Article

Customer Experience in Sports Centres: Adaptation and Validation of a Measurement Scale

Fernando García-Pascual [1,*], **David Parra-Camacho** [1] **and Gabriel Martínez Rico** [2]

1   Physical Education and Sports Department, University of Valencia, 46010 Valencia, Spain
2   Department of Teaching and Learning of Physical, Plastic and Musical Education,
     University Catholic of Valencia, Campus Capacitas, 46110 Godella, Spain
*   Correspondence: fernando.garcia-pascual@uv.es

Abstract: The service experience in fitness centres is important for understanding how users perceive and value the quality of the service. The service experience in fitness centres is constructed from the expectations and needs of the users and the capacity of the centre to satisfy them. This paper aims to adapt and validate the consumer experience quality (EXQ) scale (Klaus and Maklan, 2012) that analyses consumer experience in the context of fitness centres. This research was carried out in a sports centre in Spain with a sample of 413 users (52% male, 48% female) and an average age of 36.5 years. A CFA was carried out to check the fit of the model and then to check the reliability and validity of the scale, as well as the correlations with other factors. It can be seen that after different steps, the model shows good fitting as well as good reliability and validity values. The research also shows that this scale significantly predicts the satisfaction and future intentions of the service users. Therefore, managers of sports centres should consider the perceptions and positive experiences of their users in order to improve the viability of their service.

Keywords: customer experience; fitness centre; customer behaviour; scale validating; satisfaction

1. Introduction

Within sports services, managing sports centres has become a complex role for managers because, due to the increase in the supply of these services, transactions with users are increasingly dynamic and unstable.

Being able to more accurately know the perceptions and behaviours of customers is a key factor in the competencies of sports managers, and they can convert this information into mechanisms that allow them to retain users for a longer period of time.

In sports centres, there is a constant transition of users, due to the existing offer, within the scope of these sports services. According to Gjestvang et al. [1], this is due to the expectations of users to improve their physical condition in a period of approximately one year, not so much because of the service. Rodríguez-Cañamero et al. [2] argue in their work that members who do not hire this sports service to improve their physical condition but for leisure instead will continue to access this sports service.

Therefore, knowing the experiences that customers have during the use of the sports service is important for reinforcing the management models of these sports centres and their significant influence on customer loyalty. This user experience, according to Andreini et al. [3], is increasingly recognised within the business context as an important variable with great influence in building relationships with users.

In contrast, the perceived service quality is a variable that has been infinitely analysed within these sport services [4,5] and that analyses how an organization delivers its services in comparison to the customer's previous expectations. The service experience measures the relationship process during the service, i.e., the user's perception of their interactions with the sport service. Therefore, being able to analyse these subjective interactions towards a brand (in this specific case of a sports service) will offer more complete information to

sports managers, which will allow them to consolidate processes on their way towards the viability of the service.

In recent years, customer service experience has been an increasingly analysed variable; although, according to some authors, the literature on the analysis of this variable in the context of sports centres is scarce and new [6]. However, it is true that there has been an increase in the number of studies that have analysed this variable. Many studies that analyse service experience are focused on the fields of tourism, financial services, or online services, among others.

The EXQ scale [7], which analyses service experience, has been used in business–consumer relationship contexts such as financial services [8], tourism [9], or sporting events [10] among other contexts analysed. However, such a scale has never been used to analyse the service experience of sports centre users.

For this reason, the aim of this paper is to validate and adapt this scale and its component factors within the context of sports centres. Consequently, the paper also aims to be able to offer sports managers accurate information on the cognitive and emotional responses of customers to the service through the experience, which will thus allow the mangers to be able to establish management models that reinforce user loyalty to these sports services.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Fitness Centres and Management Models

Today's fitness market is a very powerful and dynamic context, which forces managers to be in continuous training and to constantly analyse the behaviour of users towards these services. The business purpose of these sports services is to obtain high levels of user loyalty, which allows them to continue offering these services for as long as possible. One of the most important variables in the models governing these sports services is the future behaviour of customers towards the service in terms of loyalty. Also, customer experiences are key to the future of these sports services, as a negative user experience can damage the reputation of the service and lead to user abandonment, which consequently leads to a decrease in revenue. This is why it is important for the managers of these sports centres to analyse the experience of the service as, with the results that they obtain, these managers can identify areas for improvement and use them to stimulate different measures that address the concerns of the sports service users.

