

Customer Satisfaction Among the Members of the Summit Point Golf and Country Club

VERONICA JOY V. BENCITO, MBA

Master in Business Administration, Graduate School, Lyceum of the Philippines University, Batangas City
PHILIPPINES

Abstract - This study focused on the customer satisfaction among the members of the Summit Point Golf and Country Club which served as the basis for continuous improvement. It determined the level of customer satisfaction on the services offered by the Summit Point employees in terms of food and beverages, customer service and facilities. Lastly, it also tested the significant differences on the level of customer satisfactions when grouped according to their membership variables of the club. The descriptive type of research was used to assess the operation of the club. Data gathered were analyzed using the weighted mean and ANOVA method.

The members of the Summit Point Golf and Country Club are generally satisfied in terms of facilities and amenities, food and beverages and customer service. The hypothesis has no significant difference between the membership profile and level of customer satisfaction in terms of facilities and amenities and customer service is rejected. This means that their responses differ as to their reasons of joining the club, their obtained degree and the frequency of playing in the club.

Keywords - Customer Satisfaction, Golf Course, food and beverages, customer service, facilities

I. INTRODUCTION

Customers are one of the most valued assets of a corporation and important cornerstone for organizations in highly competitive and rapidly changing market situations. According to Apruebo (2010), Customer is the ultimate objective of every business. Therefore, the company is responsible to meet their expectations to ensure their loyalty with the company. Customer satisfaction is the key to profits, secures future revenues, reduces the cost of future transactions and narrows price fluctuations.

Customer satisfaction occurs when customers confirm or exceed their prepurchase expectations of a service (Oliver, 2001). Satisfaction is fundamental to the notion of satisfying the needs and wants of consumers. This satisfaction was found to impact behavioral intentions in service settings (McDougall & Levesque, 2000). Overall, customer satisfaction is the resulting customers' attitude in a service encounter (Skogland & Siguaw, 2004).

The golf club industry is expanding by building many new clubs and courses worldwide. This creates greater competition among clubs which and negatively affectings club operations, forcing many country clubs to reduce dues and initiation fees (McMahon, 2001). Furthermore, recruiting new members is more difficult and expensive than retaining current ones. Acquiring new customers can cost five times more than the cost of satisfying and retaining current customers

(Kotler& Keller, 2009). Country clubs have access to valuable information about their members to understand preferences and behaviour, making it easier to satisfy their wants and needs. They do not have this information readily available for new members. This creates an added expense due to the time it takes to get familiar with new members preferences. In addition, recruiting new members sometimes means taking them away from other country clubs, which requires 2 more incentives to make them switch. Aside from these reduced costs, there are potential opportunities for increased value of customers being loyal over long periods of time (Kim, Park, &Jeong, 2004).

Employees' service to customer has the strongest influence on relationship quality. For managers, this indicates that employees' service to customer is important for having a good relationship with their customers. Employees who are confident in providing service and knowledgeable about products are more likely to increase customer satisfaction (Kim et al, 2006).

According to Yates (2002), there are three factors related to the quality of the services and value offered by the country club: the design quality of the golf course, the quality of golf course maintenance, and the quality of the playing experience. If the country club can maintain good services and quality amenities within their club, these should give them higher member retention rates.

Many companies aim for high satisfaction because satisfied customers still finds it easy to switch when a better offer comes along and those who are highly satisfied are much less ready to switch. Highly satisfaction or delight creates an emotional bond with the company resulting to customer loyalty (Kotler, 2003).

According to the study of Pepito (2009), in order for management to be able to guide, control and direct the activities of the club, it should manifest good leadership roles. Data revealed that there was adequate direction on the part of the management to achieve goals through motivation, guidance and instruction, supervision and evaluation of the performance of the rank and file. Another study of Artefido A.G (2008) consisted of social clubs which offered facilities for the exclusive use of members. The research was limited to the more prestigious clubs in the Greater Manila Area and included only those social clubs which had clubhouses, grounds and facilities and which offered their members and guests good dining, social activities and various kinds of sports facilities.

On March 8 of 2003, Summit Point Golf and Country Club opened its first nine holes for play. On October 1, 2005 the eighteen holes were formally opened. Presently, the first international golf course is specifically designed in celebration of the best that golf has to offer throughout the world. This exclusive project is the first golf course that is designed to incorporate golf strategic elements inspired by the greatest golf players in the world. It is located in Barangay Plaridel Lipa City Batangas, Philippines.

Summit Point's breathtaking layout is made possible by the expert state-of-the-art computer technology and aerial photography by Robert Trent Jones, Jr. to bring ultimate golf experience. The use of advance engineered turf grasses and water quality treatment zones using native grasses as natural vegetative filtration system is likewise instituted as environmental protection measures.

The golf club houses feature men's and women's locker rooms equipped with showers. There are also Jacuzzi, steam baths, sauna, massage pampering area. In addition to these, there are fully-equipped golf clinic, golf equipment servicing facilities, pro shop, lobby lounge, restaurant with a Korean and Pinoy dishes, function rooms and covered parking for golf carts. The company wants to be among the Top 500 golf course in the world with exclusive membership club, well-organized staff, financial resources, excellent service, facilities and security at all times.

