

Master Thesis

How does consumers' perception of service quality impact their overall satisfaction with a business or organization?

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January 29th, 2023

ABSTRACT,

Purpose – There has been a tremendous increase in service demand in the fitness sector resulting in the flourishing of gyms. Many factors can be attributed to this increment but just to mention a few: the growing health and fitness awareness sensitizing the importance of exercising and being fit, age inclusivity where both young and old can get appropriate services, penetration of international brands leading to diseases like diabetes and obesity, the growth of gym culture as people seek great health and long life, gyms provide accessibility to a variety of equipment (cardio & strength machines, weights, boxing kits, etc.), availability of personalized fitness training programs and rise in personal disposable incomes enabling the gym expenditure as a lifestyle.

Like any other service industry, this booming sector has to obey the rule of customer satisfaction in order to see its growth to greater heights/ levels. With regard to this fact, this study aims to understand better the components that contribute to service quality perception and customer satisfaction, as well as to determine which of these aspects has the most effect on service quality perception.

Methodology – The research follows a qualitative approach where the qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The qualitative data were collected using the Trustpilot method where customer reviews of the sampled gyms were gathered from the Trustpilot online community as well as google reviews. The scope of the study was gyms located in Amsterdam. A sample of eight gyms was selected. Ten customer reviews were selected for each gym from Trustpilot online community and google reviews, for analysis.

Results - There are five factors that contribute to the service quality of a business: responsiveness, reliability, tangibility, assurance, and empathy. It is important to note that service quality is one of the factors that contribute to customer satisfaction. All these five factors are important to ensure the service quality of a business but, tangibility, empathy, and assurance play a more necessary, general, and inclusive role and therefore must be stressed on.

Also, the gyms in Amsterdam are doing good, basically above average, but need to improve on a number of things: the customer care services, enhancing the safety of the gyms, streamlining the service pricing to ensure its static and official, and prioritizing customer needs, comfortability and satisfaction

Keywords:

Gyms, Trustpilot, Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality, Google Reviews, Responsiveness, Reliability, Tangibility, Assurance, Tangibility

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction is still highly important in the fitness sector, and service quality is a key component of it. It is essential to understand what “customer satisfaction” implies in the context of the gym industry. Eskiler and Safak (2020) say that a customer's satisfaction is determined by a rational and emotional analysis that compares the perceived level of service to an ideal. Customers will be unsatisfied if their perception is lower than what they were promised. Conversely, customer satisfaction increases when actual performance meets or surpasses expectations. The success of a fitness club in today's market is directly proportional to the level of service it provides its customers (Susanto, Tomoliyus, Sumaryanto, & Putranta, 2020).

Increases in people's interest in and understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle also contributed to sports' rise to prominence. People's desire to participate in fitness and leisure pursuits was fueled by a desire to better utilize their spare time through activities. The leisure sector is largely responsible for this increase in attention (Pradeep, Menon, & Rajasenan, 2020). The rise in the popularity of sports facilities is mostly attributable to the pressures of the economy to make use of people's leisure time. A person who spends their free time participating in sports seems to be more likely to have a positive self-image and lead a healthier lifestyle. As explained by Ma (2011), as people's incomes rise and their living conditions improve, they are more likely to view health and fitness as top priorities (Ma, 2011).

Fitness centers are service businesses, and as such, customer satisfaction must be one of their primary goals. High levels of satisfaction with fitness centers have been shown to raise demand for those facilities, whereas low levels of satisfaction have been shown to diminish demand (Breuer, Feiler, & Wicker, 2015). It is the responsibility of every business, including fitness centers, to ensure their customers are always satisfied. The growth of related businesses led directly to an increase in competition among gyms and other sports facilities. Even though there are a lot of sports facilities out there, the ones that focus on customer happiness will be the ones that survive (Akdagcik & Temel, 2022).

Maintaining happy customers is crucial to the survival and growth of fitness clubs. The success of a fitness facility is on its ability to assess the needs of its customers and then deliver services that are tailored to those requirements (Breuer, Feiler, & Wicker, 2015). Customers are more satisfied with fitness facilities when they receive personalized attention and services

tailored to their unique needs. Customers are more likely to make repeat purchases of a product or service if they are pleased with their initial purchase. As a result, ensuring the satisfaction of customers is a top priority for any organization. Satisfied customers have found that the product or service they have purchased exactly satisfies their requirements. The way in which businesses treat their clients plays a significant role in ensuring their happiness (Akhtar, 2016).

Customer satisfaction is largely dependent on a company's ability to deliver services in a timely manner, which is especially important for service-based firms. The fitness industry is growing at a rapid rate due to people's growing interest in finding healthy ways to spend their free time. With the fitness business on the rise, competition is heating up between recreation facilities. In today's competitive business climate, the satisfaction of customers is crucial to the survival of fitness centers (Uğurlu, 2018). Considering the importance of service quality to increase the satisfaction of customers availing services from fitness clubs, this study tried to explore the service quality of Amsterdam gyms and their customer satisfaction level. For this purpose, the customer perception related to the service was taken into consideration.

1.2 Goal of the study:

This exploratory study aims to understand better the components (SERVQUAL model) that contribute to service quality perception and customer satisfaction, as well as to determine which of these aspects has the most effect on service quality perception. This qualitative study analyzed service quality perception and customer satisfaction data from customer evaluations acquired from Google for eight different gyms in Amsterdam.

1.3 Research Questions of the Study:

Through this research, the below question has been tried to be answered:

1. How does consumers' perception of service quality impact their overall satisfaction with a business or organization.
2. Which dimension of service quality impacts customer satisfaction more significantly?
3. How can the gyms of Amsterdam improve the quality of their services to enhance their customers' satisfaction?

1.4 Motivation for the study:

Limited research is conducted on the fitness sector of Amsterdam; therefore, this study has tried to fill this gap. This thesis will assess customers' impression of service quality and examines the relationship between service quality, and customer satisfaction to address the literature gap in the Amsterdam market. The second motivation behind this study was to determine which service quality dimension impacts customer satisfaction more. The last motivation was to discover whether there is any unique impact identified through the customer perspective in the gym.

1.5 Significance of the study:

The significance of this research is that there is very little research that has been conducted on the fitness industry. Second, there are limited studies in which the Trustpilot method has been used. Therefore, in this way, this research adds value to the literature review. The findings of this study are significant for both the partitioners and academia. The academia can use the result of this study to support their conclusions, and partitioners can use the information to develop the appropriate strategy related to service quality and can enhance their customer satisfaction. Managers of fitness centers can use the data to improve the quality of their services and better meet the demands and preferences of Amsterdam customers. This will help them increase their market share as well as profitability.

1.6 Scope of the study:

The study was conducted in eight gyms in Amsterdam. The data used in this study was collected through the Trustpilot method which was then analyzed using thematic analysis. 10 customer reviews have been collected for each gym. Therefore, a total of 80 reviews have been used to meet the study's objective.

1.5 Structure of the study:

The study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the Introduction. The thesis's introduction chapter has various essential roles. Its purpose is to present the research topic and context, articulate the research question or problem explicitly, and outline the thesis's overall structure. The second chapter is a literature review. The literature review is an essential part of the thesis because it does so many things: it lays the groundwork for the research, provides

insight into the problem at hand, identifies the most critical approaches, results, and trends in the field, it showcases the researcher's knowledge and skill, and it guides the research.

The third chapter is the methodology. The thesis methodology chapter describes the research approach, methodologies, and procedures. The thesis's methodology chapter describes the researcher's approach to addressing the research question and validating the results. The fourth chapter is about findings. This section of the study presents the results gained using thematic analysis. A discussion of the results follows in chapter five. This chapter provides an in-depth discussion of the study methods used and outcomes that are consistent with those of earlier studies. The last and sixth chapter of the study is the conclusion. In the concluding chapter of the thesis, the study's results are summarized in the non-technical method. Along with it, recommendations, and suggestions for future research are also present in this chapter of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Evidence:

An individual may experience cognitive dissonance if they have high expectations for a product but end up with one of lower quality than they were anticipating, as proposed by the Dissonance Theory. Thus, disappointment results in dissonance, or psychological issues (Yuksel, 2008). The contrast theory argues that when a product's performance falls short of what consumers had hoped for, they would overestimate the degree to which the two differ. According to the Contrast Theory, if a consumer receives an inferior good, they will focus on the discrepancy between the two. This suggests that consumers would give low-performing products lower ratings than they deserve if they do not meet their high expectations (Yuksel, 2008).

The expectancy disconfirmation theory (EDT) is widely used in the consumer behavior literature to study consumer satisfaction, post-purchase behavior, and service marketing in general, and it can be applied to a deeper analysis of the first definition of customer satisfaction given earlier in this paper. According to this hypothesis, before buying or using a product or service, consumers acquire preconceived ideas of how well it will work (Spreng, MacKenzie, & Olshavsky, 2018). This evaluation of pre- and post-consumption expectations and disappointments is assumed to lead to greater consumer satisfaction. Customers will be moderately satisfied if their

expectation are met, if they were exceeded, customers will be highly satisfied and if they were not met, customers will be dissatisfied. In addition, the likelihood of a consumer making a repeat purchase is heavily influenced by how satisfied they were with their initial purchase and subsequent use of the product or service (Fournier & Mick, 1999).

2.2 Empirical Evidence:

2.2.1 Service Quality:

Services are an ongoing cycle of contacts between consumers and service providers, involving a wide range of nontangible activities delivered as high-quality answers to customers problems. Quality of service delivery is crucial when trying to distinguish oneself from the competition in the services sector (Grönroos, 2004). Customers are more satisfied when they have a positive impression of the service and have faith in its reliability. A company might improve its image in its eye of customers by offering them higher-quality services (Ismail, Haron, Ibrahim, & Isa, 2006). Customers will have a more favorable impression of a company's service quality if their expectations are met or exceeded. On the other hand, if consumer expectations are not met, the business might expect not only unhappy and potential customers but also customer desertion to rivals. To determine whether a service is of good quality, it must first be compared to the customer's expectations (Parasuraman & Zeithaml, 1988).

As competition in the corporate world continues to rise, the importance of providing high-quality service cannot be overstated. The degree to which a company can compete depends on the quality of the services it provides. Since there is no certainty that the current exceptional service will be adequate for the future, banks should always raise the quality of service continuously (Siddiqi, 2011). Service quality, which is the customer's opinion of the service, has been the focus of a lot of research and discussion in the academic, practitioner, and service marketing communities (Negi, 2009). If businesses have a clearer idea of what constitutes a high-quality service, they will be better equipped to provide their customers with one. Recognizing the intangibility, heterogeneity, and inseparability of services is essential for understanding service quality. Therefore, the quality of the service provided may be gauged more accurately.

The importance of providing high-quality service to clients cannot be overstated (Van der Weile et al., 2002). To attract and retain clients, your organization must provide them with excellent service. In both the creation of physical goods and the provision of services, customer

satisfaction is key to successful marketing. As our society progresses, more businesses face increased competition in the service sector. As people's incomes rise, they demand not only high-quality goods from the companies they patronize but also high-quality support services. The topic of service quality has been addressed by numerous writers. Companies place a premium on both the quality of their products and the quality of the services they receive. Companies place a premium on positive feedback from their clientele regarding the quality of the services they receive.

2.2.2 SERVQUAL Dimensions:

The most widely used scale for measuring service quality is the SERVQUAL scale, which was created by Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1988). This model defines service quality in terms of five distinct characteristics that include responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangibles.



Figure 1 Service Quality Dimensions (FutureLearn, 2022)

However, there are several theoretical and operational critiques that have been raised against the SERVQUAL model despite its widespread adoption as the general paradigm for measuring and managing service quality across a wide range of service settings and cultures.

Responsiveness:

One way to evaluate a company's responsiveness is by how promptly and satisfactorily it addresses consumer complaints. It necessitates cutting down on the time customers spend waiting as they communicate with service providers (Nambisan, Gustafson, & Hawkins, 2016). Another researcher, Berry, Wall, and Carbone (2006), responsiveness refers to the speed with which service providers respond to consumer concerns and effectively resolve them. In this respect, one's impression of service quality is shaped by the service's treatment of its customers (Berry, Wall, & Carbone, 2006). Customer requests, feedback, questions, and concerns must be promptly received, evaluated, and responded to be considered "responsive." Rapid response times to client inquiries clearly signal a company's dedication to ensuring complete customer satisfaction (Pakdil & Harwood, 2005).

According to Nambisan, Gustafson, and Hawkins (2016), timeliness is essential to improving consumers' views of service quality. Instead, the company should respond quickly and professionally when a problem arises and offer suggestions to meet best the customer's needs (Lee, Lee, & Yoo, 2000). In this context, Nambisan defines responsiveness as the following four core behaviors: delivering individualized attention to clients; responding quickly to service requests; demonstrating an eagerness to assist visitors; and being readily available to work when needed. These factors aid businesses in improving their consumers' views of the quality of the services they provide (Nambisan, Gustafson, & Hawkins, 2016).

Reliability:

Reliability arises from responsible behavior and high standards (Omar, Saadan, & Seman, 2015). The reliability of a service can be measured by how consistently the service provider meets the needs of its clients (Khan & Fasih, 2014). Delivery of the service, accurate and prompt problem-solving, and reasonable pricing are all part of this procedure. The success of a business typically hinges on its ability to satisfy the reliability expectations of its customers (Asubonteng, McCleary, & Swan, 1996).

Customer confidence in a service provider's ability to deliver on their promise of consistently high quality is based on that provider's reliability. Customer trust and satisfaction

following service are affected by the reliability of the services (Abd-El-Salam, Shawky, & El-Nahas, 2013). Perceived through interactions with service staff, the reliability aspect of service quality is crucial (Asubonteng, McCleary, & Swan, 1996).

Empathy:

Empathy describes the level of care and concern offered to each customer. Every effort is made to make the customer feel important and appreciated by the service provider (Bahadur, Aziz, & Zulfiqar, 2018). Customers want more than just to purchase from the company. They want to feel like they are a part of the company's family. One can fall short of customers' expectations even when offering the best product or service available. When customers feel their needs are prioritized, they are more inclined to stick with a business (Mehta & Durvasula, 1998).

According to Zygiaris, Hameed, Alsubaie, and Rehman (2019), one way to practice empathy is to put oneself in the consumer's shoes. Zygiaris, Hameed, Alsubaie, and Rehman (2019) include staff warmth and politeness, attention to the client's unique needs, individualized treatment, and clear explanation of service procedures as factors that foster empathy (Zygiaris, Hameed, Alsubaie, & Rehman, 2022). Khan and Fasih (2014) argued that a company's demonstration of empathy occurs when it assumes responsibility for fixing individual or systemic issues experienced by its customers. The customer understands this element of service excellence because of their interactions with the staff (Khan & Fasih, 2014).

