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Client Retention at Fitness Institution FitPro institute



Bachelor of Sports
Studies

Autumn/Spring 2018



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Abstract

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Title of the Publication: Client Retention at Fitpro Institute

Degree Title: Bachelor of Sports Studies

Keywords: Retention, Fitness, Purpose, Client, Personal Training

The fitness industry has been steadily growing in the past 10 years in the Netherlands and it has even reached a point where it is the number 1 sports. This has led to the fact that more and more institutions pop up in order to profit from this growth. The competition between fitness institutions is growing and therefore they need to do what they can to have customers. While many institutions focus on acquiring new clients, a more economical way is to retain clients. At Fitpro institute, most clients defect due to financial reasons, followed shortly by a lack of motivation

The goal of this research is to find out the main reason for a client to defect at Fitpro institute and how these reasons relate to factors such as age, sex, duration and type of product purchased. Therefore, the following research questions are set up: What is the main reason for a client to defect at FitPro institute? How does the reason for defecting relate to age, sex, duration and product? What product did a client use before defecting?

In order to answer these research questions, data on ex clients is collected from old files at FitPro institute. These files contain information such as name, age, sex, product, duration of membership. Statistics are set up based on this data. The results drew the conclusion that most ex clients defect due to financial reasons, most ex clients were using a non-personal training product and that only the type of product is related to the reason of defection. Therefore, FitPro must decrease its prices to a more market comfortable level in order to retain clients better.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The fitness industry in Holland is massively growing and it is continuously developing. In the year 2017, 800.000 new registrations have been made at fitness institutions, with as the main goal: weight-loss (Lucassen 2009, 31). According to research, the biggest part of these new registrations seek professional and personal guidance. Due to this growth, fitness has grown to the first sports in Holland (Lucassen 2009, 19). The demand for quality and fitness institutions has increased. Because of this, it has turned into a displacement market. Now that there are so many options for clients to choose a fitness institution, fitness institutions must up their game in order to be successful. Focus must be laid on personal guidance, professional personnel, good service, modern equipment and location.

While many companies focus on acquiring new clients, a much more economical and effective way is often overseen: Client retention. Research (Reinartz, Kumar, Thomas 2005, 69-71) has shown that the costs of attracting new clients, lies 5 times higher than keeping an existing client. By building a loyal relationship with current clients, you avoid the costs for acquiring new clients. Another research has shown that only 16% on companies focus mostly on client retention (44% focus more on acquisition, 40% focuses on acquisition and retention equally)(Pfeifer 2005).

FitPro institute is a self-proclaimed Personal Health institute. This institution has chosen this label, because their main focus lays on functional training, personal training and health. Most of the services that are offered include personal training, however, physiotherapy, supplements and gym equipment are also offered to willing clients. For the past 3 years, the client base of this institution has been steadily growing by about 50 new clients a year(on average, netto). However, the amount of clients that have decided to leave FitPro institute, has been proven to be a liability, despite efforts to keep them.

The purpose of this thesis is to collect and analyse data on ex clients of FitPro institute and to find out the main reasons for a client to no longer train at this institution. Statistics will be set up, regarding age, sex, health and motivation, in order to identify the population of clients and to get a clear view of the client base. In addition to this, after the main reason for the loss of clients will be identified, a strategy can be set up to retain clients better in the future.

The aim for FitPro institute is to acquire a clear picture of the retention situation at their institution. When this is finished, steps can be taken to keep clients better and to save budget that would normally go to marketing and acquiring new clients. When money is saved, products can be made cheaper where it is necessary

The aim for me personally is to gain knowledge about clients that go to fitness institutions and use the knowledge to my advantage when I am to start my own fitness institution at some point. In addition to this, I hope to get find ways for FitPro to get better at retention

The data will be collected by going through the documentation of ex clients of the past 3 years. FitPro has kept documentation of intakes, type of service purchased, date of deregistration and reason of deregistration. This information is stored in cardboard folders and are sometimes inconclusive. However, the director of the institution often has private files to back up any type of missing information, which can be accessed if necessary.

This type of studies is relevant in the field of sports studies, as it directly involves the ever-growing fitness industry. As a fitness coach and potentially a gym owner, it is essential to retain a client base and researching on how to do this as efficient as possible, is important. This is especially true, because the reasons why people quit training can be directly related to fitness and motivation, but also to other factors that you can affect as a gym owner, such as professionalism, service, equipment and prices.

