

**THE EFFECTS OF SERVICE QUALITY TO LOYALTY INTENTION: THE
MEDIATING IMPACT OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
(CASE STUDY: REWA FIGHT GYM)**

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Abstract. In the recent years, the health and fitness industry in Indonesia is growing very rapidly; one of them is Muay Thai Fight Gym. The Fight Gym industry by nature is highly competitive, since almost all of the fight gyms are alike in terms of the programs and the facilities. The management of Rewa Fight Gym needs to know which area that they have to improve in order to increase their visitor's Loyalty. This research aimed is to investigate the level of service quality, customer satisfaction, Consumer Loyalty, and finds the correlation between them. This research was using Service Quality in Participant Sport for assessing service quality in Rewa Fight Gym by constructing 4 sub-dimensions with 62-item questionnaire, Customer Satisfaction model with 5-item questionnaire, Loyalty Intention mode with 4-item questionnaire, and Behavioral Loyalty Survey of Participant Sport Clubs with 4-item questionnaire. The questionnaire was spread to 100 customers of Rewa Fight Gym. After the responses screened and proved valid and reliable, it was analyzed using Path Analysis to investigate the relationship between variable. The results of this research reveal that Rewa Fight Gym is categorized as good based on overall assessment score with every dimension has similar score. The result also reveals that service quality has significant positive impact to Loyalty through Customer Satisfaction and also independently. The implications of this research from both practical and theoretical aspect are discussed for the management of Rewa Fight Gym, fight gym industry, and suggestion as well as for future research.

Keywords: Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Consumer Loyalty, Participant Sport, Fight Gym

Introduction

In the recent years, the health and fitness industry in Indonesia is growing very rapidly (Santoso, 2010). According to CEO of PT Fitness and Health Indonesia, fitness centers with the total of almost 600 are spreading almost big cities in Indonesia, and the visitor rate is also increasing (Santoso, 2010). As an alternative to the conventional fitness centers, many different forms of specialized sports centers are developing, one of them is Muay Thai Fight Gym.

In Indonesia, the wave of Muay Thai Fight Gym has reached many big cities, including Jakarta, Surabaya, and Bandung (Indonesia Fitness Health Expo, 2015). In Bandung alone, there are 5 fight gyms that have opened during the last few years, one of them is Rewa Fight Gym.

The Fight Gym industry by nature is highly competitive, since almost all of the fight gyms are alike in terms of the programs and the facilities. The main driver of competition lies on the service quality of each gym. According to Polyakova, Mirza, and Jackson (2012), fitness clubs in a highly competitive and saturated market seek methods of both retaining existing and attracting new customers.

Therefore, it is very important to focus on Service Quality and the identification of what customers actually perceive as quality in the clubs themselves.

The same objective applies for the management of Rewa Fight Gym. According to the owner of Rewa Fight Gym, Andi, in preliminary interview done prior to conducting this research, Rewa Fight Gym aims to increase the loyalty of customers from one-time visitors to regular members. They do this by improving their facilities such as adding new workout equipment and doing regular maintenance of the gym, with a hope that it will increase their customer satisfaction. However, this effort will be futile if turns out the customers have different perceptions of Service Quality that affected their satisfaction level and eventually, customer loyalty. Looking at the similarity of business model, it is possible that other Muay Thai Fight Gym in Indonesia also experienced the same problem.

In a highly competitive industry, the management of Rewa Fight Gym needs to know which area that they have to improve in order to increase their visitor's Loyalty. Research has shown that loyalty is affected by customer satisfaction and perceived service quality. By understanding the current customer satisfaction and service quality. Rewa Fight Gym able to develop strategy to increase the customer loyalty.

Literature Review

Service Marketing Mix

Booms & Bitner (1981) are developing marketing mix into 7ps or well known as service marketing mix. Services have unique characteristics than products marketing, for example intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability and perish-ability. Bernard H. Booms and Mary J. Bitner's insight in relation to physical products and services led to an extension of the traditional marketing mix. In addition to the four traditional factors, three important factors have been added: People, Process and Physical Evidence, that make the services marketing mix.

