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Management of Modern Fitness (Comparison of Germany - Turkey)¹

(Modern Fitnes Yönetimi (Almanya – Türkiye Kıyaslaması))

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Abstract

Fitness has shown great progress in the last 20 years world-wide by offering a new sportive life and life style. Besides the expectations having an aesthetic body, being attractive and imposing, to have more healthy life, the costs are paid. In fitness Germany is in position to be a role model. Academic structure, congress organization especially for fitness, fitness journals, accreditation and supervision system for fitness centers and also great interest of the public into the sport serve as model. The sector, in which graduates are employed in higher amounts, is fitness. In Turkey the masses show great interest in fitness. The independent federation could not be reached yet and there is supervision problem to control the existing fitness centers. In fitness which is dependent to Ministry of Youth and Sports, authorization discussions are going on. There are serious problems in the competence of trainers working in centers and urgent need of changes in the legal legislation.

Keywords; Fitness, Fitness Management, Employment.

Özet

Eski çağlarda duvarlara çizilmiş olan resimleri anlamlandırma çabaları ile başlayan okuma eylemi, Fitnes dünya genelinde yeni bir sportif yaşam ve yaşam stili sunması ile son 20 yılda büyük gelişim kaydetmiştir. Estetik bir vücuda sahip olmak, çekici ve gösterişli olabilmek gibi beklentilerin yanı sıra sağlıklı bir yaşam adına ücret ödenmektedir. Fitnesde Almanya model konumundadır. Akademik yapılanma, fitnese özel kongre organizasyonları, fitnes dergileri, Fitnes merkezlerinin akreditasyonu ve denetimleri yanında fitnes sporuna halkın geniş katılımı örnek seviyededir. Spor alanından mezun olanların en yüksek oranda istihdam edildiği sektör de fitnesdir. Türkiye’de kitleler fitnese büyük bir ilgi göstermektedir. Fitnesin bağımsız bir federasyon yapısına henüz ulaşamamış, var olan merkezlerde de denetim eksiklikleri vardır. Gençlik ve Spor Bakanlığına bağlı olan fitnesde yetki tartışması devam etmektedir. Fitnes merkezlerinde çalışan eğitimcilerinin yetkinliklerinde sorunlar ve yasal mevzuat konularında acil giderilmesi gereken ciddi problemler vardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Fitnes, Fitnes Yönetimi, istihdam.

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Introduction

Fitness which started in 1970s, grew in 1980s and expanded worldwide 1990s, created essential addiction at the present time. Women and men have decided to invest money from their budgets to have more attractive and good looking body. With this aim becoming a member of fitness clubs, attending in fitness activities and having a pretty body has turned into a trend (Enders, 2012).

Besides of the wish to have an attractive and fit body;

- Protecting the body against sickness,
- Prevention of Fatness and Obesity,
- Joining daily life with vitality and cheerful,
- Decreasing the mental strain and strengthening cardiovascular system,
- Eliminate the physical posture disorders,
- To protect the health and functionality of muscles and joints,
- To delay the aging process,
- To develop the social engagement, avoid loneliness etc.

Due to health and social reasons fitness draws great interest and the participant numbers is increasing continuously. It is carrying on its growth with a speed which makes the other sport fields jealous. The development of fitness can only be compared with professional football. The endorsement of the sector is a proof of this growth. The participation in professional football can be defined as passive on the other hand the active participation in fitness shows it's another praised property.

The Aim and Method of the Project

Germany who is the leader country for the institutionalization of fitness, serves as model as the level of the fitness great interest of the public into the sport, the amount of endorsement reached by commercial fitness business. More importantly, the certificate for trainers who are working in the commercial or non-commercial business, are carefully designed requiring high level knowledge, experience and competence. Supervision of fitness centers are regulated with transparent and solid rules which are approved by the ultimate controlling party (DOSB). In Turkey there are still unsolved structural problems. Trainers can work with the basic level training certificates and there are authority discussions on the supervision procedures.

Fitness is an important field of sport in which public joins actively and has got a trend to grow in Turkey. This study was realized by literature research and observation methods. As remote target of the research; attracting Ministry of Youth and Sports' and related federations' attentions to the urgent need of making legislations, discussions of authorization and new regulations for training of fitness trainers can be mentioned.

Sport in Germany

Germany is one of the world-wide leading countries which has got public with high rate of attending sport activities. Germany is the top country for the active sport participation of the total population. Germany is the only country whose population's more than 25% is active and licensed sportsperson. German General Sports Organization (DSB) mentioned that the numbers of sport club members are more than 25 million according to their 1980-1997 statistical data. Every one of three person is an active sportsperson in Germany (Buch, M-P, 1998).

