Motivated walkers participated for over two years even during inclement weather. A group of physicians, specialists, and healthcare professionals collaborated to make possible the walk. This collaboration is due to a partnership between national and local organizations. The ward 5 health coalition is a grassroots organization. Its purpose is to analyze the core and essential functions of public health to positively impact the health and well-being of targeted populations. Evidence supporting the benefits of walking is plentiful. There are multiple studies that demonstrate the social-ecological aspects of walking. They discuss how walking positively impacts individuals, relationships, organizations, communities, public policy, environment, economics, and more. Likewise, a plethora of studies on the barriers as to why people may not engage in walking such as fear, safety, the built environment, and health have been published. However little is found in the literature regarding why individuals, who are members of populations that experience health disparities and social determinants of health walk. This study is an attempt to fill that gap. By using Motivation Theories as the conceptual framework to assist with analyzing the quantitative and qualitative data collected while asking the research question, Why do you walk?

The walk leader created a survey using Google Forms and distributed it via email to the walkers. It consisted of over 30 quantitative and qualitative questions. The survey asked questions asked about personal demographics, insurance, knowledge, behaviors, health, motivation, empowerment, and environment. The goal was to obtain from the walkers’ perspectives, the reasons why they walk? This survey was modeled after a questionnaire that was distributed by the national Ward Walk With A Doc organization. The data was collected anonymously and confidentially for three months. The Google product created qualitative and quantitative analysis of the responses. The walk leader manually analyzed the data and by grouping responses into distinct related types of motivation based on the several different theories of Motivation.

The finding of the study helped to answer the research question and contribute to the literature about what motivated the populations to walk. It also supports the existing evidence related to the social-ecological aspects of walking that the participants discussed how walking positively impacts individuals, relationships and community public policies. Additionally, the participants answered as to why they walk reported that the walk allows them to impact some of the barriers to walking as indicated in the literature. For instance, walking in the park is safe and the physical environment is conducive to walking. This study could inform the local health department and agencies on progress to implement that could increase equity and physical activity, as well as address the social determinants of health and reduce health disparities.

**INTRODUCTION**

Every first Saturday of the month, a group of individuals gather in a national park in Washington, DC and walk with a cardiologist and a walk leader. The walk takes place no matter the weather. The walk leader asks questions, while the cardiologist gives a brief talk on a health topic and answers the participants’ questions. The walk leader guides the walk which lasts from 60 to 90 minutes or one to two and a half miles depending on the pace of the participants. During the walk, the participants continue to engage with the cardiologist. At the end of the walk, the cardiologist closes the walk leader manually creates qualitative and quantitative data and by grouping responses into distinct related types of motivation based on the several different theories of Motivation.

**BACKGROUND**

**DESIGN METHODS**

The walk leader creates a survey using Google Forms and distributed it via email to the walkers. It consisted of over 30 quantitative and qualitative questions. The survey asked questions asked about personal demographics, insurance, knowledge, behaviors, health, motivation, empowerment, and environment. The goal was to obtain from the walkers’ perspectives, the reasons why they walk? This survey was modeled after a questionnaire that was distributed by the national Ward Walk With A Doc organization. The data was collected anonymously and confidentially for three months. The Google product created qualitative and quantitative analysis of the responses. The walk leader manually analyzed the data and by grouping responses into distinct related types of motivation based on the several different theories of Motivation.

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**RESULTS**

The respondents’ answers corresponded to the tenants of Motivation Theories. The data show that the majority of the sampled population was intrinsically motivated. Participants in the walking program described the motivations coming from a place of need. For example, 31% expressed that the need for the safety of exercising with others was the source of motivation. Power was communicated by 23% of the respondents, as they said that the walk has empowered them to promote health and wellness. Eighty percent of the participants indicated that correlating was one of the most important components of the walk for them. This is related to affiliation.

**CONCLUSION**

Evidence supporting the benefits of Walking is plentiful. There are multiple studies that demonstrate the social-ecological aspects of walking. They discuss how walking positively impacts individuals, relationships, organizations, communities, public policy, environment, economics, and more. Likewise, a plethora of studies on the barriers as to why people may not engage in walking such as fear, safety, the built environment, and health have been published. However little is found in the literature regarding why individuals, who are members of populations that experience health disparities and social determinants of health walk. This study is an attempt to fill that gap. By using Motivation Theories as the conceptual framework to assist with analyzing the quantitative and qualitative data collected while asking the research question, Why do you walk?

**DATA**

Thirty-one percent of the walkers who were emailed the survey responded. An interesting majority of the respondents were African American females over the age of sixty with a median income level and an income of over $100,000. Most of them live in the same ward of the city. A group of the respondents have described it as empowering. They mentioned that the walk leader has been a life-changer and the reason why they choose to come to the walk is to become a better advocate for their own and or family members health.

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