

The Relationship Between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction: Sport and Health Centers in North Cyprus

Servis Kalitesi ve Müşteri Memnuniyeti Arasındaki İlişki: Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki Spor ve Sağlık Merkezleri

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Abstract: This study was carried out due to the increasing competition in sports and health centers and its popularity today. The service quality of the gyms and its effects on customer satisfaction were investigated. It is answering the questions about if customer satisfied. In this study, it emphasized the importance of improving the quality of service and how it affects the customer. It is mentioned that the variety of activities of the gyms attract the customer. this study revealed a positive relationship between variables. The survey conducted with information from the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Test was done with SPSS program and the pilot study checked and the work started without a fault. The pilot test held in 3 main centers: Famagusta, Kyrenia and Nicosia. The sample size was determined as 215 considering the 95% confidence interval, 5% confidence level and the participants in the Health and Sports Centers in Northern Cyprus between February and April in 2019, in order to calculate the sample size were evaluated and analyzed. In this study, it was observed that the service quality of gyms in Northern Cyprus affects customer satisfaction and gender and age factors have an effect on customer satisfaction. This kind of customer-oriented enterprises should ensure that the quality should be kept high. The absence of such a study in the Northern Cyprus contribute greatly to both the academy and the sector.

Keywords: Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Sport Center, Health Center, Northern Cyprus

JEL Classification: J28, L83, I10

Öz: Bu çalışma, günümüzdeki popülerliği olan spor ve sağlık merkezlerinde artan rekabet ve nedeniyle gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, spor salonlarının hizmet kalitesi ve müşteri memnuniyetine etkileri araştırıldı ve müşterinin memnun olup olmadığı ile ilgili sorular cevaplandı. Ayrıca, bu çalışmada hizmet kalitesinin artırılmasının önemi ve müşteriyi nasıl etkilediği vurgulanmıştır. bu çalışma değişkenler arasında pozitif bir ilişki olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Anket Gençlik ve Spor Bakanlığı'ndan alınan bilgilerle yapılmıştır. SPSS programı ile test yapılmış ve pilot çalışma kontrol edilerek çalışmaya hatasız başlanmıştır. Pilot test 3 ana merkezde gerçekleştirildi: Gazimağusa, Girne ve Lefkoşa. Örneklem büyüklüğü% 95 güven aralığı,% 5 güven düzeyi dikkate alınarak 215 katılımcı olarak belirlenmiş ve 2019 yılı Şubat-Nisan tarihleri arasında Kuzey Kıbrıs Sağlık ve Spor Merkezlerindeki katılımcılar örneklem büyüklüğünü hesaplamak için değerlendirilmiş ve analiz edilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki spor salonlarının hizmet kalitesini müşteri memnuniyetini etkilediği ve cinsiyet ve yaş faktörlerin müşteri memnuniyeti üzerinde etkisi olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Ayrıca, spor salonlarının faaliyet çeşitliliğinin müşteriyi cezbediği görülmüştür. Bu çalışma ileride yapılması düşünülen araştırmalara, hem akademik hem de farklı sektörlere büyük katkı sağlayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hizmet Kalitesi, Müşteri Memnuniyeti, Spor Merkezi, Sağlık Merkezi, Kuzey Kıbrıs

JEL Sınıflandırması: J28, L83, I10

1. Introduction

Health and Fitness Clubs are most popular nowadays everywhere of the world. For the protection of health and protection of body form, it is very important to do sports. Although the name of doing sports from time to time was sometimes referred to as entertainment and