The greatest public group of Germany is sportspersons with 27, 6 million memberships in 91.000 sports clubs. Sport clubs and federations have to be ready for competition. Therefore most of the clubs are making studies on keeping the existing members in their clubs and obtaining new ones

(Digel, 2000). Some clubs has started to include fitness studios in their facilities since this sport has become a trend and the number of these type of studios increased dramatically in the last period. Moreover the studios which serves high quality, to special target groups with flexible operating hours, are awarded with a logo of SPORT PRO FITNESS.



In the empirical research of Wolfgang Weber and others (1994), it is noted that in the years of 1990/1991 the total cost of private consumption per house which is 32 billion DM, is as much as 1,4% of the whole economy and almost equal to the agriculture economy. By sport investments 700.000 people are employed in direct or indirect ways (Horch, 2002). While the number of commercial sport business number is 250 in 1980, it increased to 6000 in 1990 and reached around 10.000 in 2010. The total cost of private consumption per house which was 32 billion DM according to Weber's (1994) research, doubled in 2002 and half of this amount is paid to the fitness centers (Freyer 2003, s.261).

Fitness in Germany

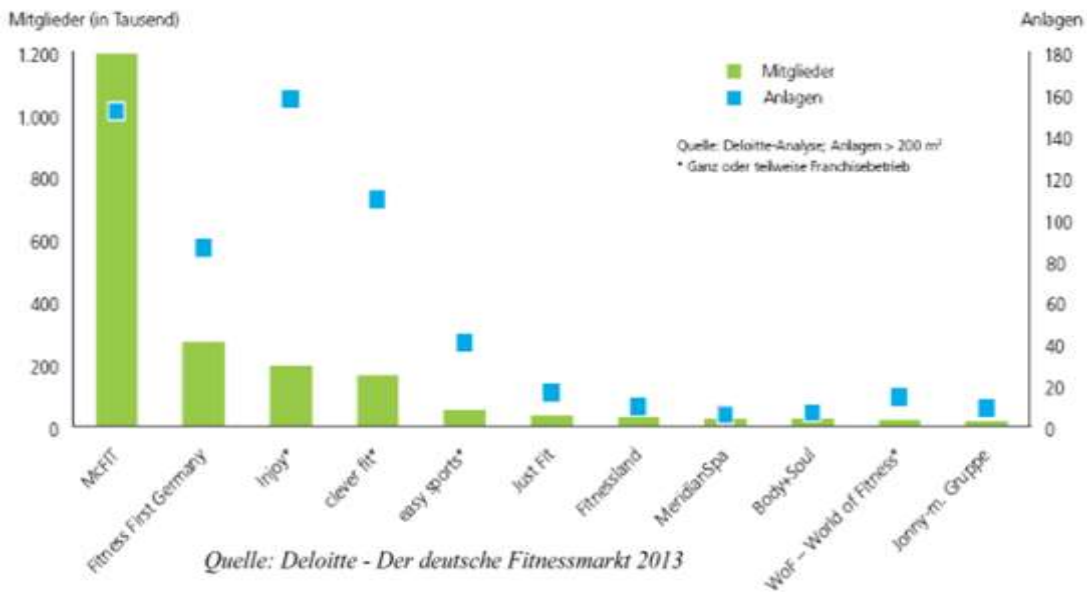
The development of these, at that time founded and newly appeared Fitness chain companies, engraved the fitness market in Germany in the first decade of the 21st century. Partly financed by external investors like Private Equity Companies, these business forms gained gradually market share in comparison to single studios managed companies. At the end of 2011 companies with more than 3 studios united already 43, 2% of 7, 6 million members, although they were running just 27, 3% of the facilities.

The discrepancy of the amount of members and studios can be explained by the considerable bigger facilities of chain companies. The owner of bigger units utilized some advantages to expand in comparison to single studios managed companies. The investment power for new equipment, appliance and last but not least new clubs is generally much stronger than in small companies managed by the owner. Also the budget for marketing and advertisement play an important role, what is seen in a higher customer perception.

The company „McFit“ is since 2007 appearing with the biggest marketing campaign of a fitness company in the media. This includes TV advertisement, Event Sponsoring and the usage of Testimonials or the publishing of an own fitness magazine. Not least bigger companies command higher management capacities, which are necessary for a successful company regulation.