Service Quality

The definition of service quality will vary according to some previous theories. As we know that there is this most common used SERVQUAL, which was developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry in 1985. The SERVQUAL theory widely adapted as an instrument measuring the perceptions on service quality. The scale contains five key measures that were found when the researchers held focus group discussion. Regardless of the service, customers will tend to use similar criteria in evaluating the service. There were originally ten groups of categories (Parasuraman et al., 1985: 47) which then the other five were merged through further scale purification (Parasuraman et al., 1988: 23).

The dimension of service quality can be defined as follow:

1. *Reliability*; which involves consistency of performance and dependability
2. *Assurance*; which involves how clearly and understandably employees explain services, costs, and benefits of service
3. *Tangibility*; which include physical evidence of the service such as appearance of personnel or the physical facility
4. *Empathy*; which involves knowing the customer by learning his or her specific requirements, providing individualized attention, and recognizing regular customers
5. *Responsiveness*; which concerns how willing or ready employees are to provide service

In the recent years, SERVQUAL has also been used to improve service quality in extended ways. Finn and Lamb, (1991, p. 487) found that "the SERVQUAL measurement model is not appropriate in a retail setting". They argued "that retailers and consumer researchers should not treat SERVQUAL as an off the shelf measure of perceived quality. Refinement is needed for specific companies and industries." (p. 489). According to Peter, Churchill and Brown (1993), to use a difference in scores causes a number of problems in such areas as reliability, discriminate validity, spurious correlations, and variance restriction. Therefore, the instruments to assess the service quality will be explained below

Service Quality in Sport Industry

Several researchers approached service quality from perspectives quite different from Parasuraman et al. (1988). For example, some scholars provide multi-dimensional models of service quality. In the 1980's, Gronroos (1984) used a two-dimensional model to study service quality. The first dimension was Technical Quality, which referred to the outcome of the service performance. The second dimension was Functional Quality, which referred to the subjective perception of how the service is delivered. This was a reflection of the consumers' perceptions of the interactions between consumer and service providers. According to his model, these two dimensions of service performance were compared to the customer's expectations and eventually the customer had his/her own service quality perception. Later, McDougall and Levesque (1994) added a third dimension - physical environment to Gronroos' (1984) model and proposed the Three Factor Model of Service Quality. It consisted of service outcome, service process (Gronroos 1984), and physical environment. They tested the model by a confirmatory factor analysis using the dimensions of the SERVQUAL scale, which provided empirical support for the model. These three components in the above models, together with Rust and Oliver's (1994) service product, represent one important aspect of services. All of them contribute to consumers' perception of service quality (Ko, 2000).

The service quality model from (Ko, 2000) will be used in this research since his study talking about recreational sport. It is called the Scale of Service Quality for Participant Sport. The perception of service quality or instruments to be assessed consisted of these followings:

1. Program Quality
2. Interaction Quality
3. Outcome Quality
4. Environment Quality

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction can be defined in many ways. Previous studies often linked customer satisfaction with what customer expect from a certain service to the reality the perceived. Customer satisfaction mainly derives from the physiological response with the perceptual difference gap between expectation before consumption and practical experience after consumption of service. It means accumulated temporary and sensory response. Therefore, under such a specific consumption setting, it frequently influences the overall attitude and decision-making when customers purchase a service (Lee, Hsiao, & Yang, 2010).

Customer satisfaction is developed by ensuring product quality in goods based industries, and it is facilitated by delivering quality services in service based industries (Warren, 2011). Customer satisfaction is one of the most important outcomes in the marketing literature. It serves to link processes culminating purchase and consumption with post purchase phenomena such as attitude change, repeat purchase, and brand loyalty (Surprenant and Churchill, 1982). To know how actually customer satisfaction measured, Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) categorized customer satisfaction measurement into 5 dimensions, (1) overall satisfaction, (2) customer favorite, (3) customer loyalty, (4) customer recommendation and (5) priority option. Understanding customer satisfaction will facilitate companies to maintain customer satisfaction to products or service. As such, inferior products or service can be improved to allow customers with wonderful impression.

Consumer Loyalty

According to Bennett & Rundle (2004) "loyalty has become widely accepted as an important issue for all organization, it is used as a marketing benchmark for the company performance." As mentioned by Park and Kim, Rosenberg and Czepiel, "it costs six times more to attract a new consumer than to retain an existing" (Park & Kim, 2000) . The definition of Customer Loyalty is a commitment by

customer to re-purchase or re-buy service from one agency in the future thus customer repeating same brand for purchasing (Oliver, 1997). Customer Loyalty can be explained with two different aspects, which are loyalty intention and behavioral loyalty (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978). Loyalty Intention refers to stated performance and purchase intention of the customer. As for behavioral loyalty, measured as repeat purchase frequency of the customer (Brown, 1952).

