



EVALUATION OF THE PERCEIVED QUALITY OF SERVICE IN SPORT FITNESS CENTERS ACCORDING TO SOME VARIABLES

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Abstract:

Purpose: The aim of this study was to evaluate perceived service quality in sports-fitness centers. **Methods:** The scale forms were applied to the 200 members who volunteered to participate in the research with the permission obtained from the enterprise management and the necessary information was provided by the researcher. Personal information form was used to collect data and Sports-fitness Centers Perceived Service Quality questionnaire was used to measure the service quality of recreational sports centers. In the statistical analysis, Kruskal Wallis analysis was used to determine the relationship between the data and Man Whitney u test was used to determine whether there was any difference between the data. **Results:** As a result of data analysis; there was no significant difference between perceived service quality in sports fitness centers and gender, age, income level, the purpose of membership, duration of active membership. However, there was a significant difference in educational status and undergraduate status variables ($p < 0.05$). **Conclusions:** Participants who take advantage of the facilities of recreational sports and fitness programs; membership periods, age, income level, the purpose of membership and active membership periods are not the factors affecting the perception of service quality. Significant differences were found between the participants' status of being a licensed athlete and their educational status. There are differences between the perceptions of the participants with a bachelor's degree and those who are educated in high school and equivalent schools. In the case of a license, it was observed that licensed athletes who regularly play sports are a factor in the perception of service quality in the fitness center.

Keywords: sports, fitness, perceived quality of service

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1. Introduction

Service is defined as an activity or benefit that does not result in ownership of anything offered from one group to another (Kotler and Armstrong, 2003). Many attempts have been made to understand the quality of service. It is stated that there are two different dimensions that affect the total quality of service: technical quality and functional quality. In light of these dimensions, the quality of service emerges as a result of an evaluation process comparing the consumer's expectation and perception (Yıldız, 2009). When we consider the concept of service quality in sports, the concept is mostly expressed with abstract elements.

2. Literature Review

Sports services, which include sports-specific characteristics, can be defined as "*the whole of abstract and different activities that have the benefits of satisfying the needs of people for sport, having fun, getting away from stress, being healthy, looking good, socializing and struggling*". The classification of sports services is shown as an important element in understanding the meaning of sports services. Sports services can be classified into two different dimensions according to the type of participation. These dimensions are; sport-based sports services and participation-based sports services (Çimen and Gürbüz, 2007).

We can define the standardization of services as meeting all the needs and requirements of the customer. When the place where the service is provided is examined, it is observed that the service provided by the sports instructor in the current location differs from the provision of the customer at the location. If we examine the size of the sports enterprise as a consumption unit, we can say that standards can be established for big enterprises, but in this case, the interaction with sports service environment and other customers' gains importance (Özkan, 2013).

The concepts of healthy living and physical activity are quite common in recent years. Individuals who give importance to these concepts have started to turn to various sports centers, especially fitness centers. With the increasing interest in fitness centers, as in every sector, a competitive environment has emerged among the companies providing fitness services. In this competitive environment, businesses have to develop customer-oriented approaches, strategies and meet customer expectations in order to survive and survive. It is essential to measure customer expectations or to meet the expectations. However, if the customer expectations are known, studies can be conducted for the quality of the service provided (Çatı, Murat and Gelibolu, 2010).

Turkey's fitness centers continue to multiply in number. The demands of individuals doing sports are constantly changing. With this research, it is thought that fitness centers will be useful for evaluating the quality of service provided to people. In addition, this research is important in terms of shedding light to sports scientists who will conduct scientific studies in the field.

3. Material and Methods

3.1. Methodology

In this study, one of the quantitative research methods, questionnaire technique was applied. The data collected for use in the study was obtained from private fitness center customers. This business has a commercial status and operates in Bahçeşehir, Istanbul. The scale forms were applied to 200 members voluntarily participating in the study receiving the services of this enterprise with the permission obtained from the enterprise management, and the necessary explanations were made by the researcher.