The clearest trend of the young 21st century represents the development of the discount segment in the fitness industry. Pushed by „McFit GmbH“, with around 1.000.000 memberships the market leader in Germany, a new area has been formed, in which meanwhile a multitude of providers are focused on offering condition- and power equipment and charging clearly less than 20 Euro membership fee each month. For the future it cannot be assumed that the increase will continue unrelieved. In fact the discount fitness will establish a certain market share, for this reason permanently force other companies to define themselves by their performances, since they hardly can win the price competition (Gronau, 2012).

Abb. 15 – Mitglieder- und Anlagenzahlen ausgewählter Betreiber



<http://www2.deloitte.com/de/de/pages/presse/contents/Deutsche-Fitnessbranche-auf-Wachstumskurs.html>

The manager of the employer organization of German Fitness and Health Facilities (DSSV) Refit Kamberovic assumes in his prediction that the number of fitness company memberships will increase to 10 million till 2017. This bears comparison with a growth of 2,4 million by contrast with the number end of 2011 and a percentage of total population (a supposed unchanged population) of around 12 %. The expectations of industry representatives concerning the future membership development seem to, after an annual increase of more than 5 % in the last 5 years, continue growing.



In the research which was done on the commercial sport businesses in Cologne in 1999, it is mentioned that the fitness centers were far beyond than others. According to data from 1995, 359 of 860 sport clubs were in commercial activities and 38.000 of 190.000 members were interested in fitness centers. 20% of fitness centers were commercial and the number of fitness center members are over 52.000 (Kaiser, 2002).

According to Bruer and Hovemann (2002), fitness has got the 7th place in sport consumption expenditures and the endorsement is around 2.795.000 Deutsches Mark (DM) (Breuer – Hovemann, 2002).

German Federation of Fitness and Aerobic (DFAV) was founded in 1991 and has been active for 25 years. German Federation of Fitness and Health Facilities Owners (DSSV) was founded in 1984. DSSV is Europe's biggest structure for fitness-economy. In Germany fitness has turned to be a big sector with more than 8.000 facilities and 4,7 billion euros yearly endorsement.

Entwicklung des Fitnessbereichs in Deutschland										
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	2000
Mitgliederzahlen gesamt	1,7 Mio.	1,8 Mio.	2,0 Mio.	2,7 Mio.	3,2 Mio.	3,3 Mio.	3,41 Mio.	3,55 Mio.	3,89 Mio.	4,55 Mio.
Ahzahl der Fitness-Center	4100	4500	4750	5000	5300	5400	5500	5700	5900	6500
Durchschnittliche Mitgliederzahl pro Studio	415	400	421	540	604	612	620	625	659	700
Jährlicher Umsatz pro Studio (DM)	390'	422'	446'	500'	509'	622'	636'	638'	679'	730'
Gesamtumsatz der Studios (DM)	1,6 Mrd.	1,9 Mrd.	2,12 Mrd.	2,5 Mrd.	2,7 Mrd.	3,36 Mrd.	3,5 Mrd.	3,64 Mrd.	4,01 Mrd.	4,74 Mrd.

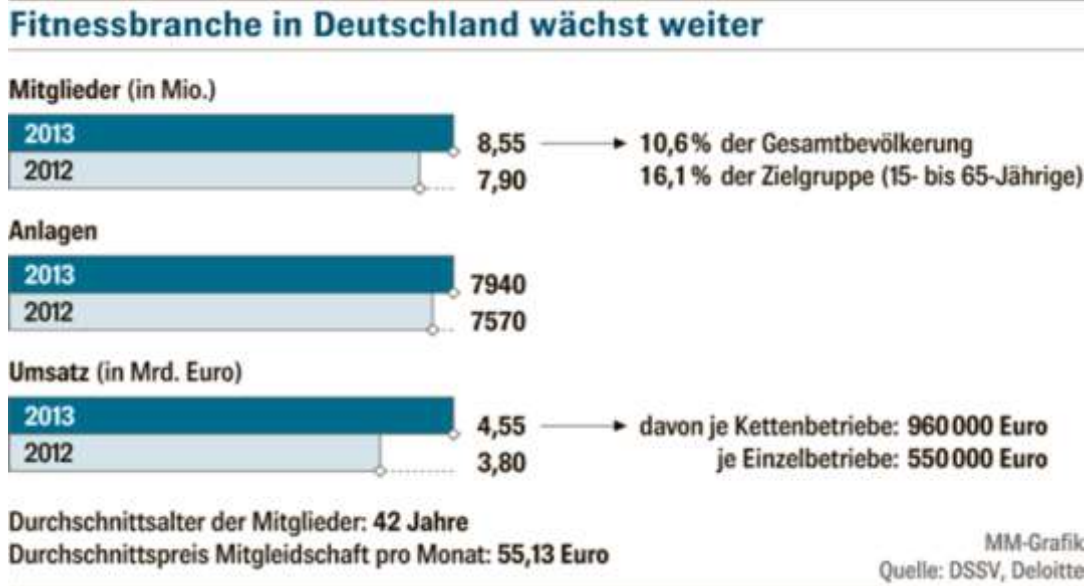
Quelle: Deutscher Sportstudioverband (DSSV) 2000.

