

## **A SURVEY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ACROSS PHYSICAL FITNESS CLUBS IN DISTRICTS 1-6 OF TEHRAN FROM QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED FOR THEM BASED ON AGE, GENDER, AND EDUCATION STATUS OF CUSTOMERS**

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### **Abstract**

This study intends to study customer satisfaction across Physical Fitness clubs in districts 1-6 of Tehran from quality of services provided for them based on age, gender, and education status of customers. Physical Fitness clubs in districts 1-6 of Tehran were chosen purposefully based on the place in which located those 150 individuals among customers who used to refer to these clubs on the whole filled the questionnaire provided for this study. The questionnaire used in this study is derived from a study by Hashemi et al.(2011) which includes 29 questions using A five-item Likert scale. To analyze data, Welch and ANOVA statistics were used to test hypothesis.

**Keywords:** Physical Fitness clubs; customer satisfaction, quality of services

### **Introduction**

Companies in addition to plan strategies to attract new customers and encourage them to trade, attempt to retain current customers and establish relationships with them in permanent and stable. In the past, many companies knew customers an absolute assumption. Today companies face new realities of marketing, such as changing demographics, slowing economic growth, competing more advanced firms and excess capacity in many industries. In recent times many companies make attempt to maintain market share and avoid reducing the share. In fact, the cost of attracting a new customer is five times the cost of retaining an old customer (Hashemi, 2007). Sports organizations as service oriented organizations in general and the management of clubs and sporting venues in particular have to assign their efforts on customer satisfaction and quality of service apply. The more quality of services used by managers at sports clubs improves, people's tendency towards sports activities would be increased and the number of individuals working under sports activities would be increased as well by which a contribution by sports in Household expenditure basket increases, and development in sports activities grows so that Capabilities including investment and income at sports arena would be increased (Hashemi, 2007). About half the people, who start to exercise, disappointed in a short period (dishman, 2001). Savieir and Smith (1999) reported that Sports facilities in the United States annually lose an average of 40% of the customers. If the organization's performance be always lower than customer expectations, customers would give up organization and the organization eventually will fail, thus, the organizations provided with higher

levels of customer satisfaction would be always stronger and more successful(Rezaei Kohan, 2007). Maintain good customers in a long term than to attract new customers is more profitable. The customers satisfied more with organization express their positive experiences to others serving as means to advertise for organization that cost to attract new customers would be reduced (Hashemi, 2007). Measuring customer satisfaction is a key issue in the market and it can be used in decision making in management (Piersi niegle, 1996), and is a fundamental tool by which marketers evaluate their communication with customers (Rouison janfe, 2003), and in this way an organization understands to what extent customers are satisfied with the status of services and products available at organization and where dissatisfaction might exist. Furthermore, organizations would be able to resolve gaps existing in services, also could avoid weaknesses that this is possible by recognizing weaknesses and all the things which cause customers are unsatisfied (Taheri Kashani, 2003). Discussion on customer loyalty is one of the main topics in sports. For a customer to provide the best service with the lowest prices can lead to customer loyalty (Fanchun man, 2010). Based on studies the manufacturers, have come to this point that how they could build loyalty in their customers, known loyalty in this meaning that customer after purchase of goods or services have to satisfy with them, and refer to them to meet their needs and persuade others to purchase that good or use of that service. Here, customer satisfaction has referred to understanding customer needs, reducing costs and ensuring the quality of goods and services and building a bond relationship between institutional brokers and clients (Nasiri Gheidari, 2003). In recent years, Competition to attract customers because of the increasing number of newly constructed modern fitness clubs in many cities, especially Tehran has increased. Hence, Attract new customers and retain existing customers is an important objective of the managers of these clubs. For this, it is necessary to go forwards with more knowledge and awareness so as to provide high-quality services for customers going to fitness clubs (PoorIran, 2008). Since, studies in the past have addressed investigating dimensions of satisfaction and not considered that customer satisfaction might be related to age, gender and education status of individuals, and quality of services in a sports club might include many factors, thus this study intends to clarify impact of age, gender and education status of customers on their satisfaction. Hence, this question comes to mind whether customer satisfaction of customers at Physical Fitness clubs in districts 1-6 of Tehran from quality of services provided for them is based on age, gender, and education status of customers.

