

The Survey of Factors Affecting Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club Customers (Case study of two top ranked fitness clubs in Georgia)

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Abstract

This survey investigates the various factors that influence customer satisfaction in health and fitness clubs. The study aims to identify key elements that contribute to a positive experience for club members, including the quality of facilities, the professionalism and friendliness of staff, the variety and availability of fitness programs, cleanliness, and the overall environment. Data was collected through questionnaires distributed to a diverse group of club members, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of customer preferences and expectations. The findings highlight that the most significant factors affecting satisfaction are the cleanliness of the facilities, the expertise and approachability of the staff, and the range of available fitness programs. Additionally, the study reveals that personalized attention and a welcoming atmosphere play crucial roles in enhancing customer satisfaction. These insights can help health and fitness clubs to tailor their services and improve customer retention by focusing on the aspects that matter most to their members.

Key words: Satisfaction, Health and Fitness customers, Club loyal Customers

Introduction

Due to its ability to provide competitive advantages and spur strategic advancements across a range of sectors, service delivery has grown in significance in the contemporary corporate environment (Khanngoen et al., 2023). However, the competition between Servants is growing and will continue to do so, thus it's critical to constantly adapt (Nursanti & Tomoliyus, 2021). Consumers are players on the commercial stage these days. They identify a need or an impulse, purchase the item, and then discard the services. Globalization of competition, market saturation, and the expansion of information technology have all raised consumer perceptions and made it such that long-term sustainability is no longer associated with better service quality and enduring relationships with customers. Consumer behavior is a multifaceted, dynamic process that often involves many phases. Consumer behavior is the examination of a person and the actions they take to satisfy their wants. The processes utilized to get, safeguard, and make use of goods and services that meet or beyond customer expectations are what lead to satisfaction (Thein, 2019). Client satisfaction is a critical factor that service providers should take into account and should be given top priority. Businesses need to understand the significance of customer experience in highly competitive service sectors because it influences customer goodwill and word-of-mouth communication (Khanngoen et al., 2023). Meanwhile, health and fitness facilities not only play a significant role in providing social sports services, but they also highlight the value of health care (Zhang & Li, 2014). This study will attempt to address the issue of the incomplete knowledge of the variables that have a major impact on members' happiness in health and fitness centers. Although a large body of research has looked at specific areas including facility quality, services provided, and pricing structures, there is still a dearth of information in the literature on a comprehensive analysis of the variables influencing

customer satisfaction in this context. Managers and marketers of health and fitness clubs must have a thorough understanding of these elements in order to create strategies that will increase client happiness and loyalty, which will eventually boost company performance and competitiveness in the congested fitness market. The fragmented character of earlier research endeavors, which tended to concentrate on discrete characteristics without taking into account their interdependence or relative significance to total customer satisfaction, is the root cause of the current issue. The capacity of operators of health and fitness clubs to create focused treatments and policies meant to optimize client happiness and retention is hampered by this fragmented approach. Furthermore, there is an urgent need for current research that captures the complex dynamics driving customer satisfaction in health and fitness club settings as the fitness sector continues to change due to shifting consumer tastes and technology improvements especially digital marketing (Moghimi, et al. 2024). In order to close this knowledge gap, a thorough survey will be conducted in order to determine and examine the many aspects that influence health and fitness club patrons' level of satisfaction. The results of this study will be insightful for both researchers and industry practitioners. Therefore, in this research, this question will be answered that what are the Factors Affecting Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club Customers.

Literature review and research background

Customer satisfaction has been a critical area of focus for fitness centers as they strive to meet the expectations of a diverse and evolving clientele. Research in this field continues to uncover various elements that contribute to customer satisfaction, such as service quality, staff professionalism, and the physical environment. Moghimi (2023) emphasized the importance of adaptability in service sectors, particularly in addressing dynamic customer preferences in health and fitness clubs. This adaptability allows clubs to stay competitive in the face of changing market conditions and shifting consumer needs.

Khanngoen et al. (2023) examined how customer co-creation influences overall satisfaction in fitness centers. Their study, conducted in Thailand, highlighted that customer engagement—through active involvement in shaping their own fitness experiences—plays a crucial role in driving satisfaction. The findings suggest that fitness centers should foster environments where members feel involved in decision-making, as this can enhance their overall experience and loyalty.