In the previous study of Chang (2000), he developed a specific measurement in measuring behavioral loyalty in Sport/Fitness clubs in order to have valid result in measuring Sport/Fitness service industries. The index was named the Behavioral Loyalty Survey of Participant Sport/Fitness Clubs (BLSPSFC). The dimension that used to measure Behavioral Loyalty consists of Program Quality, Interaction Quality, Outcome Quality, and Physical Environment Quality. Behavioral Loyalty Survey of Participant Sport/Fitness Clubs (BLSPSFC) method will be the main measurement for researcher to measure Behavioral Loyalty in Rewa Fight Gym.

Relationship between Customer Satisfaction of Service Quality and Consumer Loyalty

Previous studies already discussed about the correlation between customer satisfaction of service quality and Consumer loyalty. In general business, service quality and customer satisfaction have been widely recognized as key influences in the formation of consumers' purchase intentions in service environments (Taylor & Baker, 1994). According to Taylor and Baker (1994), "the development of a better understanding of how service quality perceptions and consumer satisfaction judgments interact and/or influence one another in the formation of consumers' purchase intentions appears a key challenge currently facing the services marketing discipline" (p. 164).

Specifically, in sport industry, Choi (2001) concluded, "customers' perceptions of service quality should be a priority for fitness clubs to increase their customers' repurchases intentions" (p.54). Since a clear path was identified from customer satisfaction to their repurchase intentions in the study, it can be said that if the level of satisfaction increased, they would show a greater willingness for repurchasing or revisiting the fitness clubs (Choi, 2001).

This research wants to show how a perceived service can result a satisfied customer and a satisfied customer will show loyalty in form of repurchasing the service. In this case, one of the most important constructs to be considered is repurchase intention. The term repurchase intention has been described as a behavioral component that shows willingness (enthusiasm) to purchase a product or service (Mittal, Ross, & Baldasare, 1998). The increasing interest in understanding the concept of repurchase intention has evolved because repeat purchasing is critical to a continued stream of profitability (Oliver, 1997). Therefore, it has become necessary to examine which factors affect the formation of customers' repeat purchase behavior in order for sport organizations to obtain a competitive market advantage.

In fact, a satisfied customer tends to be highly committed to a service and may eventually become a loyal customer (Ko, 2000). It is important to note that if customers are highly satisfied with their experience, they are more likely to be repeat visitors, become loyal users, disseminate positive word-of-mouth communication to others, and be supporting of the providing agency (Tian-Coal et al., 2002). According to Petrick (1999), the more loyal a consumer is to a service, the more likely they will be satisfied with the service and the more likely they will repurchase the service (p. 28). Thus, loyalty has been directly related to intention to repurchase (Barsky, 1992).

Methodology

Research Design

This research takes six steps in order to be completed. The figure below will explain the steps.