The journals "Fitness and Health (F&G)" by DFAV, "Fitness Management International" and "Medical Fitness and Healthcare" by DSSV are published periodically. Since 2007 "Fitness and Health" congresses have been organized regularly (<http://www.aufstiegskongress.de/eine-seite/der-kongress>).

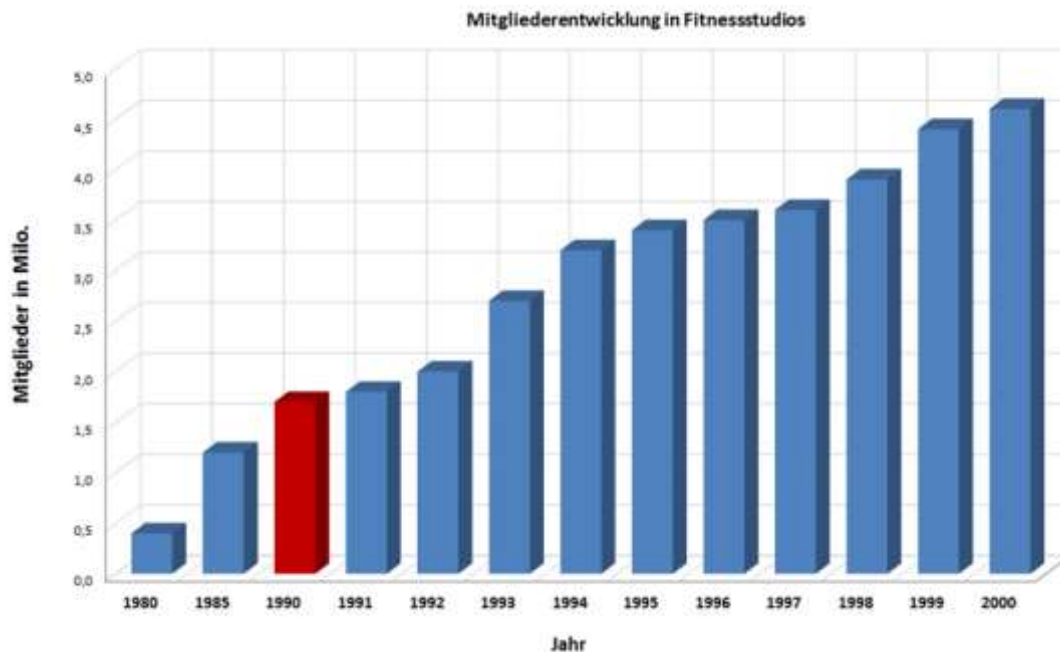


Academic Fitness Programs in German Universities

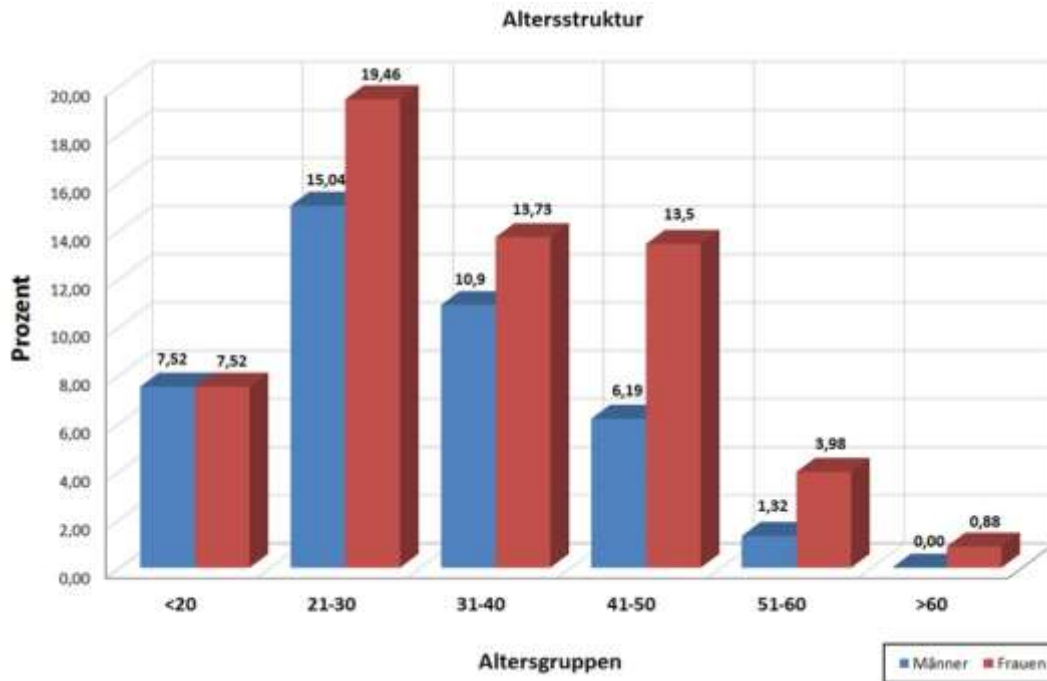
As mentioned in the Ph.D. thesis which was written over Fitness at Heinrich – Heine Universität Düsseldorf in 2012 by Wolfram Dressler;