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sometimes for defense purposes, sports are one of the most influential actions on the body's metabolism (Alexandris & Palialia, 1999). Especially for a healthy life, the body's tissue, bone, lungs and heart and vascular disorders in many issues has great benefit. Lately, sport is only for the physical strength of people not an ongoing activity its also for the psychological strengthening of people activity. Sport, the ability to maintain order and responsibility is an important institution that helps to socialize (Theodorakis, Howat, Ko, & Avourdiadou, 2014). World Health Organization (2003), stated that sports should be done in order to be a mentally and physically healthy individual and the report said that doing physical activity can be an example to the society as the individual develops himself, that is, it will affect the population. Some researchers have found that sport is an important factor in the psychosocial development of individuals. The easiest way to make people socially and psychologically active it should be remembered that the sport passes. Sports and health facilities are customer-oriented institutions (McDonald & Howland, 1998; Howat et al., 1996). The service sector is difficult to measure as it is a simultaneous, intangible and perishable sector. The interaction between the customer's expectation and the service provided determines the quality of service (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Therefore, customer satisfaction is always at the forefront. If the customer is satisfied with the service they receive, there is a possibility of continuity and if they are not satisfied, they most probably will not continue. Service quality is very important for the sustainability of the service (Kim, 2011). The increase in curiosity in sports has led to an increase in the number of such enterprises. this has increased the competition and necessitated higher levels of service quality. Research shows that the quality of service is a topic of great interest in sports market literature (Alexandris et al., 2004; Chelladurai & Chang, 2000). The quality of service researched since the 1980s has become an important issue in sports and healthcare enterprises (Tsitskari et al., 2006). The variety of services in the gyms enables the customer to find the desired training and plays an important role in the satisfaction of the customer (Taylor & Baker, 1994).

The theories that are thought to be suitable for this study have been examined in the literature. It was concluded that social change theory and expectation theory can be suitable for the study. In the theory published by Blau in 1964, social change was made and examined. Theory dealing with human interaction, social and material exchange. By looking at the change between customer and employee, mutual feelings can be examined and deficiencies can be eliminated. Vroom's expectation theory (1964) provides a general framework for evaluating, interpreting and assessing employees' learning, decision-making, attitude-forming behavior. Explaining the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction by

applying this theory will make this study meaningful. In the context of these theory, the aim of this study is to investigate the effects of on service quality and customer satisfaction in health and sport centers. The objectives of this study first, analysing the expected service quality. Expectations can be change from person the person so, its important to know the expectations of the customers at that centers. Second analyzing the percieved service quality. Its important to check the customer's sensation about the given service on the centers. The common services can be compared from different sport centers. The last objective of this study try to understand the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. High equality of the expected and percieved service quality can increase the customer satisfaction.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Therotical Background and Hypothesis

In other to comprehend what service quality and customer satisfaction entails it is important to get an insight on what fitness service is all about as stated by Yildiz (2009), who defined fitness service as “the overall intangible activities based on physical activities that create value for individuals by offering them physical, psychological, social and economic benefits. Scholars have criticized the model by Brady & Cronin (2001) noting that the model is suitable to fitness industries due to the fact that the model focuses on customer perceptions as well as the interpersonal communication between customers and staffs so as to achieve better service which is been rendered to customers from fitness instructors and receptionists at fitness centers. Today, fitness centers are gaining ground at various hotels and resort to give satisfaction to customers who use this facilities during their stay at hotels and resorts during their travel (Lam, Zhang & Jensen, 2005). The adoption of wellness program can cut out employees being absent from work due to illness and reduces health risk and that is why more corporations have increased their investment on fitness centers. In recent times it has become popular that medical practitioners with the support of medical hospitals give right to hospital owned fitness centers to help support business corporations with wellness programs for their employees (McDonald & Howland, 1998). The substantial parts of a specialist organization (for example the serviscape) are significant for the individuals from wellbeing and wellness focuses as they regularly invest moderately protracted times of energy in them. Much increasingly significant is the job of social nature of a wellness supplier, as clients profoundly depend on staff ability and conduct for their mental and physiological prosperity (Theodorakis et al., 2014; Alexandris, et al., 2004). Considering the previous studies, the relationship between of two structures has been researched in few studies on sports and health centers. In

the studies conducted, the relationship customer satisfaction and service quality has been approached from different perspectives. Some researchers have sought to determine whether there are significant differences between the quality of service, satisfaction and future intentions of customers in terms of researching and solving problems related to the sports and health center. Lower scores were given by customers who were satisfied with their solution to their problems. The lowest score for both structures was given by customers who did not affect their problems at all. Moreover, they found a significant relationship between dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction. In addition, they has been observed that the perceptions of service quality vary significantly in customer satisfactory responses (Taylor & Baker, 1994; Lentell, 2000; Theodorakis et al., 2001; Kouthouris & Alexandris, 2005; Álvarez-García et al., 2019).