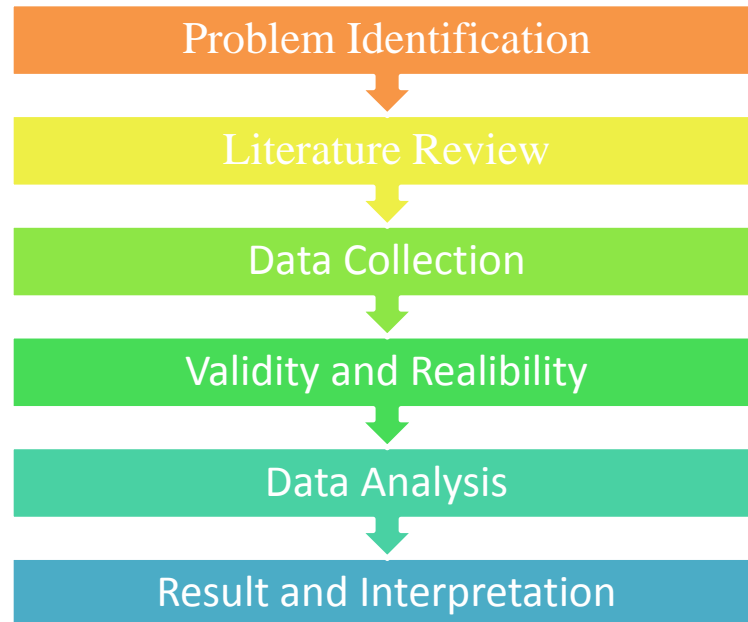


Figure 3.1 Research Design

Research Methodology

The method used for this research is by distributing questionnaire using SERVQUAL instrument. As this research discussed about sport industry, the SERVQUAL instrument was redefined into service quality model from (Ko, 2000). It is called the Scale of Service Quality for Participant Sport (SSQPS). Due to the lack of "comprehensive and psychometrically sound measures of perceived service quality within the participant sport industry", Ko developed this instrument to measure the construct of service quality perception. The instruments consist of program quality, interaction quality, outcome quality, and environment quality.

Population

Population of this research is calculated from average total visitors per month from June to November. Database information is taken from the marketing division of Rewa Fight Gym. The total number of targeted population based on total visitors of Rewa Fight Gym from June to November 2015 is 2,651 and average total visitors per month is 427

Sample

The formula below will explain the number of sample that should be gathered in this research.

Determine the number of samples

To determine the number of samples that appropriate based on the number of population the researcher used Slovin formula with error term (e) of 0.1. The appropriate sample size based on the number of population is 82 respondents. Then the result of the research would be from 82 respondents.

Data Collection

Questionnaire

The questionnaire divided into four parts, which are demographic questionnaire, behavior loyalty questionnaire, expected questionnaire, and perceived questionnaire.

Demographic Questionnaire

This part of the questionnaire will consist of participant's gender, age, education, occupation, income per month, and their spending for fight gym.

Perceived Service Quality Questionnaire

This part of questionnaire will assess customer's perception of the service they had received. This section will focus on how customers actually feel towards the service they just received, according to the Scale of Service Quality in Participants Sport by Yong Jae Ko (2000). Responses are in Likert scales from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree".

Customer Satisfaction

As this research has an objective to find the correlation between service quality and Customer Satisfaction, researcher will asses the customer satisfaction of Rewa Fight Gym visitor. Customer Satisfaction was measured by several question that indicate the level of Satisfaction according to Ko (2000). Responses are in Likert scales from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree".

Behavior Loyalty Questionnaire

The researcher will asses the behavior loyalty of Rewa Fight Gym visitor. Behavioral loyalty was measured by an index combining a participant's frequency, intensity, duration, and continuation of participation in Rewa Fight Gym. The index was named the Behavioral Loyalty Survey of Participant Sport/Fitness Clubs (BLSPSFC) (Chia-Ming, 2002). For this instrument, duration, frequency, intensity, and continuation were joined together as the measurement for behavior loyalty of Rewa Fight Gym visitor.

Loyalty Intention Questionnaire

As this research has an objective to find the correlation between service quality and Consumer Loyalty, researcher will asses the loyalty intention of Rewa Fight Gym visitor. Loyalty Intention was measured by several question that indicate loyalty intention according to (Ko, 2000). Responses are in Likert scales from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree".

Data Analysis

Descriptive Analysis

The data initially inputted and sorted in the Microsoft Excel. After inputted, the information is gathered, composed, and utilized as crude information for clear measurement, and the principle database for SPSS. Exploratory factor analysis should be done to group items with similar characteristic into respective dimensions. Dimensions emerged would better represents underlying measured variables across service quality. Furthermore, according to previous literature, dimensions emerged from this analysis would be easier to analyze and more appropriate since it represents the data obtained.

Path Analysis

This research was conducted for the purpose of finding correlation between the perceived service quality and behavior loyalty, especially in Rewa Fight Gym. loyalty. To find the correlation, path analysis will be suitable for this research.

Research Result

Level of Perceived Scale of Service Quality for Participant Sport (SSQPS)

Based on descriptive analysis score that has been converted to the continuum line, the overall variables of SSQPS in Rewa Fight Gym scores 75.1% which is indicated as "good". This shows that customer of Rewa Fight Gym perceived a good service quality in terms of overall calculation, but not in the highest score, which is "very good".

The following sub-chapter explains each dimensions and sub-dimensions in Variable Scale of Service Quality for Participant Sport .

Program Quality

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that overall perceived Program Quality is good. The followings are the conclusion of each sub-dimension analysis.

