Purpose
The purpose of our research was to determine the impact of gym television viewing on exercise routines. The following objectives were explored:

- What programming people watch on television during a workout
- Why people watch television while exercising
- How watching television affects workout intensity and duration.

Methodology
In order to conduct our research, we interviewed four people between the ages of 16-42 at the YMCA of North Pinellas. The interviews took place on June 16, 2009 between 9:30 am-10:10 am. The respondents were Jordan T., male, age 16; Jordan A., male, age 29; Debbie, female, age 42; Jackie, female, age 31. Each interview lasted between 1-2 minutes. A Sony ICD P520 audio recorder was used to record each interview. The MP3 files were then uploaded to the internet using box.net.

Results
Objective 1
Gym goers mostly watch news, sports, and music videos while working out. Like most fitness facilities, the YMCA of Pinellas has multiple television sets airing a variety of channels, which people watch for a number of different reasons.

- “ESPN. Because it’s cool.” – Jordan T.
- “I watch music videos. It gives me motivation and keeps the beat going.” - Jackie
- “I like to watch CNN and Fox because I like to be kept up on all of the latest news.” – Debbie.
- “I like to watch Bay News 9 and ESPN.” – Jordan A.
People are not highly selective in the programming they watch while working out. Only sometimes do gym goers change the television channel to their desired programming. Often, they watch whatever is already on.

Question: “If you ever have the chance, do you change the channel?”

- “No.” – Jordan A.
- “Sometimes, yes.” – Jackie
- “Not really.” – Jordan T.
- “Sometimes I do.” – Debbie

Objective 2
People watch television while exercising to fulfill different purposes. Like television viewing outside of a gym, exercisers watch for information, entertainment, or distraction.

- “I find it entertaining because it keeps me going in my workout. I tend to get bored, especially when I am doing cardio.” – Debbie
- “It gives me motivation and keeps the beat going.” – Jackie
- “Since I work, it’s hard to see during the day.” – Debbie

Television is watched simply because it is on. Although there are television screens on all around them, many people do not actively watch the programming while working out.

Question: “How much attention do you pay to the program on TV?”

- “I pay attention half of the time.” – Jackie
- “Little or not much attention.” – Jordan T.
- “Most of the time I just read the subtitles.” – Debbie

Objective 3
When it comes to the impact watching television has on the intensity and duration of a workout, the effects vary and the results can be positive or negative. For some, having a television on during a workout provides stimulation, distraction, and entertainment; this improves the intensity and extends the duration of the average workout. For others, a television is an interruption and interference that hinders a good workout.

- “If I didn’t have something to watch, I think I would be bored to death and wouldn’t last an hour to do my cardio.” – Debbie
- “It is distracting.” – Jordan T.
“I find it could be a hazard if you are not focused on your workout. You could hurt yourself.” – Debbie

Televisions diminish social interaction at the gym. Many people from the interview sample felt less social with other gym-goers as a result of the presence of televisions.

“...I like to watch TV more (than talking to others at the gym.)”. – Jordan T.

“It takes time away from talking to other people because I just mostly focus on the program at hand.” – Jordan A.

“It doesn’t (affect social interaction.)”

The effect is dependent on the programming. There was a correlation between the content being watched and gym-goers’ feelings. People said that usually news has a negative impact and music videos have a positive impact on workouts.

“If it is motivational like sports or music videos, it impacts your workout because you are working harder. You are motivated.” – Jackie

“The news gets a little depressing and it affects my workout. If something is depressing, I don’t really want to work out as hard.” – Debbie

“I like to watch Bay News 9 and ESPN...all I really want to do is watch TV and not try hard at all at what I am doing.”- Jordan A.

Conclusion

Some of what we found was surprising information while other findings affirmed predictions and ideas that we had prior to doing the interview research.

A major conclusion we drew from our results is that televisions definitely have an effect on workouts. Our findings show that the influences are positive and negative. Some gym patrons feel like viewing television improved their workout by motivating them. Others feel like it is distracting, which results in a lack of focus that is detrimental to their workout.

One big reason that people watch television while working out is because the television screens are unavoidable. Most gyms have many television screens in front of cardio machines and weight lifting equipment, which gives them an unobstructed view from anywhere in the fitness area. Televisions are always turned on, making them hard to avoid.

Regardless of how easily accessible televisions are people have the choice to watch them. The reasons people watch television varies. Many are often seeking motivation. From the interview results, generally men watch sports while working out. Athletics on television inspires them during physical exertion. Women watch music videos, especially during cardiovascular training. The beat of the music provides them a rhythm to move to and a beat to keep up with. Both men and women watch the news while exercising because they find it interesting and like to be kept up to speed.
Interview 1- Debbie Phillips
1. *Interviewer*: “What is your name?”
   *Debbie*: “Debbie Phillips.”

2. *Interviewer*: “Do you watch TV while working out?”
   *Debbie*: “Yes all the time.”

3. *Interviewer*: “What types of programs do you watch while exercising and why?”
   *Debbie*: “I like to watch CNN and FOX because I like to be kept up on all the latest news. Since I work its hard to see during the work day.”

