



Studying the anticipator of satisfaction in male customers of fitness centers

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Abstract

The purpose of current study is to study anticipators of satisfaction in male customers of fitness centers in Shahrood city. The population for this study is 7560 male customers in Shahrood city 408 of which were chosen randomly as the sample. Three self-made questionnaires made by the researcher himself. Cronbach's alpha was determined for those three questionnaires, by experts, as 0.90, 0.88, and 0.78 respectively. Anticipators were supposed to be; eco-social basis, how important is the customers wills and needs to the owners and the level of modernism used in the gym. Spearman and multivariable regression test were used in this study. Amongst the factors introduced above the most important one came up to be; how modern are the facilities in the gym. Therefore, we suggest that managers use more modern facilities in their fitness centers in order to increase their customers.

Keywords: Customer's satisfaction, private fitness centers, service quality.

INTRODUCTION

In today's market, one of the biggest challenges is to keep the customers. The competitive markets of today have made managers to dedicate more value to the customers for their services in order to show that they are a bit different from what their competitors are. According to the study conducted by Environmental Researches Institution, only 4% of unsatisfied customers complain about the quality of the services, while 90% of the remaining 96% cut their deal with the organization and more importantly every customer at least talks to seven more customers about that (13). As the sport culture has spread widely in many countries over the last decade, service providers have decided to increase the quality and effectiveness in order to higher their benefits (10). Health and fitness are increasingly growing as an industry in the world. In America for instance there are 33000 sport and fitness centers. In Europe the quantity is less but growing. With nearly 1300 private fitness centers, 311500 customers and revenue of 164.5 million dollars, Greece has a competitive industry. In services' industry, providing high quality services is the prerequisite of surviving and success (2). To assess how to meet customers' needs, managers usually

use service quality and customers' satisfaction assessments. So, these two items drew a lot of attention to themselves from marketing professionals in scientific and research organizations (17). In sports, service providing is concentrated on the customers. Thus not only quality is considered but also customers' knowledge should be (14). Cronin & Taylor (6) concluded that perceived service quality results in satisfaction of the customer after all. Also, satisfaction of customers depends on the quality of the service and it can be supposed that increasing the quality, satisfaction can be increased. This leads to; commitment of customers, tendency to come back, stability of using the services, widening the commercial relationships, increasing patience of the customer towards probable inconveniences in the future, and positive advertisements by the customers (8).

Satisfaction studies could help organizations to determine customers' vision and identify their problems which leads to organizations having the problems fixed quickly (3). So, a key discussion in market performance is satisfaction which is used by the managers in decision making (9). Satisfaction is also a tool by which marketing professionals assess

their relation with the customers and how healthy it is (15). In fitness centers, customers' wills are always increasing and changing. Therefore service quality is an important index in satisfaction assessment. Moreover through widening the relations with the customers which is the basis for serving them, fitness centers can convince customers to apply for a long-term contract which increases the revenues of the fitness center (19). Lee et al. (7) studied the factors affecting perception of the customers of the quality and their effects on satisfaction and tendency to further presence and the effects of gender in professional Golf clubs. They concluded that gender can anticipate service quality perception, and also there is a relationship between service quality and satisfaction and tendency to further presence. So, regarding the fact that people are getting more and more interested in body building and physical activities and also fitness centers are incrementally increasing, studying the anticipators of satisfaction could dramatically help the managers keep their career stabilized and keep their customers.

Woolf (20) studied customers' interest in support services especially fitness assessment tests in a research entitled "Competitive advantage in the health and fitness industry". He found out that managers could not only seem different but also achieve more and more revenues through paying attention to the customers wills and providing support for their services. Calabuig et al. (4) introduced employees, accessories, and management methods as the most important items of quality which affect satisfaction. Pedragosa & Correia (11) assessed the satisfaction from 3 different points of view; expectations, facilities, and the level to which customers are loyal. They concluded that satisfaction is a variable which is highly dependent on expectations and facilities, and also is so important to higher the level of loyalty from the customers. In a part of his work, Afsanepurak et al. (1) resulted that being satisfied with the instructors, staff, facilities, physical space, and cultural and social satisfaction are the preferences in private and regular gyms and satisfaction is higher in private gyms.

Now regarding the importance of anticipators of satisfaction in especially in private fitness centers, researchers has decided to study fitness centers in Shahrood city which are growing by the way.

METHODS & MATERIALS

Knowing the objectives of this study the methodology is descriptive of surveying kind which was conducted in field. The population is male body builders. According to the sport department of Shahrood. There are 7560 male athletes in 50 private fitness centers 408 of which were randomly chosen by Morgan's table. In all centers using the attendants' list random sampling was conducted. For this purpose, according to the times classes were held in, the population was divided to morning and afternoon shift, and from each center 10 people were asked.

For information gathering process field and laboratory methods were used. Then the three questionnaires made by the researcher were used which were on satisfaction, wills, and needs of customers and facilities. In population assessment part personal information of the participants were classified to high, medium, and low. These questionnaires were reviewed by experts of the same field and Cronbach's alpha is 0.88, 0.78, and 0.90 for each questionnaire respectively. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to classify the data, design tables, frequency distribution and calculations concerning variation indexes such as standard deviation, variance. Also inferential statistics like Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Spearman, and multi variable regression tests were used.

