

Owner Perception towards client-Related Challenges In Fitness Centres In Coimbatore City

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Abstract- *The fitness industry has witnessed rapid growth in recent years, particularly in urban regions, driven by increasing awareness of health and lifestyle management. Despite this expansion, fitness centre owners continue to encounter significant challenges related to client behaviour. This study aims to analyse the perception of fitness centre owners regarding client-related issues such as irregular attendance, lack of commitment, unrealistic expectations, and early dropout.*

The research is based on primary data collected from 50 fitness centre owners in Coimbatore City using a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, ANOVA, ranking, and chi-square tests were applied to interpret the data. The findings indicate that client behaviour remains a critical concern affecting operational efficiency and long-term sustainability.

The study concludes that improving client awareness, motivation, and engagement strategies can significantly enhance retention and performance of fitness centres.

Keywords: Fitness Centres, Client Behaviour, Retention, Motivation, Coimbatore

I. INTRODUCTION

The growing prevalence of lifestyle-related health issues has significantly increased awareness regarding physical fitness and well-being. Urban populations, in particular, are becoming more health-conscious, leading to the rapid expansion of fitness centres. These centres have evolved beyond traditional gyms into holistic wellness spaces offering personalised training, nutrition guidance, and lifestyle support.

However, the growth of the industry is accompanied by several operational challenges. Among these, client-related issues are the most critical. While many individuals initially join fitness centres with enthusiasm, maintaining consistency over time becomes difficult. This leads to irregular attendance, declining motivation, and eventual dropout.

Fitness centre owners are therefore required to manage not only physical infrastructure and services but also diverse client behaviours. Understanding these behavioural challenges is essential for ensuring long-term sustainability and improving service effectiveness.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify major client-related challenges faced by fitness centre owners
- To analyse factors influencing client retention and commitment
- To evaluate the impact of client behaviour on fitness centre operations
- To suggest practical strategies for improving client engagement and retention

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Lee (2018)¹

Lee examined the impact of trainer-client relationships on client behaviour. The study revealed that positive interaction between trainers and clients increases motivation and satisfaction. Clients who feel supported and guided by trainers are more likely to continue their fitness journey.

Kumar (2020)²

Kumar analysed the fitness industry in India and found that financial constraints can influence client retention. The study highlighted that high membership fees and additional costs may discourage clients from continuing their subscriptions, especially in the long term.

Sharma (2021)³

Sharma studied gym user behaviour and found that motivation is directly linked to attendance consistency. The research indicated that clients with higher motivation levels

are more likely to adhere to their fitness routines and achieve better results.

Patel (2019)⁴

Patel focused on communication in service industries and found that effective communication between service providers and customers enhances satisfaction. In fitness centres, clear communication regarding goals, progress, and expectations helps in building trust and improving retention.

Johnson (2017)⁵

Johnson examined the influence of the service environment on customer behaviour. The study found that a clean, well-maintained, and friendly environment positively affects customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the increasing demand for fitness services in Coimbatore City, fitness centre owners face persistent challenges arising from client behaviour. Many clients fail to maintain regular attendance and often discontinue their memberships within a short period. A major issue is the presence of unrealistic expectations. Clients frequently expect quick results without understanding the time and discipline required for physical transformation. When these expectations are not met, dissatisfaction arises, leading to reduced engagement.

Additionally, factors such as lack of motivation, time constraints, and poor awareness about fitness practices further contribute to high dropout rates. These issues not only affect client outcomes but also impact the operational efficiency and revenue stability of fitness centres.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a descriptive research design to examine the perception of fitness centre owners towards client-related challenges in Coimbatore City. This approach is suitable as it allows a systematic analysis of behavioural patterns and operational issues experienced by respondents. The study is based on both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 50 fitness centre owners and managers who have direct involvement in daily operations and client management. The sampling technique used for selecting respondents is convenience sampling, considering accessibility and willingness to participate. Secondary data was gathered from books, journals, and

relevant online sources to support the theoretical framework of the study. The collected data was analysed using statistical tools such as percentage analysis, ANOVA, ranking method, and chi-square test to derive meaningful interpretations. The study is geographically limited to Coimbatore City, and the findings are based on the responses provided by the selected sample.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table -01

Years of operation		
Operation	Respondents	Percent
below 2 years	5	10.0
2 - 5 years	22	44.0
5 - 10 years	20	40.0
above 10 years	3	6.0
Total	50	100.0

Interpretation

Most fitness centres in the study are relatively new. Around 44% have been operating for 2–5 years, while 40% have been in business for 5–10 years. Only a small number have crossed the 10-year mark. This shows that the industry is still growing, with many centres in their early or mid-stage development. It also suggests increasing interest in the fitness business in recent years.