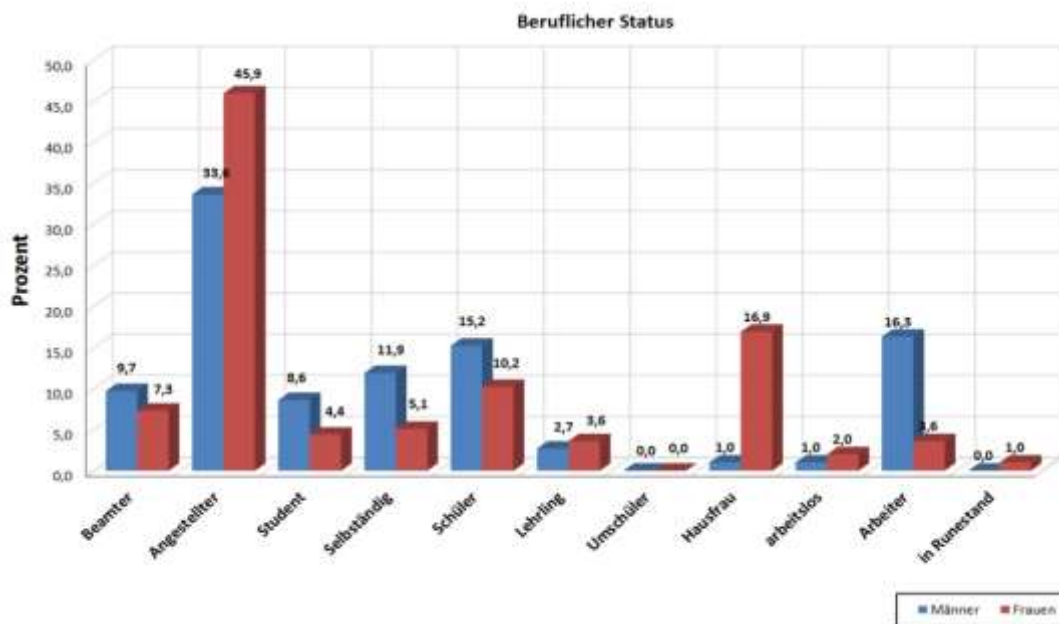
The development of fitness centers shows a periodic increase by years.



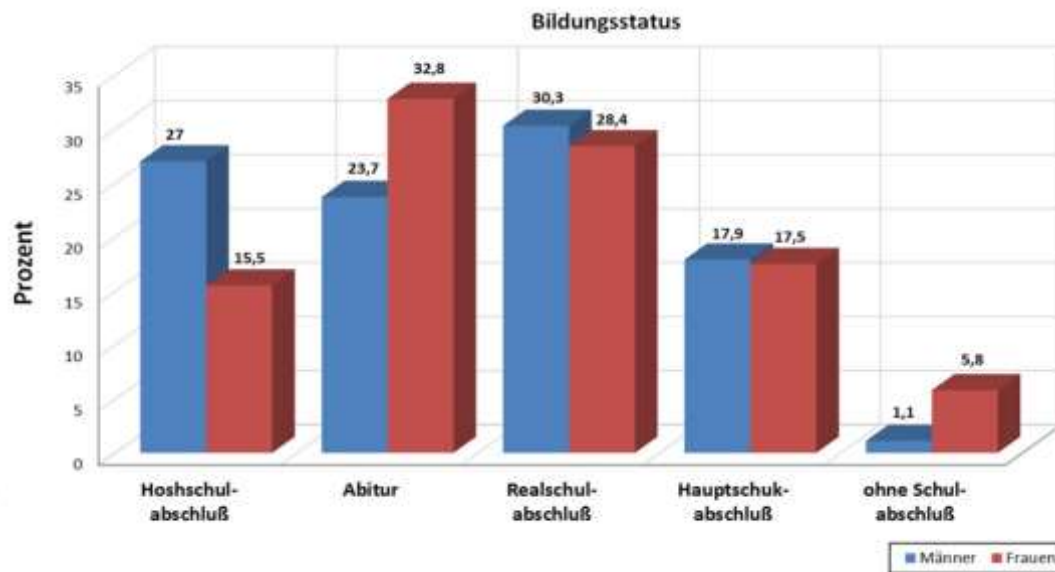
It is noticed that the increase slope of the number of the fitness centers members shows an uptrend.



