology and health communication and sports studies subjects. The method enables users to skip non-important information so they can save time. The “Cited by” function on Google Scholar enables users to discover recent research that extends from earlier fundamental studies by following the citations of an article. The research process becomes more efficient because users can save their searches and export citations to Zotero and other reference managers which enables them to maintain their sources in an organized manner.

## **3) Draft of Initial Research Proposal (IRP)**

### **Background**

Exercise facilities serve as gyms which also function as cultural social groups that create their own communication networks. The community follows the same rules as other discourse communities because new members need to learn their specific vocabulary and practices and accepted behaviors. The gym culture contains an unspoken set of rules and terminology and machine operation skills which make it difficult for new members to learn. New members commonly experience feelings of being out of place and insecurity that results in their departure from the group during its initial period. The problem mainly impacts universities because their fitness centers operate to support student health and create social connections. The research on gym literacy effects on confidence levels and

long-term gym participation will help create more welcoming campus recreation spaces through inclusive programming.

Previous research provides important context. Lamarche et al. (The study by (2018) discovered that university men develop both positive and negative body image effects when working out at the gym which indicates that gym culture produces varying effects on self-assurance. Rapport et al. (The study by (2018) found that university gym participation depends on communication and motivation levels within these facilities. The study by Andreasson and Johansson (1996) demonstrated how gender-based systems affect gym membership opportunities and social acceptance for gym members according to Kristensen et al. (2021) highlighted the growing role of digital tools in shaping participation. Research findings demonstrate that gym literacy requires knowledge of exercise techniques together with comprehension of identity factors and technological aspects and cultural norms. The research serves as the base for my study which investigates fresh players' gameplay experience and their reading abilities' impact on their self-assurance and continued participation in the game.

## **Sources (MLA)**

Lamarche, Larkin, et al. "The Gym as a Culture of Body Achievement: Exploring Negative and Positive Body Image Experiences in Men Attending University." *SAGE Open*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2018, pp. 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018778103>.

Rapport, Frances, et al. "How Are University Gyms Used by Staff and Students? A Mixed-Method Study Exploring Gym Use, Motivation, and Communication in Three UK Gyms." *Societies*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2018, p. 15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc8010015>.

Andreasson, Jesper, and Thomas Johansson. "Gendered Spaces: The Gym Culture and the Construction of Gender." *Young*, vol. 4, no. 3, 1996, pp. 32–47.

Kristensen, Dorthe Brogård, et al. "Tracking Towards Care: Relational Affordances of Self-Tracking in Gym Culture." *Sociology of Health & Illness*, vol. 43, no. 7, 2021, pp. 1598–1613. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.13314>.

## **Plan**

If I were to conduct this research, I would start by studying the university recreation center to see how new students use equipment and interact with trainers and other students. The exercise would show the hidden communication rules and patterns which make up gym literacy. I would perform interviews with both new members and experienced members to understand the factors that create confidence or destroy it in these environments. I would also collect reflections on how digital tracking tools (such as fitness apps or wearables) influence members sense of belonging and progress. The research design which combines ethnographic observation with interviews and digital practices would produce a deep understanding of gym literacy operations and their effects on confidence levels. The research plan demonstrates how this study can be conducted in future investigations although I must abandon it because of time limitations.