2 FITNESS

It is known about client retention that the cost of it is cheaper than client acquisition. Up to 5 times cheaper according to previous research (Reinartz, Kumar, Thomas 2005, 69-71). The costs of client acquisition comes from marketing towards a potential client. In order to acquire a new potential client, the client must be attracted, converted and educated. By marketing towards a current client, the client is already interested and research also shows that a loyal client is willing to spend more on services that come from the same organization/company/institution. Previous research has shown that building up a loyal relationship and an alliance with a client, will increase client retention (Reinartz, Kumar, Thomas 2005, 69-71). Previous research has shown, that in order to develop a strategy to improve client retention, the client behaviour must be analysed. Client behaviour can be analysed by researching the reason of why clients defect and to capitalize on the main issues. Previous research has shown that hiring a staff member that solely focuses on orientation, contact, special events and communications, can already increase the client retention rate by 12%. In addition to this, client-trainer relationships impact client retention positively as well. The stronger the relationship, the greater to odds of keeping a client (Schopp 2007, Emerson 1996, page 35). It remains essential to know why a service or membership is not extended and a client is lost. By understanding the cancellation purpose, client satisfaction, membership trends and client base, clients can be retained better and the next step towards a strategy for client retention can be made. Institutions that focus on Personal training, must focus more on purchase intentions, customer behaviour and by figuring out the reasons for defection. Client retention in general will not only make sure that an institution has better sustainability, but it will also increase the profitability.

The fitness industry has experienced a massive growth the past years because of the increased demand for fitness institutions and fitness **services** (Lucassen 2009, 11). More and more fitness institutions enter the market and this had lead to huge competition in the fitness industry. Due to this competition and big range of supply for customers, it becomes increasingly important for fitness institutions to retain their clients. In order for an institution to keep its clients, their market position needs to be strong.

Client retention in fitness institutions solely depends on quality of the venue, facilities and services that are provided. The wishes of the customer must be fulfilled in terms of

image, location, quality of guidance and even decoration. When all of these factors are deemed optimal, a fitness institution has a strong position in the industry.

The main question to be answered in this part is. "What is fitness, What is client retention, what influences client retention and what can be done to improve client retention at Fitpro institute".

The word fitness has the following definition: "the ability to carry out daily tasks with vigor and alertness, without undue fatigue, and with ample energy to enjoy leisure-time pursuits and respond to emergencies."(CDC Center for Disease control and Prevention). A research by Casperson, Powell, Christensen 1985, describes physical fitness as attributes that are related to health or otherwise, skill. The health attributes of **fitness being** flexibility, body composition, muscular strength, muscular endurance and cardiorespiratory endurance. The skill attributes being balance, agility, coordination, speed, power and reaction time. Taking these attributes into account, the state of being physically fit can be described as "the ability to carry out daily tasks with vigor and alertness, without undue fatigue and with ample energy to enjoy leisure-time pursuits and to meet unforeseen emergencies". Fitness institutions occupy themselves with structuring exercise with the purpose of improving physical fitness. Exercises itself is defined as "a subset of physical activity that is planned, structured and repetitive and has a final or an intermediate objective towards the improvement or maintenance of physical fitness. Any type of structured physical activity, even if it is not intended for a certain goal, is considered exercise.

Fitness itself goes way back. Back in ancient Greek times, around the year 800, there were several areas in which, mostly royal, men prepared for the ancient Olympic games. These areas were equipped for training and are widely considered to be the first fitness institutions (EEFA, 2011,1). It wasn't until the 19th century until the first open-to-all fitness institutions were opened in the Netherlands. During this time, group training was the most popular type of fitness, followed by bodybuilding and gymnastics. The biggest group of customers that trained at this particular time, were men that focused on strength **training (Stokvis,Hillevoorde 2008, 10-42).**

3 RETENTION

This chapter will describe the definition, importance, factors of retention. In addition to this, retention rates will be determined

3.1.1 Defining retention

Retention is defined as “the ability of a company to keep its customers, rather than losing them to competitors”. The latter is relevant for retention in the fitness industry. A high retention rate, means that a fitness institution is good at keeping their clients bound. Client retention in the fitness industry has proven to be one of the biggest challenges that fitness institutions face (Middelkamp, Steenbergen 2011, 6).