Tangibility:

The tangibles of a service have a significant impact on how people evaluate its quality. These are the visible features of a service that have an outward impact on the level of happiness its external customers report. Customer satisfaction can be improved through the power of word-of-mouth, which is influenced by price, ranking in relation to competitors, marketing communication, and actualization (Ismagilova, Slade, Rana, & Dwivedi, 2020; Santos, 2002).

However, service providers apply these tangibles in diverse ways, and end users interpret and experience them in varied ways as well. Service providers place a premium on tangibles since they are vital to creating a loyal customer base by way of the company's unique offerings and intangibles (Naidoo, 2014). A company's intangible qualities can be seen in many places,

from the design of its headquarters to the professionalism of its staff to the quality of its marketing materials and customer service (Asubonteng, McCleary, & Swan, 1996).

Assurance:

The abilities and knowledge of the organization that used by the staff while providing services to customers refer towards the assurance. According to Wu, Liang, and Gursoy (2015), a customer's trust and confidence in an organization's employees is a critical factor in creating a safe and satisfying service experience. Consumers those believes on the staff's abilities are more likely to make repeat purchases. (Wu, Liang, & Gursoy, 2021). A customer's trust in the servicing organization's ability to provide is essential, and this is especially true for services that the customer may view as being beyond their understanding or evaluation. Workers should always keep in mind the importance of gaining the support of the company's customers (Pakdil & Harwood, 2005).

According to Naidoo (2014), not all consumers have the knowledge to evaluate the quality of service and value they have received, so it may be necessary to provide clear information or in-depth explanations. Elmada et al. (2008), said that the most significant variables in reassuring clients are expertise, civility, a good attitude, and effective communication. Other considerations are the physical safety of the location and the verifiable high standard of customer satisfaction (Elmadağ, Ellinger, & Franke, 2008).

2.2.3 Customer Service Quality Perception:

In today's competitive market, companies who fail to live up to their customers' expectations will quickly fail. It's crucial for businesses to figure out ways to not just meet but also exceed their customers' expectations. Management studies must focus heavily on what causes satisfied and loyal customers. Researchers have become increasingly curious over the past few decades about customers' perceptions of service quality and how companies may meet those expectations (Malik, Akhtar, Raziq, & Ahmad, 2018).

In the field of marketing, the concept of perceived service quality has emerged as one of the most central, though heavily debated, ideas. Evidence suggests that it contributes to customers' perceptions of value and satisfaction, which in turn affects how committed they are to a business's service (Oliver, 1996). It is hypothesized that consumers have certain preconceived

notions about the quality of a service encounter, either on their own experiences or those of others (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). Customers with strong expectations are more likely to notice discrepancies between their service experience and their memories of it. Perceived service quality is the primary driver of perceived value and is thus a significant factor in determining a company's success (Madsen & Johanson, 2016).

2.2.4 Customer Satisfaction:

Kolter (1997) said that "A consumer's level of satisfaction with a product is based on how well it meets their needs and how well the product delivers on those needs. According to Broetzmann, Kemp, Rossano, and Marwah (1995), One thing that corporations, governments, service providers, and NGOs have in common is a concern with customer satisfaction. The topic of satisfied customers has been frequently discussed and researched in the past (Ramachandran & Chidambaram, 2012). Customer satisfaction is widely explained by the researchers.

Customers and consumers alike have come to use the term satisfaction to describe the experience of having their wants and needs met (Ibáñez, Hartmann, & Calvo, 2006). Several definitions of satisfaction highlight the importance of customer happiness to a company's long-term viability in the market. A consistent source of marketing inspiration, the gratification concept can take time to develop. There are a variety of antecedents that are typically considered, such as price label quality, service, and its expectation, that help to explain variations in satisfaction. The customer satisfaction landscape is gaining more and more interest as time goes on (Ali & Anwar, 2021).

Products and services with the highest customer satisfaction ratings are the ones that have been determined to be the most popular by the public (Oliver, Rust, & Varki, 1997). Satisfaction in this context might be understood as either contentment or pleasure, or even ambivalence, depending on the nature of the service being provided to the consumer at the time of purchase (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). Price, service characteristics, consumer perceptions, and service quality are all factors that might affect customers' overall satisfaction. However, the way customers see the service has a direct effect on how they rate the service (Liu & Jang, 2009).

Machirori and Fatoki (2011) explain customer satisfaction as the level of happiness the customers feel after availing of the services. This can be measured using surveys and star ratings

to learn about client preferences and make necessary modifications (Machirori & Fatoki, 2011). Satisfaction of customers is defined as the reaction of an individual to a certain product when that product's performance is compared to that individual's expectation (Leong, Hew, Lee, & Ooi, 2015). When a customer's feelings about their future expectations are negative, it can have a psychological and even physical impact on their pleasure with a company. According to Abd-El-Salam, Shawky, and El-Nahas (2013), satisfaction arises when a customer evaluates how well a service delivers on its promises. Consumers' opinions may shift because of these comparisons. Another research has explained customer satisfaction as the feeling of the person after comparing the actual results of the service with the expectation (Chen, 2010).

Customers need to feel valued by a firm to generate positive word-of-mouth about the products or services offered (Zameer, Tara, Kausar, & Mohsin, 2015). Word of mouth is the oldest process through which opinions on products and brands are generated, expressed, and spread (Arndt, 1967). According to Leung (2020), this indicates that satisfied customers are more likely to recommend the business to their friends and family (Leung, 2020). For instance, Han and Ryu (2012) provided empirical support for the idea that customer satisfaction at full-service restaurants is correlated with favorable word of mouth (Han & Ryu, 2012).

Customers are more likely to remain faithful to a brand if it meets their needs and wants. Agnihotri, Yang, and Briggs (2019) in their research found that consumers' good attitudes toward salespeople significantly impact their propensity to pay premium prices. This demonstrates that contented customers are more likely to make further purchases and return to the store more frequently when those needs are effectively addressed (Agnihotri, Yang, & Briggs, 2019). However, research by Reynolds and Beatty (1999) shows that happy customers are more likely to talk positively about a business (Reynolds & Beatty, 1999).

Chandra, Tjiptono, and Setyawan (2021) have explained the four methods to measure the satisfaction level of the customers determined by Kotler (2011). First, the system of suggestion and complaint. Every business that cares about its consumers should make it simple and easy for them to voice their ideas, grievances, and compliments. Suggestion boxes, comment cards, and toll-free phone numbers are just a few examples of the various forms of media that can be employed (Chandra, Tjiptono, & Setyawan, 2021). The second is ghost shopping. They are using a group of ghost shoppers to simulate actual buyers of the company's and its rivals' wares. They

are to engage with the service provider's employees and use the company's offerings. Typically, ghost shoppers are requested to evaluate the competition by seeing how they respond to customers' requests, answer their questions, and deal with complaints. They are then tasked with providing feedback on the relative merits of the company's and the competition's offerings (Chandra, Tjiptono, & Setyawan, 2021).

Third the customer satisfaction survey. Research into customer happiness is typically accomplished using questionnaires sent in the mail, over the phone, via email or a website, or through personal interviews with actual customers. By conducting surveys, a firm can gain valuable insight into its consumers' thoughts and perceptions while also giving the appearance that it values that input (Chandra, Tjiptono, & Setyawan, 2021). Forth the analysis of lost customers. The organization tries to connect with previous customers who have either stopped buying from them or switched suppliers to learn more about the reasons for these actions and develop targeted strategies for improving customer satisfaction (Chandra, Tjiptono, & Setyawan, 2021).

Reason to evaluate customer satisfaction:

Customer expectations are a crucial factor in ensuring satisfaction. This factor is vital since it can influence a buyer's opinion of a product and shape their opinion of the product overall. Customers' positive expectations indicate an emotional investment in the product or service, whereas those with negative expectations drive them away. If the connection is poor, the customers are more likely to look elsewhere (Ratanavaraha, Jomnonkwao, Khampirat, & Watthanaklang, 2016). In a business with a strong focus on the market, customer happiness ranks high on the desired results from marketing campaigns. The apparent requirement for customer satisfaction is for the firm to grow, increase its market share, and recruit new customers through word of mouth (Barsky, 2016).

Hayes (2008) explained that having a firm grasp on what it is that customers want is crucial, as it gives rise to a complete comprehension of how they place value on the service and the product offered. Companies can better meet their customers' needs if they have a firm grasp on what those needs are (Hayes, 2008). A company's future course of action can be better determined by gathering data on client satisfaction and their needs. Higher standards are being

demanding by an increasingly discerning consumer base. According to this definition, service entails ensuring the satisfaction and loyalty of one's customers (Zelege, 2012).

2.2.5 Impact of service quality on customer satisfaction:

Customers will become loyal to a company that tries to meet their demands, which will reward the company with repeat customers and possibly even new ones (Nabi, 2012). The literature suggests a direct correlation between service quality and customer satisfaction. An integral part of a service business is ensuring that customers receive excellent services. Most companies perform regular quality checks on their services to ensure their clients are happy and coming back for more. Satisfying customers requires delivering services at or beyond industry norms regarding quality and responsiveness (Agnihotri, Yang, & Briggs, 2019).

If a customer has a good time when using your product or service, he will probably have a favorable impression of it in general. However, happy customers don't necessarily mean repeat business, repeat loyalty, or even happy repeat customers. Many professionals in the business world, as well as academics, are of the opinion that delivering excellent service is the best method to retain existing customers and bring in new ones (Hayes, 2008). When a customer is pleased with the service they receive, they are more likely to continue doing business with that company. The level of service provided makes a significant difference in how satisfied a customer is. It is crucial for service businesses to increase their profits and market share by using this method (Bloemer & Ruyter, 1999).

According to Fornell (2018), retaining loyal customers requires addressing their needs, removing barriers to switching, and giving them a voice. Customers who are satisfied are more likely to remain loyal, although loyalty is not a necessary condition for consumer satisfaction. More people are likely to join and contribute to ELSS mutual funds that offer superior customer care once the transaction has been made (Sharma, 2015). Customers are more likely to be pleased with a business and its services if they believe they are receiving value from their interactions with its staff (Sharma, 2015).

The Saghier (2015) has represented the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction through below framework:

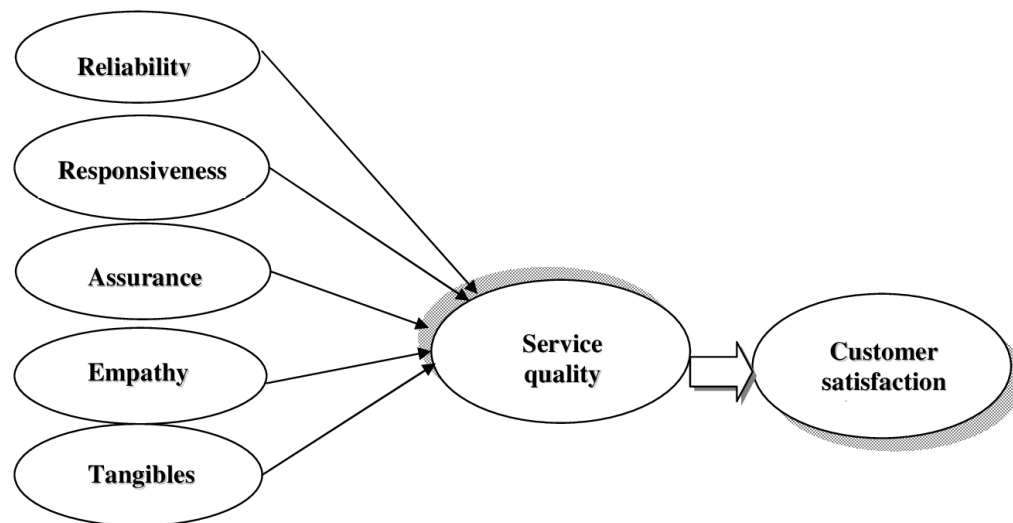


Figure 2 Service Quality impact on Customer Satisfaction (The Saghier, 2015)

As discussed already, there are five dimensions of service quality that have an influence on customer satisfaction (Saghier, 2015). In the further literature review, the impact of these five dimensions will be discussed in detail with the help of previous research:

Responsiveness impact on customer satisfaction:

The ability of companies to alter their product lines quickly and effectively in response to changes in consumer demand is more likely to retain customers and grow their businesses, and this refers to the responsiveness of the company (Ali & Anwar, 2021). Daugherty, Bolumole, and Grawe (2018) define customer responsiveness as the ability of a company to meet the needs of its customers by gathering information about those customers and responding to or anticipating their wants. This information is then used as an externally focused tool by the company to strengthen ties with its customer base and boost its service quality and productivity (Daugherty, Bolumole, & Grawe, 2018).

Considered a key indicator of service excellence is a company's responsiveness to its customers and enhances their satisfaction level. Responsiveness is also a major factor in how well you communicate with and serve your customers. Fast and accurate service has a significant impact on product profitability since it increases customer satisfaction and, in turn, sales. Trust,

loyalty, and happiness are all impacted by this problem. High profits and increased product movement will result from this (Ali & Anwar, 2021).

Reliability impact on customer satisfaction:

Customers place a high value on reliability since it provides an indication of how much each component contributes to the overall system's dependability. Using a pricing or arrangement structure as an example is a simple way to demonstrate this concept (Ali & Anwar, 2021). It appears from the results of the dependability of service and customer satisfaction test conducted by Ibáñez, Hartmann, and Calvo (2006) that there is a positive association between the reliability of service, service quality, performance, and customer satisfaction. That's because of the productive interactions between workers and clients. This feature is made possible by the human element of service excellence (Ibáñez, Hartmann, & Calvo, 2006).

Assurance impact on customer satisfaction:

To achieve desired result, assurance is a part of the problem-solving process that is integral to operational control. A further crucial phrase is "customer service operation," the designation of which will be crucial for the company's security and continued customer satisfaction. Businesses have several objectives, including maintaining happy consumers, growing their customers, and maximizing profits (Ali & Anwar, 2021).

According to research by Parasuraman et al. (1988), assurance is one of the most important aspects of service quality that contributes to customers' overall pleasure by permanently establishing a positive impression of a company in their minds. This is especially helpful in the banking sector, where word of mouth is encouraged. Customers gain peace of mind when dealing with a trustworthy business.

Empathy impact on customer satisfaction:

Ganguli & Roy (2011) believe that a positive association does exist between customer satisfaction and empathy. The absence of empathy leads to the dissatisfaction of the customer after receiving the service. Therefore, empathy substantially impacts customer satisfaction. This factor will be crucial in long-term customer retention (Ganguli & Roy, 2011). Wieseke, Geigenmuller, and Kraus (2012) conducted an in-depth empirical study to better understand the

connection between empathy and service quality. It has been proven that customers who are handled with enthusiasm return more frequently and are more forgiving of service problems. Because of the emotional connection that is established through empathy, the consumer feels that they are truly valued. Existing customers stay loyal, and new ones are attracted (Wieseke, Geigenmüller, & Kraus, 2012).

