Vojko Vučković <sup>1,\*</sup> Tanja Kajtna <sup>1</sup> Maja Zalaznik <sup>2</sup> Živa Kolbl <sup>2</sup>

# SCROLLING FOR SWEAT: UNPACKING THE DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL MEDIA, MOTIVATION, TRUST, AND REPURCHASING IN THE FITNESS WORLD

POVEZANOST DRUŽBENIH OMREŽIJ, MOTIVACIJE ZA VADBO, ZAUPANJA IN PONOVNEGA NAKUPA V INDUSTRIJI FITNESA

## ABSTRACT

Our goal in this study was to examine the structural relationships between social media fun, social media informativeness, exercise motivation, trust, and repurchase intention. Participants, all of whom were members of fitness center, completed surveys to assess these relationships. Results showed that both social media fun and social media informativeness had a positive impact on trust, but not on repurchase intention. Social media fun has a significantly positive influence on exercise motivation, but we could not confirm this for social media informativeness. Moreover, our results show that only social media fun has a positive influence on exercise motivation. We could not confirm the influence of motivation on trust. Finally, we confirmed that trust predicts repurchase intention for fitness center members.

*Keywords:* Exercise motivation, social media, trust, repurchase intention, fitness centers

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of sport, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

# IZVLEČEK

Naš cilj v tej raziskavi je bil preučiti strukturne odnose med zabavnostjo družbenih medijev, informativnostjo družbenih medijev, motivacijo za vadbo, zaupanjem in namero ponovnega nakupa. Udeleženci, ki so bili vsi člani fitnes centrov, so izpolnili ankete za oceno teh odnosov. Rezultati so pokazali, da ima tako zabavnost družbenih medijev kot tudi informativnost družbenih medijev pozitiven vpliv na zaupanje, vendar ne na namero ponovnega nakupa. Zabavnost družbenih medijev pozitivno vpliva na motivacijo za vadbo, medtem ko tega nismo mogli potrditi za informativnost družbenih medijev. Poleg tega naši rezultati kažejo, da ima le zabavnost družbenih medijev pozitiven vpliv na motivacijo za vadbo. Vpliva motivacije na zaupanje nismo mogli potrditi. Nazadnje smo potrdili, da zaupanje napoveduje namero ponovnega nakupa med člani fitnes centrov.

*Ključne besede:* motivacija za vadbo, družbena omrežja, zaupanje, namera za nakup, fitnes centri

Corresponding author\*: Vojko Vučkovic, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Sport, Gortanova 22, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia E-mail: vojko.vuckovic@fsp.uni-lj.si https://doi.org/10.52165/kinsi.29.2.119-135

#### INTRODUCTION

The health and fitness industry are growing every year, and they have almost tripled in some EU countries in the last decade (Trening, 2019; Storm & Hansen, 2021). In 2021 there were more than 56 million fitness members in Europe alone (Europe Active, 2022). For gyms, their communication with their customers is extremely important because it impacts the number of customers and revenue (García-Fernández et al., 2017).

However, the impact of marketing communication tools, such as social media on training center performance, and number of users has not been adequately researched (García-Fernández et al., 2017). When looking at fitness center users' decisions, it has been shown that their motivational structure is important (Tsitskari et al., 2017). Some authors have claimed that exercise motivation is lower for females who spend more than 1 hour on social media daily (Graff & Czarnomska, 2019). The growing number of fitness communities on social media has also raised the question of whether users can be motivated to exercise or even purchase through social media or other marketing communication channels?

Some studies have demonstrated that motivation to exercise can also be positively influenced by marketing communication channels, such as social media, who send framed messages daily (Gilbert et al., 2021). The extent to which persuasive communication about physical activity motivates people to exercise and improve their health is an extremely important area for future research (Bergeron et al., 2019). A recent scoping review on physical activity messages showed that although there is evidence of the influence of message content on physical activity and exercise, there are still gaps in the literature, for instance in terms of media or mode of delivery (Williamson et al., 2020). In this article, we therefore explore and focus on the research gap regarding the relationship between different types of social media marketing communications, exercise motivation, trust, and repurchase intention in fitness centers. In this way, we make an important contribution to the literature on exercise motivation. To date, no attempt has been made to establish an empirical relationship between exercise motivation, marketing channels, trust and repurchase intention in fitness environments, so such a study would be of great conceptual as well as practical value. Some researches have been conducted on sub-models, but there is none that encompasses all of the above constructs. This study would be of interest to gym owners and managers, as well as to their customers who want to get or stay active. It would also be very beneficial for public health on a national level, as active citizens are more productive and less likely to get ill (Jimenez et al. 2020; Nieman, 2019; Nieman & Wentz, 2019).