3.2. Sports-Fitness Centers Perceived Service Quality Questionnaire

Personal data form and Sport-fitness Centers Perceived Service Quality Scale were used to measure the service quality of recreational sports centers. The scale was developed by Uçan and Doğu (2007). Sports-fitness Centers Perceived Service Quality Scale consists of 31 items and 6 sub-dimensions as interaction quality, output quality, physical environment quality, exercise equipment, program quality, ambient conditions quality. Cronbach's alpha value was found to be 0.93. This result shows that the scale is reliable. The expressions in the scale were measured with a 5-point Likert-type rating. The findings obtained in this study are limited to 200 people who are allowed to participate in the study and who are members of the fitness center and who voluntarily participated in the study. Another limitation of the study is the lack of funding and time, in Bahçeşehir, Istanbul. Therefore, the findings do not reflect the quality of service of all fitness centers in Turkey. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of perceived service quality scale used in the study was determined as 0.909. It can be said that perceived service quality scale has very high-reliability levels for research. As a result, it can be said that the results obtained from the data produced by this scale with high-reliability level will be consistent and stable.

3.3. Data Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed by SPSS 22.0 package program. Since the data were not suitable for normal distribution, Nonparametric tests were applied. In statistical analysis, Kruskal Wallis h analysis was used to determine the relationship between the data and Man Whitney u test was used to determine whether there was a difference between the data.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Distribution of participants by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Men	134	59.6
Women	91	40.4
Total	225	100.0

When the distribution of participants according to gender was examined, it was seen that 59.4% of the participants were male and 40.4% were female.

Table 2: Distribution of participants by age

Age	Frequency	Percent
15-25	99	44.0
25-35	72	32.0
35-45	25	11.1
45 and over	29	12.9
Total	225	100.0

When the age distribution of the participants was examined, it was found that 44% of the participants were in the 15-25 age range, 32% were in the 25-35 age range, 11.1% were in the 35-45 age range and 12.9% were 45 years and older.

Table 3: Distribution of participants by educational status

Education	Frequency	Percent
Elementary School	6	2.7
High School and equivalent	81	36.0
Under Graduation	111	49.3
Postgraduate	27	12.0
Total	225	100.0

When the distribution of Spor-Fitness participants according to education is examined, it is seen that 2.7% of the participants have an elementary school education, 36% have a high school or equivalent schools, 49.3% have undergraduate and 12% have postgraduate education.

Table 4: Distribution of participants by income level

Income	Frequency	Percent
0-1000	84	37.3
1001-2000	28	12.4
2001-3000	49	21.8
3001 and over	64	28.4
Total	225	100.0

When the income distribution of the participants was examined, it was found that 37.3% of the participants had 0-1000, 12.4% had 1001-2000, 21.8% had 2001-3000 and 28.4% had 3001 and above.

Table 5: Distribution of participants by the status of being a licensed athlete

License	Frequency	Percent
Yes	58	25.8
No	167	74.2
Total	225	100.0

When the distribution of the participants according to the status of being a licensed athlete was examined, it was found that 25.8% of the participants participated in the study as licensed athletes and 74.2% did not do sports as licensed.

Table 6: Distribution of participants by the purpose of coming to the Sports-Fitness center

Purpose	Frequency	Percent
Living Healthy	173	76.9
Evaluating Their Spare Time	11	4.9
Acquiring Social Environment	13	5.8
Achieving Sport Success	14	6.2
Having a Nice Time and Having Fun	8	3.6
Others	6	2.7
Total	225	100.0

When the distribution of the participants according to the purpose of coming to the Sports-Fitness center was examined, 76.9% of the participants were living healthy, 4.9% evaluating their spare time, 5.8% acquiring social environment, 6.2% achieving sport success, 3.6% It was determined that they preferred to come to the Sports-Fitness hall for having a nice time and having fun, and 2.7% of them preferred to come to the Sports-Fitness Hall.

Table 7: Distribution of participants by their sports activities

Activity	Frequency	Percent
Fitness	169	75.1
Crossfit	10	4.4
Pilates	17	7.6
Kickboks	7	3.1
Step-Aerobik	3	1.3
Zumba	4	1.8
Crunch	2	0.9
Tabata	13	5.8
Total	225	100.0

When the distribution of participants according to their sports activities was examined, 75.1% were Fitness, 4.4% were CrossFit, 7.6% Pilates, 3.1% Kickboxing, 1.3% Step-Aerobic, 1.8% Zumba, 0.9% Crunch, 5.8% of them participated in Tabatha activities.