Wieseke et al. (2012) also explain that customers are more likely to engage in commerce with an organization if they feel an emotional connection to its representatives. The ability to recognize and respond to customers' emotions and feel their expectations impact the development and coordination of positive interaction behaviors, which boosts customers' appreciation for these enhancements and satisfaction with the service (Jones & Shandiz, 2015). Workers who are empathetic and who have a broad understanding of customers' needs are better able to tailor their actions to the needs of individual customers, hence increasing customer satisfaction (Wieseke, Geigenmüller, & Kraus, 2012)

Most modern businesses are focusing on the empathy issue to serve their consumers better because there is a strong correlation between the two that helps establish trust between firms and customers. Trust and empathy are also critical in assisting the associations in creating improved working conditions. This is because rapid globalization in the present-day corporate world has led to an increase in the growth and distinctiveness of international associations. Because of the trend toward globalization, business groups now must deal with their representatives in a variety of cultures, time zones, and organizational structures. The reality of competing in a global market necessitates that organizations strengthen their authoritative structure and foster trust among their employees to ensure the survival and growth of their businesses (Ali & Anwar, 2021; Top & Ali, 2021).

Tangibility impact on customer satisfaction:

Companies' tangibles include their staff, buildings, supplies, machinery, and promotional items. In addition, the provider's apparent concern for the service's finer points was borne up by the surrounding physical environment (Mehta & Durvasula, 1998). A service's perceived quality is heavily impacted by its tangible components (Ismagilova, Slade, Rana, & Dwivedi, 2020). Because consumers often make judgments about purchases based solely on appearance or physical characteristics. The product's outward appearance must suggest that they can deliver

excellent service if they are to be purchased. Researchers also argue that material objects are just as important as emotional ones.

These exterior factors affect the satisfaction of the service's external customers. Price, ranking in comparison to competitors, marketing communication and implementation, and word-of-mouth impacts are the most important tangibility factors that contribute to customers' positive impressions of service quality (Ismagilova, Slade, Rana, & Dwivedi, 2020). The tangible appearance is defined by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) to include buildings, machines, people, and documents.

2.3 Conceptual Framework of the Study:

After the literature review analysis, the below conceptual framework has been constructed. The five dimensions of service quality are found to have a significant influence on customer satisfaction as per the literature review:

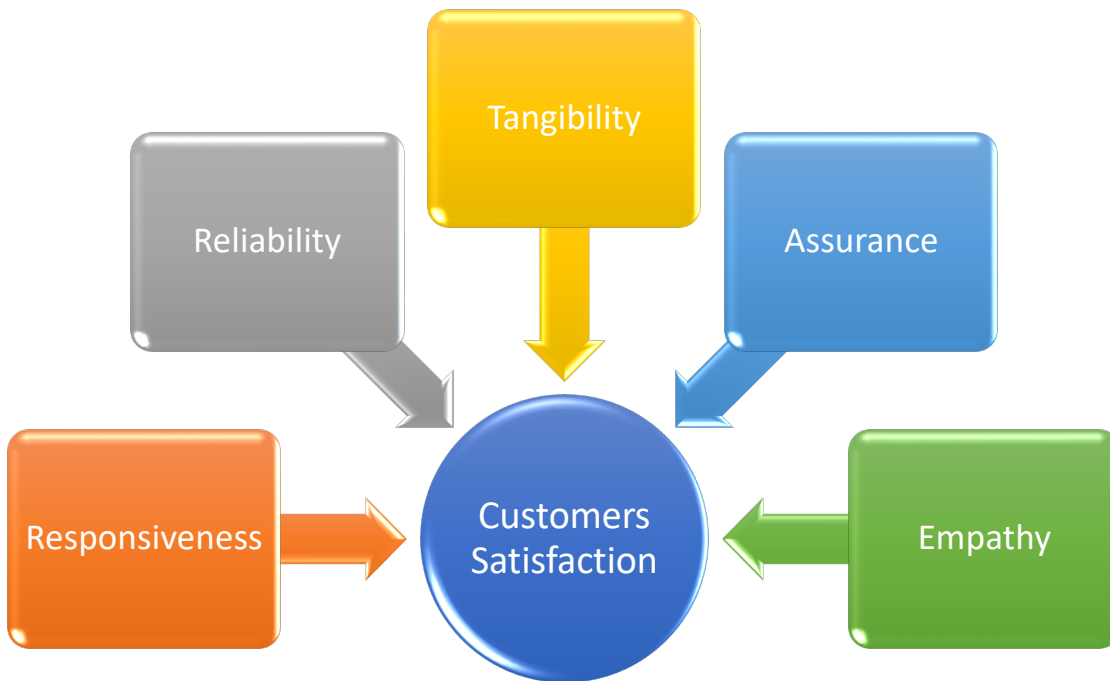


Figure 3 Conceptual Framework of the Study

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design:

The research design is the overarching plan that guides the researcher through the steps of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Scientists might tailor their investigations to make use of the best appropriate research techniques. A strong research design serves as a simple and concise road map for the research project, and it is also adaptable enough to accommodate changes as the investigation develops. There are two main categories of research design that include Qualitative research design and Quantitative research design (Myers, Well, & Jr, 2010).

The research design of this study is a qualitative research design. To better understand phenomena that challenge easy quantitative measurement, researchers often turn to qualitative research designs. In the social sciences and the humanities, it is frequently employed to dig into complex topics and experiences, as well as to understand the interpretations and worldviews of the people under study. Interviews, focus groups, observations, and document analysis are all common methods of data collection used in qualitative research. Methods like coding, categorizing, and memoing are then applied to the data to extract meaningful themes and trends (Pathak, Jena, & Kalra, 2013). A qualitative analysis has been carried out in this research on the reviews of customers regarding the gym they joined.

3.2 Data Collection:

The data used in this study was qualitative, which has been gathered using the Trustpilot method. Customer reviews were the data used for the analysis as shown in (appendix 1), collected from the Trustpilot of multiple gyms. Trustpilot is an online community where customers who have used a company's products or services can rate and review them. Businesses having a Trustpilot profile are given a Trust Score between 1 and 5 based on the average rating provided by their previous customers.

Table 1 Information about Gyms

| Gym Name | Categorization | Google Rating | How many customer reviews have been collected |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| David Lloyd Amsterdam | Large Fitness Club | 3.7 | 10 |
| SportCity Amsterdam | GYM | 4.5 | 10 |
| SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat (different branch, different rating) | GYM | 4 | 10 |
| Basic-fit Amsterdam | The 24-Hour Access Membership Gym | 3.6 | 10 |
| The Crunch fitness and health club | Fitness and Health Club | 4 | 10 |
| CrossFit AKA | CrossFit | 4.9 | 10 |
| Olympic Gym Amsterdam | Fitness Club | 4.6 | 10 |
| The Body studio | Small Group Training Facility | 4.9 | 10 |

The customer review for this study was also gathered from the website of the eight gyms. The seller rating (Trust Score) data was also obtained along with the reviews. Table (1) represents the names of gyms, categories of gyms, and their rating as per Google. A total of ten customers review of each gym were gathered.

3.3 Data Analysis:

Examining, cleaning, converting, and modeling the data is required to achieve the goals of gaining insights, drawing conclusions, and assisting in decision-making. This process is known as data analysis (Washington, Karlaftis, Mannering, & Anastasopoulos, 2020). The process of analyzing data can be carried out in a variety of ways, with the approach that is used frequently being determined by the particulars of the data and the questions that are being posed. There are various types of technology used for data analysis in a qualitative study. A qualitative analysis of data takes a more reflective and interpretive approach to the data. Coding and detecting themes or patterns in qualitative data are everyday tasks in the analytical process. Methods like open coding, axial coding, and selective coding are used for this purpose (Washington, Karlaftis, Mannering, & Anastasopoulos, 2020).

The techniques include grounded theory, thematic analysis, narrative analysis, interpretive phenomena, and discourse analysis. For this study, the thematic analysis technique has been used. One way to examine qualitative information is by using thematic analysis. It is a

common method in the social sciences because of its flexibility and usefulness with many types of data, such as interview and focus group transcripts and written texts. With the help of thematic analysis, researchers can look for recurring topics in their data and report on their findings. Researchers can find themes and patterns in their data systematically and rigorously by employing the thematic analysis method, which is a flexible and adaptable approach. As such, it can be a powerful method for exploring complicated topics and gaining insight into the real experiences and interpretations of the persons under study (Alhojailan, 2012).

In this study, the thematic analysis has been carried out in multiple steps. First, the data has been gathered and arranged in a meaning full manner. The collected data was read multiple times to get a clear sense of the context and content. After that, the data were coded and conceptualized according to the keywords that were gathered and refined from past research that was done on service quality and customer satisfaction as shown in (appendix 2). As already discussed, the service quality was measured using its multiple dimensions. After getting a clear understanding of the information gathered, data segmentation was done as shown in (appendix 3) in order to create different themes for the study. These segmentations were done on the base of six dimensions of service quality named as SERVQUAL Model. The six dimensions are responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangibility.

Segments of Service Quality:

1. Responsiveness:

Responsiveness explains as the willingness of employees to provide help to their customers and provide services to them (Pakdil & Harwood, 2005). The keywords used to determine whether companies are responsive towards their customers are staff fast in providing service, extra service, tell precisely when services will be performed, receive prompt service from staff, staff willing to help customers, staff reaction to customers request, staff availability, and attitude.

2. Reliability

Reliability can be explained as the ability and accuracy to deliver the service promised. Timeliness is the key when providing a service (Asubonteng, McCleary, & Swan, 1996). The keywords used to determine whether companies provide reliable services to their customers

include quality-price ratio, promises were kept, staff solving a problem, staff sympathetic to issues and interested in solving them, staff dependable, provide services at the time promised, gym keeps individuals financial records accurately, hidden fees, extra costs, customers confusion, and transparency.

3. Assurance:

Assurance can be explained as the competence and politeness of the staff, as well as their skill at inspiring confidence (Pakdil & Harwood, 2005). The keywords used to measure the assurance are trustworthy, customers feel safe in the gym, staff knowledge and customers feel comfortable.

4. Empathy:

Customers are shown empathy through the company's attentive, personalized service (Mehta & Durvasula, 1998). The keywords used to measure the empathy dimension of service quality are staff giving personal attention, understanding customers' specific needs, keeping the best interest at a level, and providing time for customers.

5. Tangibility

Tangibility refers to a company's proficiency in conveying the quality of its services to its customers. (Asubonteng, McCleary, & Swan, 1996). The tangibility of the service was measured using keywords like up-to-date professional equipment, availability of facilities, physical facilities visually appealing, staff appealing, well-dressed staff, staff appeared neat, the appearance of physical equipment, equipment up-to-date, availability of equipment, gym atmosphere, and cleanliness.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Thematic analysis

The research conducted a thematic analysis to analyze data obtained from customer reviews of the gyms they have attended in Amsterdam, with the main aim of having a better understanding of the concepts that contribute to service quality perception as well as their impacts on customer

satisfaction, and eventually establish which of these components have a more effect on service quality perception.

The thematic analysis used qualitative data gathered using Trustpilot method where the customer reviews of the gyms were collected from the Trustpilot online community, where many gyms have a profile that also allows their customers to rate them on a scale of 1 to 5. The customers' reviews were also obtained from the google reviews of the eight gyms sampled.

The thematic analysis method was more appropriate for this study because firstly, it makes use of qualitative data, and secondly and most importantly, it enables a researcher to find out 'things' (mostly facts and realities) about and in people's views, knowledge, opinions, values, and experiences, by studying different artifacts like the five components of service quality perception; responsiveness, reliability, empathy, tangibility, and assurance.

The qualitative data collected underwent a few steps: being studied and understood, arrangement into a meaningful manner, segmentation according to the five components, conceptualization and coding based on the keywords, and finally generation of themes.

The figure below shows all five service quality components under investigation and the themes that emerged from each of them after the theme development process.



Figure 4 Summarized Themes of Service Quality Based on Google Reviews

Tangibility emerges to be the component presenting the most themes (5), followed by empathy and reliability (both with a frequency of 4 themes) and lastly assurance and responsiveness with 3 themes each. Therefore, overall, the analysis presented a total of 19 themes to be discussed.

Before discussing the individual themes in detail, it is analytically important to have information on the frequency distribution of the themes as provided in the frequency table below:

Table 2 Frequency Distribution of The Themes

| Table. | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Dimensions | Themes | Frequencies |
| Responsiveness | Negative customer services | 13 |
| | Positive customer services | 35 |
| | Positive Staff Willingness to Help Customers | 6 |
| Reliability | Poor customer experience | 3 |
| | Exaggerated costs | 6 |
| | Lack of transparency | 8 |
| | Keep Promises | 2 |
| | Fair prices | 3 |
| Assurance | Negative customer experience | 3 |
| | Positive customer experience | 2 |
| | Professional services | 13 |
| Empathy | Unmet customer needs | 6 |
| | Prioritizing customers interests | 9 |
| | Personalized attention to customers | 12 |
| | Understanding customer needs | 9 |
| Tangibility | Lack of sufficient resources | 5 |
| | Unfavorable Gym atmosphere | 7 |
| | Available/sufficient resources | 9 |
| | Favorable Gym atmosphere | 15 |
| | Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | 11 |

This frequency table enables to understand which theme has the most occurring in the data set. Also, the study was able to have a quick analysis of the themes based on positivity and negativity and be able to conclude that most themes presented positivity which further has different implications for instance, customer satisfaction.

From the table, themes with positive attributes bear high frequencies under four dimensions: positive staff willingness (35), professional services (13), personalized attention to customers (12), and favorable gym atmosphere (15). Only one dimension presented a theme with negative attributes, with the highest frequency, and lack of transparency (8).

The heterogeneity of the results as observed in the frequency table is a presentation of ideal statistical data. This provides the surety that research questions will be answered, and objectives met.

4.2 Word cloud/word frequency

The figure below shows the word cross generated from the customers' comments on the eight gyms they attend in Amsterdam.



Analyzing this word cloud with a focus on two aspects; appearance (boldest to the most faded) and text size (either large or small), presents a vivid overview of the popular word constituents of the data. Equally, the highlighted words also indicate the most important words mentioned by the customers whose comments were analyzed.

The highlighted words based on the two aspects are: great, friendly, very, equipment, good, always, workout, work, clean, will, trainers, recommend, Amsterdam, new, atmosphere, and other. These are the most commonly used words in the text data. More importantly, these words are the builders of the themes to be discussed.