RESULTS

After reducing the information, findings were analyzed. Results are as the following: all participants are 408 people. Average age of the sample is 49.6 ± 27.56 . Table 1 shows some properties of the population.

The results of the table 2 show that there is a meaningful positive relationship between eco-social basis and satisfaction ($P < 0.05$).

The results of Table 3 show that there is positive meaningful relationship between wills and satisfaction in the customers ($P < 0.05$).

The results of Table 4 show that there is a positive meaningful relationship between the facilities being modern and satisfaction.

About anticipators of satisfaction, we considered eco-social basis, wills and needs of the customers, and modernism in the facilities, results of which are in Table 5.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of subjects' research.

Variable name	Status	Frequency	Percent
Residential area	Low	121	29.7
	Average	185	45.3
	Up	102	25.0
	Total	408	100
Occupational class	Up	2	0.5
	Moderate to high	7	1.7
	Median	51	12.5
	Moderate to low	20	4.9
	Low	328	80.4
	Total	408	100
Monthly income	Below \$ 220	10	2.5
	Between 221 to 320\$	26	6.4
	Between 321 to 420\$	30	7.4
	Between 421 to 520\$	69	16.9
	Between 521 to 620\$	73	17.9
	More 620\$	200	49
	Total	408	100

Table 2. Spearman's Test results on the relationship between eco-social basis and satisfaction.

Variable	Correlation coefficient	Sig
Eco-social basis and satisfaction	0.119	*0.016

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 3. Spearman's Test results on the relationship between wills and satisfaction.

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Sig
Wills and satisfaction	0.446	0.001*

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4. Spearman's Test results on the relationship between wills and satisfaction.

Variable	Correlation coefficient	Sig
Facilities being modern and satisfaction	0.698	*0.001

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5. Multivariate regression for the anticipators of "customer satisfaction" eco-social basis wills and needs of the customers, and modernism in the facilities.

Source of variation	Total square	df	Mean square	F	p
Regression	35.07	3	11.690	124.361	0.001
Remaining	38.027	404	0.094		

Table 6. Regression coefficients associated with the anticipators of "customer satisfaction", the eco-social bases, customers' wills and needs, and modernism in the facilities.

Variable	Variables Anticipators	B	β	t	p
Customer Satisfaction	Eco-social bases	0.000	-0.006	-0.176	0.861
	Customers' Wills and Needs	0.045	0.069	1.761	0.079
	Modernism in the Facilities	0.434	0.666	17.331	0.001

Regarding the fact that F is meaningful in table 5, it can be said that there is a meaningful relationship between eco-social bases, customers' wills and needs, and modernism with satisfaction. Therefore, to determine regression coefficients it is necessary to illustrate the regression coefficients' table. Table 6 is designed for the aforesaid matter. Also 48% of variances in the variables were correlated to satisfaction ($R^2=0.480$).

According to multi variable regression coefficients through simultaneous input method and the T value, it can be said that it is just modernism that shows a meaningful difference in $P<0.05$ (the hypothesis of regression coefficient being zero is refused). However, other factors of satisfaction show no meaningful difference, so they can be removed from the regression equation. Hence the regression equation is: Satisfaction = $1.824 + 0.434$ Modernism

DISCUSSION

Researcher tries to explain the factors making this equation in the terms of findings from private fitness centers. According to the findings of the study about the relationship between satisfaction and the eco-social basis it seems that people who live in better parts of the city use better facilities and in this matter the relationship between satisfaction and eco-social basis reflects the relationship between education and facilities. This is in consistency with the works of (1,7,11). It seems that increasing the level of education has caused the quality perception to change. Also, Teodrakis et al. (18) concluded that people of higher levels of education are a lot less satisfied with the mental-social tools.

Regarding the fact that customers' will is assessed in the form of factors like; distance between their houses with the gym, times in which there are at the gym, coaches' skills and abilities, repairing and replacing the facilities, and discipline and hygiene, obviously meeting their wills would result in higher levels of satisfactory. The results of the present study are consistent with those of (4,5,11,20). Sadeghi & Frokhian (16) suggested that analyzing and meeting customers' needs is a necessity for long-term planning in production which can dramatically increase loyalty and success. Then it is suggested that managers have a survey for their customers regularly to understand the needs and wills of customers, and also coaches

should design training plan in accordance with the objectives.

About the modernism which is the most important anticipator of the satisfaction results are consistent with those of (1,4,5,20). Choi (5) introduced the relation with the physical atmosphere and facilities as the most important anticipator of satisfaction. It seems that factors like ease of access to the facilities of different exercises, reducing injury risk, and a better concentration on training process and using appropriate machines will affect satisfaction. Also, Peetz et al. (12) reported facilities as a mental factor which affects mentality. They believe facilities can positively affect people working out in a gym for training and achieving success. Then regarding the fact that facilities do a lot in predicting satisfaction, managers will try to use modern facilities in their gym in order to keep the customers satisfied. This will not only keep the customers happy but also increase the revenues.

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