Further building on this, Nursanti and Tomoliyus (2021) explored how word-of-mouth and service quality impact both customer satisfaction and loyalty in fitness clubs. Their research, which focused on fitness centers in Indonesia, revealed that service quality had a more significant influence on customer loyalty than pricing. This aligns with previous studies that suggest fitness clubs should prioritize service improvement and relationship-building to retain long-term customer loyalty.

Moghimi (2024) further supports this notion, identifying that personalized attention and effective communication between staff and customers are key drivers of satisfaction in fitness-related services. His research underscores that when staff members are attentive to individual customer needs, satisfaction and loyalty increase significantly, particularly in environments where customer expectations are rapidly evolving.

The role of facility quality is also crucial while of course known international brands and licencing can attract customers too (Moghimi, Azizi. 2023). A study by Pussadu, Paopun, and Pornapiraksakul (2020) in Bangkok found that accessibility, convenience, and the integration of technological features significantly impacted customer satisfaction. This highlights the importance of offering user-friendly systems, such as online booking and seamless access to club facilities, which cater to modern consumers who value both convenience and technology in their daily routines.

Thein (2019) explored the factors influencing customer satisfaction in fitness centers in Myanmar, focusing on physical and personal factors. The study concluded that the location, space, and professionalism of staff had the most profound impact on customer satisfaction. These insights suggest that health and fitness clubs need to provide not only excellent facilities but also well-trained and friendly staff to meet customer expectations fully.

Moghimi's (2023) findings on customer relationship management (CRM) further emphasize that building strong personal relationships between fitness club staff and members is essential for long-term satisfaction. His research on CRM in the service industry shows that fitness clubs that invest in maintaining consistent, high-quality communication with their members are more likely to see sustained loyalty and positive word-of-mouth referrals.

Moreover, Zhang and Li (2014) analyzed consumer behavior in commercial fitness clubs in Liverpool, finding that young, health-conscious individuals with higher incomes are more likely to prioritize flexible and convenient fitness options. This demographic demands services that align with their busy lifestyles, further demonstrating the need for clubs to cater to the specific demands of their target market.

In conclusion, the literature highlights the multifaceted nature of customer satisfaction in the fitness industry. Key elements

such as service quality, staff professionalism, facility cleanliness, accessibility, and customer engagement all contribute to a positive customer experience. Fitness clubs that successfully integrate these factors into their service offerings are more likely to retain satisfied, loyal customers, ensuring their long-term competitiveness in the industry.

Research Objectives

- The survey of effects group classes and programs have on Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club Customers.
- The survey of effects accessibility and convenience have on Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club Customers.
- The survey of effects cleanliness and hygiene have on Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club Customers.
- The survey the effects community and social atmosphere have on Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club Customers.

Research hypotheses and Conceptual model

As the result of above research objectives, the hypothesis also are formed as:

H1: There is a positive and significant relationship between the variety and customization of group fitness activities and the overall satisfaction of health and fitness club members. This hypothesis tests the extent to which diverse and tailored fitness programs enhance perceived value and customer engagement, ultimately driving satisfaction.

H2: Accessibility and convenience, including flexible operating hours and ease of access to services, have a significant positive impact on health and fitness club customer satisfaction. This hypothesis evaluates how operational efficiency and reduced customer effort contribute to improved satisfaction levels.

H3: The cleanliness and hygiene of the fitness environment positively and significantly influence customer satisfaction. This hypothesis assesses the role of physical safety, sanitation, and perceived well-being in shaping customer trust and loyalty, particularly in a post-pandemic context.

H4: A supportive and inclusive community atmosphere within health and fitness clubs has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction. This hypothesis explores how social engagement, a sense of belonging, and emotional bonds with the brand enhance customer loyalty and advocacy.