These words make the word cloud a clear depiction of the data and the customers' thoughts and feelings, as they were gathered from the customers' honest reviews of the gyms. Appendix 1 gives the keywords for each service quality component under study, with the aim of having a better understanding of them and establishing which component has more influence on service quality

perception. There is a close relationship between the keywords and the words making the word cloud, which is an implication of data credibility and an indication of achieving the objectives of the study, as well as answering the research questions.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion

Theme 1: Negative customer services

This theme emerged from the component of responsiveness. It is characterized by negative staff attitudes towards customers, unavailability of staff both physically and online (staff absence), negative staff reactions to customers' requests, and negative staff willingness to help customers with their inquiries and challenges.

“The staff is incredibly unhelpful, dismissive, and impolite”

“The staff is friendly but has become a bit chaotic, especially at the reception”

“Communicating with them (via e-mail) is very difficult as they refuse to answer in English”

“They hire people who don't bother to come to work on time”

“Ignoring membership cancellation requests”

These coded statements show how the gyms went against all the requirements of a responsive business. Any business, organization, or company upholding responsiveness should be able to: deliver individual attention to its clients, have timely responses to service requests from clients, demonstrate an eagerness and prioritization to assist visitors, and be readily available to work when needed whether physically or online, especially in this digital world where the online medium of communication is more utilized than the physical medium (Nambisan, Gustafson, & Hawkins, 2016).

When customers experience these kinds of negativity, none of them will consider coming back or even dare recommend any of their friends or relatives, instead they will spread a word of

warning against these gyms. They will find no meaning in supporting a business that can't support them.

“So, if the client does not get support in working out in a safe environment, why should clients still support you?”

Theme 2: Positive customer services

This theme is also presented under the component of responsiveness and with the highest frequency, almost three times the negative customer services. It is important to note this comparison because it may be an indication that the negative services were from just a few staff who do not uphold company cultures & values, lack an understanding of the qualities of a good customer care representative, or lack training and experience on good customer service.

This positivity was contributed by factors like positive extra services to customers to ensure their comfortability, positive staff attitude to clients (majority), positive staff willingness to assist clients with their needs, and availability of prepared staff when needed, as demonstrated by the following statements.

“They also have a spacious cafe with decent Wi-Fi and serve you one of the best cappuccinos in Amsterdam”

“Friendly reception”

“Friendly people there working and exercising”

“I met the store manager there and he was very friendly and helpful”

“The people who work there are prepared to help you when you need it”

These code statements show the real responsiveness of a business. The clients with these experiences will probably go for long-term subscriptions and spread good word of mouth thus accelerating recommendations that lead to new clients and consequently business growth and expansion.

Theme 3: Positive staff willingness to help customers

Staff willingness to help, assist and guide clients is one of the ways businesses show responsiveness to their clients (Berry, Wall, & Carbone, 2006). This theme was enhanced by the acts of positive staff reactions to customers' requests.

“Very careful and helpful”

“Staff member took the time to show me around, explain what the equipment was used for, and demonstrated some basics for me”

“Friendly trainers who are always open to questions and help”

Customers will always choose where they are heard, prioritized, and treated as if they matter. It's more important for businesses to ensure their clients feel this way because, in a world full of choices, you need to be satisfactory and stand out in order to win.

Theme 4: Poor/ negative customer experience

This theme emerged under two components; reliability and assurance. Experience comes after a client gets to taste the good or service. Negative experience feedback means that customers got less or the opposite of their expectations or previous experience.

This theme existed because the sample gyms turned out the cheapest, were not customer friendly, have confusing options for customers, and made the customers feel uncomfortable and unsafe in the gym.

“I have been trying out a multitude of gyms since arriving in Amsterdam and this so far is the worst”

“Ultimately having to pay a considerable amount via a collection agency”

“There are many membership options to choose from”

“The “trainers” block off huge segments of the gym for classes and scoff at you for accidentally walking near it”

“It does not feel safe to go there”.

A measure of reliability is the consistency in meeting customers’ needs by any service provider (Khan & Fasih, 2014). Assurance relies on staff conduct and professionalism, the physical safety of the location and the gym itself, and the standard of customer satisfaction (Elmadağ, Ellinger, & Franke, 2008). All these determinants have been mentioned by some of the participants from the sampled Gyms having both positive and negative reviews. However, no client will think twice about a place where their safety feels threatened.

Theme 5: Exaggerated costs/ Lack of transparency (Reliability)

Money is a sensitive matter and since it’s the mode of exchange for goods and services, no one wants to spend money without getting the equivalent value back in terms of goods or services. A transparent business automatically exhibits the attributes of responsible behavior, good and timely communication, and high standards.

Customers prefer conclusive and static service pricing for their own planning and budgeting.

The characteristics of this theme are unnecessary and unending extra costs, extra costs with no quality-price ratio, hidden and unexplained fees, unfulfilled promises, and lack of transparency.

“I would have to pay a lot extra in order to quit earlier than my contract is expected to last”

“These guys really want to empty your pockets with minimum effort and value given”

“Need extra fee on top of your regular subscription to enter this gym”

“This is unacceptable. They said its open 24/7”

“It is quite annoying that you can’t see the membership prices online”

These discrepancies in charges and fees are assumed as theft by customers. They see themselves being extorted especially when more money is asked, and poor services are offered, or no noticeable changes are seen.

“The gym really isn't worth the price for the service you get”

Reasonable pricing is one of the factors that enhance the reliability of a business (Khan & Fasih, 2014). When customers are looking for a service provider, one of the comparisons they use are pricing comparisons then others follow. They may compromise quite a higher price only if all other factors are extremely excellent and outstanding like available equipment, professionalism of the staff, cleanliness and attractive general appearance of the gym, among others.

A transparent service provider wins the faith of the customers, especially with money matters. They will genuinely trust the business and even when something is wrong and they are promised it will be fixed, they will believe that and be patient. This will extend also to charges such that when a new extra charge is introduced, they will believe the reason behind that especially when services are of a high standard. Therefore, there are too many benefits of transparency that a business can enjoy mainly increasing its reliability to its clients.

Theme 6: Keep promises/ fair prices (Reliability)

This theme has two traits; fulfilled or kept promises and a positive quality-price ratio.

Promises are only considered kept when they are delivered as promised.

“It's a high-end gym, so it's not cheap, but they deliver on expectations”

“They do what they say”

A positive quality-price ratio means that the quality of services provided is directly proportional to the pricing. In other words, the standard of the environment and services are high and worth the prices charged.

“Subscriptions are decent for what you get”

“The gym has got most of the basics you need to stay fit and of course not far away to my crib”

“Good price/quality”

In this case, clients do not feel cheated and receive value for their money. On the other hand, the business benefit from subscriptions from satisfied clients, referrals, and repeated clients, and

all these increases the reliability of the business to its customers. This is an ideal business situation where it is a win for both customers and the business

Theme 7: Positive customer experience (Assurance)

Under this theme, customers feel comfortable and safe in the gym. Customers get assistance whenever they need from the staff who are willing to help.

“Staff willingness to help customers”

When customers are assured of their safety, they become so comfortable that they won't consider other choices. The homely feeling, they develop towards the business is a gain for the business and strengthens its assurance to clients and automatically raises the standard of the gym.

“I feel completely at home here”

Theme 8: Professional services (assurance)

Assurance as a service quality component is centered on the ability of a business's staff ability to provide services in the most professional way, appropriateness and safety of the physical location of the business and the quality standard of the services offered (Elmadağ, Ellinger, & Franke, 2008). The importance of this theme cannot be understated because we need to understand the professionalism of the staff in the sampled gyms.

As anticipated, most customers commented the positive knowledge of the staff in the gyms, their trustworthiness and the nice conduct when handling clients.

“The sales guy who gave me the tour really gave me a great feeling about the place”

“Professional staff”

“Classes were good, everything from kickboxing/zumba/body pump/spinning all with enthusiastic and professional instructors”

“Will be guided and advised by very knowledgeable”

There is a great assurance to customers concerning a service provider when they encounter experienced staff. They are assured of the best advice, guidance, training, and results unlike inexperienced staff who would keep them on panic mode.

“Experienced staff”

“Professional coaches”

Theme 9: Unmet customer needs (Empathy)

Customer needs are both physical and emotional. Their perception is that they will get all the necessities they need in good condition and offered to them respectfully, to receive the services in a professional and effective way and to be shown and handled with respect. They expect the staff to carry themselves with etiquette.

“I saw a personal trainer once having his own prepped lunch while giving training next to the machines with a not-so pleasant-smelling lunch box”

“Waiting to get your towel when checking in and checking out is kind of annoying at times”

“The staff is a huge let-down”

Customers will try to give a benefit of doubt by raising complains and suggesting improvements but when all that fall on deaf years, they end up finding another service provider.

“They prefer to lose the customer than make a solution. SURREAL!”

Also, customers anticipate a service provider who can understand their time flexibility. For instance, many people tend to be free on weekends and would need more gym time. Therefore, it's upon the gym management to adjust and have enough open hours on the weekends.

“Only downside is the limited opening hours on weekends”

Theme 10: Prioritizing customer interests (Empathy)

Empathy in general, is about the level of care and concern offered to each customer by a service provider. Can be accomplished by making customers feel appreciated and important,

paying attention to their individual unique needs and individualized customer treatment (Zygiaris, Hameed, Alsubaie, & Rehman, 2022). Showing customers you prioritize them and their needs is heartwarming and will make them prioritize your business in return.

“I love the fact they have water fountains to fill our water bottles. What a nice concept my previous gym didn’t have”

“Very cool that you get access to the Amsterdam Olympic Stadium”

“Small gym with small groups, also no more than 5 or so people are allowed to train independently at the same time”

“Intensive guidance”

Also, having other services that customers may need close by like coffee shops, juice bars and cafes, is a way of prioritizing their interests and needs. It makes the business look like an all-inclusive service provider, which any client would prefer, because of all the time saved.

“Great coffee and shakes with social / friendly bar also.”

“A nice little cafe attached, and you can use the track in the Olympic Stadium during the day”

“The juice bar next door is another big plus”

Theme 11: Personalized attention to customers (Empathy)

A fitness center is one of the service sectors that receive customers with diverse needs. Some go for increased fitness, balance and flexibility, nutritional advice, to lose weight, to gain weight, to deal with stress, among others. The gyms should be able to meet all these individual specific needs and have a personalized time with each customer.

“Personal fit plan, and a coach assigned to you”

“The Piri Reis location is limited to 6 people per workout which means you get a lot of attention”

“Receive personal guidance in creating your training theme that leads to your goal”

“That bit of extra attention that they offer you here is worth a lot to me and helps you achieve your personal goals”

“There are also options for personal training and nutritional advice”

The personalized attention to all customers allows the business to be accommodative of all clients regardless of gender, age or needs. It's empathetic for a service provider to come up with plans that fit everyone, old or young, female or male.

“Whether you are young or old, you will receive excellent guidance from the personal trainers”

Theme 12: Understanding customer needs (Empathy)

The dictionary meaning of empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. Understanding the needs of customers means that the service provider is ready to put him/herself in the shoes of the individual customers in order to explore the ways of addressing and meeting them in the best and satisfying way possible (Zygiaris, Hameed, Alsubaie, and Rehman , 2019).

“Had an annual premium membership, including fruits and access to towels amongst other things”

“PT fits in well with your own wishes and challenges you well”

“It is effective, fun, and balanced in all good ways”

Another benefit of understanding customer needs to both service providers and customers is that the gyms get to be fully equipped with both the staff, equipment and space, which means they will never turn down a client for any shortage. Similarly, the customers are able to enjoy a variety of services, equipment and trainings.

“There are many skill lessons where you can work on specific goals”

“Great facility that has all I looked for in a fitness gym and more”

“The great thing about Olympic Gym is that you can attend many classes. Whether you want to train for yourself or follow X-Fit”

“Trainers are always bringing the best out of you”

Theme 13: Lack of sufficient resources/ unfavorable gym atmosphere (Tangibility)

Tangibility as a service quality component refers to all the visible features of a service that have an outward impact which includes but is not limited to; the appealing nature of the premises, professionalism of the staff, quality of customer service, and marketing materials (Asubonteng, McCleary, & Swan, 1996). Resources like equipment, staff, and space and the state of those resources matter to customers.

This theme is developed by the unavailability of equipment and staff, the poor state of their cleanliness and appearance, outdated equipment, and the unappealing visual appearance of the physical facilities.

“The machines and pool are nearly always full, and nobody seems to return their weights”

“There’s no warm water in the showers and people fight at peak hours”

“The man shower is always a bit dirty and not smelling pleasant”

“Very dirty (locker rooms are cleaned once a week max)” (negative cleanliness)

“It’s incredible that the Jacuzzi part of the swimming pool has been closed for 9 months (out of order) and the facilities are aging” (negative equipment up to date)”

“The access key does not always work; you usually have to ask the staff to open the entrance”

Gyms are sensitive places where high levels of cleanliness should be maintained in the showers, on the floor, and on the equipment. Sanitization on top of cleanliness is important because of the sharing of bathrooms and equipment. Make sure clients' and staff's health are safe.

Theme 14: Available/ sufficient resources (tangibility)

Sufficient resources imply that the gym has equipment, space, and staff enough to cater to the customer population without a stretch. In so doing, the customers get to receive the quality of services they have paid for which is a motivation.

“There are a lot of cardio devices and most of the time it isn't busy”

“They have all the equipment you could want”

“The spa and pool area are just the cherry on the top”

The reason most people don't practice home workouts is because of the equipment and trainers. Acquiring those two essentials is expensive and that is why it is easier to go to the gym. Therefore, it is important that gym owners remember that to make sure those essentials are present.

Theme 15: Favorable gym atmosphere (tangibility)

This theme constitutes of high levels of cleanliness, equipment that are up to date, the general appealing gym atmosphere, positive gym culture and visually appealing physical facilities. The ambiance of a place of service determines the preparedness of it to offer services and which standard of services.

“Great gym, great trainers & staff and clean”

“They have recently upgraded the machines”

“Small but a good mix of people (age/international/local/man/woman)”. (Positive gym culture)

“A great open space to work your muscles on different machines”

“I'm glad to see they are remodeling the changing rooms”

Theme 16: Up-to-date professional equipment (tangibility)

The gym is a service sector that is so fashionable and evolving on a daily basis. The functionality goal is the same but new machines come out frequently. If you visit a gym a year later after the previous visit, you will be surprised by the change. Gym owners who keep up with the market install new, modernized and better equipment frequently.

“The fitness equipment is pretty new (Techno-gym) and the gym is clean”

“The new equipments are modern, digital and precise”

“Has the best and most complete gear set I could see in Amsterdam, with all the high-end techno-gym line”

“Spacious enough gym area with modern machines”

Customers are curious people and would want to try new machines. They are attracted to beautiful equipment and would want the people they love to also try it, which means increased recommendations and business growth.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION, FUTURE RESEARCH, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

This study helped to gain an understanding of customer perception and satisfaction related to and linked to the fitness sector. The components of service quality explained the whole concept through the themes that emerged from the customer reviews. As of now, we are knowledgeably aware of where the sector is flourishing and where improvements should be made.