Through the EXQ scale [7] that measures service experience, the quality of the user experience can be analysed more comprehensively [11]. Within the context of sports centres, this EXQ scale can analyse users' perceptions of service experiences through the scale's dimensions. The dimension called product experience can be used to analyse the quality of facilities and their equipment; alternatively, for example, the dimension called outcome focus could be used to measure the effectiveness of the programmes and services offered by the sports centre. On the other hand, the so-called moments of truth dimension could be used to evaluate the different interactions that can take place between workers and users of the sports service. Therefore, the EXQ scale can allow the managers of these sports services to identify which aspects need to be improved; consequently, this enables the managers to achieve positive experiences that influence user satisfaction and, above all, user loyalty towards the service, allowing for higher income and service viability.

Prentice et al. [12] argue in their work that during the process of interacting with the service, users establish links with the service, and this link leads users to reuse the service again. During the interaction with sport services, variables such as satisfaction or perceived value of the user towards the services have also been analysed. In the sports centre management literature, there are studies that have argued that these two variables, both satisfaction and perceived user value, are antecedents and significantly predict the customer's future intentions with the sports service [13–16].

Customer satisfaction is a measure of consumers' perception of the quality of a product or service and its adequacy to their expectations [17]. In the context of fitness centres, cus-

tomer satisfaction is related to their degree of satisfaction with the gym and the experience that they have had while using it. Customer satisfaction in fitness centres is important because it is associated with the customers' loyalty to the brand and their intention to continue using the gym in the future.

Another aspect to consider is the relationship between fitness centre management and sustainability. Fitness centres play an important role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as they promote regular physical activity, which has a positive impact on people's health and well-being. According to a study by De Groot et al. [18], physical activity is an effective intervention to prevent chronic diseases such as diabetes and obesity, and they can also improve mood and sleep quality.

In addition, many fitness centres implement sustainable measures in their management, such as the use of renewable energy or the promotion of sustainable transportation among their users. This contributes to the achievement of SDG 13, which seeks to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

In conclusion, fitness centres have an important role to play in achieving the 2030 Agenda, especially with regard to SDG 3 and SDG 13. In addition to promoting people's physical activity and well-being, they can also contribute to sustainability through sustainable practices in their management.

Knowing the perceptions of the customers of these sports services as well as their sustainable practices, among many other variables, helps to reinforce positive feelings and repeat behaviour towards the service on the part of the users, which would obtain quality sports services with respect for the environment through this loyalty.

Therefore, it is understood that loyalty is the final objective pursued by managers within the management models established in sports centres. In order to ensure that users behave positively towards the purchased service, it is important for managers to know the influencing variables and how they behave in the prediction of this loyalty.

2.2. Service Experience in Fitness Centres

The service experience in fitness centres is a topic of great importance to understand how customers perceive and value the quality of the service they receive in these spaces. There are many studies that address this issue, and the current theoretical framework will present some of the main ideas and concepts that have been developed in this regard.

The models that structure the management of sports services, particularly sports centres, increasingly analyse factors that help sports centre managers obtain more precise information, which helps them to implement actions and thus strengthen user loyalty towards the service.

A relevant theory is that of experience design, which was proposed by Pine and Gilmore [19]. According to these authors, experience is the result of the interaction between the user and the service, and it is made up of three key elements: the physical design of the space, the design of the processes, and the design of the relationship with the user. In the case of fitness centres, this means that the service experience is built on the quality of the facilities and equipment, the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes, and the personalised and friendly service of the staff.