Golf clubs can be treated as business enterprises whose primary objective is to provide satisfaction to its

members. To achieve this, they must be managed efficiently and effectively. One way improving the features and services of the golf club is collecting feedback from the golf club members. The clientele is the most reliable source of feedback that could provide indications and directions for improvement. In this context, the researcher was inspired by this topic to identify the quality of services Summit Point Golf and Country Club directly from customers.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study determined the customer satisfaction of Summit Point Golf and Country Club. Specifically, it described the membership profiles in terms of age, gender, civil status, educational attainment and professional. It determined the level of customer satisfaction on the services offered by the Summit Point employees in terms of food and beverages, customer service and facilities. Lastly, it also tested the significant differences on the level of customer satisfactions when grouped according to their membership variables.

Hypothesis

This study tested the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the level of customer satisfaction when respondents were grouped according to their membership variables.

III. METHOD

Research Design

The researcher used the descriptive type of research to analyze the data gathered. The researcher preferred to use this type of research in order to assess the data of the golf club operation of Summit Point Golf and Country Club. And to determine the customers' satisfaction on the quality of services offered by the Summit Point Golf and Country Club.

Respondents of the Research

The study focused on Golf Club Operation of the Summit Point Golf and Country Club in PlaridelLipa City. It included a total of a 100 regular members of the club who were tasked to answer the questionnaire.

Procedure

The following steps were undertaken in gathering the data to answer the questions in the study. Permission was first sought from the managers of the golf club before the questionnaires were distributed, through the assistance of personnel at the registry desk. This arrangement helped much in assuring the participation of the 100 respondents

in the member of the club. In order to obtain the necessary data, the researcher used a structured survey questionnaire. Modifications were incorporated through the help of experts in the field. A letter of request to conduct the study, together with the questionnaire was given to the members of the golf club of Summit Point Golf and Country Club.

Data Analysis

The following statistical measures were applied to analyze the data: Weighted mean was used to determine the assessment of the respondents on the golf club operation of Summit Point Golf and Country Club and ANOVA method was used to determine the significant difference on the level of customer satisfaction when grouped according to the membership profile. The following arbitrary guide was used to interpret the result of the data gathered: 3.50-4.00 = Highly Satisfied (HS); 2.50-3.49 = Satisfied (S); 1.50-2.49 = Less Satisfied (LS); 1.00-1.49 = Not Satisfied (NS).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data show indicate that majority of the golfers are in the middle age. Most number of respondents, as a whole was registered within the 31-40 age group, with 38 respondents or 38 percent of the sample. The next large group 18-30 age bracket consist of 22 or 22 percent of the respondents. Interestingly, 41-50 and 51 years old and above age bracket data obtained w 20 or 20 percent of the respondents. Golf can be played by all ages. A golfer can start playing from teen age years and may continue up to his sixties and beyond. According to the Victorian Golf Association, the handicapping system helps to accommodate players of all ages and ability levels. It allows people of differing abilities to play together on an equal footing”.

With regard to gender, indicates that there are significantly more male golfers that female confirming a common observation that golfing is predominantly game for males. The respondents consist of 84 males 16 females which comprise of 84 16 percent of the respondents respectively. Men ranked high because men are competitive and this allows them to compete without showing their spidery veiny legs and getting sweaty. Also golf is a good way for men to socialize and meet new people. The shared interest in the sport helps to form a bond between players, often leading to life-long friendships. Many golf courses also have their own clubs. Regular players can become members of these clubs, turning the golf course into both a social and sporting destination.

For the civil status, members of the club are mostly married with a total of 81 or 81 percent of the respondents. It shows that playing golf is one way of bonding with their wives and mostly the people who engage in this kind of sport are in the middle age. Meanwhile 19 members or 19 percent of the respondents are single.

In terms of educational attainment, majority of the respondents completed a college education, with 69 or 69 percent having baccalaureate degree. At least 30 respondents or 30 percent pursued graduate or postgraduate courses. There is 1 or 1 percent who fails under the under graduate category.

According to their profession, from among ten professions reported, the most respondents are businessmen with 65 or 65 percent. The golf course is a popular venue for businessmen. As highlighted by the ABC of Golf website, the golf course provides a way for businessmen to find new partners, make new deals and socialize with potential clients. Next in line are the engineers with 10 or 10 percent of the respondents followed by the doctors with 9 participants or 9 percent. Other profession groups were the lawyer (6 or 6 percent); bank managers (3 or 3percent); the accountant and professor with the same frequency and percentage of 2while the least are the student, housewife and veterinarian with only 1 or 1 percent of the respondents.