Communication channels that gyms use include social media and e-mail (Mulchrone, 2021; Vučković & Majerič, 2021). Social media, such as Facebook, can be used to build a fitness center brand (García Fernández et al., 2015) and indirectly improve decision making to purchase a ticket (Wright et al., 2017). For this reason, many authors believe that fitness centers should integrate social media as an important part of their marketing communication (García-Fernández, et al., 2017; Middelkamp & Rutgers, 2020, Vučković & Majerič, 2021). In study which was done in Ireland, up to 37% of fitness participants first learned about the current fitness class they were attending through social media. And a quarter of survey participants reported that a post shared by a health and fitness influencer motivated them to try a fitness class online (Mulchrone, 2021). A study of a Slovenian sample also showed an increasing trend of social media and Internet marketing being a member's first contact with a gym - from 8.4% in 2016 to 31.8% in 2020 (Vučković et al., 2023). Some authors have demonstrated that athletes' posts on social media increase their followers' motivation for physical activity, especially when they include images (Johnston & Davis, 2019; Ehrlén & Villi, 2020). In addition, Tricás-Vidal et al. (2022) confirmed that residents of the United States, who felt encouraged to be physically active by fitness influencers on Instagram, were more physically active. Baranow (2019) and Haemers (2016) have shown that marketing communication via Instagram influencers has a positive impact on brand perceptions of fitness activity and even influences purchase decisions (Schiefer, 2018), but they didn't further divide perceptions of different social media content.

According to Morgan and Hunt (1994), trust in relationships is characterized by qualities such as consistency, competence, honesty, responsibility, good faith, and integrity of the partner. Several authors have recognized trust as a critical factor in fostering successful relationships between companies and customers (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). It is well known that user satisfaction and trust in the fitness center brand have a positive influence on the decision to repurchase (Hurley, 2004; Musskopf et al., 2021). Istanbulluoglu & Sakman (2022) believe that communicating with customers through social media channels may be associated with stronger repurchase intentions by instilling greater trust in the company. Many more studies have found connections between marketing communication channels and purchase decisions in other areas, outside fitness industry (Dabbous & Barakat, 2020; Ramesh and Vidhya, 2019).

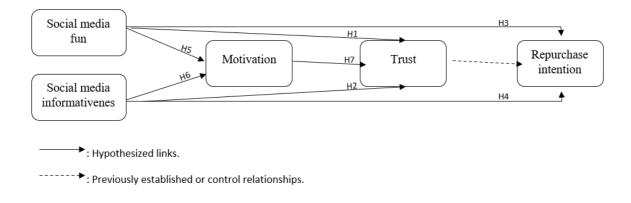
In the fitness industry, it has been shown that with posts on social media and the use of influencers, it is possible to influence consumer trust (Barranow, 2019) and purchase (Schiefer, 2018) or even exercise intent (Durau et al., 2022). Tsitskari et al. (2017) segmented gym participants based on their motivation. Their study showed a statistically significant difference between groups with exercise motivation for both service quality and psychological commitment to the fitness center. A recent study conducted in Indonesia also shows that marketing content on social media can have a positive effect on customer engagement, which in turn affects intention to use the service (Miryam & Antonio, 2022). But contradictory, Zhou and Krishnan (2019) could not confirm a direct effect of social media content on exercise maintenance. Furthermore, contradictory empirical findings in this area is one more reason to conduct research.

A study conducted in Korea showed that customer trust in fitness centers had a significant impact on customer satisfaction, and customer satisfaction had a significant impact on revisit intention (Kim & Lee, 2018). In addition, content quality had significant positive effects on the perceived value of fitness platforms on social media, and perceived value was positively correlated with revisit intention in China (Gao et al., 2021). Trust also had a direct and positive impact on repurchase intention in fitness centers in Brazil (Musskopf, 2021), so we expect the same results in our research.

The aim of our study is to investigate the relationships between marketing channels, exercise motivation, trust, and repurchase intention. First, we will collect information from users of Slovenian gyms. Following factorial analysis, which has been shown to be a good method for Exercise Motivations Inventory -2 (EMI-2) in the Slovenian population (Vučković et al., 2022), we will use the first factor in Structura Equation Modelling (SEM).