3.1.2 Importance of retention

According to research, 30 percent of the clients that fitness institutions have, defects in the Netherlands within one year (Lucassen, van der Roest 2009, 11). The reason for this is that the clients feel that the fitness institutions in question, no longer lives up to their standards. In addition to this, due to the growth of the fitness industry, many more fitness institutions have been established, meaning that clients have many different institutions to choose from. This makes it difficult to reel in new clients. This makes that retention becomes very important (Middelkamp, 2004, 6-54). However, this growth in the fitness industry, was due to initiatives that were meant to increase general interest in fitness. While this was successful, no initiatives have been created to maintain the general interest. This has lead to many people starting to exercises at fitness institutions, but also to many people defecting after a short period (Dishman 2001,12).

3.1.3 Determining retention rates

In order to determine retention rates, different methods can be used. First of all, retention rates can be determined, based on the amount of new clients in that month and the amount of defected clients in that month. This gives a clear picture on whether the amount of clients has increased, decreased, evened out or exactly the same. (Barazite 2013, 16-22)

Secondly, retention rates can be determined by solely looking at the product that is purchased. Different statistics will be set up, based on the defection per product, the average duration in which a client purchased said product(subscription, per month) and the amount of clients that actually extends their product, percentually.

Next up, the retention rates can be determined by looking at defection based on age, sex and even by looking at the particular month in which a client has started at a fitness institution (Middelkamp, 2004, 12-54).

3.1.4 Factors of retention

According to Laviriere (2002), retention can be defined by looking at several different factors. These are revolving around the question of why a client remains a customer. It is about the following factors: Customer evaluation, Behaviour, Basic info and external factors.

Customer evaluation

This factor is all about the perception that the client has of a certain service. This has to do with the perceived quality of a product or service. The quality of the service provided is defined as the sheer difference between the expectation that a client has and the actual experience that the client has. The customer evaluation is based on the experience that the client has (Barazite 2013,16-22)

Behaviour

The behavior of the client is identified by keeping track of patterns that a client has during when it comes to the use of products of services. It can be determined by looking at the frequency of a visit to a fitness institution, as well as looking at what product in particular is used when visiting the fitness institution (Barazite 2013, 16-22).

Basic info on clients

The basic info is essential to identify the type of clients that are present at an institution. This includes information such as age, sex, gender, type of product/service purchased and sometimes even additional info such as level of education and type of diploma earned at school. This information can paint a more narrow picture of what kind of people are part of the institution in particular.

4 RESEARCH PROBLEMS

The research problems are:

What is the (most common) reason for a client at the Fitpro Institute, to stop coming?

What kind of product/service did the client use before leaving?

How are these reasons to stop coming related to age, sex, health and motivation?

What can Fitpro Institute do to prevent a client from leaving in terms of strategy and innovation?

5 RESEARCH PROCESS

In my thesis the research process will be as followed to reach the objectives that i have set for this thesis. As mentioned before, The purpose of this thesis is to collect and analyse data on **ex clients** of FitPro institute and to find out the main reasons for a client to no longer train at this institution. Statistics will be set up, regarding age, sex, health and motivation, in order to identify the population of clients and to get a clear view of the client base. In addition to this, after the main reason for the loss of clients will been identified, a strategy can be set up to retain clients better in the future.

1. Observation Material stored into google drives files
2. Info on Name, Gender, Reason for deregistration, product/services used and duration collected
3. statistics will be set up based on age, gender, average duration of a client at FitPro, what product/service is most purchased, what product/service has dealt with the most defection, Which month/year has had the most defection, what the most common reason was for defection, how age relates to product/service purchased.
4. Analysis

The observation material has been stored into Google Drive files. It consists of name, age, gender, reason for deregistration, product/services used, duration of subscription at FitPro. After that, statistics will be set up based on age, gender, average duration of a client at FitPro, what product/service is most purchased, what product/service has dealt with the most defection, Which month/year has had the most defection, what the most common reason was for defection, how age relates to product/service purchased.

As this is a quantitative research, the aim is to generalize and test. The data collection for this research is structured and it will consist of numbers and statistics. However, it has qualitative elements as some characteristics are flexible. The target group is sam-

pled by only collecting information of clients that have been a member at FitPro institute between 2015 and 2018. By doing this, it is possible to generalize the total client base in the years before this, as well as the clients that join the institute in the future. (Verschuren, & Doorewaard, 2010, 22) The selection criteria are that participants have to have been a member of Fitpro between 2015 and 2018. Since it is known for how long Fitpro institute has existed, this sample size paints an accurate picture of the whole population. Sampling will be accurate as every single ex-client between 2015 and 2018 is part of the sample. The data will be structured in units and variables(both categorial and numerical) (Verschuren, & Doorewaard, 2010, 22). Categorial variables will be analyzed with the use of frequency tables, to analyze how client defection is related to sex, purchased product and reason for defection (Barazite 2013, 12).