For this, an issue that has pulled in noteworthy consideration is the conceptualization of administration quality against consumer loyalty. Administration fulfillment is relevant more to the mental results getting from a particular administration experience, while saw administration quality speaks to a progressively shaped positive or negative frame of mind towards different administration related properties (Crompton & McKay, 1989). This contention recommends that while it is feasible for an association to control quality, consumer loyalty isn't altogether heavily influenced by its (Alexandris & Paliatia, 1999). In all actuality the degree of consumer loyalty is relied upon administration quality and different factors that may influence a client/client, for example, the atmosphere, his/her state of mind, the nature of the social gatherings partaking, and others (Crompton & McKay, 1989). Sport and fitness focuses are client orientated associations. Gerson (1999), contended that a client of a game focus is fulfilled at whatever point his/her needs, genuine or saw, are met or surpassed. While it is generally acknowledged by the two specialists and scholastics that fantastic clients' needs and needs is one of the pivotal issues for the achievement of game associations, there have been constrained endeavors to examine observationally the idea of consumer loyalty inside game associations (Chelladurai & Kerwin, 2018). Administration quality may recognize the significant elements affecting responsibility (Howat et al., 2008; Ko & Pastore, 2005) and therefore dedication, as mental duty has been recommended as one of the develops speaking to the attitudinal segment of unwaveringness (Alexandris et al., 2004; Pritchard et al., 1992). Following the part of Cronin and Taylor (1992), fulfillment may have a more grounded and increasingly predictable impact on parts of attitudinal dedication, for example, mental responsibility.

2.2. Hypothesis and Research Model

From the perspective above, the following study hypotheses are recommended (Figure 1):

H1: Ages of sports and health center users have a positive effect on the customer satisfaction.

H2: Gender of sports and health center users have a positive effect on the customer satisfaction.

H3: Customer perception of sports and health center users have a positive effect on the customer satisfaction.

H4: Customer expectation of sports and health center users have a positive effect on the customer satisfaction.

