



Places, events and sport:
Going for gold

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MEMBER'S RETENTION IN FITNESS: CONTRIBUTION OF THE QUALITY OF SERVICES, EXPECTATIONS, SATISFACTION IN LIFE AND IN THE CLUB

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Background: Members retention is essential for financial viability of fitness organizations. Thus, these organizations focus on service quality to keep their members satisfied (Lee, Kim, Ko, & Sagas, 2011) and to maintain or exceed their expectations (Robinson, 2006; Pedragosa, & Correia, 2009). Therefore, gyms and health clubs expect that satisfied members repurchase and spend extra money in their fitness services (Ferrand, Robinson, & Valette, 2010) increasing organization profitability. In this study, it was intended to understand the contribution to the members' retention intention in fitness organizations regarding: service quality; expectations; satisfaction in life; and satisfaction in the club.

Methods: The study sample consisted in 850 members of fitness organizations in Portugal (average of 2000 members). Questionnaires were applied, based in the literature (Gonçalves et al., 2014), to test five dimensions: service quality (11 items), expectations (5 items), satisfaction in life (5 items), satisfaction in the club (5 items) and retention (5 items). All items were measured with a 5-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree, to 5=strongly agree). Data analysis was performed using SPSS through correlation and regression analysis. Additionally, the internal consistency of service quality ($\alpha=0,911$), expectations ($\alpha=0,902$), satisfaction in life ($\alpha=0,902$), satisfaction in the club ($\alpha=0,799$), and retention ($\alpha=0,909$) was calculated through Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Results: The results show that, for members retention, expectations ($\beta=0,393$; $p<0,001$), followed by service quality ($\beta=0,330$; $p<0,001$) and satisfaction in the club ($\beta=0,285$; $p<0,001$) are essential, while satisfaction with life seems not be significant (excluded by the stepwise algorithm). The regression model has an explained variation (72.2%) and does not unveil multicollinearity problems.

Conclusions: Data suggest that fitness managers should continuously invest in maintaining and exceed member's expectations, through the preservation of facilities and services quality. Therefore, member's satisfaction will be assured, increasing their possibility of repurchase intentions and/or their retention. Curiously, satisfaction with life does not present explanatory results for retention. These specific results suggest the continuous study of this dimension and its relation with the consumption of fitness.

Service quality attributes, expectations, satisfaction, member's retention, fitness organizations