The service experience in sports centres is a key concept in the sport and leisure industry; it refers to the users' subjective perception and evaluation of the quality of service that they receive in a sports centre. The service experience can be influenced by a number of factors, including the attentiveness and friendliness of staff, the availability and quality of the equipment and facilities, the variety of the activities and programmes offered, and the ease of access and use of the centre [20,21].

This customer experience is concerned with aspects such as knowing how behaviours are related to the experiences that users have based on their objectives, the flexibility of the staff with the users and, above all, with emotional aspects during the different interactions that arise with the service. In order to analyse the user experience at the sports centre, peace of mind must be taken into account, which refers to emotional attributes such as

experience, ease of process, or advice. The moment of truth, which measures attributes such as the perception of risk or the recovery of the service among other attributes, must also be assessed. Another factor to take into account when analysing the service experience is the outcome focus whose attributes include how the results are approached and include past experiences, among others. Finally, the product experience must be taken into account, which measures attributes such as freedom of choice and the need for comparison, among other attributes.

Customer experience is a variable that has been widely analysed in the field of services; there are a number of studies in the literature that have analysed the influence of experience on consumer behaviour and how, if there is a lasting experience, the company will benefit from it [6]. The study of customer service experience began gaining momentum at the beginning of this century, where different research [22,23] related the influence of this experience to the value attached to it. Brakus et al. [24] argued in their work that, in order to obtain consumer experiences, interactions with the company must be analysed, as these experiences determine how the user will respond to the company in the future.

The customer's experience of the service and their interactions with it are variables with strong predominance in the field of marketing research [25]. Within this research on the interactions that arise in a service context, the outcomes of these interactions have been analysed more precisely than the origin of the interactions themselves. In these interactions, which can also be social, as one can also find interactions that arise between customers within the context of the services, it has been analysed how these relationships influence the future behaviour of users [26]. They even conclude that, by sharing a service, bonds can arise between the customers, thus causing motivational feelings that influence future behaviour.

Within the sports centre management literature, there is not a large amount of research that analyses the user experience of sports services. In their work on sports centres, García-Fernández and Sañudo [27] identify service managers working on the service experience as a strategic objective and defend the importance of its analysis. Baena et al. [13], in their work analysing the service experience in fitness centres in relation to fitness classes, observed that there is a positive influence of the service experience on the future behaviour of users; the authors also highlighted the importance of creating positive experiences for the users of these sports centres, with the aim of obtaining satisfied and loyal users of the service. Eskiler and Safak [28] also analysed this variable in the management models of fitness centres, concluding that these services should make efforts to create positive service experiences, which will help these services to have a certain competitive advantage in the long term.

Kumar and Anjaly [29] concluded in their work that product attributes, services, and performance are among the factors found as antecedents of service experience. Within sport services, the literature for sport management has had more and more works that analyse this variable as an important factor in the prediction of customer satisfaction [30,31] and customer retention [13].

The main objective of these sports services is to be able to secure their long-term income viability, so if a service is closely related to experiences, it helps to strengthen this economic viability over long periods of time [32].

Verhoef et al. [33] argued that aspects such as age and lifestyle among other aspects play an important role in shaping the user experience.

Therefore, service experience is an interesting variable for considering how these relationships are produced and how they are not necessarily linear, but dynamic [7]. However, trends in the analysis of user experience interactions have been more focused on the outcomes rather than on the essence of the interaction itself.

Achieving loyal and satisfied users is the main objective of sports centres and the managers who run them, as having high levels of these two variables will help the viability of the sports service. Achieving loyal and satisfied users leads to positive attitudes and prolonged revenues over time. Therefore, much research within the field of fitness centre management has been based on analysing customer loyalty and its relationship with customer experiences [27,30,34,35].