4. *Interviewer*: “If you ever have the chance do you change the channel?”
   *Debbie*: “Sometimes I do because the news gets a little depressing and it affects my workout. If something is depressing I don’t really want to work out as hard.

5. *Interviewer*: “How much attention do you pay to the program on TV?”
   *Debbie*: “Most of the time I just read the subtitles. Some things like the stock market I pay attention.”

6. *Interviewer*: “Is it distracting or entertaining?”
   *Debbie*: “I find it entertaining because it keeps me going in my workout. I tend to get bored especially when I am doing cardio.”

7. *Interviewer*: “How does TV affect your social interaction with others at the gym?”
   *Debbie*: “That’s an interesting question because during the elections it was very heated in my job and people had a lot of differing ideals and sometimes in a negative way but a lot of times in a positive way.”

8. *Interviewer*: “Do you think there is a hazard or negative aspects to watching TV while working out?”
   *Debbie*: “I find it could be a hazard if you are not focused on your workout. You could hurt yourself.”

9. *Interviewer*: “How does TV help the endurance or intensity of your workout? Or does it improve the quality of your workout?”
Debbie: “I would say yea. It keeps me interested in my workout. If I didn’t have, especially again in cardio, if I didn’t have something to watch I think I’d be bored to death and I wouldn’t last an hour to do my cardio.”

**Interview 2- Jackie Skylar**

1. **Interviewer**: “What is your name?”
   Jackie: Jackie Skylar

2. **Interviewer**: “Do you watch TV while working out?”
   Jackie: “Yes, sometimes I do.”

3. **Interviewer**: “What types of programs do you watch while exercising and why?”
   Jackie: “I watch music videos. It gives me motivation and keeps the beat going.”

4. **Interviewer**: “If you ever have the chance do you change the channel?”
   Jackie: “Sometimes yes.”

5. **Interviewer**: “How much attention do you pay to the program on TV?”
   Jackie: “I pay attention half the time.”

6. **Interviewer**: “Is it distracting or entertaining?”
   Jackie: “Entertaining.”

7. **Interviewer**: “How does TV affect your social interaction with others at the gym?”
   Jackie: “It doesn’t.”

8. **Interviewer**: “Do you think there is a hazard or negative aspects to watching TV while working out?”
   Jackie: “No I don’t think there’s hazards to it.”

9. **Interviewer**: “How does TV help the endurance or intensity of your workout? Or does it improve the quality of your workout?”
   Jackie: “If it’s motivational like sports or music videos, it impacts your workout because you are working harder. You are motivated.”

**Interview 3- Jordan A.**

1. **Interviewer**: “What is your name?”
   Jordan A: “Jordan”

2. **Interviewer**: “Do you watch TV while working out?”
   Jordan A: “Yes.”

3. **Interviewer**: “What types of programs do you watch while exercising and why?”
Jordan A: “I like to watch Bay News 9 and ESPN. It’s just interesting to watch.”

4. Interviewer: “If you ever have the chance do you change the channel?”
Jordan A: “No.”

5. Interviewer: “How much attention do you pay to the program on TV?”
Jordan A: “My full, undivided attention.”

6. Interviewer: “Is it distracting or entertaining?”
Jordan: “Entertaining.”

7. Interviewer: “How does TV affect your social interaction with others at the gym?”
Jordan A: “It takes time away from talking to other people because I just mostly focus on the program at hand.”

8. Interviewer: “Do you think there is a hazard or negative aspects to watching TV while working out?”
Jordan A: “No.”

9. Interviewer: “How does TV help the endurance or intensity of your workout? Or does it improve the quality of your workout?”
Jordan A: “It decreases from it because all I really want to do is watch TV and not try hard at all at what I am doing.”

Interview 4- Jordan T.

1. Interviewer: “What is your name?”
Jordan T. “Jordan.”

2. Interviewer: “Do you watch TV while working out?”
Jordan T: “Yes.”

3. Interviewer: “What types of programs do you watch while exercising and why?”
Jordan T: “ESPN, because it’s cool.”

4. Interviewer: “If you ever have the chance do you change the channel?”
Jordan T: “Not really.”

5. Interviewer: “How much attention do you pay to the program on TV?”
Jordan T: “Little or not much attention.”

6. Interviewer: “Is it distracting or entertaining?”
Jordan T: “Distracting.”
7. Interviewer: “How does TV affect your social interaction with others at the gym?”
   Jordan T: “I like to watch TV more.”

8. Interviewer: “Do you think there is a hazard or negative aspects to watching TV while working out?”
   Jordan T: No, I don’t think there is.”

9. Interviewer: “How does TV help the endurance or intensity of your workout? Or does it improve the quality of your workout?”
   Jordan T: “No, it lessens it.”

**Interview Guide**

1. What is your name?

2. Do you watch TV while working out?

3. What types of programs do you watch while exercising and why?

4. If you ever have the chance do you change the channel?

5. How much attention do you pay to the program on TV?

6. Is it distracting or entertaining?

7. How does TV affect your social interaction with others at the gym?

8. Do you think there is a hazard or negative aspects to watching TV while working out?

9. How does TV help the endurance or intensity of your workout? Or does it improve the quality of your workout?