6 RESULTS

The results of the research will be presented in this chapter. The following questions will be answered with by using the gathered information: What is the reason for a client to stop coming to FitPro institute? What type of product did the client use before stopping? How are the reasons for stopping related to age, sex and product? What can FitPro institute do in order to prevent a client from leaving in terms of strategy and innovation? However, before all that, a picture will be presented on what the current client base of Fitpro institute looks like.

At the moment FitPro institute has 233 clients. Every client has agreed to participate to this research. 121 are male, 112 of are female. This can be seen in table 5.1.1. The clients will be divided into 3 different age groups: <40, 40-60 and 60+. This can be seen in table 5.1.2. Most clients at Fitpro are female and between the age of 40 and 60.

5.1.1	Frequency	Percentage
Male	121	51.9%
Female	112	48.1%
Total	233	100%

Sex	Below 40 Frequency	Percentage	40-60 Fre- quency	Percentage	60+ Fre- quency	Percent- age	Total
Male	25	10.7%	53	22.75%	43	18.45%	51.9%
Female	24	10.3%	55	23.6%	33	14.2%	48.1%
Total	49	21%	108	46.35%	76	32.65%	100%

The 233 clients all have products at FitPro institute. The type of product can be categorized into 3 different categories: Personal training, individual training and group lessons. The following table(5.1.3) will show how this is divided among the current clients.

Men (121)	PT (92– 76% of the males)	Non PT (18– 14.9% of the males)	Group (11 – 9.1% of the males)
5.1.3			
Below 40 (25)	13 (52%)	6 (24%)	6 (24%)
40 – 60 (53)	39 (73.6%)	11 (20.8%)	3 (5.6%)
60 plus (43)	40 (93%)	1 (2.3%)	2 (4.7%)
Women(112)	PT(74 - 66.1%)	Non PT(19 – 16.95%)	Group (19 – 16.95%)
Below 40 (24)	15 (62.5%)	6 (25%)	3 (12.5%)
40 – 60 (55)	37 (67.3%)	8 (14.5%)	10 (18.2%)
60 plus (33)	22 (66.7%)	5 (15.1%)	6 (18.2%)
Total (233)	166 (71.2%)	37 (15.9%)	30 (12.9%)

Among the current clients, a personal training product is the most popular by far (71.2%). Especially among the older population. The younger population is more likely to take a less personal product, but even among this age group, the personal training product is still the most popular by far (57.1%), however, this is significantly less compared to the older populations (70.4% in the 40-60 age group and 84.9% in the 60 plus age group). The reason for this is most likely because of the fact that the personal training product is the most expensive product out of these 3 and the younger group is less likely to be as financially established as the older population is. Personal training is more popular among men, compared to women(76% to 66.1%), whereas group lessons are more popular among women in comparison to men(16.95% to 9.1%). The least popular product among all the clients, is group lessons. (12.9%).

Since 2015, there have been 147 clients that have canceled their product at FitPro institute (Up until November 2018). All of these defected clients have been analysed. 70 of these ex clients are male (46.6%) and 77 of these ex clients are female (53.4%). In the following tables, a picture is drawn of the ages of these ex clients, the product they defected from and the duration of their product at FitPro institute:

5.2.1	Frequency	Percentage
Male	68	46.6%
Female	78	53.4%
Total	146	100%

Sex	Below 40 Frequency	Per-centage	40-60 Fre- quency	Percentage	60+ Fre- quency	Percent- age	Total
5.2.2							
Male	22	15.1%	28	19.2%	18	12.25%	46.6%
Female	22	15.1%	44	30.2%	12	8.25%	53.4%
Total	42	30.2%	72	49.4%	30	20.5%	100%

Men (68)	PT (28 – 41.2%)	Non PT (33 – 48.5%)	Group (7 – 10.3%)
5.2.3			
Below 40 (22)	11	7	4

40 – 60 (28)	11	14	3
60 plus (18)	6	12	0
Women(78)	PT(30 – 38.5%)	Non PT(40 – 51.3%)	Group (8 – 10.2%)
Below 40 (22)	2	13	7
40 – 60 (44)	22	22	0
60 plus (12)	6	5	1
Total (146)	58 (39.7%)	73 (50%)	15 (10.3%)

With 50%, non PT products were responsible for half of the defected clients between 2015 and 2018. Unlike the current clients, this product had been more popular than PT among the defected clients. However, if these 146 clients had never defected, PT would still be significantly more popular.