Therefore, analysing the service experience of fitness centre users has become a key factor in predicting the satisfaction and future behaviour of users and, above all, in improving the sustainability and profitability of the sports service.

3. Method

3.1. Sample

The sample obtained consisted of 442 users of a private sports centre (CDM) in Spain, of which 29 participant questionnaires were eliminated because they were incomplete; the final sample represented 413 users, consisting of 215 men (52%) and 198 women (48%), and the ages of the users were between 18 and 79 years, with a mean age of 36.5 years. A non-probabilistic convenience sample (95% confidence interval) was used.

Eighty-four per cent of the sample represented stated that they go to the sports service three or more times a week for physical activity.

3.2. Instrument

The measurement instrument consisted of 19 indicators measuring customer experience, 2 measuring satisfaction, 4 measuring future intentions, and the socio-demographic variables of the users. Service experience was measured using the EXQ questionnaire [7], which comprises 4 factors: peace of mind (PEA) with 6 indicators, moments of truth (MOM) with 5 indicators, outcome focus (OUT) with 4 indicators, and product experience (PE) with 4 indicators. The psychometric properties of this scale were confirmed in previous studies in other contexts [8,36].

Overall user satisfaction was also measured using two indicators [37]. Previous studies have confirmed the adequate psychometric properties of the scale [38].

Finally, users' future intentions were also analysed through 4 indicators [39]. The psychometric properties of this scale were confirmed in previous studies conducted in sports centres [15,40].

The response options used a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with the neutral value being 3.

The last section was related to sociodemographic variables such as age, sex, sport frequency, and education attained.

3.3. Procedure

The manager of the sports service was contacted in order to obtain approval and to be able to administer the measuring instrument on the users of the sports centre. The interviewers were located at the entrance of the sports facility in different time slots in order to try to obtain results of different socio-demographic variables, as in the morning, there are older users, and in the afternoon, there are younger users. The users showed total willingness to fill out the questionnaire, and they were reminded that the instrument was completely anonymous and for academic purposes.

Customers were willing to participate by filling out the questionnaires and were assured of the confidentiality of the data. The study was carried out through the University of Valencia, whose ethics and human research department did not consider it necessary to obtain consent for the collection of the perceptions of the sample analysed.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaires completed by the users of the sports service were used to analyse the psychometric properties of the EXQ scale (internal reliability and construct validity) and the nomological validity in order to determine whether the scale was associated with other variables. Statistical analyses were carried out using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Version 26) and EQS (structural equation modelling software (SEM), Version 6.4) software to establish the confirmatory factor analysis. First, the descriptive statistics of the indicators were analysed, as well as the values of the skewness and kurtosis.

Subsequently, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to check the model fit using various goodness-of-fit indices as recommended by the literature [41,42]. Then, the reliability of the scale was analysed through Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, whose values must be above 0.70 [41], as well as the average variance extracted (AVE) values, which must be above 0.50 [43].

Finally, the relationship of the EXQ scale with other variables, which the literature supports as correlating factors, was analysed. These variables are user satisfaction and future user behaviour, which the literature confirms as variables.

4. Results

4.1. Psychometric Properties of the Items

Table 1 shows the data obtained for the mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis of each of the analysed indicators of the instrument used. Bearing in mind that the response options were Likert-type ranging between one and five with the neutral value being three, all of these indicators obtained higher scores, thus reflecting a tendency towards agreement in all of them. In the factor analysing PEA, the indicator with the highest mean score was PEA2, which measured the ease of interacting with the service (M = 4.27; SD = 0.89). In the second factor analysed (MOM), the indicator that analysed the friendly relationship of the service workers (MOM4) obtained the highest mean score (M = 4.15; SD = 1.08). With respect to the third factor analysed (OUT), indicator OUT1, which measures the comfort and tranquillity offered by the service to the user, obtained the highest mean score (M = 4.20; SD = 0.94). Finally, in the PE factor, PE1, which analyses the user's choice of different offers, obtained the highest mean score (M = 3.95; SD = 1.04). The skewness and kurtosis values obtained are acceptable as all indicators obtained values lower than three [44].