The age distribution of fitness centers' members shows a balanced distribution from 6 till 60 years old, supports the image of sportive society.



The occupation distribution of fitness centers' attendee also shows a balanced distribution in the society. A high rate in the officers group which is defined as "Angestellter", auxiliary staff and housewives and males in the workers group are observed which is in the normal limits.



In the research made on the education levels of attendee to fitness centers, also a balanced distribution is observed. While there is a reasonable balance between university graduates and others, the highest portion is consisted of high-school graduates (30,3 % male and 28,4 % female) and next highest one is of university graduates (27 % male and 15,5 % female).

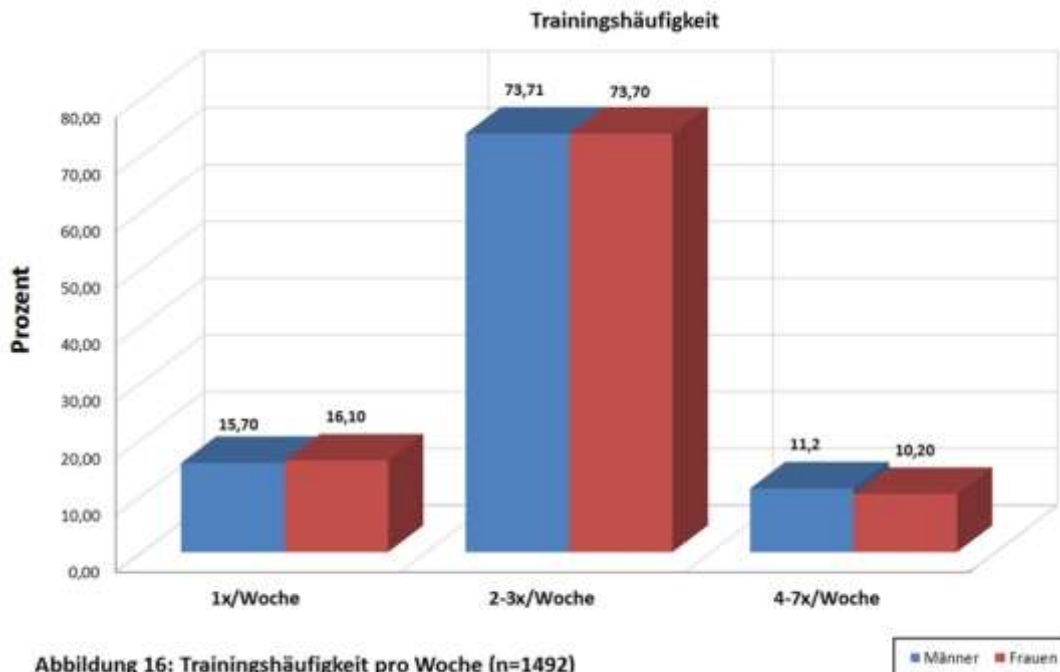


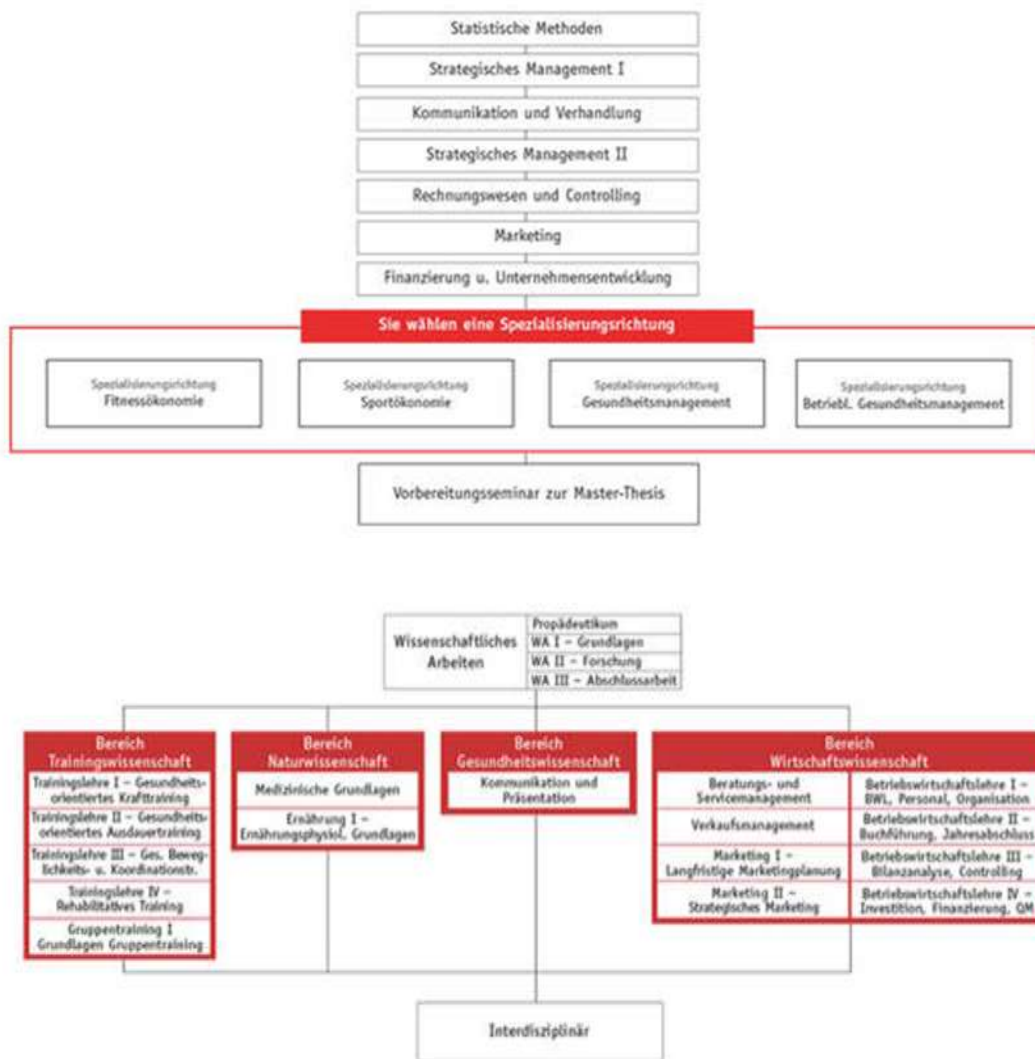
Abbildung 16: Trainingshäufigkeit pro Woche (n=1492)

It is found out that attendee are training fitness generally (78 % of all) 2 or 3 times per week (Dreßler, 2002).

Academic Education of Fitness in German Universities

In German universities the following bachelor or master degree programs whose length change between 4 till 8 semesters, are offered:

- Fitness Management
- Fitness Economy
- Fitness Exercise Science
- Management of Sport Facilities
- Sport Management
- Sport and Management



(Quelle: <http://www.dhfp.de/studiengaenge/kurzuebersichten/inhaltsuebersicht-studiengaenge.html>)

Sport Pro Fitness Quality Logo

Health and fitness centers of sport clubs have been able to apply to get SPORT PRO FITNESS Quality Logo since autumn of 2008. This logo is given to only studios belonging to sport clubs nationwide by Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund (DOSB), Deutscher Turner-Bund (DTB) and Bundesverband Deutscher Gewichtheber (BVDG). A team of experts examines the studio of the sport club who made application.