### **Research methodology**

Research method is of descriptive type regarding survey method. Statistical population of this study includes all male and female customers used to refer to physical fitness clubs at 1-6 districts across Tehran, that 3 months activity and membership at the club age range over 16 years old as well as total health required to them. Total clubs across Tehran includes statistical population in this study, mentioned 382 clubs of which 82 clubs were chosen as sample group in sampling. In this study, sampling has been targeted and districts 1-6 were chosen among 22 districts in Tehran that found with common points in terms of cultural and social classes, and then 150 individuals of 6 districts were chosen equally using simple random method, in this the questionnaire was filled. Two instruments including library studies and questionnaire as library and field methods have been used in this study, and Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire across Tehran cities would be used to measure satisfaction factors belonged to customers who used to go physical fitness clubs used previously in study by Hashemi et al.(2011). This questionnaire includes 25 questions and five sections, prepared based on Likert scale(five-item Likert scale). Questions 1-4(social satisfaction),

5-11(satisfaction with equipment and physical environment of saloon), 12-18(satisfaction with quality of employees), 19-21(satisfaction with practicing programs) and 22-25(other satisfaction factors) mentioned. The questionnaire mentioned derived from a study by Hashemi et al.(2011) that includes 25 questions based on five-item Likert scale. Reliability of questionnaire in previous studies using pilot method was obtained regarding Cronbach's alpha(86.32%); it can say based on the value of this coefficient that questionnaire has enjoyed a high reliability(Hashemi et al.2011). In this study, to determine validity, the questionnaire was distributed among experts, trainers and professors at university in the field of sports management and then validity of questionnaire was confirmed. Two descriptive and inferential methods have been used in data analysis. Descriptive statistics has been used to categorize scores, design tables, frequency distribution and SPSS software-version 18 has been used to calculate scattering indices including mean, standard deviation and variance. Furthermore, ANOVA statistical test was used to examine intergroup difference.

## **Results**

According to the results of table 1, there exists a significant relationship between social satisfaction and customer satisfaction with quality of services available at physical fitness clubs across districts 1-6 in Tehran.

Table 1. Results of correlation test between social satisfaction and customer satisfaction with quality

Independent variable	dependent variable	Significance level	Error level	Correlation coefficient
Social satisfaction	Customer satisfaction with quality	0.000	0.05	0.345

The results of correlation test indicate that significance level(0.000) is lower than error level(0.05), and a significant relationship exists between variables. Further, positive correlation coefficients indicates the more social satisfaction increases, customer satisfaction with quality of services using at clubs increases, thus, there exists a significant relationship between social satisfaction and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran.

There exists a significant relationship between satisfaction with equipment and physical environment of saloon and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran.

Table 2. Results of correlation test between satisfaction with equipment and physical environment of saloon and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs

Independent variable	dependent variable	Significance level	Error level	Correlation coefficient
Social satisfaction	Customer satisfaction with quality	0.000	0.05	0.904

The results of correlation test indicate that significance level(0.000) is lower than error level(0.05), and a significant relationship exists between variables. Further, positive correlation coefficients indicates the more satisfaction with equipment and physical environment of saloon increases, customer satisfaction with quality of services using at clubs increases, thus, there exists a significant relationship between satisfaction with equipment and physical environment of saloon and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran. There exists a significant relationship between satisfaction with Location, tuition and buffet at the club and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran.

Table 3. Results of correlation test between satisfaction with Location, tuition and buffet at the club and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs

Independent variable	dependent variable	Significance level	Error level	Correlation coefficient
Location, tuition and buffet at the club	Customer satisfaction with quality	0.000	0.05	0.291

The results of correlation test indicate that significance level (0.000) is lower than error level (0.05), and a significant relationship exists between variables. Further, positive correlation coefficients indicates the more satisfaction with Location, tuition and buffet at the club increases, customer satisfaction with quality of services using at clubs increases, thus, there exists a significant relationship between Location, tuition and buffet at the club and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran.

There exists a significant relationship between satisfaction with Training programs and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran.

Table 4. Results of correlation test between satisfaction with Training programs and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs

Independent variable	dependent variable	Significance level	Error level	Correlation coefficient
satisfaction with Training programs	Customer satisfaction with quality	0.000	0.05	0.275

The results of correlation test indicate that significance level(0.000) is lower than error level(0.05), and a significant relationship exists between variables. Further, positive correlation coefficients indicates the more satisfaction with Training programs increases, customer satisfaction with quality of services using at clubs increases, thus, there exists a significant relationship between satisfaction with Training programs and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran.