Specifically, we propose that social media informativeness and social media fun should both have positive effect on consumer trust (H1, H2). Social media informativeness will also have a positive effect on consumers' repurchase intention (H4), because it is expected that informing customers about the positive effects of exercise can increase interest in exercise and trust in the center as a reliable source of information. There is not much evidence that posting fun posts on social media can attract customers, but we expect there a visible connection. There will be a positive effect of perception of social media fun on repurchase intentions (H3). As aforementioned, social media can have different effects on exercise motivation (Vaterlaus, 2015; Carrotte et al., 2015). However, we hypothesize that both social media fun (H5) and

social media informativeness (H6) will have positive effects on motivation. Finally, we will investigate the relationship between motivational structure and trust in fitness center (H7).



### **METHODS**

### **Participants**

The purpose of the present study was to determine the trust and repurchase intentions of fitness centers users in relation to marketing channel use and exercise motives of fitness users. We collected data from fitness center members from 18 fitness centers from 9 major Slovenian cities (4 from the eastern region and 5 from the western region). A total of 1696 questionnaires were distributed, 764 of which were completed and eventually used, representing a response rate of 39.36%.

Table 1. Sample characteristics.

	(%)
Gender	
Male	50.5
Female	49.5
Age	
Mean age	27.4
Status	
Single	49.7
In relationship	50.3
Education	
Elementary school degree	1.8
Secondary school degree	47.4
High school degree	18.5
College degree	25.8
Master's or doctoral degree	6.4
Occupation	
Student	47.9
Unemployed	2.0
Corporate employee	39.0
Self-employee	9.9
Retiree	1.0

In the Table 1, we can see the demographic characteristics of the samples.

#### Instruments

### Exercise Motivation

The EMI-2 scale consists of 51 items and each item is measured on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from zero (does not apply to me at all) to five (applies to me very much), with higher scores indicating higher motivation to exercise. These items form 14 subscales, including: Affiliation, Appearance, Challenge, Competition, Enjoyment, Health Pressure, Disease Prevention, Agility, Positive Health, Revitalization, Social Recognition, Strength and Endurance, Stress Management, and Weight Management. Each subscale is determined by calculating the average of 3 to 4 appropriate items based on the EMI-2 scale scoring key. The EMI-2 is a factorially valid mean of assessing a wide range of motives for participation in sporting activities in adult men and women and is suitable for both athletes and non-athletes (Markland & Ingledew, 1997). EMI-2 was already used on Slovenian population, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.70 to 0.94 (Vučković et al., 2022). There are several other instruments that are similar in nature and can be used to measure exercise motivations for instance the Behavioral Regulation in Exercise Questionnaire-2 (BREQ-2), whos Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the different subscales range from 0.60 to 0.88 (Mahony et al., 2019).

#### Social Media Informativeness and Social Media Fun

Consistent with studies of traditional advertising, the two main benefits of advertising are expected to be informativeness and entertainment (Edwards et al., 2002). Perceptions of informativeness of social media were assessed using a four-point scale (helpful, unimportant, uninformative, useless; the last three items were reverse coded), as were perceptions of social media fun (attractive, enjoyable, entertaining, fun). We adopted scales to our context from original, where instead of social media, more generalized, advertising informativeness and fun/entertainment (Edwards et al., 2002; Noguti & Waller, 2020). The scale was never used in Slovenian speaking area, so we translated it back-forth.

#### Trust

A scale previously used by Morgan & Hunt (1994) was adapted by Walsh & Beatty (2007) to measure trust. The scale consists of 6 five-item Likert-type items. The original scale has acceptable reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.74 to 0.83. The scale was never used in Slovenian speaking area, so we translated it back-forth.

### Repurchase Intention

Four five-point Likert-type items measure a customer's attitude toward his current and future purchases of the brand. The original scale has acceptable reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.66 to 0.77 (Kumar & Pansari, 2016). The scale was never used in Slovenian speaking area, so we translated it back-forth.

### **Research Design**

Members were approached with iPad when they were leaving fitness center after their workout. To encourage participation, members were offered a protein bar and kindly asked to complete a questionnaire. They sat down on a chair and completed the questionnaire in peace. All questionnaires were distributed from Monday to Sunday in the morning, afternoon, and evening. Although the sample was convenient rather that a randomly selected one, all fitness centers in the country have similar characteristics in terms of facilities, equipment, programs offered, and membership conditions. This study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki and the British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Q4 Conduct. All participants provided written informed consent before participating in the study, and the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Sport at the College of Ljubljana granted ethical approval for data collection (No. 2021-19).