a) Quality criterias

SPORT PRO FITNESS raises the organized sport to higher quality standards. To be awarded with quality logo, it is necessary to meet the quality criteria. Related headlines are listed below:

- Sufficiency of managing and training staff
- Attention sportively
- Existing equipment
- Spatial conditions
- Service
- Environmental criteria
- Struggling against misuse of pills

Those quality criteria's are evaluated according to a kind of point scoring system. In every field it is necessary to reach a minimum point level. In case the necessary score is reached, the quality logo is given. The design of the logo includes the expression "the health, fitness studio in the sport club".

b) The advantages for the clubs

SPORT PRO FITNESS Quality Logo helps the clubs with health and fitness studios to survive in the sector. Thus, these clubs can take part in the huge fitness sector. A studio with SPORT PRO FITNESS Quality Logo have got;

- Qualified and outstanding service
- Attraction to catch new members
- Experience share platform.

c) Advantages for Members of the Studio

SPORT PRO FITNESS Quality Logo offers a clear guidance for people who interested in fitness sport in the huge market of fitness studios. Customers have got certain demands from health and fitness studios. From this aspect, the basic priority is the competence of the staff. The other demands can be counted as equipment and hygiene. Nationwide SPORT PRO FITNESS Quality Logo shows the satisfaction of these kind of demands.