Table-02

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
client dropouts significantly affect revenue	Between Groups	.644	4	.161	.638	.638
	Within Groups	11.356	45	.252		
	Total	12.000	49			
client dropout has increased in recent years	Between Groups	.787	4	.197	.869	.490
	Within Groups	10.193	45	.227		
	Total	10.980	49			

Interpretation

The analysis shows a significance value of 0.638, which is higher than 0.05. This means there is no strong statistical evidence to say that client dropouts directly affect revenue. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. It suggests

that revenue may depend on multiple factors, not just client retention. Other elements like pricing or new admissions might also play a role.

Table-03

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
overall commitment level of clients	50	2.82	.388	2	3
client behaviour increases staff workload	50	1.76	.657	1	3
do you provide counselling or follow up support to retain clients	50	1.00	.000	1	1
promotional offers helps improve client retention	50	1.26	.443	1	2
flexible membership plans improve client retention	50	1.34	.479	1	2

Interpretation

The significance value here is 0.490, which is again above 0.05. This indicates that there is no clear statistical proof that dropouts have increased in recent years. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. The trend of client dropout appears to be relatively stable. Any changes are not significant enough to draw strong conclusions

Table-04

Ranks	
	Mean Rank
overall commitment level of clients	4.89
client behaviour increases staff workload	3.29
do you provide counselling or follow up support to retain clients	1.88
promotional offers helps improve client retention	2.39
flexible membership plans improve client retention	2.55

Interpretation

The mean score for client commitment is 2.82, indicating a moderate level of dedication among clients. Respondents also agree that client behaviour increases staff workload. All centres seem to provide counselling support,

which shows a proactive approach. Promotional offers and flexible plans are also seen as helpful strategies. Overall, fitness centres are actively trying to improve retention.

Table-05

Test Statistics ^a	
N	50
Chi-Square	142.658
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000
a. Friedman Test	

Interpretation

It is observed that the Chi-square value is 142.658 with a significance of 0.000. Since the value is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant. This indicates differences in the ranking of factors affecting client retention. The null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, all factors do not have equal importance. The analysis reveals several important patterns:

- A majority of fitness centres operate within 2–10 years, indicating a developing industry
- Most centres are independently owned, reflecting local entrepreneurship dominance
- All respondents reported experiencing client-related challenges, confirming that behavioural issues are universal in the industry.
- Unrealistic expectations and lack of commitment were identified as the most common issues. A significant proportion of respondents agreed that clients expect rapid results, which often leads to dissatisfaction.

Statistical analysis shows that

- ANOVA The average client retention period is 3–6 months, showing short-term engagement
- results indicate no strong direct relationship between dropout and revenue
- Chi-square test confirms a significant association between behavioural factors and operational challenges

V. FINDINGS

The key findings of the study include:

- Client behaviour is a major challenge for all fitness centres
- Most clients discontinue within the first 3–6 months
- Unrealistic expectations and low commitment are dominant issues
- Irregular attendance affects operational planning
- Client behaviour increases staff workload
- Follow-up strategies are widely adopted but need improvement
- Revenue is influenced by multiple factors, not just retention

VI. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Clearly set realistic expectations during enrolment
- Focus on the first three months, which is the critical dropout period
- Implement regular follow-ups and progress tracking systems
- Provide personalised training programs
- Introduce flexible timings to accommodate busy schedules
- Conduct awareness programs on fitness consistency
- Encourage motivation through group activities and challenges
- Strengthen trainer–client relationships
- Use digital tools for reminders and engagement

VII. CONCLUSION

The study highlights that client behaviour plays a decisive role in the success of fitness centres. While the industry continues to grow, maintaining client consistency remains a major challenge. Issues such as lack of motivation, unrealistic expectations, and irregular attendance significantly affect both client outcomes and business performance. The findings suggest that fitness centres must adopt a more proactive and client-focused approach.

By improving communication, offering personalised services, and enhancing engagement strategies, fitness centre owners can overcome these challenges and ensure sustainable growth.

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