The first aim of the study has been met because now the study shows how a responsive business should deliver services to its clients and the benefits accruing from that. Initially, the level of attention given to clients, the type of responses, and the availability of service providers to attend to clients, was underestimated and its significance taken for granted but in reality, they are crucial for the success of a business, a similar view to Ali & Anwar (2021).

Empathy, reliability, and responsiveness: we have all seen friends or family who have specific service providers for every service and would not seek any other provider unless advised by their trusted providers. One would wonder how such a relationship came to exist but when you observe well you will realize some traits the providers relied on; they never fail nor disappoint their customers, they are available anytime needed, and willing to compromise for the sake of the customer, they have a constant price and no fluctuations and communicate any changes prior, their goods and services are of high quality and their attitudes to their clients are always positive and are very empathetic to their clients (Ibáñez, Hartmann, & Calvo, 2006).

Tangibility and assurance: some successful businesses will not mind incurring high expenses in decorating and equipping their businesses, training and hiring professional staff, security and marketing mix. They understand these three aspects are the backbone of any business tangibility and create assurance to clients of satisfaction to clients. When done well, these aspects always pay back. More so, they are able to meet their customers' service perceptions, hence satisfying them.

How does consumers' perception of service quality impact their overall satisfaction with a business or organization? By understanding the components of service quality, we were able to understand the nexus between consumer perception and satisfaction. The components of service quality are the factors that derive the qualities of services perceived by customers enabling them to know if and how well their needs have been met.

All the service quality components have proved to be important factors in deriving quality services. However, tangibility and empathy appeared to cover them all. These two components explore the business culture, staff conduct and professionalism, managerial transparency, physical space standard and atmosphere, customer care services, customer needs and treatment, security, equipment and other essential resources, and quality of marketing.

Finally, gyms in Amsterdam are doing well in average but there is always room for improvement. They can improve the quality of their services by enhancing transparency by being open on matters of service fees and other charges, improving customer care services through ensuring their staff act professionally, empathetically and with etiquette which can be achieved during hiring, through training and code of conduct, and finally by making sure they are well equipped and essential resources are available.

6.2 Future Research

We live in a world run by a 24-hour economy, meaning businesses operate all the hours of the day, with no closing doors. Some customers even raised the issue in their reviews, where they expected the gym to be 24/7 even on weekends but were disappointed when it was not so.

In this case, the customer perception was not met by the actual service. This creates disappointments and affects the customers' view of the service. These unmatched perceptions of realities affect customer satisfaction. But what would happen if gyms operated 24 hours? Well, at least we are sure one of the customer perceptions would be met.

Gyms operating 24 hours is still a virgin idea, not much explored. There may be a few that are doing that. Research to explore the possibility, advantages, and challenges of 24/7 gyms should be conducted. The research should be able to explain how that will impact the gym service providers; what will be the impact on cost? Will there be a profit increase? Also, the impact on customers; will there be an increase in subscriptions at the gyms? What times will register more clients, day or night?

6.3 Limitations

The first limitation of the study is sample-based. The Trust-pilot online community allows customers to rate gyms at a rating of between 1 and 5. The gyms sampled for the study were only those with a rating greater than three, which is above average. The limitation of the sample size could not allow the inclusion of below-average gyms according to the rating.

Another limiting factor for the study was time. The available time period could only allow the collection of ten reviews for every gym (the sample size was also limited). Maybe more conclusive and highly accurate results would have been achieved with a higher sample size.

Insufficient and inadequate literature available was another limitation. There exists limited research done on the fitness sector and more precisely Amsterdam. This limitation is important because it propelled the motivation of the study.

6.4 Recommendations

After going through the results and analyzing the themes presented, a few gaps have been identified that are against the customers' perceptions, which in turn affect their satisfaction with the services they receive from the gyms.

There exists a problem with customer service in gyms. For the service industry, poor customer services are intolerable because the success of the gyms depends on the walking in. Clients will only walk in if they receive high-quality services. This problem is mainly associated with the staff. The genesis of the solution is to ensure the hiring of people who have the knowledge, skills, and experience and then training them to modify them into the specific business culture, visions and objectives. That way, business managers will be sure they will handle the customers as they anticipate.

Safety is another important issue. It's unfortunate that customers can feel unsafe in gyms. It's the mandate of the gym management to ensure a secure location for the gym. Also, the trainers need to speak gently and professionally to the customers to avoid making them feel unsafe.

Another problem is with the pricing. Customers are complaining of extra and hidden charges they don't understand. The solution is to have an official pricing strategy, design a charging sheet or plan that outlines all the charges as per service, and make it public on the website and the gym. In case of any new charges to be introduced, make it official while explaining how it arises, prior to effecting it. Make it a requirement and responsibility to streamline the pricing sector/department.

Prioritizing overall customer needs should be made a daily mission in the gym services. Customer needs comprise both what they want and what they expect. Exceed their expectations when providing what they need, so that you create and instill the urge of wanting more in them.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Customer Reviews:

1. David Lloyd Amsterdam Gym:

1. I love the gym. Sure it's expensive but not over the top expensive for what you get. Friendly people there working and exercising. I wasn't sure if I would sign up on the day I went for a tour, but the sales guy who gave me the tour really gave me a great feeling about the place. His positive energy, motivation and fitness goals made me really excited to join.

Every gym has pros and cons. Can't make everyone happy. I'm glad to see they are remodeling the changing rooms. The lights are a bit odd. I wish the saunas and steam rooms weren't as busy with the door constantly opening and closing.

The towel service is extra and I wish they provided small towels to use when working out. I'd prefer that more than the big towels. Waiting to get your towel when checking in and checking out is kind of annoying at times - but the staff does their best to deal with it.

I love the fact they have water fountains to fill our water bottles. What a nice concept my previous gym didn't have. The cafe also has reasonably priced drinks and would refill bottles for you too.

Classes are the main thing about this gym. Too much to go into detail here. There is something for everyone and they are all high tech.

There is a huge workout device on the main floor that tries to accommodate every workout, including TRX, even though I'm sure it's awesome, it is hardly used. Only taking up valuable space.

It can be crowded on peak hours but also very empty at other times. Lots of people staring at their phones in between their sets can really slow down a workout. Too bad they don't have a timed circuit or something like the eGym.

2. Apart from the reception & juice bar, the staff are incredibly unhelpful, dismissive and impolite, especially the trainers. Harry and Joerene outstandingly so.

The machines and pool are nearly always full and nobody seems to return their weights. My locker was nearly broken open and cancelling is an absolute chore.

The "trainers" block off huge segments of the gym for classes and scoff at you for accidentally walking near it.

Their "BodyTrax" machine has also been out of order since my arrival.

Go anywhere else, especially at these prices.

3. The gym really isn't worth the price for the service you get. It bothers me, because I train everyday. Sure, the equipment and spa (which are often out of use) are nice, but the staff is a huge let down. And in my opinion: it's the service that should be exceptional, or at least good, decent equipment and facilities are the basics. Staff should be laid back and helpful, not act like it's their dad's gym. I cancelled my membership and will look for a new gym.
4. I was never a person to go to the gym and enjoy it, but visiting David Lloyd in Amsterdam changed that. I think it's the atmosphere and the possibilities. That is if you're serious about the goals you wish to achieve and are fine with investing in yourself.

Sure, there might be gyms far cheaper, but I have been there and they never worked for me. Going to the gym is one thing, coming back and progressing is another and I feel at David Lloyd I have thus far been devoted to keep going. There is a lot you can do.

- 120+ workout classes to pick from
- Swimming pool
- 2 different Saunas
- Steam room
- Fairly big fitness area for all your needs
- Upper floor with cardio focused equipment.

The locker rooms look very clean and there's lockers you can rent. The showers are each separated for privacy.

I have been a member for a month, but can tell you that David Lloyd is doing a much better job than a lot of other gyms.

5. Super sport club and perfect for triathletes!! Best I've ever had. I took a 3 month membership I could combine strength training (really all equipment available!) with swimming in 1 spot in preparation of my half Ironman Worlds. People are super friendly, it's never busy and super clean!
6. Best and most inclusive gym I've been to. It's a huge open space, never feels crowded. Top classes, great trainers, lots of support, and friendly reception. The spa and pool area are just the cherry on the top!
7. Went here to have a tour and inquire about membership prices. It is quite annoying that you can't see the membership prices online and then when you come in for the tour we had to wait over 30 mins in their bar, which seems like they are trying to get you to buy a smoothie while you wait. There are many membership options to choose from. The gym itself seemed quite nice but our first impression was quite low due to how we were treated when inquiring about a membership.
8. Terrible customer service, these guys really want to empty your pockets with minimum effort and value given. It's incredible that the jacuzzi part of the swimming pool has been closed for 9 months (out of order) and the facilities are ageing. The worst by far is the

customer service and how to get a hold of them. Been trying for 5 months (literally) and the result is no contact and an debt collection agency for an administration mistake ON THEIR END. The outrageousness of it all is incredible, and the staff still likes to give off attitude. AVOID DAVID LLOYD AMSTERDAM at all cost.

9. It's a big studio with sauna and pool. They have a great HIIT workout called "blaze". I wish it was more organically sectioned, I find the workout areas a little bit separated and overloaded. The sauna and relaxation space is great but you do wear clothes and I did not perceive it as cozy unfortunately. I wish it was more clean. I guess it's used a lot and so on but I think the cleanliness and the maintenance is not adequate at all :(
10. This gym is unfortunately not quite as good as it used to be. The staff is friendly but has become a bit chaotic, especially at the reception. I'm not sure that it is a good idea to go for the towel service as one very often has to wait for 5 min to return it after your workout, which is annoying. They have recently upgraded the machines, but the old ones were better as you had more workout options to choose from. now you have to watch a video pretending that you are running in California. However, it is big and clean and the pool and the spa area are top-notch!

2. SportCity Amsterdam (Wibautstraat):

1. SportCity Wibautstraat has one of the best gym atmosphere in Amsterdam. The subscriptions are decent for what you get and the people who work there are prepared to help you when you need it, but you have to ask, even if they might seem busy. The new food and drink bar is also great and has nice variety of healthy food and drinks.
2. Can recommend the personal trainer Dave Rijkaard. He is very friendly, professional and figures out quickly where your areas of improvement are. We are doing couple personal training and it works very well. He always finds the right exercises and combines his training with fun. Well done buddy.
3. I have to say the gym is actually pretty nice. Lots of equipment and it's new as well. It would make more sense to have some more space around the weight lifting area. Apart from that stuff seems friendly. I haven't tried to cancel my subscription yet so I'm holding off one star until that.
4. AVOID. The facilities may be nice, but they are incredibly unprofessional on the admin side and do everything to keep you paying - ignoring membership cancellation requests, slapping you with delay fees for no reason etc. They're very hard to reach as well, you have to e-mail and pray they respond to you within a reasonable time (my issue has been going on for months now). Just find another gym, this place is really not worth the stress.
5. Have been going there 3 years now. Staff are very friendly in my experience, instructors mostly very good and this sportcity is well maintained. You get access to the national chain, which is handy if you travel for work.
Things to improve: weekend closing hours and add more classes outside of 9to5 regular office hours - the classes are often fully booked so there is demand.

They also do not have mirrors and do not allow tank tops in the free weights area. I guess it is to make the gym not attractive to a certain group, which they fear will scare off other visitors.

Good price/quality

6. I have been a member in this gym for more than a year. While I had a good experience with the gym located at Waterlooplein, the one in Wibaustraat is very disappointing. The staff is unfriendly. The yoga classes are great, but they are overshadowed by immense noise from other classes next door. Doing functional training is hardly ever possible, given that in this area they schedule one class after the other. Wanting to quit after moving to another country, it turned out that I would have to pay a lot extra in order to quit earlier than my contract is expected to last. I am particularly disappointed because I asked for this before I signed the contract and they did not point this out to me. Besides that, communicating with them (via e-mail) is very difficult as they refuse to answer in English.
7. The friendliness of the staff is unfortunately not enough to make up for the unclean facilities. the gym starts to get overcrowded, gents dressing room stinks, so do the wc facilities, there is dirt around the toilet; of the four water basins one doesn't work already for three months, at least; there is mould around the basins...the toilet facilities at the ajax arena are cleaner than the ones at this sportcity location. Also, i preferred that in the past gents had to wear t-shirts with sleeves for sporting. now it seems to be acceptable for the gym to allow gents wear sleeveless shirts, sweating a lot and making the gym look unhygienic.
8. A great open space to work your muscles on different machines. Many group classes and friendly, experienced staff. They also have a spacious cafe with decent WiFi and serve you one of the best cappuccinos in Amsterdam.
9. Nice gym with lots of space to work out, you never feel cramped. The fitness equipment is pretty new (Technogym) and the gym is clean. There are many group lessons and the teachers are nice.
Having said that they have a very annoying policy about clothes: you cannot work out sleeveless (man or woman) in the main area. It is only allowed for the group lessons. The reasons they give for that are hygiene, not wanting other users to feel uncomfortable and not wanting to attract body builders to their facility. Ridiculous!! In the same line of thought, you will not find a single mirror in the work out areas o classes. Apparently they do not want vain people around just admiring their biceps while in the gym. It is a shame for it helps to have a mirror to correct your posture while training...
10. What I really like about the gym:
 - Personal fit plan, and a coach assigned to you
 - The new equipments are modern, digital and precise.
 - clean equipments
 - air conditioning, high roof tops

Cons:

 - too busy and sometimes a little more crowded than your expectation
 - above point for changing room as well

3. SportCity Amsterdam:

1. I was searching for a gym membership for a week, because I was working in Amsterdam for a few days.
After checking out a few, I've found this one.
I met the store manager there and he was very friendly and helpful.
The gym is quite small, but it's very familiar and modern, so it's not crowded. It's quiet and you have private space.
The saunas are great and everything is very clean.
The membership for a week is totally legitimated and I recommend this small studio to everyone who's staying for a short time in Amsterdam and searching for a good gym.
2. Nice easy-going gym. Small but a good mix of people (age/international/local/man/woman). However the man shower is always a bit dirty and not smelling pleasant. Also i saw a personal trainer once having his own prepped lunch while giving training next to the machines with a not-so pleasant smelling lunch box.
3. Love it! From the sauna to the helpful staff! Every month you can can meet with one of the staff / personal trainers and they will do a body scan and make a whole new tailor made workout which you can follow via an app. Go once a month make a routine, go to the gym and don't think just follow the routine and boom in shape haha! Good luck and totally recommend this place!
4. A cozy, friendly gym with lovely staff. Always many work-out spots available with modern equipment. Definitely recommend!
5. After trying a number of other gyms in the city, very happy with Sports City. Not the biggest but everything you need is available. Certainly one of the friendliest.
6. Cosy and small gym. Great atmosphere and great people. Staff is super friendly and always ready to help you. The in-house Spa is a nice treat after any workout.
7. Exceptionally tasty protein shakes, that are very convenient to have, post-workout. Friendly staff, great location, and everything you need! Would definitely recommend this gym, if you haven't been.
8. Very friendly place to train with no egos in sight.
Super helpful friendly staff - highly recommended.
Great coffee and shakes with social / friendly bar also.
9. Top gym, they have all the equipment you could want. Right in the center, walking distance from the Rijksmuseum, makes this the perfect gym for me. The only downside is the monthly price. If you want a good price you have to be a member for at least a year.
10. Very friendly place to train with no egos in sight.
Super helpful friendly staff - highly recommended.
Great coffee and shakes with social / friendly bar also.