The other advantage of the fitness studios in the sport clubs is their own structure which has developed for decades. Sport clubs offer more than just sports, they are suitable places for new social contacts. Fitness customers have got following advantages:

- High qualifications for the trainers,
- Every two years periodical checks for quality standards,
- Friendly conversation atmosphere,
- Various types of sport opportunities,

(<http://www.sportprogesundheit.de/de/sport-und-gesundheit/sport-pro-fitness/downloads>)

Education Levels of Fitness Trainers in Germany

Fitness trainers must have A class fitness training certificate besides their academic education. According to the scientific progress in the field, the trainers have to join periodic in service trainings. During the opening of fitness centers the competence of trainers and for routine checks the diplomas of the trainers are controlled. The competence of the trainers is the primary issue of all.

In Germany commercial fitness structuring and non-commercial one (DFAV) are active together in cooperation. German fitness and health studio owners federation (DSSV) is quiet active and effective with serious lobby activities.



Fitness in Turkey

In Turkey fitness could not obtain an independent federation structure yet. It exists in the structure of Turkish Federation of Body Building, Fitness and Arm Wrestling (TVGFBB). Federation has no effective web-site. As activities of the federation, fitness is overshadowed by body building and arm wrestling.

The classification of fitness trainers are done in 5 levels as done in general sport fields;

- A. I. Level, (Assistant Trainer)
- B. II. Level, (Trainer)
- C. III. Level, (Senior Trainer)
- D. IV. Level, (Headcoach)
- E. V. Level, (Technical Director)

There is no regulation or official instructions for setting up fitness centers. According to Turkish Private Sport Studio Setting up Instructions under Private Physical Training and Sport Facilities Instructions which was published in official gazette with the number of 15.10.1999 / 23847, fitness studios can be set up. For setting up fitness studios, an application from just II. level fitness trainer as technical staff is sufficient. Bachelor degree from Physical Training and Sport, no matter from which department, is also accepted as fitness specialist. However, bachelors' degree for sports have got just for different basic programs. From those ones, just Coaching Training Department's curriculum corresponds to German fitness training graduation competences. The curriculum and education of the other programs, which are Physical Training and Sport Education Department, Recreation Department and Sport Management Departments, is not suitable to raise fitness trainers. There are no courses special to fitness exist, thus the competences to the field are discussable. However the regulations gives all graduates of sport faculties right to be fitness trainer. (http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/html/23847_0.html)

There is no common organization or union of commercial fitness business owners in Turkey. No scientific organization, congress of symposium special to fitness have not been organized yet. In universities there are no bachelor or master program particularly related fitness. Scientific researches (master or doctorate thesis) are little if any. There is lack of literature to reach information about the budget of fitness and endorsement of the fitness sector in Turkey. Information special to field is not shared and reachable. From the newspaper articles, some numbers for the endorsement can be estimated. According to Hurriyet (Turkish nationwide newspaper) the estimated endorsement is around 375.000 million USD. Even there are some estimations for the

number of participants, attending to the studios with or without membership, as 500.000, it is difficult to reach trustable information.



Conclusion

Fitness is growing rapidly in Turkey. But there is lack of information about the number of participants and the endorsement reached by the sector. Universities does not show sufficient interest to fitness yet. No programs special to fitness, just fitness courses special exist in universities. The fitness courses are insufficient when they are compared to Germany.

The certificates of trainers who work as specialist in fitness centers, are in low-level. While in Germany it is a must to have A class diploma, trainers who have got I. level training certificate can easily work in Turkish fitness centers and serves training to participants as if they are specialists.

There is authorization problem for supervision of fitness centers. The fitness centers situated in shopping centers cannot be controlled. Because the shopping centers

are under the supervision of Ministry of Industry, thus Ministry of Youth and Sports is no authority make any controls.

In universities special programs for fitness should be opened, in service training for existing fitness trainers should be organized and the certificates necessary to be fitness trainers should be re-organized. New regulations and instructions, pointing the missing issues, should be prepared by Ministry of Youth and Sports. It would be suitable to create realistic and determined politics to end the authorization for supervision problems.

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