There is significant difference in the services provided between the different ages in satisfaction with quality of services using at clubs.

Table 5. Results of Testing for homogeneity of variance

Testing	for	Degree of freedom 1	Degree of freedom 2	Significance level
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homogeneity of variance			
0.751	3	146	0.523

As homogeneity of variance was rejected, Welch test was used instead of ANOVA.

Table 6. Results of Welch test

Welch test	Degree of freedom 1	Degree of freedom 2	Significance level
0.818	3	50.192	0.490

As significance level is greater than 0.05, thus there does not exist a significant relationship between variables. Hence, at 95% confidence level, it can say that there does not exist a significant difference between different ages in satisfaction with services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran. In other words, this hypothesis was rejected.

There exists a significant difference in satisfaction with physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran from the services provided.

Table 7. Results of Testing for homogeneity of variance

Welch test	Degree of freedom 1	Degree of freedom 2	Significance level
0.462	1	148	0.498

As homogeneity of variance was rejected, ANOVA test was used instead Welch. As homogeneity of variance is firstly used before ANOVA test, mentioning if this test was accepted and data were homogenous, then ANOVA can be used; otherwise Welch can be used to get results.

Table 8. Results of Welch test

Welch test	Degree of freedom 1	Degree of freedom 2	Significance level
5.509	1	64.468	0.022

As significance level is greater than 0.05, thus there does not exist a significant relationship between variables. Hence, at 95% confidence level, it can say that there exists a significant difference between males and females in satisfaction with services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran. In other words, this hypothesis is confirmed.

There exists a significant difference between individuals with different education status in satisfaction with physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran from the services provided.

Table 9. Results of Testing for homogeneity of variance

Welch test	Degree of freedom 1	Degree of freedom 2	Significance level
0.033	3	145	1.137

As Testing for homogeneity of variance was confirmed, ANOVA test is used.

Table 10. Results of ANOVA test

ANOVA test	Sum of squares	Freedom degree	Mean of squares	F	Significance level

As significance level is lower than 0.05, thus there exists a significant relationship between variables. Hence, at 95% confidence level, it can say that there exists a significant difference between individuals with different education status in satisfaction with services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran. In other words, this hypothesis is confirmed.

### **Discussion**

This study aimed to examine customer satisfaction across Physical Fitness clubs in districts 1-6 of Tehran from quality of services provided for them based on age, gender, and education status of customers. this study examined customer satisfaction from four dimensions including social satisfaction of customers, satisfaction with equipment and physical environment of saloon, satisfaction with quality of services, satisfaction with training practices provided for customers who used to go physical fitness clubs, further addressed comparing difference on customer satisfaction in terms of age, gender and education status among customers.

there exists a significant relationship between social satisfaction and customer satisfaction with quality of services available at physical fitness clubs across districts 1-6 in Tehran. The findings of this study in relation to relationship between social satisfaction and customer satisfaction with quality of services are in accordance with results of study by Memari et al.(2013), Ameri et al.(2012), Hoseini et al.(2010), Kozechian et al.(2009), Hak lee et al.(2010), Hak lee(2003).

Second hypothesis: There exists a significant relationship between satisfaction with equipment and physical environment of saloon and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran. Customer satisfaction is the customer trust on reliability and leading factor in getting customer confidence on quality in services or goods (Farahani, 2009).

The results of this hypothesis is in accordance with results of study by Saatchian et al.(2010), Kozechian et al.(2009), Bahleke et al.(2008), Hak lee et al.(2010). Saatchian et al.(2010) in a study grounded on topic of quality of services defined satisfaction and loyalty that there exists a positive significant relationship between quality of services and loyalty and satisfaction.

Kozechian et al.(2009) in a study addressed comparing customer satisfaction in public and private fitness clubs across Tehran, stated, there exists a significant difference on customer satisfaction with social factors, equipment, quality of employees' behavior, training programs and tuition in public and private clubs.

Bahleke et al.(2008) in their study examined the factors associated to customer satisfaction in private indoor pools, that proved the relationship between health, security affairs, facilities and equipment with customer satisfaction.