4. Basic-Fit:

1. I have been trying out a multitude of gyms since arriving in Amsterdam and this so far is the worst (also cheapest). No staff seemed to exist, you need to use the bathroom sink for water if you do not want to pay to fill up your bottle at the "sports drink" fountain. No one puts their weights back so it is hard to tell what benches and racks are being used. The dumbbells are just put back in random spots. I understand that for the price this is all you can expect, but I will not be returning.
2. Cool gym, probably the cheapest in Amsterdam.
There are many branches around the city. I really loved the one in Rembrandtplein. The one in Baarsjesweg is good enough for me, there are a lot of cardio devices and most of the time it isn't busy.
In summer it gets a bit hot in door so try to go at night.
Peak hours are between 4 pm to 9 pm, try to avoid them for a better experience.
3. Today Sep. 9 2022. Basic-fit was close. Without explain. This is unacceptable. They said its open 24/7. Not always. I just ask for a little respect with the members. It doesnt deserve even a one star. Basic fit waste my time.
4. Slow and unhelpful customer service. Did not even answers my questions, just logged off and sent me back to the not-so-intelligent chatbot. Impersonal and careless attitude.
5. I would give this place 0 stars if I could. They hire people who don't bother to come to work on time so people regularly have to wait outside in the cold over half an hour for somebody to bother to come open the doors.
Find another gym, there's plenty. It's worth paying a little extra if it means you can actually get inside to train.
6. Very very dirty (locker rooms are cleaned once a week max), the one guy working there doesn't care about anything at all. The internal rules are not respected, there's no warm water in the showers and people fight at peak hours. Cheap in every sense of the way.
7. The gym has got most of the basics you need to stay fit and ofcourse not far away to my crib. No hassles to get your work out even if you find yourself in the middle of Paris or Enschede so long as you've got your membership.
8. How can people get rid of you? I cancelled my subscription and sent mails about it, which you apparently don't read, and keep asking for money. You also never pick up the phone.
Get out of my life finally!
9. Gym is super overcrowded and they do not provide a free water drinking fountain. Only free water is from the tap in the bathroom?!
10. They should say, in the website, they only accept Dutch bank accounts. They prefer to lose the customer than make a solution. SURREAL!

5. The Crunch Fitness and health club:

1. Great gym, great trainers & staff staff and clean. The vibe at this place is very welcoming with friendly staff and clientele. The classes are good too! Haven't used the sauna yet but hear positive things. All in all a big thumbs-up!
2. I hadn't ever been to a gym before but Jim from Scotland took the time to show me around, explain what the equipment was used for and demonstrated some basics for me. True gentleman!
3. Great gym for the standard in the North. Never really busy so you can get on with your training comfortably. It's definitely not perfect but found it the best in the North i have been to. The staff has always been helpful to me.
4. Good high end gym with restaurant/café and unisex sauna, a bit outside the center. Had an annual premium membership, including fruits and access to towels amongst other things. Classes were good, everything from kickboxing/zumba/body pump/spinning all with enthusiastic and professional instructors. Food and drinks ordered in the restaurant/café were of good quality.
5. I joined the gym this month but can't wait for my 6-month contract to end. It could be such a lovely place, but the service is terrible. Rude, and the answer to most questions is: I don't know.
6. Excellent personal trainers in a nice little gym. Whether you are young or old, you will receive excellent guidance from the personal trainers. And you can also train alone or in pairs. (Coach/Trainer) Justin is exceptional.
7. This was a great gym where I enjoyed working out, unfortunately the daily management has changed. I have since canceled my contract and am chased with monthly payments. Like a book club that you can no longer get rid of. Absolute recommended!
8. Great gym. Only downside is the limited opening hours on weekends. If you pretend to be a "high-end" gym, you should also be open in the evenings on weekends.
9. Just like other reviews say: an administrative mess, try to cancel several times, both at the desk and by e-mail. Ultimately having to pay a considerable amount via a collection agency (how to be customer-friendly).
10. Dear people, I would not recommend this gym because:
 - Administrative chaotic (Mrs Jaime is a very unfriendly staff I have ever seen!)
 - The access key does not always work, you usually have to ask the staff to open the entrance.
 - Nothing is done with problems and complaints
 - Do not adhere to the conditions of their website, be careful!
 - Not too much equipment in the gym.

- It's really all about money. High price and low service !!
So don't waste time and money. There are many gyms or gyms in the city of Amsterdam.

6. CrossFit AKA:

1. Nice place for a good crossfit workout, great coach Paolo , very careful and helpful !
Friendly and professional, thank you for the drop in!
Marina and Melanie
2. Very cool, cosy place, with very nice and knowledgeable trainers. I have met Alexander, and had a great workout. Thanks guys.
3. Great crossfit box! Good and strict coaches :) The Piri Reis location is limited to 6 people per workout which means you get a lot of attention. The other location on the Willem de Zwijgerlaan is quite a bit larger and allows up to 14 people per workout.
4. I've been with this club for over a year now. It is effective, fun, and balanced in all good ways: male - female, all nationalities, beginner - advanced, driving progress - retaining safety, serious workouts - relaxed interactions, usual suspects - tourist visitors, mutual support - competition, work hard - play hard. Competent and caring owner + staff.
5. Really great gym with thoughtful programming for people of all levels, helpful, encouraging coaches, plenty of time slots/classes to pick from, with an affordable price tag.
6. Best crossfitbox in Amsterdam. Nice and professional coaches, beautiful members and great atmosphere. Highly recommended!
7. Super nice place to train, you always feel welcome! The coaches like to share their knowledge, there are many skill lessons where you can work on specific goals.
8. crossfit Aka, I train now 6 months, nice people, professional coaches and a good atmosphere! a good balance between workouts and ski training.
9. This CF gym is good sized with plenty of space to workout. The instructor is good and the people are nice.
10. I love training here. Professional coaches, great atmosphere and ideal location. I highly recommend AKA!!!

7. Olympic Gym Amsterdam:

1. The place gives the feeling of a family managed business. It is not busy even in peak times (to me the best thing in a gym), it has the best and most complete gear set I could see in Amsterdam, with all the high-end technogym line, classes are good, there is a nice view on the stadium and canal, changing rooms are spacious and the staff is super friendly. They also added a juice bar recently.

Training gear aside, the gym feels quite old, especially the interiors, the changing rooms and showers. They do not provide towels, no wellness/spa, not much "vibe" as it is always nearly empty and music is low. Also it would be nice to have a few extra benches and a biceps bench!

Really recommended if what you care of is just working out with no frills!

2. Corona has been tough on the gym. And yes, they need all the support they can get. But support needs to be earned. It took them a long time to 'freeze' the subscriptions. Now that it has reopened: the corona rules are hardly adhered to, people come in without a reservation on the app, the showers are very busy and not ventilated. It does not feel safe to go there. So if the client does not get support in working out in a safe environment, why should clients still support you? It's a 2 way street. Get your act together.
3. It's a high-end gym, so it's not cheap, but they delivery on expectations. It has very nice changing rooms, spacious enough gym area with modern machines, really good cardio equipment with all the latest bells and whistles. They have a lot of different classes, a nice little cafe attached, and you can use the track in the Olympic Stadium during the day.
4. Nice gym lots of equipment. There are a couple of things i'd personally like to see in here but the fact that you can actually get onto the track is a major plus. Also the changing room is more spacious then you might find at some other gym.
5. The gym just got all new equipment - internet on the trainers and nice weight machines. Always comfortable, always clean, it's a nice place.
6. Many new devices.. unfortunately, all a bit less clear in 3 different places you have dumpels and related things. Or I have yet to understand the logic in their layout
7. Great facility that has all I looked for in a fitness gym and more. Very cool that you get access to the Amsterdam Olympic Stadium.
8. The great thing about Olympic Gym is that you can attend many classes. Whether you want to train for yourself or follow X-Fit, it is all possible. In addition, you can go to the trainers and you will be helped well. In addition, it is clean and tidy. I personally like the X-Fit classes the most. CrossFit inspired workouts with fun trainers to pound

in an hour. I get my most full nutrition from this. Even with the corona crisis, they do everything they can to keep the offer going online through videos. Respect for that!

9. Super nice gym! Sports in a unique location: the Olympic stadium. Friendly trainers who are always open to questions and help. In addition, you will receive personal guidance in creating your training theme that leads to your goal. Really recommended!
10. Without a doubt the best gym in Amsterdam and the surrounding area! You will not be left to your own devices here, but will be guided and advised by very knowledgeable (and super nice) sports instructors. Even in the periods when things weren't going well for me, I was always helped very well. That bit of extra attention that they offer you here is worth a lot to me and helps you achieve your personal goals. In addition, it is also a very nice gym, in the middle of the Olympic Stadium. There is beautiful, new fitness equipment and there are also options for personal training and nutritional advice. Oh yes, the group lessons are also incredibly fun to follow. Boxing is a must!

8. The body Studio:

1. Great gym! I love the community vibe, the classes are always challenging and fun. The staff are always friendly and willing to help. The juice bar next door is another big plus! I couldn't recommend more
2. Awesome gym. Has good equipment and great people. I highly recommend for everyone who lives in the area and look for a place that's more private with a family vibe rather than a commercial gym.
3. **Positive:** Communication, Professionalism, Quality
An awesome gym in a great location. Suitable for all levels of fitness and the trainers are always bringing the best out of you! Highly recommend
4. Overall I enjoy the gym however there are big inconsistencies with the instructors. Some I like and some I really don't. I only wish there was a way to be able to know who was teaching in advance. Showing up and having a bad class can really cause for a frustrating experience.
5. Great work out space, with usual machines and weights. Locker space, showers and a juice bar. Always nice and clean, covid sanitizer etc in place all around. 5*
6. Nice! Small gym with small groups, also no more than 5 or so people are allowed to train independently at the same time. So, no crowds. Because the groups are small, the trainer has the chance to adapt exercises for you if necessary (think injuries or lighter exercises for beginners or challenging versions for the beasts). Nice people so far, both the trainers and visitors. International.
Take a free trial week and see for yourself! I will continue!

7. I started a year ago at The Body Studio with the 6 week kickstart program, I had to lose weight, I lost a few kilos in the first process. Now after a year I am in a better shape than ever and I really enjoy sports and this new lifestyle, I really owe this to The Body Studio.
8. Very nice studio for sports! Nice atmosphere and excellent guidance. Classes are good and Personal Training in particular are really great. PT fits in well with your own wishes and challenges you well. Made a lot of progress and learned a lot. Strong recommendation
9. In the Body Studio, trainers and owners are open, friendly and approachable. The lessons are varied and there is good guidance, you can also ask questions in the field of nutrition. If you are looking for a gym where everyone is welcome and where they train effectively, then this is the place to be.
10. Pleasant atmosphere, personal attention, intensive guidance. They do what they say. I feel completely at home here, I enjoy coming here and making progress.

Appendix 2: Conceptualization of the data:

| <p>Customer reviews were analyzed based on the SERVQUAL dimensions and the definition made by Valarie Zeithaml, A. Parasuraman, and Leonard Berry in 1988 for each dimension as well as the following keywords were used to annotate the data.</p> <p>The five Dimensions were defined by Zeithaml et al. (1990) as follows</p> | | |
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| Dimension | Definition | Keywords |
| Responsiveness | Employer willingness to help customers and to provide quick service. | “Staff fast in providing services”, “extra services”, “tell exactly when services will be performed”, “receive prompt service from staff”, “staff willingness to help customers”, “staff reaction to customers’ requests”, “staff availability”, “staff attitude”. |
| Reliability | The ability to perform the service promised accurately and dependably. When a service is promised it has to be on promised time. | “Quality-Price ratio”, “Promises were kept”, “staff solving problems”. “Staff sympathetic to problems and interested in solving them”, “staff dependable”, “provide services at the time promised”, “gym keeps individuals financial records accurately”, “hidden fees”, “extra costs”, “customers confusion”, “Transparency” |

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| Assurance | The knowledge and courtesy of personnel and their ability to convey trust and confidence | "Trustworthy", "customers feel safe in the gym", "staff knowledge", "customers feel comfortable". |
| Empathy | The provision of care to individualized attention to the customer. | "Staff gives personal attention", "understanding customers' specific needs", "keeping the best interest at level", "time providing for customers". |
| Tangibility | The appearance of physical facilities, equipment quality, personnel physical appearance, communication material (positive) (negative) | "up-to-date professional equipment", "availability of facilities", "physical facilities visually appealing", "staff appealing", well-dressed staff", "staff appealed neat", "appearance of physical equipment", "equipment up-to-date", "availability of equipment", "gym atmosphere" "cleanliness" |

Appendix 3: Segmentation of the Data:

| Gym | Responsiveness | Reliability | Assurance | Empathy | Tangibility |
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| David Lloyd Amsterdam | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Friendly people there working and exercising" (positive staff attitude) 2. "His positive energy, motivation, and fitness goals made me really excited to join" (positive staff attitude) 3. "The staff is incredibly unhelpful, dismissive, and impolite" (negative staff attitude) 4. "People are super friendly" (positive staff attitude) 5. "Friendly reception" (positive staff attitude) 6. "Terrible customer service" (negative staff attitude) 7. "The staff is friendly but has become a bit | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Not over-the-top expensive for what you get" (Negative Quality-price ratio) 2. "The gym really isn't worth the price for the service you get" (negative Quality-price ratio) 3. "There are many membership options to choose from" (negative customers confusion) 4. "It is quite annoying that you can't see the membership prices online" (negative transparency) 5. "These guys really want to empty your pockets with | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The sales guy who gave me the tour really gave me a great feeling about the place" (positive staff knowledge) 2. "The "trainers" block off huge segments of the gym for classes and scoff at you for accidentally walking near it" (negative customers feel comfortable). | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Waiting to get your towel when checking in and checking out is kind of annoying at times" (Negative understanding customers specific needs) 2. "I love the fact they have water fountains to fill our water bottles. What a nice concept my previous gym didn't have" (positive keeping the best interest at level) 3. "Lots of support" (positive staff gives personal attention) 4. "They have a great HIIT workout called "blaze". I wish it was more organically sectioned" (negative | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I'm glad to see they are remodeling the changing rooms" (Positive Physical facilities visually appealing) 2. "The machines and pool are nearly always full, and nobody seems to return their weights" (negative availability of equipment) 3. "Sure, the equipment and spa (which are often out of use) are nice" (positive appearance of physical equipment.) 4. "I think it's the atmosphere and the possibilities" (positive gym atmosphere) 5. "The locker rooms look very clean and there are lockers you can rent. The showers are each separated for privacy". (Positive availability of facilities) |