Range of Program

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that overall perceived Program Quality is good. The only variable that fall below sub-dimension mean is program variety, which is indicated that Rewa Fight Gym is lack on giving variety in program. While in other variables, which are Rewa Fight Gym gives a good program and gives an interesting program are indicated in good point.

Operating time

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that operating time is perceived as good. Based on the variable analysis in Operating Time, the highly above the sub-dimension mean is flexibility in program schedule, which means that the schedule of program in Rewa Fight Gym is perceived as highly flexible.

Information

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Information is perceived as good. Based on the variable analysis in Operating Time, Rewa Fight Gym is perceived as giving an up to date information about its program. However, Rewa Fight Gym's website has not yet given a clear information about the program.

Interaction Quality

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that overall perceived Program Quality categorized as good. The followings are the conclusion of each sub-dimension analysis.

Employee Attitude

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Employee Attitude is perceived as good. Based on the variable analysis in Employee Attitude, Trainer of Rewa Fight Gym exhibits a friendly attitude towards the visitor of Rewa Fight Gym is in the highest score.

Employee Experience

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Employee Experience is perceived as good. Based on the variable analysis in Employee Experience, Experience of Rewa Fight Gym's admin in serving the customer and competence of trainer in the training field are in the highest score

Employee Expertise

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Employee Expertise is perceived as good. Variable that falls highest above the mean is Rewa Fight Gym's trainer are competent in doing his job to train the customer.

Inter-client Interaction

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Inter-client is perceived as good. Variable that falls highest above the mean is other members are following the written rules in Rewa Fight Gym.

Outcome Quality

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that overall perceived Outcome Quality categorized as good. The followings are the conclusion of each sub-dimension analysis.

Physical Change

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Physical Change is perceived as good. Based on the variable analysis in Physical Change, shows that the member feels their physical ability improve much after getting a training session in Rewa Fight Gym.

Valence

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Valence is perceived as good. Based on the variable analysis in Physical Change, it can be seen that the point that falls highest above the mean is the member is having a good feeling after leaving Rewa Fight Gym.

Sociability

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Sociability is perceived as good. Based on the variable analysis in Sociability, it can be seen that the point that falls highest above the mean is the trainer of Rewa Fight Gym exhibits a friendly attitude towards the visitor of Rewa Fight Gym.

Physical Environment Quality

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that overall perceived Outcome Quality categorized as good. The followings are the conclusion of each sub-dimension analysis.

Ambience

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Ambience is perceived as good. Based on the variable analysis in Ambience, it can be seen that the point that falls highest above the mean is the temperature in Rewa Fight Gym is already good enough.

Design

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Design is perceived as good. Based on the variable analysis in Design, it can be seen that the point that falls highest above the mean is interior in Rewa Fight Gym placed on a good spot.

Equipment

Based on processing results presented in the previous chapter, it can be indicated that Equipment is perceived as good. Based on the variable analysis in Equipment, it can be seen that the point that falls highest above the mean is the equipments are always updated and there are already a lot of equipments in Rewa Fight Gym.

Level of Customer Satisfaction of Rewa Fight Gym

Based on descriptive analysis score that has been converted to the continuum line, the overall variables of Customer Satisfaction in Rewa Fight Gym scores 80.7%, which is indicated as "good". This shows that customer of Rewa Fight Gym are satisfied with the service in terms of overall calculation, but not yet enough to reach "very good" in continuum line.

Level of Customer Loyalty of Rewa Fight Gym

Based on descriptive analysis score that has been converted to the continuum line, the overall variables of Loyalty Intention in Rewa Fight Gym scores 78.6%, which is indicated as "good". This shows that customer of Rewa Fight Gym are Loyal in terms of overall calculation, but not yet enough to reach "very good" in continuum line.

As for Behavioral Loyalty Dimension is mention in the following.

Duration

Based on the descriptive analysis, it can be seen that top 2 of most favorable answer respond to question "How long have you join Rewa Fight Gym?" are: 26 respondents (26%) answered between 3 to 6 months of joining Rewa Fight Gym, and the most favourable duration which 31 respondents (31%) answered between 1 to 3 months of joining Rewa Fight Gym.

Frequency

Based on the descriptive analysis, it can be seen that top 2 of most favorable answer respond to question "How often you practice at Rewa Fight Gym?" are: 27 respondents (27%) answered twice a month, 20 respondents (20%) answered once a month of joining Rewa Fight Gym.