Hak lee et al.(2010) in a study addressed investigating impact of quality of services on satisfaction and tendency: Gender segmentation strategy, Korea golf clubs. They concluded in this study that quality of services used at club and new equipment in club are more important to Women Golfers rather than men golfers, that such findings confirm the results of second hypothesis.

Third hypothesis: There exists a significant relationship between satisfaction with Location, tuition and buffet at the club and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness

clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran. Thus, for Customer satisfaction, it is better to provide proper Location, tuition and buffet at the club for customers at club.

Zeithaml(1987) has defined quality of services as Holistic judgment by Customer about superior nature of service to the same services with their distinctive advantages. Havvat et al.(1996) in a study entitled “measure quality of services at sports centers” introduced a four-dimensional model including main services, quality of employees behavior, public equipment and secondary services at Australia entertainment and sports center.

Bahleke et al.(2008) in their study stated that the relationship between health, security affairs, equipment and facilities with customer satisfaction has been approved. According to the results of this study, the third hypothesis was confirmed.

Fourth hypothesis: there exists a positive significant relationship between training practices and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran that this has not examined in studies previously. For instance, Ameri et al.(2012) in their study declared that a significant relationship exists between “quality of services and sub-scales including quality of program, quality of facilities and quality of interaction” and customer loyalty. They stated that repeat in customers’ purchase lies in high-quality services that quality of services has to be increased by providing diverse classes and programs, well-informed trainers, top user and attractiveness in sports appliances, high sense of interaction and attention to trainer, providing timely guidance and understanding specific needs of any company. Furthermore, they stated that if made an attempt to satisfy customers, a particular attention has to be paid on all aspects of quality of services. Koozechian et al.(2009) stated that a significant difference exists between satisfaction with training practices at public and private clubs, that what causes this difference regarding declarations by customers who refer to clubs, lies in a fact that trainers provide specific and professional practices for their customers at private physical fitness clubs rather than public clubs.

Avesta & colleagues(2004) concluded in their study that children evaluated quality of saloons based on five dimensions including security, pollution, facilities, reliability and interaction with trainer, yet it seemed that parents evaluated their children’s attendance at sports clubs based on four factors including security, interaction with trainer, reliability and facilities. Evaluation of quality of sports services and organizations and entertaining facilities is a multi-dimensional structure, seemed these dimensions might be difference in any nation to other nations. Hence, research hypothesis can be confirmed. According to fifth hypothesis, there does not exist a positive significant relationship between different ages and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran. A large body of studies has addressed investigating customer satisfaction with quality of services at sports clubs, yet only few studies have examined impact of descriptive characteristics on customer satisfaction.

Saatchian(2010), Norouzian(2010) and Chuan(2008) stated in their study that quality of services affects customer satisfaction. Hence, fifth hypothesis of research has a novelty, so that with respect to this hypothesis, it can say there does not exist a significant difference on difference ages in satisfaction with physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran. According to the sixth hypothesis, there exists a significant difference between males and females and customer satisfaction with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran. Theodorakiss et al.(2004) indicated that women in the context of services and equipment compared to male are less satisfied. According to the study by Hekmat nia et al.(2007), it can state that factors affecting satisfaction include social satisfaction, social awareness, citizenship partnership, age, social and economic status. Afintoose, Theodorakiss and Narsis(2005) carried out a study on

customers' expectations from services used at physical fitness clubs across Greece, that their findings suggested a significant difference between male's and female's expectations and users at public and private sports centers, mentioned that all these results are in accordance with research hypothesis. It can state that the reason for this difference in customers satisfaction at physical fitness clubs across districts 1-6- Tehran in terms of gender, males and females need to sport, to what extent male and female required to sports rather than quality of services at club, and regarding that each of males and females need sports and sports appliances regarding their body, so their satisfaction level from quality of clubs is totally different.

According to seventh hypothesis, there exists a significant difference between individuals with different education status in their satisfaction level with quality of services using at physical fitness clubs at districts 1-6 across Tehran. Theodorakiss et al.(2004) stated the more individuals are educated, found with high satisfaction level in the mental and social equipment. Fewer studies grounded on this research hypothesis have been found, yet the reason for getting this result lies in different expectations of individuals with different education status. Individuals at any education status have specific expectations from quality of services at club so that found with different satisfaction with services provided for them.

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