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| | chaotic, especially at the reception” (negative staff attitude) | minimum effort and value given” (negative extra costs and Quality-price ratio) | | understanding customers' specific needs) 5. “The staff is a huge let-down” (negative understanding customers' specific needs) | 6. “Really all equipment available” (positive availability of equipment) 7. “The spa and pool area are just the cherry on the top” (positive availability of facilities) 8. “Its incredible that the jacuzzi part of the swimming pool has been closed for 9 months (out of order) and the facilities are ageing” (negative equipment up to date) 9. “I think the cleanliness and the maintenance is not adequate at all” (negative cleanliness, equipment up to date) 10. “They have recently upgraded the machines” (positive equipment up to date) |
| <u>SportCity Amsterdam</u> <u>(different branch, different rating)</u> | 1. “The people who work there are prepared to help you when you need it” (positive staff availability) 2. “He is very friendly, professional and figures out quickly where your areas of improvement are” (positive staff attitude) 3. “Ignoring membership cancellation requests” (negative staff reaction to customers’ requests) 4. “Staff are very friendly in my experience” (positive staff attitude) 5. “More classes outside of 9to5 regular office hours” (positive staff availability) 6. “Communicating with them (via e- | 1. “Subscriptions are decent for what you get” (positive Quality-price ratio) 2. “Unprofessional on the admin side and do everything to keep you paying” (negative extra costs) 3. “Slapping you with delay fees for no reason etc” (negative hidden fees) 4. “Good price/quality” (positive Quality-price ratio) 5. “I would have to pay a lot extra in order to quit earlier than my contract is expected to last” (negative extra costs) | 1. “Instructors mostly very good” (positive staff knowledge) 2. “Doing functional training is hardly ever possible, given that in this area they schedule one class after the other” (negative customers feel comfortable) 3. “Experienced staff” (positive staff knowledge) | 1. “The new food and drink bar is also great and has nice variety of healthy food and drinks” (positive understanding customers' specific needs) 2. “Personal fit plan, and a coach assigned to you” (positive Staff gives personal attention) | 1. “One of the best gym atmospheres in Amsterdam” (positive gym atmosphere) 2. “Lots of equipment and it’s new as well” (positive up-to-date professional equipment and availability of equipment) 3. “This sportcity is well maintained” (positive up-to-date professional equipment) 4. “Not enough to make up for the unclean facilities. the gym starts to get overcrowded, gents dressing room stinks, so do the wc facilities” (negative gym atmosphere) 5. “A great open space to work your muscles on different machines” (positive gym atmosphere) 6. “Nice gym with lots of space to work out” |

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| | <p>mail) is very difficult as they refuse to answer in English” (negative staff availability).</p> <p>7. “The friendliness of the staff is unfortunately” (negative staff attitude)</p> <p>8. “They also have a spacious cafe with decent WiFi and serve you one of the best cappuccinos in Amsterdam”. (Positive extra services)</p> <p>9. “Teachers are nice” (positive staff attitude)</p> | | | | <p>(positive gym atmosphere)</p> <p>7. “The fitness equipment is pretty new (Technogym) and the gym is clean” (positive up-to-date professional equipment)</p> <p>8. “You will not find a single mirror in the work out areas of classes” (negative availability of facilities)</p> <p>9. “The new equipments are modern, digital and precise. - clean equipments” (positive up-to-date professional equipment)</p> |
| <p>SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat</p> | <p>1. “I met the store manager there and he was very friendly and helpful” (positive staff attitude, staff willingness to help customers)</p> <p>2. “Friendly gym with lovely staff” (positive staff attitude)</p> <p>3. “Friendly staff” (positive staff attitude)</p> <p>4. “Very friendly place to train with no egos in sight” (positive staff attitude)</p> <p>5. “Super helpful friendly staff” (positive staff attitude, staff willingness to help customers)</p> | <p>1. “Need extra fee on top of your regular subscription to enter this gym” (negative extra cots, hidden fees)</p> | <p>1. Professional staff (positive staff knowledge)</p> | <p>1. “I saw a personal trainer once having his own prepped lunch while giving training next to the machines with a not-so pleasant-smelling lunch box” (Negative keeping the best interest at level)</p> <p>2. “Everything you need is available” (positive understanding customers' specific needs)</p> <p>3. Great coffee and shakes with social / friendly bar also. (Positive keeping the best interest at level)</p> <p>4.</p> | <p>1. “Very familiar and modern” (positive up-to-date professional equipment)</p> <p>2. “The saunas are great, and everything is very clean” (positive cleanliness)</p> <p>3. “Small but a good mix of people (age/international/local/man/woman)”. (Positive gym culture)</p> <p>4. “The man shower is always a bit dirty and not smelling pleasant” (negative cleanliness)</p> <p>5. “Modern equipment” (Positive equipment up to date)</p> <p>6. “The gym is small, but facilities are complete” (positive availability of facilities)</p> <p>7. “They have all the equipment you could want” (positive</p> |

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| <u>Basic-fit Amsterdam</u> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "No staff seemed to exist" (negative staff availability) 2. "Just ask for a little respect with the members" (negative staff attitude) 3. "Slow and unhelpful customer service" (negative staff availability and reaction to customers' requests) 4. "Impersonal and careless attitude" (negative staff attitude) 5. "They hire people who don't bother to come to work on time" (negative staff availability) 6. "The one guy working there doesn't care about anything at all". (Negative staff reaction to customers' requests). 7. "I cancelled my subscription and sent mails about it, which you apparently don't read" (Negative reaction to customers' requests). 8. "Keep asking for money" (Negative reaction to customers' requests). | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I have been trying out a multitude of gyms since arriving in amsterdam and this so far is the worst (also cheapest)". (Negative Quality-price ratio) 2. "This is unacceptable. They said its open 24/7" (negative promises were kept) 3. "The gym has got most of the basics you need to stay fit and ofcourse not far away to my crib" (positive Quality-price ratio) 4. "Keep asking for money" (negative extra costs). 5. "They should say, on the website, they only accept Dutch bank accounts" (negative transparency) | | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "They prefer to lose the customer than make a solution. SURREAL!" (Negative understanding customers' specific needs) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "There are a lot of cardio devices and most of the time it isn't busy" (positive availability of equipment) 2. "Very very dirty (locker rooms are cleaned once a week max)" (negative cleanliness) 3. "There's no warm water in the showers and people fight at peak hours". (Negative availability of staff) 4. "Only free water is from the tap in the bathroom?!" (Negative availability of facilities) |
| <u>The Crunch fitness and health club</u> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The vibe at this place is very welcoming with friendly staff and clientele" (positive staff attitude) 2. "Staff member took the time to show me around, explain | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I have since canceled my contract and am chased with monthly payments" (negative extra costs) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Staff willingness to help customers" (positive customers feel comfortable) 2. "Classes were good, everything from kickboxing/zumba/" | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Had an annual premium membership, including fruits and access to towels amongst other things". (Positive understanding) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Great gym, great trainers & staff staff and clean" (positive cleanliness) 2. "Good high-end gym with restaurant/café and unisex sauna" (positive availability of facilities) |

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| | <p>what the equipment was used for and demonstrated some basics for me” (Positive staff willingness to help customers)</p> <p>3. “The staff has always been helpful to me” (positive staff reaction to customers’ requests).</p> <p>4. “It could be such a lovely place, but the service is terrible. Rude, and the answer to most questions is: I don’t know”. (Negative staff reaction to customers’ requests).</p> <p>5. “Administrative chaotic (Mrs unknown is a very unfriendly staff I have ever seen!)”. (Negative staff attitude).</p> | <p>2. “Ultimately having to pay a considerable amount via a collection agency (how to be customer-friendly)”. (Negative extra costs)</p> <p>3. “Physical facilities visually appealing” (negative promises were kept).</p> <p>4. “It’s really all about money. High price and low service” (Negative Quality-price ratio)</p> | <p>body pump/spinning all with enthusiastic and professional instructors”. (Positive staff knowledge)</p> | <p>customers’ specific needs)</p> <p>2. “Food and drinks ordered in the restaurant/café were of good quality” (positive keeping the best interest at level)</p> <p>3. “Whether you are young or old, you will receive excellent guidance from the personal trainers” (positive staff gives personal attention)</p> <p>4. “Only downside is the limited opening hours on weekends” (Negative understanding customers’ specific needs).</p> | <p>3. “The access key does not always work; you usually have to ask the staff to open the entrance”. (Negative physical facilities visually appealing)</p> <p>4. “Not too much equipment in the gym” (negative availability of equipment)</p> |
| <p><u>CrossFit AKA</u></p> | <p>1. “Very careful and helpful” (positive staff reaction to customers’ requests)</p> <p>2. “Friendly staff” (positive staff attitude)</p> <p>3. “Good and strict coaches” (positive staff attitude)</p> <p>4. “The coaches like to share their knowledge” (positive staff willingness to help customers)</p> <p>5. “Nice people, and a good atmosphere” (positive staff attitude)</p> <p>6. “The instructor is good, and the people are nice”. (Positive staff attitude)</p> | | <p>1. “Professional staff” (positive staff knowledge)</p> <p>2. “Helpful, encouraging coaches” (positive staff knowledge)</p> <p>3. “Professional coaches” (positive staff knowledge)</p> <p>4. “Professional coaches” (positive staff knowledge)</p> | <p>1. “The Piri Reis location is limited to 6 people per workout which means you get a lot of attention” (positive staff gives personal attention)</p> <p>2. “It is effective, fun, and balanced in all good ways” (Positive understanding customers’ specific needs)</p> <p>3. “There are many skill lessons where you can work on specific goals” (Positive understanding customers’ specific needs)</p> | |

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| <p><u>Olympic Gym Amsterdam</u></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The place gives the feeling of a family managed business. It is not busy even in peak times (to me the best thing in a gym)". (Positive staff attitude) 2. "Staff is super friendly". (Positive staff attitude) 3. "So, if the client does not get support in working out in a safe environment, why should clients still support you?" (Negative staff willingness to help customers) 4. "You can go to the trainers, and you will be helped well" (positive staff willingness to help customers) 5. "Friendly trainers who are always open to questions and help" (positive staff willingness to help customers) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "It's a high-end gym, so it's not cheap, but they delivery on expectations" (positive promises were kept) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "It does not feel safe to go there". (Negative customers feel safe in the gym) 2. "Will be guided and advised by very knowledgeable (and super nice) sports instructors" (positive staff knowledge) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "A nice little cafe attached, and you can use the track in the Olympic Stadium during the day" (positive keeping the best interest at level) 2. "Great facility that has all I looked for in a fitness gym and more" (Positive understanding customers' specific needs) 3. "Very cool that you get access to the Amsterdam Olympic Stadium" (positive keeping the best interest at level) 4. "The great thing about Olympic Gym is that you can attend many classes. Whether you want to train for yourself or follow X-Fit" (Positive understanding customers' specific needs) 5. "Even with the corona crisis, they do everything they can to keep the offer going online through videos" (positive keeping the best interest at level) 6. "Receive personal guidance in creating your training theme that leads to your goal" (positive staff gives personal attention) 7. "You will not be left to your own devices here" (positive staff | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Has the best and most complete gear set I could see in Amsterdam, with all the high-end technogym line" (positive up-to-date professional equipment) 2. "Changing rooms are spacious" (positive physical facilities visually appealing) 3. "Spacious enough gym area with modern machines" (positive up-to-date professional equipment) 4. "Nice gym lots of equipment" (Positive availability of equipment) 5. "The gym just got all new equipment" (positive up-to-date professional equipment) 6. "Always comfortable, always clean" (Positive cleanliness) 7. "Many new devices" (positive up-to-date professional equipment) 8. "There is beautiful, new fitness equipment" (positive up-to-date professional equipment) |
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| | | | | <p>gives personal attention)</p> <p>8. "That bit of extra attention that they offer you here is worth a lot to me and helps you achieve your personal goals" (positive staff gives personal attention)</p> <p>9. "There are also options for personal training and nutritional advice" (positive staff gives personal attention)</p> | |
| <u>The Body studio</u> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The staff are always friendly" (positive staff attitude) 2. "Staff willing to help" (positive staff willingness to help customers) 3. "Great people" (Positive staff attitude) 4. "Communication" (positive staff availability) 5. "Staff is very friendly" (Positive staff attitude) 6. "Nice people so far, both the trainers and visitors" (Positive staff attitude) 7. "Trainers and owners are open, friendly" (Positive staff attitude) 8. "Approachable" (positive staff availability) 9. "A gym where everyone is welcome" (Positive staff attitude) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "They do what they say" (Positive promises were kept) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Professionalism" (Positive staff knowledge) 2. "Professional approach with tips that really helped me" (Positive staff knowledge) 3. "I really owe this to The Body Studio" (Positive Trustworthy) 4. "I feel completely at home here" (Positive customers feel safe in the gym) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The juice bar next door is another big plus" (Positive keeping the best interest at level) 2. "Trainers are always bringing the best out of you" (Positive understanding customers' specific needs) 3. "Managed to motivate me when I got through" (Positive staff gives personal attention) 4. "Small gym with small groups, also no more than 5 or so people are allowed to train independently at the same time" (Positive keeping the best interest at level) 5. "The trainer has the chance to adapt exercises for you if necessary" (Positive staff gives personal attention) 6. "Excellent guidance" | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Love the community vibe" (Positive gym atmosphere) 2. "Has good equipment" (positive appearance of physical equipment) 3. "Always nice and clean" (Positive gym cleanliness) 4. "Pleasant atmosphere" (Positive gym atmosphere) |