When collecting the data, information on why a client had decided to leave, has also been collected. In general the reasons were as followed:

5.2.4

1 (29.4% - 43)	Financial Reasons
2 (22.6% - 33)	Lack of Motivation
3 (15.1% - 22)	Moved away
4 (13.7% - 20)	Private/Other
5 (10.3% - 15)	Health
6 (8.9% - 13)	Too busy/Time related reasons

The biggest reason for a client to defect ,is financial reasons. The private/other section stands for reasons such as a certain product being retired, wanting something else, goals achieved. The next table paints a picture on how reasons for defecting are related to product as well as age and sex:

5.2.5	Financial Reasons 43	Motivation 28	Private other 25	Moved away 22	Health 15	Too busy/time related 13
Men be- low 40 PT 11	2	3	2	1	0	3
Men be- low 40 Non PT 7	1	0	0	4	0	2
Men be- low 40 Group lessons 4	0	0	3	1	0	0
Men 40- 60 PT 11	2	3	1	2	2	1
Men 40- 60 non PT 14	6	2	1	2	2	1
Men 40- 60 Group lessons 3	0	0	3	0	0	0
Men 60 plus PT 6	4	1	1	0	0	0
Men 60 plus non PT 12	4	1	1	0	2	1
Men 60 plus Group lessons 0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	19	10	12	10	6	8
Women below 40 PT 2	0	0	0	1	1	0
Women below 40	3	2	1	4	1	2

Non PT 13						
Women below 40 Group lessons 7	0	0	5	1	0	1
Women 40-60 PT 22	8	7	2	1	3	1
Women 40-60 non PT 22	7	6	3	2	1	1
Women 40-60 Group lessons 0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women 60 plus PT 6	0	0	2	1	3	0
Women 60 plus non PT 5	4	1	0	0	0	0
Women 60 plus Group lessons 1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Total	24	18	14	10	9	5

As can be seen from the tables, group lessons rarely defect unless its because of the lesson being cancelled. Also, the biggest difference in sex lies with motivation. Women are more likely to defect due to a lack of motivation than men are. However, they have one thing in common, they mostly defect when they have a non PT product, due to financial reasons. 34.2% of the ex clients defected due to financial reasons when having purchased a non personal training product. This was only 27.6% for the ex clients with a personal training product. The next table will show for how long the ex clients were a member and how the reason for defecting are related to the duration of them being a member. In addition to this, the table will show how the type of product affects the duration of their membership:

The average ex client at Fitpro institute, has been a member for 15.6 months.

5.2.6

Dura- tion on average	Financial	Motivation	Private	Moved away	Health	Time	Average
Men PT	10.6 months	6.4 months	11 months	33.2 months	49.5 months	30.7 months	19.6
Men non PT	8.5 months	10.4 months	23 months	12.3 months	22 months	23 months	12.3 months
Men	-	-	14.5	1 month	-	-	14.5

Group lessons			months				months
Average duration men							15.5 months
Women PT	13.6 months	24.7 months	5 months	26.7 months	50.5 months	8 months	19.2 months
Women non PT	13.4 months	8.6 months	10.5 months	21.2 months	1 month	33.3 months	16.7 months
Women Group	-	-	25 months	17 months	-	16 months	11.4 months
Average duration women							15.8 months

Both men and women are quicker to defect due to financial reasons (their average duration being below the average overall duration of all men and women). This is also the case for defection due to motivational reasons, however, women with a personal training product are an exception. They tend to be a member for longer (24.7 over 15.8).

5.2.7	Financial	Motivational	Private other	Moving away	Health	Time related
	Non PT 55.6%	PT 50%	Group lessons 48%	Non PT 54.5%	PT 60%	53.8%

7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research questions will be answered.