Table 1. Psychometric properties, skewness, and kurtosis values of the items.

Item		M	SD	S	K
PEA1	I am confident in CDM's expertise.	4.19	0.94	−1.37	2.12
PEA2	The whole process with CDM was easy.	4.27	0.89	−1.21	1.24
PEA3	CDM will look after me for a long time.	3.64	1.22	−0.61	−0.43
PEA4	I stay with CDM because of my past dealings with CDM.	3.96	1.07	−0.89	0.18
PEA5	I have dealt with CDM before, so getting what I needed was really easy.	3.86	1.16	−0.80	−0.25
PEA6	CDM give(s) independent advice.	3.76	1.20	−0.70	−0.38
MOM1	CDM was flexible in dealing with me and looked out for my needs.	3.69	1.19	−0.60	−0.56
MOM2	CDM keeps me up to date.	3.60	1.25	−0.46	−0.82
MOM3	CDM is a safe and reputable company.	3.93	1.11	−0.91	0.20
MOM4	The people at CDM have good people skills.	4.15	1.08	−1.25	0.93
MOM5	CDM deals/dealt with me correctly when things go/went wrong.	3.90	1.24	−0.96	−0.07
OUT1	Staying with CDM makes the process much easier.	4.20	0.94	−1.11	0.75
OUT2	CDM gives me what I need swiftly.	3.75	1.16	−0.61	−0.49
OUT3	I prefer CDM over an alternative provider.	3.88	1.18	−0.88	−0.12
OUT4	The people at CDM can relate to my situation.	3.86	−1.12	−0.81	−0.03
PE1	I need to choose between different options at CDM.	3.95	1.04	−0.89	0.41
PE2	I need to receive offers from more than just CDM.	2.94	1.44	0.03	−1.30
PE3	I need to compare different options from CDM.	3.19	1.34	−0.27	−1.02
PE4	I have one designated contact at CDM.	3.36	1.34	−0.40	−0.95

Note. Mean (M), standard deviation (SD), skewness value (S), and kurtosis value (K).

4.2. Validity and Reliability of the Scale

A confirmatory factor analysis (Table 2) was performed to see if the model was correctly fitted with the four factors proposed by Klaus and Maklan [7]. This CFA did not show adequate goodness-of-fit indices (RMSEA = 0.081; NNFI = 0.86; CFI = 0.88) and presented indicators with very low factor loadings (PE3 and PE4) as well as high residuals (>0.20). For this reason, a new CFA was performed without these indicators. This CFA showed a better fit, but the product experience factor, which was reduced to two items, had a very limited reliability (α = 0.47), with one item (PE1) having a very low factor loading

(λ = 0.47); thus, it was decided to eliminate this factor. Finally, the CFA performed on the three factors of the scale showed a good fit, as can be seen in the goodness-of-fit indices of the model: significant chi-square value (χ^2 = 379.67; gl = 87; $p < 0.05$), normed chi-square value (χ^2/gl = 4.36) of lower than 5, and RMSEA index value of 0.07 (CI = 0.06–0.08), which was lower than 0.08 (Hu and Bentler, 1999). In the same line, the rest of the indices show a good fit of the model, as they presented values above 0.90; NNFI = 0.92, CFI = 0.93, and IFI = 0.93.

Table 2. Goodness-of-fit indices of the EXQ scale.

Model	χ^2	gl	χ^2/gl	NNFI	CFI	IFI	RMSEA (CI)
Model 1 (4 factors and 19 items)	696.42	146		0.86	0.88	0.89	0.81 (0.073–0.088)
Model 2 (4 factors and 17 items)	458.46	113		0.91	0.93	0.93	0.068 (0.059–0.077)
Model 3 (3 factors and 15 items)	379.67	87	4.36	0.92	0.93	0.93	0.070 (0.060–0.080)

Note: chi-square (χ^2) ratio and degrees of freedom (df); comparative fit index (CFI), incremental fit index (IFI), normed fit index (NNFI): adequate $\geq$ 0.90; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA): adequate $\leq$ 0.08; confidence interval (CI).