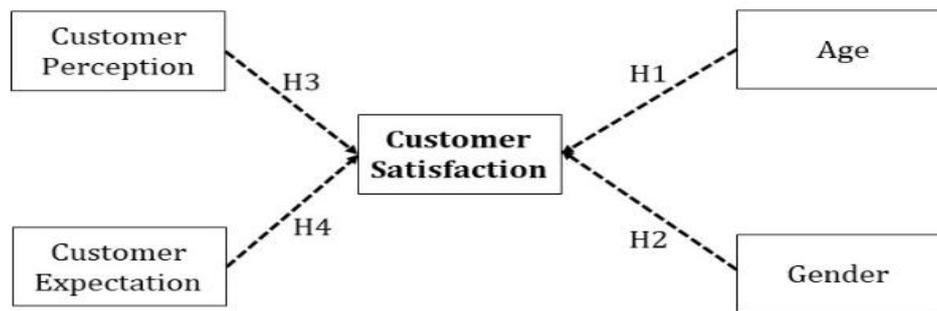


Figure 1. Research Model

3. Method

To test the relationship service quality (customer perception and expectation), customer satisfaction to make survey on the Health and Sport centers in North Cyprus. The information of the sport centers received from the ministry of Youth and Sports. We prepared Turkish and English questionnaires. We did pilot study before starting to distribute the surveys. While applying the survey, simple random sampling method, one of the probable sampling methods was used. The pilot test held in 3 main centers: Famagusta, Kyrenia and Nicosia. The sample size was determined as 215 considering the 95% confidence interval, 5% confidence level and the participants in the Health and Sports Centers in Northern Cyprus between February and April in 2019, in order to calculate the sample size were evaluated and analyzed. The survey consists of 2 parts. In the first part, there are demographic questions for the people participating in the research. The second part consists of 3 groups, and the questions were re-synthesized from previous studies in order to be suitable for the purpose and subject of the research. To measure service quality in this research, there is 5 points likert scales from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. There is 22 questions about service quality which are divided to 2 as an expectation and perceptions. Customer satisfaction have 4 different

multiple choice questions. For statistical analyses, such as descriptive analyses, factor analysis and regression analysis using SPSS statistical program.

4. Results

As can be seen in Table 1, the majority of the participants in the research are men (61.9%). In addition, the majority of the participants in the study were 30 and over (51.1%). Finally, due to the large population, there has been more research in the region of nicosia (38.6%).

Table 1. Demographic Information

	N	%
Age		
18-22	40	18.7
23-30	65	30.2
30+	110	51.1
Gender		
Male	133	61.9
Female	82	38.1
Education		
Secondary Education	62	28.8
University	123	57.2
Master/Phd	30	14.0
Location		
Famagusta	60	27.9
Kyrenia	72	33.5
Nicosia	83	38.6
Total	215	100

In this study, it was tested suitability for factor analysis to organize the questions that are consistent in the data set and to make the study manageable. Factor analysis is a multivariate statistical technique used to express a large number of variables with fewer new variables (Yong & Pearce, 2013). There are different rotation methods that can be used when applying factor analysis to an existing data set, and these methods may yield different results due to their theoretical assumptions (Wood et al., 1996). Therefore, in this study, the varimax method was rotated with fewer variables so that the factor variances were maximized. Moreover, common method variance (CMV) is a very important issue that concerns the field of management and organization. Because, it causes the emergence of systematic errors among behavioral variables, thus revealing incorrect research results. In this research, the factors that cause the emergence of CMV are emphasized (Tehseen et al., 2017). Therefore, it was performed with Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) and Barlett test in order to determine the suitability of the data set for factor analysis in table 2. 30 items with an eigenvalue greater than 1 were obtained from 44 questions of service service, expectation and perception, which are two dimensions. Propositions with factor loadings over 0.500 are taken into account. The

total variance of 15 scales from 22 scales of customers' expectations was 73.921%, eigenvalue was 7.182 and cronbach alpha value was $\alpha = 0.852$. Moreover, The total variance of 15 scales from 22 scales of customers' perceptions was 63.951%, eigenvalue was 5.195 and cronbach alpha value was $\alpha = 0.882$. Lastly, The total variance of 4 scales from 4 scales of customers satisfaction was 25.145%, eigenvalue was 2.658 and cronbach alpha value was $\alpha = 0.795$.

Tablo 2. Factor Analysis

Measure	Items	Factor Loading	Eigen Value	Variance %	Cronbach Alpha
Customer Satisfaction	4	0.55 to 0.76	2.658	25.145	0.795
Customer Perception	15	0.50 to 0.79	5.195	63.951	0.882
Customer Expectation	15	0.53 to 0.80	7.182	73.921	0.852

Regression analysis is performed in order to determine the relationship between two or more variables with a cause-effect relationship and to make predictions or predictions about that subject by using this relationship (Sen & Srivastava, 2012). In this study, multiple regression analysis model was used to explain the relationship between more variables. Therefore, multiple regression analysis was performed to support the accuracy of the hypotheses and the results are given in the Table 3. Our dependent variable is determined as customer satisfaction, and our independent variables are gender, age, customer perception and customer expectation. While the customers' perceptions of satisfaction were significantly different between age and service quality (perception and expectation) variables, no significant difference was observed between gender. According to the regression analysis result, H1, H3, H4 hypotheses are accepted. however, H2 hypotheses are not accepted.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	B	S.E	T-value	β	P-value	F	R ²
Dependent Variables:							
Customer Satisfaction							
Constant	1.014	0.196	5.173*	-	0.000		
Age	0.104	0.030	2.100**	0.163	0.048		
Gender	0.086	0.072	1.912	0.099	0.256	7.989	0.308
Customer Perception	0.275	0.500	2.234*	0.360	0.000		
Customer Expectation	0.345	0.650	2.265*	0.420	0.000		