7.1 What is the reason for a client to stop coming to FitPro institute?

The biggest reasons for a client to stop coming to FitPro institute, are financial reasons and lack of motivation, as can be seen and concluded from 5.2.4. These 2 reasons together already account for over half of all the reasons for defection (29.4% and 22.6% respectively, meaning together they account for 52% of all defections). Even though there were more women than men defecting over the course of 2015-2018, the reasons remained consistent, because for all reasons, there were slightly more defections for a particular reason for women, except for one: Time related reasons, as can be seen and concluded from table 5.2.5. This reason was bigger among men, though barely(8 to 5).

7.2 What type of product did the client use before stopping?

As can be seen in table 5.2.3, out of 146 clients(78 female, 68 male) that have defected, 50% (73) had purchased a non personal training product, 39.7%(58) had purchased a personal training product and finally, 10.3% (15) had purchased a group lesson as product. For both men and women Non personal training was the most popular(48.5% and 51.3% respectively), followed by Personal training (41.2% and 38.5% respectively). The only note-worthy thing is that personal training was bigger for men in terms of, however, it was still smaller compared to women in terms of absolutes.

Among the current clients, Personal training is the most popular product by far, as can be seen in table 5.1.3(71.2%). This is very different compared to the ex clients.

7.3 How are the reasons for stopping related to age, sex, product and duration?

How are the reasons for stopping related to factors such as age, sex, health and product. This question will be answered in steps.

7.3.1 Age

The biggest group of defected clients are women between the age of 40 and 60, shortly followed by men between the age of 40 and 60. This means that it can be concluded that the biggest age group is 40-60. This is the case as well for the current clients. Among the defected clients, the 60 plus group is the smallest for both current and defected clients.

As you can see in table 5.2.5, the most common reason for men and women younger than 40 to defect, are private/other reasons (Men 22.7%, women 27.2%) and moving away (both men and women 27.2%). Among the men younger than the age of 40, even the time related reason is as big as the private/other reason (22.7%). This is not in line with the general statistic of Financial reasons and lack of motivation being the most common reason for a client to defect (For both men and women).

When it comes to men and women between 40 and 60, this is far more consistent. Among women, the exact order of table 5.2.4 is met, whereas among men between 40-60 lack of motivation and private/other reasons are equally common (17.9%), as well as moved away and health related reasons (14.3%).

Regarding the oldest age group, it is more inconsistent, except for the fact that for both men and women, the most common reason for defecting, is still financial reasons (44.4% for men and 33.3% for women).

7.3.2 Sex

The sex of the defected members was as followed, according to table 5.2.1: 53.4% male, 46.6% female. This is different compared to the current members (as viewed in

table 5.1.1), which are divided as followed: 51.9% male, 48.1% female. Regarding to how reasons for defecting relates to gender, the following conclusions can be drawn. In table 5.2.5, it is shown that motivational reasons for defecting are far more common than they are for men (18 to 10, 23.1% to 14.7% respectively). Moving away was a reason that was more common for men procentually, but when it comes to absolutes, they are still equal to females in that sense. Aside from this, sex does not affect the reason for defecting.

7.3.3 Product

Table 5.2.3 and table 5.2.7 will mostly show how the reasons for defecting relates to the products that the ex clients have purchased. When it comes to a financial reason being the ground for a client to defect, 55.6% of the times, the client had a non personal training product. 50% of the times when the client defected due to lack of motivation, the client has a personal training product. Private/Other was the most common reason(48%) when the ex client had group lessons as a product. 60% of the times when a health related reason was the ground for defecting, the product purchased was a personal training product. Moving away was the biggest reason for clients that had purchased a non personal training product (54.5%). Lastly, 53.8% of the times, a non personal training product was purchased and the client defecting due to a time related reason.

What can be concluded from this is that motivation is a big issue when a client has a personal training product, the only issue since the only other reason where mostly personal training clients defected, were health related reasons and FitPro institute has no control whatsoever over the health of a client. For clients with a non personal training product, Financial reasons, moving away and time related reasons were the biggest ground. The only ground here that FitPro institute has control over, are the financial grounds. A better price for that product needs to be found in order to keep those clients for a longer period of time. Lastly, private/other reasons was the biggest reason for clients with group lessons to defect, however this was mostly due to the group lessons in particular being stopped by FitPro institute

7.3.4 Duration

Table 5.2.6 will shed light on how the duration of a client at FitPro institute is related to the reason for defecting. The first thing to note is that the average duration of ex clients is 15.6 months. In every single case, PT, non PT and group lessons, clients who defected due to financial reasons, were member for a shorter period of time than the average 15.6 months. This is the same for clients who defected due to a motivational reason, except for women who had purchased a personal training product: They lasted 24.6 months. In general, there were only 3 groups that lasted for a shorted period of time than the average: group lessons of both men and women and men who had purchased a non personal training product. The finding about group lessons can be explained by the fact that most of the time a group lesson client defected due to the group lesson not continuing. Therefore a client simply couldn't be a client for longer.