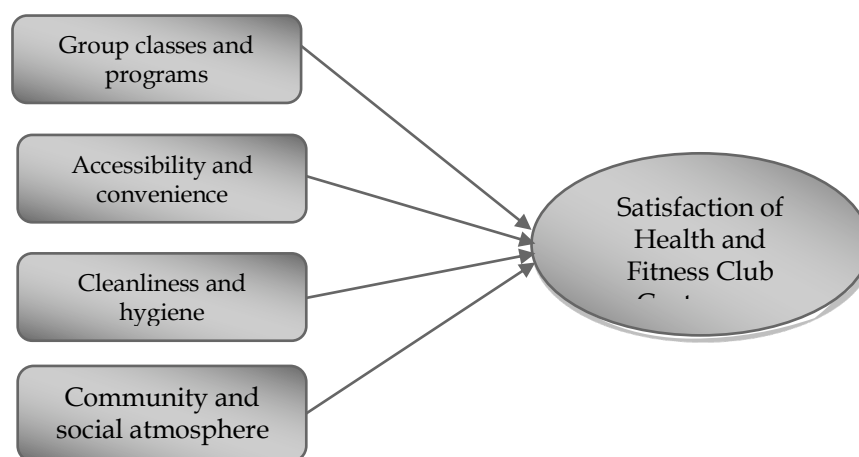


Figure 1: Conceptual model of the research

The conceptual model presented in this research integrates key factors influencing customer satisfaction in health and fitness clubs, grounded in established service marketing theories. The model hypothesizes that group fitness activities, accessibility and convenience, cleanliness and hygiene, and community atmosphere are primary drivers of customer satisfaction. Each of these variables reflects critical touchpoints in the customer journey, where the quality of service delivery can significantly shape customer perceptions and experiences. By positioning these factors within a cohesive framework, the model not only highlights their individual contributions but also their interrelated impact on overall satisfaction. This alignment allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how both tangible elements (such as cleanliness and accessibility) and intangible aspects (such as social engagement and personalized attention) work synergistically to enhance customer loyalty and retention. The use of this model in fitness club settings provides a strategic lens through which managers can allocate resources and tailor offerings to optimize customer experience, ensuring long-term competitive advantage in a rapidly evolving marketplace.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a robust descriptive-survey research design, which is applied in nature and cross-sectional in terms of the time frame. The primary objective of this approach is to systematically analyze and quantify the factors influencing customer satisfaction within a health and fitness club setting. By utilizing a cross-sectional design, the study captures a snapshot of customer perceptions within a defined period, ensuring that the findings are relevant and timely for the current market conditions. Although longitudinal studies might provide insights into changing customer preferences over time, a cross-sectional design is appropriate for this study due to its efficiency in gathering a large volume of data within a shorter time frame.

The statistical population includes 290 active members of the central branches of two known and top health and fitness clubs located in Tbilisi, Georgia. This population represents a comprehensive and diverse sample, ensuring that the results will be applicable across various demographic and socio-economic segments within the fitness industry. Sampling was conducted using an available method, which is suitable for this research as it facilitates access to a manageable and representative sample. Based on Morgan's table, the minimum required sample size is 165 respondents. The decision to employ Morgan's table stems from its widespread use in social sciences research, offering a reliable means to determine appropriate sample sizes based on population estimates. This ensures the statistical power of the analysis and minimizes the margin of error.

Data collection employed both library and field methods. The library method was crucial in building the theoretical framework of the study by drawing upon established academic sources. This secondary research provided the necessary grounding for the empirical analysis. For the field study, primary data was collected through a structured 16-question questionnaire developed by the researcher. This questionnaire was carefully constructed to measure various dimensions of customer satisfaction, utilizing a five-point Likert scale to capture the intensity of respondents' attitudes. The Likert scale is particularly well-suited for this type of research, as it provides an ordinal measure of customer satisfaction, allowing for more nuanced interpretations of the results.

The face validity of the questionnaire was confirmed through consultation with both academic experts and a supervisor in the field. This process of expert validation ensures that the instrument accurately captures the constructs of interest—namely, customer satisfaction and its various determinants. Such validation is a critical step in survey-based research, as it increases the reliability of the findings by ensuring that the questionnaire is aligned with the study's theoretical framework.

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with all indicators surpassing the threshold of 0.7, indicating a high level of internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha is a widely recognized metric in social science research, providing a measure of the reliability of the scale by analyzing the correlations between items. Achieving a reliability coefficient above 0.7 ensures that the questionnaire items measure the same underlying construct, thus making the instrument both dependable and reproducible in future studies.