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| | | | | <p>7. "PT fits in well with your own wishes and challenges you well" (Positive understanding customers' specific needs)</p> <p>8. "The lessons are varied and there is good guidance" (Positive staff gives personal attention)</p> <p>9. "Personal attention" (Positive staff gives personal attention)</p> <p>10. "Intensive guidance" (Positive keeping the best interest at level)</p> | |
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Appendix 4: Codebook

| Dimensions | Themes | Codes | Coded statement | Gym | |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsiveness | Negative customer services | Negative Staff Attitude | "The staff is incredibly unhelpful, dismissive, and impolite" | David Lloyd Amsterdam | |
| | | Negative Staff Attitude | "Terrible customer service" | David Lloyd Amsterdam | |
| | | Negative Staff Attitude | "The staff is friendly but has become a bit chaotic, especially at the reception" | David Lloyd Amsterdam | |
| | | Negative Staff Attitude | "The friendliness of the staff is unfortunately" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | |
| | | Negative Staff Attitude | "Just ask for a little respect with the members" | Basic-fit Amsterdam | |
| | | Negative Staff Attitude | "Impersonal and careless attitude" | Basic-fit Amsterdam | |
| | | Negative Staff Attitude | "Administrative chaotic" | The Crunch fitness and health club | |
| | | Negative Staff Availability | "Communicating with them (via e-mail) is very difficult as they refuse to answer" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | |
| | | Negative Staff Availability | "No staff seemed to exist" | Basic-fit Amsterdam | |
| | | Negative Staff Availability | "They hire people who don't bother to come to work on time" | Basic-fit Amsterdam | |
| | | Negative Staff Availability And Reaction To Customers' Requests | "Slow and unhelpful customer service" | Basic-fit Amsterdam | |
| | | Negative Staff Reaction To Customers' Requests | "Ignoring membership cancellation requests" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | |
| | | Negative Staff Willingness To Help Customers | "So, if the client does not get support in working out in a safe environment, wh | Olympic Gym Amsterdam | |
| | | Positive customer services | Positive Extra Services | "They also have a spacious cafe with decent WiFi and serve you one of | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | | Positive Staff Attitude | "Friendly people there working and exercising" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "His positive energy, motivation, and fitness goals made me really excit | David Lloyd Amsterdam | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "People are super friendly" | David Lloyd Amsterdam | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Friendly reception" | David Lloyd Amsterdam | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "He is very friendly, professional and figures out quickly where your ar | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Staff are very friendly in my experience" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Teachers are nice" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Friendly gym with lovely staff" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Friendly staff" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Very friendly place to train with no egos in sight" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "The one guy working there doesn't care about anything at all". | Basic-fit Amsterdam | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "I cancelled my subscription and sent mails about it, which you appare | Basic-fit Amsterdam | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Keep asking for money" | Basic-fit Amsterdam | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "The vibe at this place is very welcoming with friendly staff and clientel | The Crunch fitness and health club | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "The staff has always been helpful to me" | The Crunch fitness and health club | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "It could be such a lovely place, but the service is terrible. Rude, and th | The Crunch fitness and health club | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Friendly staff" | CrossFit AKA | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Good and strict coaches" | CrossFit AKA | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Nice people, and a good atmosphere" | CrossFit AKA | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "The instructor is good, and the people are nice". | CrossFit AKA | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "The place gives the feeling of a family managed business. It is not busy | Olympic Gym Amsterdam | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Staff is super friendly". | Olympic Gym Amsterdam | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "The staff are always friendly" | The Body studio | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Great people" | The Body studio | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Staff is very friendly" | The Body studio | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Nice people so far, both the trainers and visitors" | The Body studio | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | | "Trainers and owners are open, friendly" | The Body studio | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude | "A gym where everyone is welcome" | The Body studio | | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude, Staff Willingness To Help Customers | "I met the store manager there and he was very friendly and helpful" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat | | |
| | Positive Staff Attitude, Staff Willingness To Help Customers | "Super helpful friendly staff" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat | | |
| | Positive Staff Availability | "The people who work there are prepared to help you when you need it | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | | |
| Positive Staff Availability | "More classes outside of 9to5 regular office hours " | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | | | |
| Positive Staff Availability | "Communication" | The Body studio | | | |
| Positive Staff Availability | "Approachable" | The Body studio | | | |
| Positive Staff Willingness To Help Customers | Positive Staff Reaction To Customers' Requests | "Very careful and helpful" | CrossFit AKA | | |
| | Positive Staff Willingness To Help Customers | "Staff member took the time to show me around, explain what the equi | The Crunch fitness and health club | | |
| | Positive Staff Willingness To Help Customers | "The coaches like to share their knowledge" | CrossFit AKA | | |
| | Positive Staff Willingness To Help Customers | "You can go to the trainers, and you will be helped well" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam | | |
| | Positive Staff Willingness To Help Customers | "Friendly trainers who are always open to questions and help" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam | | |
| Positive Staff Willingness To Help Customers | "Staff willing to help" | The Body studio | | | |

| Dimensions | Themes | Codes | Coded statement | Gym |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Reliability | Poor customer experience | Also Cheapest | "I have been trying out a multitude of gyms since arriving in amsterdam" | Basic-fit Amsterdam |
| | | How To Be Customer-Friendly | "Ultimately having to pay a considerable amount via a collection agency" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | | Negative Customers Confusion | "There are many membership options to choose from" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | Exaggerated costs | Negative Extra Costs | "Unprofessional on the admin side and do everything to keep you payi" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Negative Extra Costs | "I would have to pay a lot extra in order to quit earlier than my contract" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Negative Extra Costs | "Keep asking for money" | Basic-fit Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Extra Costs | "I have since canceled my contract and am chased with monthly payme" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | | Negative Extra Costs And Quality-Price Ratio | "These guys really want to empty your pockets with minimum effort an" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | Lack of transparency | Negative Extra Costs, Hidden Fees | "Need extra fee on top of your regular subscription to enter this gym" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat |
| | | Negative Hidden Fees | "Slapping you with delay fees for no reason etc" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Negative Promises Were Kept | "This is unacceptable. They said its open 24/7" | Basic-fit Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Promises Were Kept | "Physical facilities visually appealing" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | | Negative Quality-Price Ratio | "Not over-the-top expensive for what you get" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Quality-Price Ratio | "The gym really isn't worth the price for the service you get" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Quality-Price Ratio | "It's really all about money. High price and low service" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| Negative Transparency | | "It is quite annoying that you can't see the membership prices online" | David Lloyd Amsterdam | |
| Negative Transparency | | "They should say, on the website, they only accept Dutch bank account" | Basic-fit Amsterdam | |
| Keep Promises | | Positive Promises Were Kept | "It's a high-end gym, so it's not cheap, but they delivery on expectation" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | Positive Promises Were Kept | "They do what they say" | The Body studio | |
| Fair prices | Positive Quality-Price Ratio | "Subscriptions are decent for what you get" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | |
| | Positive Quality-Price Ratio | "Good price/quality" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | |
| | Positive Quality-Price Ratio | "The gym has got most of the basics you need to stay fit and ofcourse" | Basic-fit Amsterdam | |
| Assurance | Negative customer experience | Negative Customers Feel Comfortable | "The "trainers" block off huge segments of the gym for classes and scoff at you fi" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Customers Feel Comfortable | "Doing functional training is hardly ever possible, given that in this area they sc" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Negative Customers Feel Safe In The Gym | "It does not feel safe to go there." | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | Positive customer experience | Positive Customers Feel Comfortable | "Staff willingness to help customers" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | | Positive Customers Feel Safe In The Gym | "I feel completely at home here" | The Body studio |
| | Professional services | Positive Staff Knowledge | "The sales guy who gave me the tour really gave me a great feeling about the" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Staff Knowledge | "Instructors mostly very good" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Positive Staff Knowledge | "Experienced staff" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Positive Staff Knowledge | "Professional staff" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat |
| | | Positive Staff Knowledge | "Classes were good, everything from kickboxing/zumba/body pump/spinning all" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | | Positive Staff Knowledge | "Professional staff" | CrossFit AKA |
| | | Positive Staff Knowledge | "Helpful, encouraging coaches" | CrossFit AKA |
| | | Positive Staff Knowledge | "Professional coaches" | CrossFit AKA |
| | | Positive Staff Knowledge | "Professional coaches" | CrossFit AKA |
| | | Positive Staff Knowledge | "Professionalism" | The Body studio |
| | | Positive Staff Knowledge | "Professional approach with tips that really helped me" | The Body studio |
| | | Positive Trustworthy | "I really owe this to The Body Studio" | The Body studio |
| | And Super Nice | "Will be guided and advised by very knowledgeable" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam | |

| Dimensions | Themes | Codes | Coded statement | Gym |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Empathy | Unmet customer needs | Negative Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "I saw a personal trainer once having his own prepped lunch while giving traini" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat |
| | | Negative Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "Waiting to get your towel when checking in and checking out is kind of annoyi" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "Blaze". I wish it was more organically sectioned" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "The staff is a huge let-down" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "They prefer to lose the customer than make a solution. SURREAL!" | Basic-fit Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "Only downside is the limited opening hours on weekends" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | Prioritizing customers interests | Positive Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "I love the fact they have water fountains to fill our water bottles. What a nice" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "Great coffee and shakes with social / friendly bar also." | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat |
| | | Positive Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "Food and drinks ordered in the restaurant/café were of good quality" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | | Positive Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "A nice little cafe attached, and you can use the track in the Olympic Stadium di" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "Very cool that you get access to the Amsterdam Olympic Stadium" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "Even with the corona crisis, they do everything they can to keep the offer goi" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "The juice bar next door is another big plus" | The Body studio |
| | | Positive Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "Small gym with small groups, also no more than 5 or so people are allowed to" | The Body studio |
| | | Positive Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "Intensive guidance" | The Body studio |
| | | Positive Keeping The Best Interest At Level | "Lots of support" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | Personalized attention to customers | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "Personal fit plan, and a coach assigned to you" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "Whether you are young or old, you will receive excellent guidance from the pe" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "The Piri Reis location is limited to 6 people per workout which means you get ;" | CrossFit AKA |
| | | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "Receive personal guidance in creating your training theme that leads to your g" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "You will not be left to your own devices here" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "That bit of extra attention that they offer you here is worth a lot to me and he" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "There are also options for personal training and nutritional advice" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "Managed to motivate me when I got through" | The Body studio |
| | | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "The trainer has the chance to adapt exercises for you if necessary" | The Body studio |
| | | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "The lessons are varied and there is good guidance" | The Body studio |
| | | Positive Staff Gives Personal Attention | "Personal attention" | The Body studio |
| Understanding customer needs | Positive Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "The new food and drink bar is also great and has nice variety of healthy food a" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) | |
| | Positive Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "Everything you need is available" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat | |
| | Positive Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "Had an annual premium membership, including fruits and access to towels amo" | The Crunch fitness and health club | |
| | Positive Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "It is effective, fun, and balanced in all good ways" | CrossFit AKA | |
| | Positive Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "There are many skill lessons where you can work on specific goals" | CrossFit AKA | |
| | Positive Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "Great facility that has all I looked for in a fitness gym and more" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam | |
| | Positive Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "The great thing about Olympic Gym is that you can attend many classes. Whet" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam | |
| | Positive Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "Trainers are always bringing the best out of you" | The Body studio | |
| | Positive Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "PT fits in well with your own wishes and challenges you well" | The Body studio | |
| | Positive Understanding Customers' Specific Needs | "Excellent guidance" | The Body studio | |

| Dimensions | Themes | Codes | Coded statement | Gym |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Tangibility | Lack of sufficient resources | Negative Availability Of Equipment | "The machines and pool are nearly always full, and nobody seems to return the" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Availability Of Equipment | "Not too much equipment in the gym" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | | Negative Availability Of Facilities | "You will not find a single mirror in the work out areas of classes" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Negative Availability Of Facilities | "Only free water is from the tap in the bathroom?!" | Basic-fit Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Availability Of Staff | "There's no warm water in the showers and people fight at peak hours". | Basic-fit Amsterdam |
| | Unfavorable Gym atmosphere | Negative Cleanliness | "The man shower is always a bit dirty and not smelling pleasant" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat |
| | | Negative Cleanliness | "Very very dirty (locker rooms are cleaned once a week max)" (negative clean) | Basic-fit Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Equipment Up To Date | "Its incredible that the jacuzzi part of the swimming pool has been closed for 9 r | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Negative Gym Atmosphere | "Not enough to make up for the unclean facilities. the gym starts to get overc | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Negative Physical Facilities Visually Appealing | "The access key does not always work; you usually have to ask the staff to open | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | | Positive Appearance Of Physical Equipment | "Sure, the equipment and spa (which are often out of use) are nice" (positive ap | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Appearance Of Physical Equipment | "Has good equipment" | The Body studio |
| | Available/sufficient resources | Positive Availability Of Equipment | "Really all equipment available" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Availability Of Equipment | "They have all the equipment you could want" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat |
| | | Positive Availability Of Equipment | "There are a lot of cardio devices and most of the time it isn't busy" | Basic-fit Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Availability Of Equipment | "Nice gym lots of equipment" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Availability Of Facilities | "The locker rooms look very clean and there are lockers you can rent. The show | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Availability Of Facilities | "The spa and pool area are just the cherry on the top" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Availability Of Facilities | "The gym is small, but facilities are complete" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat |
| | | Positive Availability Of Facilities | "Good high-end gym with restaurant/café and unisex sauna" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | | Negative Cleanliness, Equipment Up To Date | "I think the cleanliness and the maintenance is not adequate at all" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | | Favorable Gym atmosphere | Positive Cleanliness | "The saunas are great, and everything is very clean" |
| | Positive Cleanliness | | "Great gym, great trainers & staff staff and clean" | The Crunch fitness and health club |
| | Positive Cleanliness | | "Always comfortable, always clean" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | Positive Equipment Up To Date | | "They have recently upgraded the machines" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | Positive Equipment Up To Date | | "Modern equipment" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat |
| | Positive Gym Atmosphere | | "I think it's the atmosphere and the possibilities" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | Positive Gym Atmosphere | | "One of the best gym atmospheres in Amsterdam" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | Positive Gym Atmosphere | | "A great open space to work your muscles on different machines" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | Positive Gym Atmosphere | | "Nice gym with lots of space to work out" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | Positive Gym Atmosphere | | "Love the community vibe" | The Body studio |
| | Positive Gym Atmosphere | | "Pleasant atmosphere" | The Body studio |
| | Positive Gym Cleanliness | | "Always nice and clean" | The Body studio |
| | Positive Gym Culture | | "Small but a good mix of people (age/international/local/man/woman)". (Positiv | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat |
| | Positive Physical Facilities Visually Appealing | | "I'm glad to see they are remodeling the changing rooms" | David Lloyd Amsterdam |
| | Positive Physical Facilities Visually Appealing | | "Changing rooms are spacious" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | "This sportcity is well maintained" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | "The fitness equipment is pretty new [Technogym] and the gym is clean" (positi | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | "The new equipments are modern, digital and precise. | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | equipments" (positive up-to-date professional equipment) | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |
| | | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | "Very familiar and modern" | SportCity Amsterdam Wibautstraat |
| | | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | "Has the best and most complete gear set I could see in Amsterdam, with all th | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | "Spacious enough gym area with modern machines" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | "The gym just got all new equipment" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | "Many new devices" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment | "There is beautiful, new fitness equipment" | Olympic Gym Amsterdam |
| | | Positive Up-To-Date Professional Equipment And Availability Of Equipment | "Lots of equipment and it's new as well" | SportCity Amsterdam (different branch, different rating) |