

# Attitude and Behavior of Gym Goers in Ahmedabad – An Observational Study

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## Abstract:

**Background:** Use of gyms has become an increasing fad among people. Some use it to stay healthy and others get addicted to exercise. This study aimed to find the attitude and behavior of gym goers of Ahmedabad.

**Methodology:** An observational study was conducted upon men and women age group 18-50 years going to any gym since at least one month. They were asked to fill a self administered google doc. Descriptive analysis was done.

**Result:** 62 people completed the study. 43% went to gym for building their body and muscles and 30% for weight loss. 48% use gym 3-5 days/week and 30% went to the gym for > 5days. 55% people did workout for 1-2 hours. 41% did cardio workouts and 39% went for crossfire workout. 65% did moderate workout, 27 % did high workout. 41 % of people have pain. 56% complained of feeling tired after workouts. 36% reported that gym occasionally restricted their daily activity, 56% reported that the gym did not restrict daily activity and 8% said it does restrict daily activities. Regarding food intake of gym goers, 15% took quality carbs, 18% took lean protein, 13% took heart healthy fat, and 17% did intermittent fasting. 11% gym goers feel that the gym created distance among family.

**Conclusion:** Building muscles and reducing weight are the common reasons of using the gym. About 65% did a moderate workout. About 40% have pain and 50% feel tired after the gym.

**Keywords:** Exercise, Gym goers, Physical fitness

## Introduction:

Exercise is seen as a healthy coping strategy and it is associated with various benefits which can range from physical to psychological aspect of life. Physical inactivity and a sedentary lifestyle have been major health issues due to their incremental disadvantages to one's wellbeing. Being physically active improves one's mental health by reducing depressive symptoms. Being physically active could also lower the risk of having depression symptoms throughout adulthood, up to the age of 62.<sup>1</sup> Physical activity behavior depends on a multitude of barriers and facilitators, such as accessibility, weather, and social support. It also includes many different psychological components, such as habits, planning, perceived behavioral control, motivation, personality, and self-efficacy. Due to the high prevalence of physical inactivity, increased levels of physical activity are a global public health priority.<sup>2</sup> The number

of fitness centers has increased throughout the years. Along with the increase of fitness centers there is increase of gym goers.<sup>3</sup> This is because of people's awareness regarding the effects of their age on their physical activities.<sup>4</sup>

According to the International Health, Racquet, and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA), gym-goers comprised of 33% from Generation Y, also known as Millennials (born between 1980 and 1999), followed by 24% from Generation X (born between 1965 and 1979), 22% from Baby Boomers (born between 1945 and 1964), 14% from Generation Z (born in years 2000 and later), and 7% from the Silent Generation (born before 1945)<sup>5</sup>

The exercise dependence is called when the "physical activity is extreme in frequency and duration, relatively resistant to change, and is often associated with an irresistible impulse to continue exercising despite personal demands, fatigue, injury, or illness." Exercise as an addiction can become a craving where an individual, for example, goes to the gym and exercises with high intensity for an extended period and neglects occupational, educational, and social areas of his/her life.<sup>6</sup> Body esteem dissatisfaction, according to Johnson and Wardle (2005) can lead to various problems such as poor psychological adjustment, leads to excessive dieting, and symptoms of eating disorders. People with exercise dependence experience an increase in body satisfaction.<sup>7</sup> Vigorexy is a kind of body dysmorphic disorder, in which the individual empowers either the aesthetic defects he may have. Such imperfection may turn individuals into feeling themselves as small, weak and lacking vigor. Its co-morbidity is extensive and individuals undergo immense psychic suffering due to the fact that the imperfection may not be seen in a small portion of the body but in the whole. Men are likely to have vigorexy and are obsessed to have maximum hypertrophy and minimum body fat.<sup>8</sup>

Use of gyms has become an increasing fad among people for various reasons. Some use it to stay healthy and others get addicted to exercise. This study aimed to find the attitude and behavior of gym goers of Ahmedabad.

### **Materials & methods:**

A cross-sectional study was conducted in November-December 2022 using convenience sampling. A self-administered questionnaire was prepared and the data of men and women who were going to the gym was collected with the help of google docs. Institutional permission was taken to conduct the study. The participants were explained the study and people willing to participate were included. Participants were asked close ended questions. In this study they were asked the reason behind going to the gym. They were also asked the duration and how many days they are going to the gym. Details of the type of exercises they performed were asked. Questions about intensity of their exercise and which type of diet they are taking were also asked. Some questions related to pain and tiredness were included. Did workout restrict their daily activity was also a question.

### **Statistical Analysis:**

Descriptive analysis was done.