In a pilot study for Slovenian population (Vučković et al., 2022), it was demonstrated that we extract 9 factors when factorizing 52 EMI-2 items and that the first component accounts for 36.2% of the explained variance. Consequently, we took the items from this first component.

We first conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the model constructs.

#### RESULTS

With factor analysis, we got 9 factors. Most of the questions are in the first component, which accounts for 36.2% of the explained variance. According to original scoring key, questions from first component fit into 3 motivations: Stress management, Revitalization and Enjoyment. Those 3 dimensions of motivation were used in Structural model equation.

Below, we can see the results of confirmatory analysis, composite reliability and average variance extracted of used constructs.

Construct	λ	CR	AVE
Stress manageme	ent	0.85	0.65
EMI20	0.77		
EMI34	0.78		
EMI46	0.88		
Revitalization		0.8	0.58
EMI3	0.66		
EMI17	0.85		
EMI31	0.76		
Enjoyment		0.84	0.57
EMI9	0.63		
EMI23	0.80		
EMI37	0.82		
EMI48	0.76		
Social media info	ormativeness	0.92	0.78
INFDO2	0.83		
INFDO3	0.91		
INFDO4	0.92		
Social media fun	L	0.88	0.65
ZABDO5	0.80		
ZABDO6	0.86		
ZABDO7	0.87		
ZABDO8	0.68		
Trust		0.97	0.78
TRUST1	0.85		
TRUST2	0.89		
TRUST3	0.91		
TRUST4	0.88		
TRUST5	0.89		
TRUST6	0.89		
Repurchase inter	ntion	0.89	0.72
RINT1	0.85		
RINT2	0.85		
RINT4	0.85		
Model fit			
$\chi^2$		1087	
df		278	
RMSEA		0.06	
NNFI		0.97	
CFI		0.98	

Table 2. Construct measure and psychometric properties.

Notes:  $\lambda$  – standardized loading, CR = composite reliability, AVE = average variance extracted

As we can see in Table 2, psychometric properties of our constructs are acceptable. The CFA model resulted in a good overall fit ( $\chi$ 2=1087, df=278, RMSEA=0.06, NNFI=0.97; CFI=0.98) and high construct reliability (ranging from 0.8 for revitalization to 0.97 for trust). In addition,

convergent validity of the measures was supported, as all indicators significantly load on their respective latent variables.

# construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Informativeness	0.81						
social media fun	0.19**	0.76					
stress management	0.08*	0.26**	0.75				
Revitalization	0.12**	0.27**	0.71**	0.88			
Enjoyment	0.08*	0.27**	0.63**	0.73**	0.81		
Trust	0.31**	0.46**	0.24**	0.30**	0.28**	0.88	
repurchase intention	0.25**	0.32**	0.17**	0.22**	0.20**	0.73**	0.85

Table 3. Discriminant validity assessment.

Notes: correlations are shown below the diagonal; square root AVEs are shown on the diagonal in bold.

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As we can see in Table 3, average variance extracted (AVE) ranged from 0.57 to 0.78 and all square roots of AVEs were much larger than any of the corresponding correlations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) thus establishing discriminant validity.

Table 4. Structural model estimation results.

Estimated paths	$\beta$ (t-value)	$\mathbb{R}^2$
Stress management $\rightarrow$ trust	-0.08 (-1.19)	0.35
Revitalization $\rightarrow$ trust	0.46 (1.66)	
Enjoyment $\rightarrow$ trust	-0.03 (-0.24)	
Social media informativeness → trust	0.17 (5.65)	
Social media fun → trust	0.39 (10.69)	
Trust $\rightarrow$ repurchase intention	0.80 (19.41)	0.62
Social media informativeness $\rightarrow$ repurchase intention	0.02 (0.83)	
Social media fun $\rightarrow$ repurchase intention	-0.05 (-1.62)	
Social media informativeness → stress management	0.01 (0.24)	0.09
Social media fun → stress management	0.36 (6.88)	
Social media informativeness $\rightarrow$ revitalization	0.03 (1.31)	0.10
Social media fun $\rightarrow$ revitalization	0.18 (6.57)	
Social media informativeness → enjoyment	0.03 (0.67)	0.10
Social media fun $\rightarrow$ enjoyment	0.34 (6.98)	
Model fit	χ2 = 1087.58, df = 281, RMSEA = 0.06, NNFI = 0.97; CFI = 0.98	

Notes:  $\beta$  = standardized coefficient

As shown in Table 4, SEM resulted in an acceptable model fit ( $\chi 2 = 1087.58$ , df = 281, RMSEA = 0.06, NNFI = 0.97; CFI = 0.98) and was valid.