The scale was checked for compliance with the requirements to ensure the contingent and discriminant validity by observing the significance of the *t*-test values (t > 1.96) associated with the factor loadings of the items of each factor, i.e., the correlations between pairs of factors (lower than 0.85). Finally, as shown in Table 3, the Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CF), and average variance extracted (AVE) measures were analysed, whose values were within the parameters recommended by the literature, ranging between 0.86 and 0.89 in the case of the first two [41] and between 0.54 and 0.68 in the case of the AVE [43].

Table 3. Factor loadings, Cronbach´s alpha, composite reliability, and AVE.

Items	λ	α	CR	AVE
Factor 1—Peace of Mind		0.87	0.88	0.54
PEA1	0.72			
PEA2	0.66			
PEA3	0.71			
PEA4	0.83			
PEA5	0.78			
PEA6	0.71			
Factor 2—Moments of Truth		0.86	0.87	0.56
MOM1	0.76			
MOM2	0.71			
MOM3	0.79			
MOM4	0.69			
MOM5	0.79			
Factor 3—Outcome Focus		0.88	0.89	0.68
OUT1	0.85			
OUT2	0.85			
OUT3	0.77			
OUT4	0.78			

Note: average variance extracted (AVE).

Finally, the relationships between the analysed factors were examined to determine the criterion or nomological validity of the instrument. For this validity, Spearman correlation coefficients were calculated for future intentions and user satisfaction with the three analysed factors of the EXQ scale (PEA, MOM, OUT). As can be seen in Table 4, all of the factors that make up the scale measuring the user's experience of the service correlate positively and significantly with the users' future intentions in their behaviour towards the service.

Table 4. Correlations of the EXQ scale factors, customer's satisfaction, and future intentions.

		FI	SAT	1-PEA	2-MOM	3-OUT
	Future intentions	1				
	Satisfaction	-	1			
EXQ	1-PEA	0.76 **	0.73 **	1		
	2-MOM	0.72 **	0.72 **	0.84 **	1	
	3-OUT	0.76 **	0.76 **	0.83 **	0.83 **	1

Note. ** $p < 0.01$

5. Discussion

Within sport services, particularly in fitness centres, different interactions are established that lead to experiences that influence customer satisfaction, including their future behaviour through the evaluation of this experience.

The quality of the service experience perceived by the customer has been a widely analysed factor in different contexts [45,46], but it is hardly used in the field of fitness centre management. This paper validates and adapts the EXQ scale [7] to analyse the perceptions of users of these sports services.

Customer experience in sports facilities is a topic of scientific interest because it can have a significant impact on the motivation and behaviour of individuals. According to a study by Tsitskari et al. [47], user satisfaction in a sports centre is positively related to return intention and loyalty to the centre. The authors found that the quality of the facility, customer service, and range of sports activities offered are important factors in the user experience.

Another study by Yu et al. [48] examined how personalisation of the user experience in a sports centre can improve customer satisfaction and loyalty. The results suggest that personalisation of the user experience, such as offering personalised training programmes and individualised communication with facility staff, can have a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, a systematic literature review [49] found that the quality of customer service is a key factor in the user experience at a sports centre. The authors also point to the importance of a sense of belonging and community in the user experience and highlight the need for further research on how these factors can improve customer satisfaction and loyalty to the centre.

This study shows that the peace of mind (PEA) factor is the one that obtained the highest mean values from the users of the sports centre. This result coincides with other studies that used the same scale, but in different settings [8,36,50]. This factor is related to emotional aspects and their benefit through the service experience. Again, it has been interpreted that positive emotional aspects are very important in the perceptions of users of sports centres [40,51] and that managers of these services should promote actions and programmes that positively influence users' emotions.