For the statistical analysis, both parametric and non-parametric tests were considered. However, after testing the normality of the data distribution using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, it was determined that the data followed a normal distribution. This allowed for the application of parametric tests, such as regression analysis. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was chosen for its sensitivity in detecting deviations from normality, making it an appropriate preliminary test in studies dealing with large datasets.

Regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the independent variables—group classes and programs, accessibility and convenience, cleanliness and hygiene, and community atmosphere—and the dependent variable, customer satisfaction. Multiple regression analysis was selected due to the complexity of the model, which incorporates several predictors simultaneously. This method is ideal for determining the relative impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable while controlling for the influence of other factors. By employing this statistical technique, the study provides a more comprehensive understanding of the direct and indirect influences on customer satisfaction, offering practical insights for fitness club managers.

The use of SPSS software further enhances the reliability and precision of the statistical analysis. SPSS is a well-established tool in market research and social sciences, known for its robust data handling capabilities and advanced analytical functions. The software facilitates the execution of complex statistical procedures such as regression analysis and hypothesis testing, ensuring that the findings are both accurate and actionable.

The methodological approach adopted in this research integrates both rigorous statistical analysis and practical market research principles. By combining a descriptive-survey design, carefully considered sampling techniques, validated instruments, and the application of advanced statistical tools, this study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing customer satisfaction in health and fitness clubs. These findings are anticipated to inform managerial decisions, particularly in areas related to service enhancement and customer retention strategies.

Data analysis

1. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test

Prior to hypothesis testing, consideration should be given to the normality or non-normality of the research data. If the data distribution is normal, parametric tests are appropriate, whereas non-normal distributions necessitate non-parametric methods. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test can be applied to assess the normality or non-normality of the data in this context.

- ☐ **H0:** The data distribution is not normal
- ☐ **H1:** The data distribution is normal

Table 1. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		group classes and programs	Accessibility and convenience	Cleanliness and hygiene	Community and social atmosphere	Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club
N		165	165	165	165	165
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	3.9333	4.4333	3.4333	3.9333	3.3000
	Std. Deviation	.82768	.67891	.97143	.78492	.74971
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.232	.331	.220	.216	.291
	Positive	.201	.205	.172	.216	.189
	Negative	-.232	-.331	-.220	-.201	-.291
Test Statistic		.232	.331	.220	.216	.291
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.000 ^c	.000 ^c	.001 ^c	.001 ^c	.000 ^c
a. Test distribution is Normal.						
b. Calculated from data.						
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.						

In this test, considering that the significance level is lower than the error level i.e 05. Therefore, the H0 hypothesis is rejected and the H1 hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, the distribution of the data is normal and a parametric method such as regression can be used.

2. Regression

Considering that the main independent variable includes several sub-variables, multiple regression can be used to check these assumptions at once.

- Statistically significant positive relationship exists between varied and engaging group fitness activities tailored to diverse preferences and the satisfaction of health and fitness club's customers.
- Statistically significant positive relationship exists between easy access and flexible operating hours of health and fitness club and the satisfaction of their customers.
- Statistically significant positive relationship exists between safe and hygienic environment of health and fitness club and the satisfaction of their customers.
- Statistically significant positive relationship exists between a supportive and inclusive community (where members feel a sense of belonging and encouragement) of health and fitness club and the satisfaction of their customers.

The statistical hypotheses of this research are as follows:

- ☐ **H0:** Statistically significant positive relationship exists.
- ☐ **H1:** Statistically significant positive relationship does not exist.

Table 2. Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
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1	.781 ^a	.610	.547	.66472
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a. Predictors: (Constant), group classes and programs, Accessibility and convenience, Cleanliness and hygiene, Community and social atmosphere

b. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club

Table 3. ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17.254	4	4.313	9.762	.000 ^b
	Residual	11.046	160	.442		
	Total	28.300	164			

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club

b. Predictors: (Constant), group classes and programs, Accessibility and convenience, Cleanliness and hygiene, Community and social atmosphere

Table 3. Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2.512	1.136		-2.211	.036
	group classes and programs	.609	.198	.433	3.218	.004
	Accessibility and convenience	.602	.194	.414	3.108	.005
	Cleanliness and hygiene	.722	.213	.610	3.574	.001
	Community and social atmosphere	.698	.194	.555	3.596	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club