#### DISCUSSION

In the age of digitalization, marketing channels, such as social media, can greatly influence consumer trust (Baranow, 2019) and purchase intention (Schiefer, 2018) in the fitness market. While previous studies have shown that social media content can positively influence exercise intention (Durau et al., 2022) and service usage intention (Miryam & Antonio, 2022) in fitness centers, our study contributes to this knowledge by examining the influence of different types of social media content on motivation, trust, and repurchase intention.

Our results suggest that both informativeness and social media fun have a significant positive impact on gym members' trust. Thus, we confirmed H1 and H2. By providing informative content on social media, companies can establish themselves as experts in their field and build credibility (Fog & Indra, 2022). They can help customers better understand the value of their services and increase their commitment to their health and fitness goals, creating a relationship that can lead to greater trust in brand. On the other hand, social media fun can help create a sense of community among fitness center members. By offering their members the opportunity to interact on social media, fitness centers can create a positive and supportive environment that fosters trust. It is well known that the use of humor by salespeople positively influences customer trust (Lussier, Grégoire & Vachon, 2017). Our research has shown that by providing fun and creative content on social media, fitness centers can show their members that they are not just a faceless business, but a group of people with a sense of humor and a passion for fitness; this can help increase members' trust in the brand.

Some studies have demonstrated that people can be motivated to exercise through social media (Li et al., 2023). Conversely, other studies have attempted to confirm that social media can influence exercise maintenance, but the results were not significant (Zhou & Krishnan, 2019). To further the body of knowledge, we examined the effects of different types of content on social media channels on membership repurchase intention in fitness centers.

Our results show that the impact of social media fun on the intention to repurchase membership is not significant, so we reject H3. There may be several reasons for this. If individuals perceive the fitness brand's social media posts as frivolous or unrelated to their fitness goals, they may begin to question the credibility and relevance of the fitness center, which could negatively impact their intention to repurchase membership. On the other hand, entertaining content looks fun and interesting, and members enjoy watching it. However, after some time, the fitness brand posting such content may appear less professional and competent, which may cause members not to renew their membership. Also, the impact of social media fun on repurchase intention may also depend on how the fitness center uses its social media presence to drive engagement and encourage customers to return. For example, if the fitness center uses social media to offer exclusive deals or provide personalized recommendations, customers may be more likely to repurchase their membership (Vučković & Majerič, 2021). However, if the fitness center does not actively use social media to engage or provide value to customers, the impact of social media fun on repurchase intention may be minimal.

In addition, we found that the perception of social media informativeness on intention to repurchase ticked in attended fitness center is not significant, so we rejected H4. We expected, as posting informative content about exercise could position fitness club as credible and competent, making customers want to stay and renew their membership. However, our results show that while informative content may increase brand trust, it may not necessarily lead to purchase behavior. Even if customers perceive the fitness center as informative on social media, they may not necessarily feel compelled to renew their membership if they have concerns or priorities that outweigh their appreciation for the informative content. This is not consistent with previous literature suggesting that informative and high-quality content on social media can influence customers' intentions, such as exercise intention (Li et al., 2023). However, it is very important to have in mind that the decision to repurchase a fitness center membership is influenced by several factors, such as perceived quality (Musskopf et al., 2021) and service quality (Choi, 2001), customer commitment and frequency of weekly visits, and perceived price (Ferrand et al., 2010). In addition, other factors such as variety of classes or convenience of location (Plummer, 2003; Plummer, 2007), or even type of membership (DellaVigna & Malmendier, 2006) could also influence the decision to repurchase membership at a fitness center visited.

Social media fun positively and significantly impacts all three types of motivation, so we could confirm H5. Laughter and humor can trigger positive emotions such as joy and happiness, which can lead to increased motivation for physical activity (Ekkekakis et al., 2008). When people see a funny post, it can help them associate exercise with positive emotions, which can increase the likelihood of wanting to engage in physical activity. In addition, seeing a funny post on social media can provide a brief distraction and help people forget about negative thoughts, making it easier to stay motivated and focused on fitness goals. When people find exercise enjoyable and fun, they are more likely to continue doing it consistently. Fun posts on

social media can help exercise feel less like a chore and more like a fun activity, which can increase willingness to exercise.