**Results:**

62 people completed the study. Figure 1 shows the different age group of people going to gym. Figure 2 shows why people go to the gym. Figure 3 is showing how many days of a week they do the workout. Figure 4 is showing the duration of workout. Figure 5 is showing type of exercises they do. Figure 6 is showing which type of food gym goers are eating.

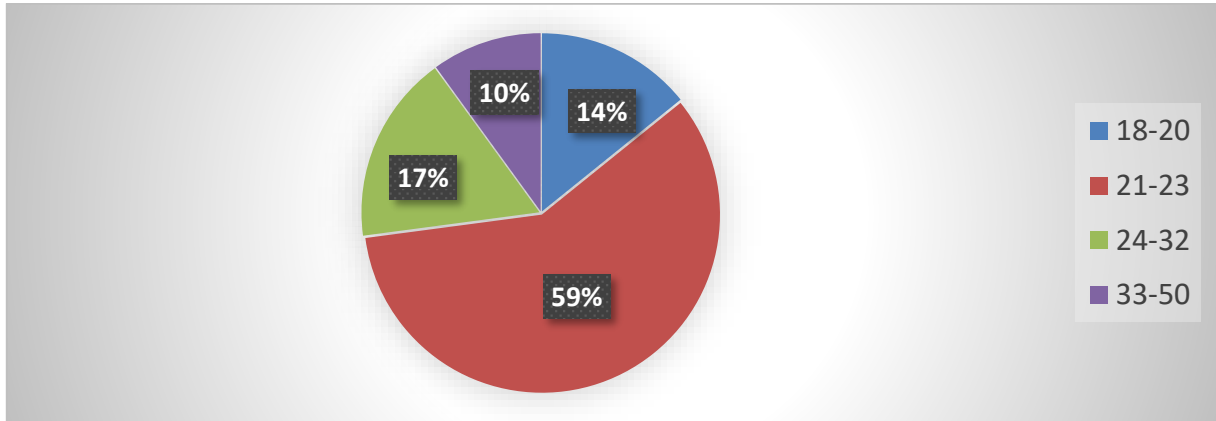


Figure 1: Age group of participants going to gym

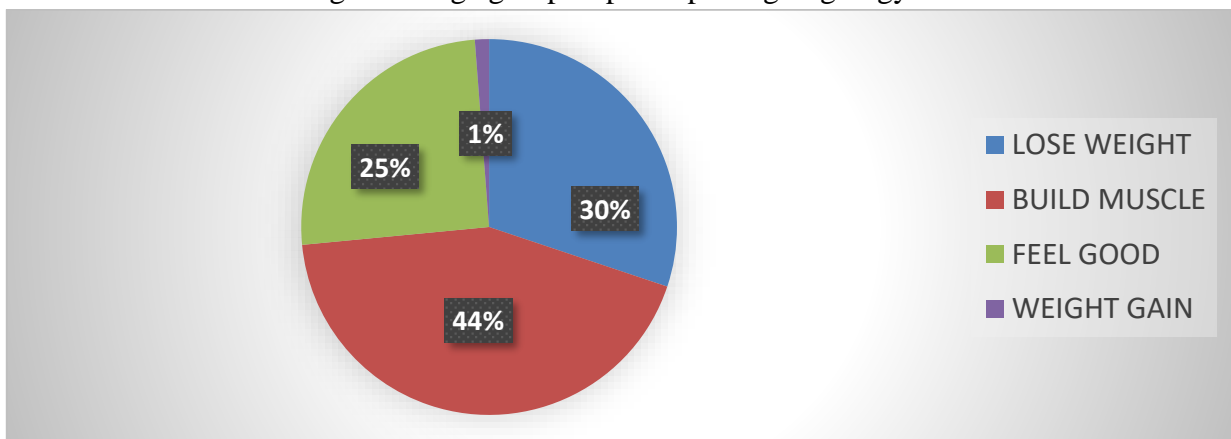


Figure 2: Reasons why people go to the gym

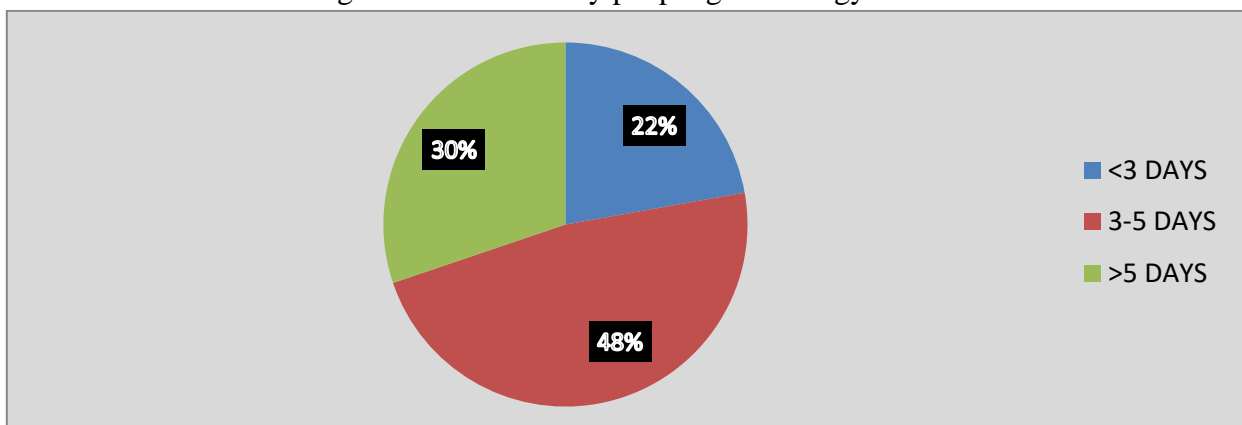


Figure 3: Number of days of a week they do the workout

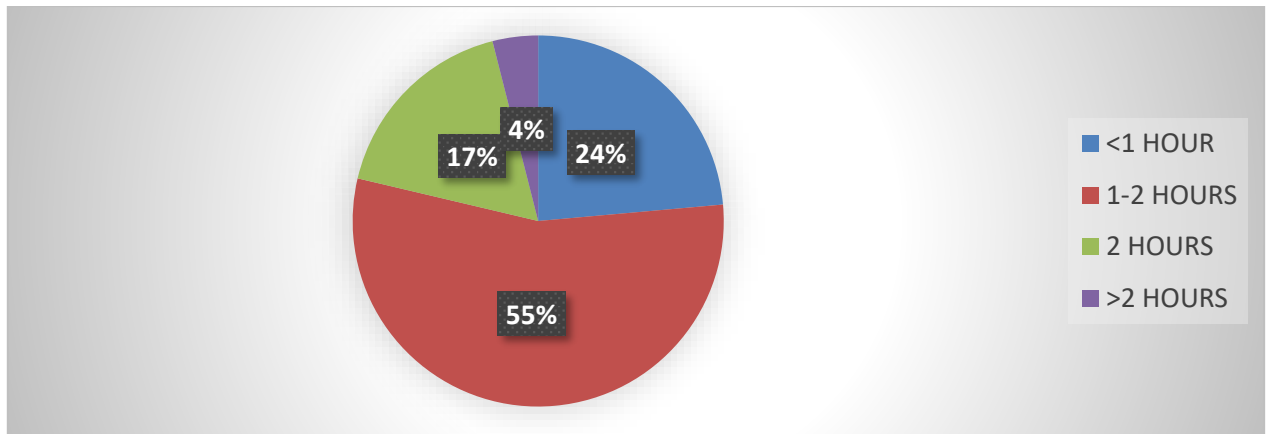


Figure 4: Duration of workout

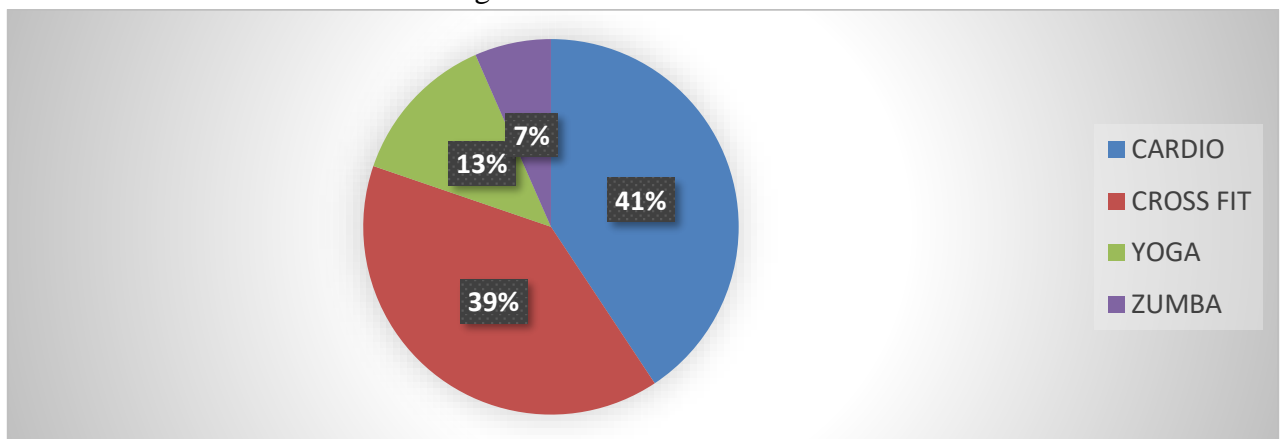


Figure 5: Type of exercise they do

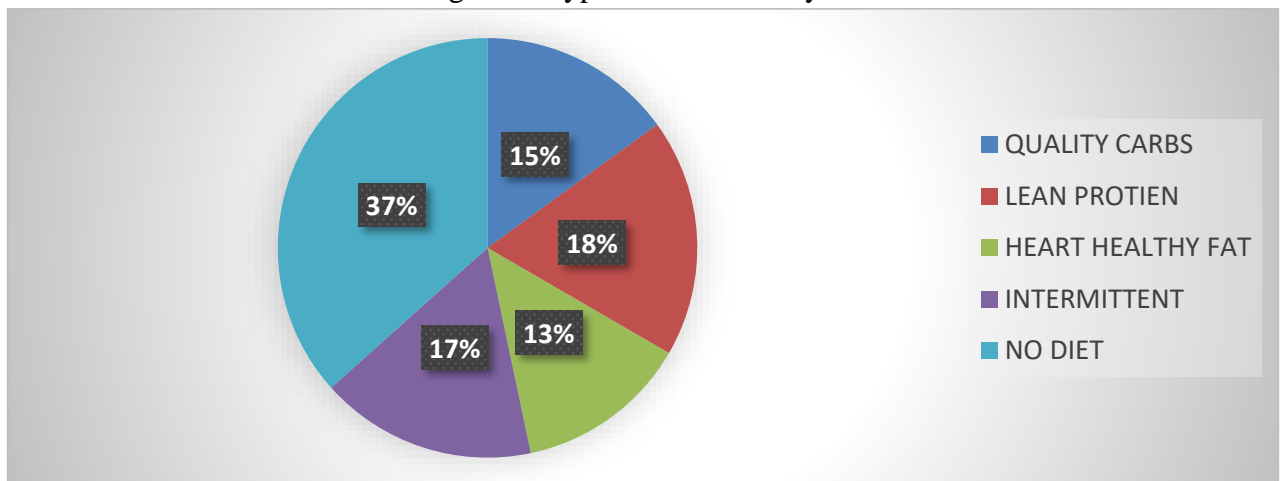


Figure 6: Type of food gym goers are eating.

**Discussion:**

43% went to gym for building their body and muscles and 30% for weight loss. 48% use gym 3-5 days/week and 30% went to the gym for > 5days. 55% people did workout for 1-2 hours. 41% did cardio workouts and 39% went for crossfire workout. 65% did moderate workout, 27 % did high workout. 41 % of people have pain. 56% complained of feeling tired after workouts. 