The value of the correlation coefficient in the table shows that there is a very strong correlation between all subsidiary independent variables and dependents variable ($R = 0.781$). The squared values of the correlation coefficient in the table generally fluctuate between zero and one. Here, it is equal to 0.610, which shows how much of the dependent variable, Satisfaction of Health and Fitness Club, can be explained by the sub-independent variables. In this research, the independent variable can explain 61% of the changes in the dependent variable, which is a significant amount. The analysis of variance table shows whether the regression model can significantly explain the changes in the dependent variable. To check the significance, we pay attention to the last column (significance level). This column shows the significance of the regression model. Considering that the obtained value is less than 0.05, we conclude that the used model is a good predictor for the dependent variable and therefore the research hypothesis is confirmed. Also, the table of coefficients gives us meaningful information about predictor variables. It can be seen that both the constant value and the independent variable are significant in the model (according to the significance level). Considering that the significance level is less than 0.05 for all sub-independent variables, therefore all sub-hypotheses are confirmed. Also, after determining the significance of the constant value and the independent variable, the column of significant coefficients (beta) indicates the standardized regression coefficient or beta value. The beta regression coefficient for each of the independent variables is equal to 0.609, 0.602, 0.722, 0.698, respectively, which indicates the strong impact of these sub-independent variables on the dependent variable, Satisfaction of Health and Fitness.

Table 4. result of Hypothesis

Row	Hypothesis	sig	Result
1.	Statistically significant positive relationship exists between varied and engaging group	.004	Ok

	fitness activities tailored to diverse preferences and the satisfaction of health and fitness club's customers.		
2.	Statistically significant positive relationship exists between easy access and flexible operating hours of health and fitness club and the satisfaction of their customers.	.005	Ok
3.	Statistically significant positive relationship exists between safe and hygienic environment of health and fitness club and the satisfaction of their customers.	.001	Ok
4.	Statistically significant positive relationship exists between a supportive and inclusive community (where members feel a sense of belonging and encouragement) of health and fitness club and the satisfaction of their customers.	.002	Ok

he results presented in Table 4 provide substantial evidence to support the existence of statistically significant positive relationships between the identified independent variables—group fitness activities, accessibility and convenience, cleanliness and hygiene, and community atmosphere—and the dependent variable, customer satisfaction. These findings align with well-established theories in customer satisfaction and service quality, confirming that the holistic customer experience in health and fitness clubs is deeply influenced by both tangible and intangible service attributes.

First, the hypothesis regarding the impact of varied and engaging group fitness activities on customer satisfaction was confirmed with a significance level of 0.004. From a marketing research standpoint, this suggests that customers perceive the diversity and customization of fitness programs as a direct reflection of the club's ability to cater to individual preferences and goals. Offering a variety of fitness classes not only satisfies the diverse needs of customers but also enhances perceived value, a critical metric in consumer decision-making. This variety serves as a differentiation factor in an increasingly competitive market, where consumers are not only seeking physical results but also a sense of novelty and engagement in their fitness routines. By positioning group classes as a key element in the service offering, fitness clubs can significantly boost customer retention rates through enhanced customer satisfaction.

Similarly, the hypothesis related to accessibility and convenience showed a significant relationship with customer satisfaction, with a significance level of 0.005. This outcome reinforces the critical role of operational factors in shaping the customer experience. In marketing terms, ease of access to services—whether through physical proximity, flexible operating hours, or user-friendly booking systems—affects both the functional and psychological dimensions of customer satisfaction. When gyms provide convenience through optimized location and accessibility features, they reduce friction in the customer journey. Marketing research consistently highlights the importance of minimizing customer effort to enhance satisfaction, which in turn fosters brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. In this context, accessibility and convenience are not merely operational advantages but key components of a gym's value proposition that directly influence customer perceptions of service quality.

The findings also validated the hypothesis regarding the importance of cleanliness and hygiene, with a strong statistical significance of 0.001. From a marketing perspective, hygiene and safety have become increasingly central to the overall service offering, especially post-pandemic. Cleanliness is often categorized as a hygiene factor in service marketing frameworks, meaning that while its presence may not significantly elevate satisfaction, its absence can severely detract from it. The positive relationship between cleanliness and customer satisfaction highlights the role of fitness clubs in maintaining an environment where customers feel both safe and comfortable. In terms of customer retention, the perceived cleanliness of facilities correlates with trust in the brand and long-term customer loyalty, as it suggests a commitment to customer well-being, a factor that modern consumers prioritize when selecting service providers.