We found no significant effect of social media informativeness on exercise motivation types, so we rejected H6. One possible explanation could be that the type of information provided on social media may not be directly related to exercise motivation. While informative content may increase trust in the fitness center brand, it may not necessarily address the specific needs and motivations of individual customers. Exercise motivation is a complex construct that is influenced by a variety of internal and external factors (Markland & Ingledew, 1997). Therefore, even if customers perceive the fitness center as informative on social media, it may not necessarily impact their exercise motivation. Furthermore, the impact of social media informativeness on exercise motivation may depend on how the information is presented and the engagement it elicits from customers. For example, if the informative content is presented in a motivational way that excites and encourages customers to exercise, it may have a more significant impact on exercise motivation. However, if the informative content is presented in a passive or uninspiring manner, customers may not engage with it and the impact on motivation to exercise may be limited. In addition, there is a difference between reading or knowing information about exercise and being motivated for exercise. Some people just want to know about something but are not motivated to exercise.

We also examined the relationship between exercise motivation and trust in a fitness center, but could not find significant connection, so we rejected H7. A more fine-grained approach showed that Revitalization as a part of motivation positively influenced trust, but we could not conclude so for Enjoyment and Stress management. Members who exercise for stress management or enjoyment reasons do not trust fitness center brand - connection was negative but not significant. Perhaps it is due to the fact that people who exercise for pleasure like it so much that they do not care which gym they work out at. They are intrinsically motivated to exercise no matter which club they are training. Even more, they enjoy exercise, but they may hate the "Fitness club community", because there is a lot of noise, talking and socializing. They do not want that; they just want to enjoy in exercise. Similarly, people who exercise because exercise helps them relieve stress. They also do not care in which fitness club community" and all the measures that fitness clubs make to engage members and build brand trust have an opposite effect on such motivated members. Our results also show a positive but not significant relationship between revitalization motive and trust. It is known that members who exercise for

revitalization reasons are mostly older members (Vučković & Kajtna, 2023), who exhibit more consistent exercise behavior (Rahman et al., 2018) and change clubs less frequently, so we expected them to trust their fitness center brand; but our results could not confirm this. Sandach (2022) empirically examined whether specific self-efficacy for a particular health behavior (in his case, habitual meditation, and mindfulness for stress reduction) had a moderating effect on the influence of social media, but again the results were inconclusive.

Lastly, we confirmed the previously researched fact that user trust in a fitness center strongly predicts repurchase intention, similar to Kim & Lee (2018) and Musskopf (2021).

Overall, social media can play a critical role in success of fitness centers by providing a platform for informative content that builds trust, educates customers, keeps them engaged, and influences their behavior for future purchases.

### Limitations

The results of this study are of some theoretical value and practical importance, but also have some limitations. First, this study was cross-sectional, data were collected at one time, and no effective follow-up study was conducted. Second, the sample size was 18 gyms; since Slovenia is a small country and 18 large gyms from 9 major cities were included in the study, the conclusions can only be generalized to a certain extent. Third, due to the cultural and sociological characteristics of Slovenia, this study cannot be generalized worldwide. Fourth, participants were asked about their perception of social media content and that can also be subjective – future studies could use more objective measures or qualitative approaches to capture specific content characteristics. Lastly, we surveyed participants of fitness centers, who already train and are already (highly) motivated to participate in fitness training. It would be interesting to observe the interaction of factors in a general population.

### CONCLUSION

Our research contributes to the international kinesiology literature by seeking to better understand the relationships between exercise motivation, marketing channels, trust, and repurchase intention in the fitness sector. To the best of our knowledge, our study is the first to examine the relationships between these constructs.

We found that both social media informativeness and social media fun had a significant positive impact on the trust of fitness center members, but neither had a direct significant impact on repurchase intention. In addition, we found that social media fun positively influenced all three types of motivation, while social media informativeness had no significant influence on exercise motivation.

#### **Managerial implications**

From a practical perspective, the study's findings provide some guidance on how fitness managers and owners should communicate with their members on social media to build trust in their brand and thus increase the likelihood of repurchase intention. It is important for fitness centers to invest in market research to better understand the motivational structure of their target audience and use this information to develop effective marketing strategies.

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### **Disclosure statement**

All authors declare that they are not aware of any competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work in this article.

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