8 DISCUSSION

In this chapter the results of the research will be compared to results from other researches, the reliability will be discussed, as well as my own personal development.

8.1 Results

The results of this research were that among ex clients, non personal training products were most popular, the most common reason for defecting being financial grounds and group lessons being the least common to defect. In addition to this, this research has also shown that a personal training product is by far the most common product among the current clients, followed by non personal training products and group lessons. The results have been compared to another research (Barazite 2013, 31-33). This research had done a similar research at 2 different organization "X" and "Y". For both organizations, the result was that individual products were the most common ones for the current clients and group products least common. However, for the individual products, it was not stated whether or not the products were personal or non personal training. When it came to defecting, the clients with an individual product were also the most common ones to defect (58.3% for "X" and 43.6% for "Y"). Compared to this research, the facts are the same, however, at FitPro institute, the amount of clients with an individual product that defected is much higher (89,7%). According to the research by Barazite, the clients that had defected but had participated in group lessons before they defected, were a member for the longest period of time. This research differs in that aspect, since it states that clients with a personal training product were a member for the longest period of time on average.

8.2 Reliability and validity

According to (Heale, Twycross 2015,1-2), reliability relates to the consistency of a measurement. A participant should be giving the exact same response when an instrument is being completed. Since the data collected on the current data and data of ex

clients was based on data that still in the files of FitPro, this is proven to be very consistent, since the reason for defecting was stated the moment the client had left FitPro institute. This means that the reason for defecting is very consistent. The product that the client had purchased is consistent as well as that is data that fitPro possesses themselves as well. According to the attributes of reliability: homogeneity, stability and equivalence an estimation can be made of reliability, since an exact calculation can not be made. The homogeneity can be determined as long as there are at least 2 responses to a particular question. The stability in this case of the research is acceptable. This is determined by test-retest method. This research can be tested and retested due to the method used when collecting the data. However, this research lacks in reliability since FitPro can only be compared to other institutions that specialize in personal training. Lastly, Fitpro benefits greatly from this and this research might even benefits them compared to their competitors, as FitPro now possesses insight on which product needs to be promoted more in order to keep new clients longer but also the existing ones, as well as potentially shift the focus to different products that have shown much less retention over the course of 2015-2018.

Validity refers to whether or not the method of the collection of data and the data collected, actually measures what they intend to measure (Golafshani 2003, 3-5). When it comes to this research, the aim was to collect data on why clients defected. The intention was to paint a picture on the retention numbers and which products and target groups were involved, By collecting this data and setting up these statistics, FitPro institute has a great picture on what has to be done in order to improve. Data such as age, sex, type of product and reason for retention, duration of being a member, is all the data needed. When it comes to this thesis the validity can be doubted at a few points. First of all, the size of the sample size. Due to the relatively small sample size of 146, the section on how duration relates to reason for defection, can be seen as inconsistent. For example, when you look at the defection of women older than 60, due to health reasons, the sample size is small than 5. Therefore, the average duration of that age group is not even close to the average that is seen in table 5.2.6. To solve this issue, a minimum requirement can be taken on when it comes to a minimum amount, however, the sample size would need to be bigger for that.

8.3 Own professional development

This research has helped my own professional development. According to the general competences of the Sports and Leisure management degree, I need to be able to retrieve and analyze information that I collect and be able to evaluate it critically. I feel like I have succeeded in this by researching this topic, as well as expanding my researching skills. This research process has taught me a lot about running a small business in the physical education business. Even though retention is the main subject, it has given me a first hand experience at FitPro on how a physical education business is run. This research could help me further if I decide to do set up my own company with clients. I now have the fundamental knowledge that I would need in order to keep my clients better.

Despite this research not being a sport specific research, I have developed skills that do help me in the industry in the future. There have been no development from the coaching competence or the tourism competences, however, there has been development in the management competences, such as the development in skill in terms of marketing.

Lastly, I have gained competences when it comes to coaching. It may not be on the practical side, but I have gained a first hand experiences on how a client experiences their services and what can be done to provide a certain service.

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