Intensity

Based on the descriptive analysis, it can be seen that the most favorable answer respond to question "How many hours do you usually practice in one visit?" is 55 respondents (55%) answered between 1 to 2 hours practiced in one visit.

Continuation

Based on the descriptive analysis, it can be seen that of the 100 respondents surveyed, 65 respondents (65.0%) of them answered yes to the question "Are you going to continue your membership in Rewa Fight Gym after a period of your membership end?" and 35 respondents (35.0%) answered No to the question "Are you going to continue your membership in Rewa Fight Gym after a period of your membership end?".

Conclusion

The relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty

The effect of Service Quality Toward Customer Satisfaction

From the result of path analysis, Service Quality make a positive relation to Customer Satisfaction. According to test result, can be conclude that Service Quality affect significantly toward Customer Satisfaction. Test result indicates the empirical proof that the higher Service Quality will increase Customer Satisfaction.

The Effect of Service Quality Toward Consumer Loyalty

From the result of path analysis by using partial path coefficient test, Service Quality make a positive relation to Consumer Loyalty. Therefore based on testing result, can be concluded that Service Quality affect significantly toward Consumer Loyalty. This testing result is giving empirical proof that the higher Service Quality will increase Consumer Loyalty.

The Effect of Customer Satisfaction toward Customer Loyalty

From the result of path analysis by using partial path coefficient test, Customer Satisfaction make a positive relation to Consumer Loyalty Therefore based on the testing result, Customer Satisfaction significantly affects Consumer Loyalty. Testing Result indicate the empirical proof that the higher Customer Satisfaction will increase Consumer Loyalty

influence of Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction toward Consumer Loyalty

From the result of path analysis by using simultaneous test, According to test result, can be concluded that Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction are simultaneously affecting Consumer Loyalty significantly.

Recommendations

Researcher has three recommendations to give based on the result of this study.

For Management of Rewa Fight Gym Service Quality Improvement

This research already highlighted that all Service Quality aspects of Rewa Fight Gym is perceived as good by the customers. However, we can see that there is several aspects that still can be improved. Firstly, the lowest performing dimension from Rewa Fight Gym SSQPS is Program Quality, with a sub-dimension of Information. It is recommended for Rewa Fight Gym to make themselves more available through the marketing channels in order to give information for the customers. Secondly, they also can improve their range of program, since currently they only focus on Muay Thai and might be possible to add more classes in the future. Lastly, they can also improve their ambience, specifically the smell and aroma in the training area.

Other than that, several sub-dimensions already reached a good score, for example on the point of Physical Change in Outcome Quality. It means that Rewa Fight Gym is perceived to be able to deliver a good outcome for the members. However, in order to have a specialization compared with competing Fight Gym, it is advised for Rewa to aim in achieving a "Very Good" score in one of the Service Quality measurement, since right now all of them falls under a "Good" criteria.

Converting Loyalty Intention to Behavioral Loyalty

It is seen that Rewa Fight Gym customer already has a good loyalty intention. However, the result of Behavioral Loyalty research still shows that some improvements can be made. For example, on the point of membership, most of the respondents have only been a member in Rewa for 1-2 months. Therefore, the management should do an active effort to convert Loyalty Intention into Behavioral Loyalty, with programs such as a more interesting membership scheme that will attract people to be loyal with Rewa Fight Gym longer.

For For Fight Gym / Muay Thai Gym Business

From the previous chapter, it is stated that Service Quality is positive yet significantly affect Customer Satisfaction and Consumer Loyalty. It can be indicated that by improving Service Quality, can increase Customer Satisfaction and Consumer Loyalty toward the gym. Researcher suggests that Fight Gym Business should put high attention on improving service quality, because it will affect positive impact to Consumer Loyalty.

For Further Research

Researcher's suggests that this kind of research should be conducted with another Fight Gym as the object, in order strengthen the method and give the right recommendation for Fight Gym Business to improve it's business. Researcher also suggests that this research can be applied in other participant sport business, in order to improve. Lastly, researcher suggests that the research take place in other participant sport sectors in order to proof the validity of this theory and improving service of participant sport industry. Seen from the result mentioned before, there are some recommendations for WOODKA that can be done in order to improve in the future.

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