Note: *p<0.001; **0.05

5. Discussion

This research is a new subject as it aims to fill a gap in research conducted in sports organizations. From this point of view, the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality has been comprehensively examined and the relations between them have been supported (Murray & Howat, 2002; Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008; Shonk & Chelladurai, 2009). Besides, it has not been established that this relationship is still a consensus on causality. Therefore, it is necessary to continue researching this topic (Iacobucci et al., 1995). The focus of this work is to ensure and increase customer loyalty. Only way to do it make satisfy to the customer. It can be seen that low-paid enterprises cannot provide high quality service, which has caused the customer to lose, no matter how cheap the price. As it is seen in the researches, customer satisfaction passes through the quality of service. It was concluded that quality is one of many potential service dimensions that take into account customer satisfaction (Rust & Oliver, 1994). It has been suggested that satisfaction comes from multiple sources, and a higher level of satisfaction from certain sources may compensate for lower levels of satisfaction with others (Westbrook, 1981). Sports and health centers must satisfy the customer and ensure loyalty in order to continue their activities. It will be beneficial to find a solution based on the customer's satisfaction theory of expectation (Vroom, 1964).

Another issue is service failure. If the sports center owners are successful in finding the cause of the service failure and repairing it, they can make the service higher quality. For example, Murray et al. (1999) and Zeithaml et al. (1996) observed that service failure affected the customer. To maximize customer satisfaction, it is necessary to minimize service problems (Anderson & Sullivan, 1990). Since customer satisfaction will return to the company as a positive contribution (Cannie & Caplin, 1991; Horovitz, 1990), the expectations of the customer should be listened and their suggestions should be taken into consideration. Providing customer satisfaction by solving service failure shows that it gives importance to the customer, can strengthen ties between the customer and the sports center and can make them loyal customers Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml, 1991).

6. Conclusion

There are a total of 215 customers participating in the research. Of these, 133 are male and 82 are female. As a result of the analysis and findings obtained, it is between the satisfaction of customers and the demographic variables (age) and service quality dimensions (customer perception and customer expectation) ($p < 0.05$). Hence, H1, H3, H4 hypotheses are supported. However, there was no significant relationship between gender and customers satisfaction ($p > 0.05$). In this context, H2 hypotheses are not accepted. Research has proven

that high-quality businesses have become more attractive to customers. This study examined that the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in fitness centers in North Cyprus. There are similar searches about it but for other countries such as South Cyprus. However, there is no study about it in North Cyprus. This work is of great importance for the customer acquisition of sports and health centers in Northern Cyprus. It is important to remember that sports and health centers should improve the quality of their services and measure their satisfaction in order to satisfy their users like all other organizations. The ability of these organizations to adjust their services according to the current demand and to predict and adapt the changes from the perceptions of the customer will ensure customer satisfaction.

In future studies, it will be appropriate to use research models and analyzes that will provide conclusions about the direction of the relations as well as the existence of relations between different variables. Moreover, these findings suggest that managers of sports and health centers need to change their existing survey tools and model to get more detailed information about what affects their customers' perceptions and expectations. From this point of view, this study will provide a basis for many future studies. In this study, service quality and customer satisfaction were examined and contributed to the literature, but loyalty was not investigated. This issue may be explored in the future. The study was conducted by examining 3 main centers of Northern Cyprus. However, Lefke, Güzelyurt and İskele regions will also provide important resources. Due to time and distance constraints, those regions have not been studied. In the future, a more comprehensive study will be possible by adding these regions.

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