In this work, several CFAs were carried out in order to obtain a correct fit of the model through the use of different indicators. For this purpose, the product experience factor, which analysed the need in the customer's perception to know if there is an offer to compare and decide, had to be removed. This restructuring of the model fit also occurred in works that validated the scale in different domains. Milman et al. [9], in their work based on tourism, did not find a correct model fit of the scales analysed and even eliminating the product experience factor, which still did not improve the model fit. This contrasts with the current work which, after the elimination of this factor, obtained adequate goodness-of-fit indices for the model.

This paper also shows how the three factors of the scale have a strong relationship with users' satisfaction and future intentions. Service experience is an important factor in determining users' future behaviours. If a customer has a positive experience with a service, they are more likely to use that service again in the future and recommend the service to others. On the other hand, if a customer has a negative experience with a service, they are

more likely to avoid using that service in the future and may even recommend others not to use the service [7].

This relationship is also observed in the work of Raina et al. [8], where the authors used the same scale to analyse customer experience in the context of financial services. Yi and Gong [52] argue that user experience must be addressed to improve user satisfaction and loyalty towards a service. Milman et al. [9] used the EXQ scale to analyse user experience in tourism and concluded that there was a positive and significant effect of customer experience on satisfaction, loyalty, and WoM. In this study, the outcome focus factor correlated with higher significant values of satisfaction and future intentions, as the user's past experience with the service is very important in the formation of positive behavioural intentions [53], and it has an influence on loyalty [54].

According to the results obtained, the EXQ scale is an instrument whose reliability and validity show that it can be used in sports centres to analyse the experience of their users. For this reason, this study is important as it is the first to use this scale with the users of these sports services.

6. Conclusions

The management of sports centres is mainly based on knowing the perceptions, including the positive and motivating experiences in sport practice, from each of the centres' customers. This work adapts and validates a service experience scale within sports services, specifically in sports centres, in order to provide the managers of these services with accurate information that will help them to improve their viability. Through the different analyses that have been carried out, it can be seen that this scale is valid and reliable enough to be used in sports centres to measure the experiences of their service users. On the other hand, it is observed that the scale that measures the service experience significantly predicts both the satisfaction and future intentions of the service customers.

7. Limitations, Future Lines of Research, and Practical Implications

This work was carried out using a non-probabilistic sample; that is, a sample was used that was not universally represented, and it was not possible to extend its generalisation to all users of private sports centres. It is also limited by the fact that this scale has not been used previously in the context of sports facility management. Therefore, in future research, it would be useful to consider increasing the sample size and extend the analysis of the experiences to users of other sports centres.

With regard to the adaptation and adjustment of the scale, given that one dimension of this scale was eliminated due to problems in the psychometric properties of the indicators, it is necessary in future studies to continue comparing the performance of this factor in case it is a limitation of the data from this study. In any case, these three dimensions collect the most relevant information about the service experience as they analyse important variables for sports managers, such as the emotional aspects of the service for users; the service experience also measures the relationship of the service to the user, the treatment offered by the workers, or the comfort and tranquillity felt by the user in the sports service through the different interactions.

Service experience analysis is a key practice in the service industry as it allows companies to understand how customers experience and perceive the service that they are offered. This can have important practical implications for sports services. Analysing the service experience can also help companies develop effective marketing strategies.

One of the main practical implications of analysing the service experience is that it allows companies to identify areas of opportunity for improvement. For example, if a company receives negative feedback on customer service, it can take steps to train its staff in customer service techniques and provide a more positive experience for its customers. In this way, the company can increase customer satisfaction, ultimately improve its reputation, and increase the number of users.

Therefore, analysing the experience of users of sports centres is a fundamental tool for knowing the viability of the service due to its close relationship with the loyalty of the user of the sports service.

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