Table 8: Distribution of participants by their duration of exercise

Duration	Frequency	Percent
1-3 month	59	26.2
4-6 month	49	21.8
7-12 month	53	23.6
12 month and over	64	28.4
Total	225	100.0

When the distribution of the participants according to their duration of exercise was examined, it was found that 26.2% of them have exercised for 1-3 months, 21.8% of them 4-6 months, 23.6% of them 7-12 months, 28.4% of them have exercised for 12 months or more.

Table 9: Distribution of perceived service quality scale of Sport-Fitness centers according to gender scale total score average

Gender	n	Mean Rank	U	P
Man	134	112.58	6041.000	0.907
Woman	91	113.62		

In terms of gender, there was no statistically significant difference in perceived service quality in Sport-Fitness centers ($p > 0.05$).

Table 10: Distribution of perceived service quality scale of Sport-Fitness centers according to age scale total score rank averages

Age	N	Mean Rank	X^2	P
15-25	99	113.34	0.718	0.869
25-35	72	108.58		
35-45	25	119.90		
45 and over	29	116.86		

Kruskal Wallis H analysis was performed to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in the mean age distribution of the scores obtained from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers of Sport-Fitness participants who participated in the survey. According to the results of the test, it is seen that there is no statistically significant difference between the scores obtained from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers according to age distribution ($p > 0.05$).

Table 11: Distribution of perceived service quality scale of Sport-Fitness centers according to educational status and scale total score average

Education	N	Mean Rank	X^2	p	Benferroni
Elementary School (1)	6	132.58	9.618	0.022	$2 > 4$
High School and equivalent (2)	81	125.91			
Under Graduation (3)	111	109.73			
Postgraduate(4)	27	83.37			

Kruskal Wallis H analysis was conducted to examine whether the mean scores of the participants' scores obtained from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers in terms of educational status. According to the results of the test, it is seen that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the participants' scores obtained from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers ($p < 0.05$). In order to determine the difference, the group was used to correct the difference. According to the

results of the test, it was found that there was a difference between high school and equivalent schools and post-graduation.

Table 12: Sports-Fitness centers perceived service quality scale according to the income status of the scale according to the total score average distribution

Income	Frequency	Mean Rank	X^2	P
0-1000	84	117.18	3.189	0.363
1001-2000	28	93.79		
2001-3000	49	118.64		
3001 and over	64	111.59		

Kruskal Wallis H analysis was performed in order to examine whether the mean scores of the participants' scores obtained from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers in terms of the income status of the participants. According to the results of the test, it was seen that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the participants' scores obtained from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers ($p > 0.05$).

Table 13: Spor-Fitness merkezleri algılanan hizmet kalitesi ölçeğinin lisans durumuna göre ölçek toplam puan sıra ortalamalarına göre dağılımı

License	Frequency	Mean Rank	U	P
Yes	58	96.91	3910.000	0.029
No	167	118.59		

Mann Whitney U test was used to determine whether the scores of the Sport-Fitness participants from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers differed according to the status of their licenses or not. It was determined that the mean scores of the scores obtained from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers were statistically significant according to their undergraduate status ($p < 0.05$).

Table 14: Sports-Fitness centers perceived service quality scale according to the purpose of membership scale according to the average score distribution of the total score

Purpose of Membership	Frequency	Mean Rank	X^2	P
Living Healthy	173	114.37	3.338	0.648
Evaluating Their Spare Time	11	113.91		
Acquiring Social Environment	13	114.15		
Achieving Sport Success	14	98.11		
Having a Nice Time and Having Fun	8	85.50		
Others	6	140.75		

Kruskall Wallis H analysis was performed in order to examine whether the mean scores of the participants 'scores obtained from the perceived service scale of the Sport-Fitness centers in terms of the purpose of membership at this center were statistically significant. According to the results of the test, it is seen that there is no statistically

significant difference between the mean scores of the participants' scores obtained from perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers ($p > 0.05$).

Table 15: Sports-Fitness centers perceived service quality scale according to the effectiveness of the scale according to the total score average distribution of the scale

Activity	n	Mean Rank	X^2	P
Fitness	169	116.87	9.998	0.189
Crossfit	10	142.70		
Pilates	17	79.15		
Kickboks	7	94.29		
Step-Aerobik	3	130.00		
Zumba	4	74.88		
Crunch	2	124.25		
Tabata	13	100.31		

Kruskall Wallis H analysis was performed in order to examine whether the mean scores of the participants' scores obtained from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers in terms of the participants' activities were statistically significant. According to the results of the test, it was seen that there was no statistically significant difference between the scores of the participants' scores obtained from perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers according to their activities ($p > 0.05$).