Lastly, the significant relationship between community and social atmosphere (significance level of 0.002) and customer satisfaction underscores the evolving role of social factors in the service marketing of fitness clubs. Fitness centers are no longer viewed solely as places for individual physical improvement but as social hubs where individuals seek a sense of

belonging and community. This shift has been captured in recent marketing research, where fostering a sense of community is linked to increased customer engagement and lifetime value.

A supportive and inclusive environment strengthens emotional bonds with the brand, thus transforming occasional gym-goers into loyal advocates. This is particularly relevant in health and fitness clubs where customer satisfaction is not just influenced by the service quality but also by the emotional and social connections formed within the facility.

Together, these hypotheses and their respective results contribute to a comprehensive understanding of customer satisfaction in health and fitness clubs. By identifying and confirming the importance of these factors, this research offers valuable insights into how fitness centers can leverage these variables to enhance overall customer experience. From a marketing perspective, these findings enable fitness clubs to refine their service offerings, create targeted marketing campaigns, and ultimately develop stronger, more profitable relationships with their customers.

Recommendations and Suggestions

1. Personalized Engagement and Customization of Services

Our research highlights the critical role of varied and engaging group fitness activities in driving customer satisfaction. In practice, fitness centers can significantly benefit by personalizing services to meet the diverse needs and preferences of their clientele. By tailoring fitness programs and offering a range of activities, clubs can cater to different fitness levels and goals, ensuring that members feel personally valued. This aligns with findings in our study that demonstrate how personalization enhances perceived value, which is central to fostering customer loyalty and retention. For example, gyms can use customer data to design personalized fitness plans, track individual progress, and even introduce specialized classes that align with members' specific fitness goals.

2. Enhancing Operational Convenience and Member Accessibility

One of the key findings in our research is the positive impact of accessibility and convenience on customer satisfaction. Operational convenience directly influences members' overall experience, especially in urban environments where clients often seek facilities that are easy to access. Fitness clubs should focus on optimizing their digital platforms to ensure a seamless experience—from booking classes to managing memberships. This approach minimizes barriers and enhances operational efficiency, which is essential for retaining members. The more frictionless the customer journey is, the more likely members are to maintain their subscriptions. Implementing advanced booking systems, integrating mobile apps for easy gym access, and allowing flexible payment plans are practical steps that align with these findings.

3. Emphasizing Hygiene and Facility Quality as Key Differentiators

Our findings strongly underscore the importance of maintaining high standards of cleanliness and hygiene. Post-pandemic consumer behavior shows that fitness center members prioritize safety and hygiene more than ever. Gyms and fitness centers can use this insight to enhance their competitive positioning by visibly investing in sanitation protocols and facility upkeep. This focus on cleanliness not only ensures compliance with health guidelines but also reinforces trust and customer loyalty. Regular, transparent communication about these hygiene practices to members can further strengthen the club's reputation as a responsible and customer-centric establishment, aligning with the growing market demand for health and safety assurances.

4. Creating a Community and Social Atmosphere

A significant finding from our research is the strong link between a supportive community atmosphere and overall customer satisfaction. Fitness centers can leverage this insight by creating spaces and opportunities for social interactions. Encouraging member involvement through group activities, social events, or online fitness communities helps foster a sense of belonging, which can transform casual members into loyal advocates. Building this type of community within the gym environment not only enhances the customer experience but also increases long-term member retention, as individuals are more likely to continue memberships when they feel a part of a larger, supportive network. Offering programs that target social engagement and promoting inclusive environments are highly effective strategies in this regard.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

Research limitations include small sample size and cross-sectional design that were justified due to budget and timeframe of the research, however it limited the ability to generalize findings and determine causality or track changes in customer satisfaction over time. For future research, it is suggested that longitudinal studies be conducted to observe changes in satisfaction levels, and also researchers may use a mixed approach for deeper understanding, perform comparative analysis in different types of health and fitness clubs, and investigate specific factors affecting satisfaction.

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