36% reported that gym occasionally restricted their daily activity, 56% reported that the gym did not restrict daily activity and 8% said it does restrict daily activities. Regarding food intake of gym goers, 15% took quality carbs,

18% took lean protein, 13% took heart healthy fat, and 17% did intermittent fasting. 11% gym goers feel that the gym created distance among family.

In this study 43% people went to gym for building their body and muscles and 30% for weight loss. According to study done by Choi et al, gymgoers have shown increasing dissatisfaction to appearance and that turns them to exercise dependence.<sup>9</sup> In a study done by Wolke and Sapouna, bodybuilders present a disorganized body perception which may enhance psychiatric difficulties and make them reach higher total scores for vigorexy compared to gym goers.<sup>10</sup>

In this study regarding food intake of gym goers, 15% took quality carbs, 18 % took lean protein, 13 % took heart healthy fat, and 17 % did intermittent fasting. According to a recent study, the consumption of supplements taken by the people going to gym or by athletes to maintain health and prevent nutritional deficits, increase their energy level, speed up recovery after physical activity, and boost their immune systems.<sup>11</sup>

In our study 48% use gym for 3-5 days/week and 30 % went to the gym for >5days. 55% people did workout for 1-2 hours. However a study showed that the time of exercise practice is not associated to intentional effects and intolerance to appearance.<sup>12</sup>The present study did not differentiate the reason people used the gym to the frequency of use. In our study about 30% of people went to gym for losing a weight. Similarly, a study which was done on college students reported that those who engaged in exercises like aerobics, cycling, weight training were more focused on appearance than those engaging in sports (e.g., tennis, basketball, soccer).<sup>13</sup>

The study had a few limitations where age groups were not differentiated. Gender differences were not identified. The duration since when people were going to gym was not known.

Further studies could explore the benefits of gym which lead to an active lifestyle in terms of physical and mental health. Studies with objective measures can also be done. How the gym is benefited in different age groups can also be explored.

### **Conclusion:**

Building muscles and reducing weight are the common reasons of using the gym. About 65% did a moderate workout. About 40% have pain and 50% feel tired after the gym.

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