Table 16: Distribution of Sport-Fitness Centers perceived service quality scale according to the active membership period and scale total score average

Active Membership Period	Frequency	Mean Rank	X^2	p
1-3 month	59	119.67	4.216	0.239
4-6 month	49	96.30		
7-12 month	53	116.50		
12 month and over	64	116.74		

Kruskall Wallis H analysis was performed in order to examine whether the mean scores of the participants' scores obtained from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers in terms of active membership period in the center. According to the results of the test, it is seen that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the participants' scores obtained from the perceived service scale of Sport-Fitness centers ($p > 0.05$).

4. Results and Discussion

It was found that perceived service quality in sports centers did not differ statistically by gender. Despite this, it is seen that the perceived service quality of women in the sports center is better than men. When the literature was examined, Oktay (2016) found a significant difference between gender and perceived service quality. This study does not show parallelism with our findings.

It is seen that perceived service quality in sports centers does not differ statistically according to the age distribution of participants' scores obtained from Sport-Fitness centers perceived service scale. Participants between the ages of 35-45 show more participation than other age groups. Duygulu (2015) found a significant difference between the age variable and perceived service quality in the study. There was no significant difference in the age variable in our findings.

There is a statistically significant difference between the perceived service quality in sports centers according to their educational status. Participants at the undergraduate and equivalent level of education are more likely than the participants at the other level of education. In the study conducted by Tüfekçi (2010), a significant difference was found between education level and perceived service quality. This study shows parallelism in our findings.

In the literature, Duygulu (2015) found significant differences in the perceived quality of service in fitness centers in undergraduate and graduate groups. In our study, significant differences were found between high school and equivalent schools and graduate education. This study is similar to our study.

It is seen that perceived service quality in sports centers does not differ significantly in terms of the income status of the participants. However, when the quality perception of the participants with the income level of 3001 and over was considered, it was seen that it is higher than the participants with other income levels. In the study conducted by Altan and Ediz (2016), a significant difference was found between the perceived service quality of the participants with the highest income level compared to the other income level groups. In our findings, no significant difference was found between the income level.

In Yaşar (2013) 's study on the perception of service quality in fitness centers, participants' opinions about the quality of sports field differ according to the participants' active membership period. In our study, no significant difference was found between participants' perception of service quality in sports fitness centers and duration of active membership. In the literature, our study shows parallelism with this study.

According to the research conducted by Ceyhun (2006), the satisfaction of the members decreases as the duration of the utilization of the enterprise's increases. In other words, members deem the enterprises insufficient in terms of service quality during their stay

Duygulu (2015) showed that there was a significant difference in the values of the participants who had been doing sports for 1-5 years and those who have a sports history for 6-10 years according to the total sport duration. In our study, a significant difference was found in perceived service quality in fitness centers according to license status. This study shows parallelism with our study. In the literature, it can be said that license status has an effect on service quality.

In a study by Demirel (2013), when the membership sub-dimension of the perceived service quality of the members participating in the study was examined,

significant differences were found in the values of members whose membership period was less than 1 year. In our study, there were no significant differences in membership time. This study differs according to our study.

Yüzgenç's (2010) study shows that service quality evaluation scale general scores are affected only by the income levels of the members in the personnel sub-dimension. The level of service quality pertaining to the personnel is higher among members with a higher income than members with lower income. In other words, high-income members think that their expectations are better met. In our study, no significant difference was found between the perception of income status and service quality. This study differs from our study.

The results of our study show that the gender factor is not a factor in perceived service quality. The duration of membership, age, income, arrival time and arrival objectives of the participants who benefited from the facilities of recreational sports and fitness programs are not the factors affecting the perception of service quality. My participants found significant differences in their undergraduate and educational status. There are differences between the perceptions of the participants with a bachelor's degree and those who are educated in high school and equivalent schools. In the case of a license, it was observed that licensed athletes who regularly play sports are a factor in the perception of service quality in fitness halls. When the literature is examined, there are studies about the perception of service quality. However, the number of studies related to perceived service quality in sports fitness centers is insufficient.

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