The table 2 provides information on the length of time the respondents have been members of the golf clubs. The table reveals that those respondents who have been members of the golf club for 3-5years for are of 49 or 49 percent of the respondents. It is understood that the club has been existing for the past eight years and mostly, members belong to the lifetime membership. It was followed by the 1-3 years with 31 or 31 percent of the respondents. These members belong to the playing rights or the assignee. These are the members who become part of the club with two year membership contract. At least 14 or 14 percent of the respondents have been members of the golf club for more than 5 years these members are mostly the lot owner of the club or the resident. The rest of the respondents have been members of not more that 5 months – 1 year.

The table also reveals that respondent’s have varied reasons for joining the golf club. The most popular reason was “golfing friends were also in the club” which gives them the feeling of being at home. This goes to show that golfers prefer to play with their companion’s friends and/or associates. It is worth mentioning that at least three respondents have referred to exercise as reason for joining the club. Golf is a good form of exercise with a minimal risk of injury.

Table 2. Membership Psychographics

How long have you been a member of the club?	F	%
5months – 1 year	6	6.00
1 year – 3 years	31	31.00
3 years – 5 years	49	49.00
5 years and above	14	14.00
Besides love of the sports, what is reason/s for joining the club?		
It is quite near to my residence/office	39	39.00
My golfing friends are in this club	52	52.00
Exercise	3	3.00
Loves to play here	1	1.00
My husband golf here	1	1.00
My father golf here	1	1.00
Great golf course	1	1.00
Physical fitness	1	1.00
On the average, how often do you play in this club?		
Everyday	1	1.00
Twice a week	36	36.00
Three times a week	32	32.00
Once a month	15	15.00
Twice a month	16	16.00
What are your preferred playing days?		
Tuesday	7	7.00
Wednesday	10	10.00
Thursday	8	8.00
Friday	16	16.00
Saturday	25	25.00
Sunday	34	34.00

The American Society of Golf Course Architects website highlights a number of studies that reveal the health benefits of golf. According to these studies, golfers who walk and carry their own bags burn 721 calories on average during a nine-hole round of golf. Burning calories helps reduced the risks of heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

The respondents reported that they play frequently as much as twice a week for 36 or 36 percent or the respondents because they need the exercise and perfection of their skill, or simply the relaxation that playing golf. And members who played twice a week are those members who are playing with their business partners and friends. Some of them live in the Summit Point residential or the lot owner who play with their loved ones followed by the three times a week 32 or 32 percent. Most members who play three times a week are those members who can play before or after work. According to them, playing makes them relaxed. A few plays just twice a month for 16 or 16 percent of the respondents and just once a month for 15 or 15 percent of the respondent's only one among the respondents plays golf every day. The data on frequency should that the respondents take golfing seriously as a pastime. Some may even be called "golf freaks" Even those who plays less frequently can still be included in this category if they play on a regular basis.

Majority of the respondents come to play every Sunday. The businessmen usually prefer Sunday because they do not have any conflict with this kind of arrangement. The others who were government workers usually choose Saturdays or Sundays to play when they are free from work. Similarly, students who play golf have no choice but weekends.

Table 3. Level of Customer Satisfaction in terms of Facilities and Amenities

Facilities and Amenities	WM	VI	Rank
1. The country club has an adequate parking space with securities provided free to guests.	3.59	Highly Satisfied	1
2. The physical features of facilities of the country club are visually appealing.	3.51	Highly Satisfied	2
3. The country club has fully-equipped and air conditional board room and convention facilities.	3.39	Satisfied	4
4. The country club has pleasing and well -maintained cafeteria with the area of the club.	3.38	Satisfied	5
5. The country club has a smoking and non smoking area.	3.37	Satisfied	6
6. The country club has a complete set and well maintained sports and recreational facilities.	3.33	Satisfied	7
7. The country club has a clean and adequate public toilet and bathroom for male and female locker provided with sufficient hot and cold running water, soap, toilet paper and a hand drier.	3.48	Satisfied	3
Composite Mean	3.44	Satisfied	

The table 3 presents the Level of Customer Satisfaction on the Services Offered by the Summit Point Employees in terms of Facilities and Amenities. The composite mean of 3.44 shows that the facilities in terms of design and lay-out satisfied respondents. The adequate parking space with securities provided free to guests obtained a weighted mean of 3.59 verbally interpreted as highly satisfied. Respondents agreed that efficient facilities must have adequate parking space. Summit Point has a capacity of 150 slots of cars for parking with street lights and guards to make sure that vehicles are in safe.

Rank 2 shows the weighted mean of 3.51 verbally interpreted as highly satisfied was the physical features of the club are visually appealing. Since the Summit Point is a recreational facility, the management always makes sure that the ambiance in the club will helps the customers feel relaxed and enjoyed every time they visit.

The table also shows the five items which were verbally interpreted as Satisfied with the weighted mean of 3.48, 3.39, 3.38, 3.37, 3.33, respectively as follows: “clean and adequate public toilet and bathroom for male and female locker provided with sufficient hot and cold running water, soap, toilet paper and a hand drier”, “fully-equipped and air conditional board room and convention facilities”, “pleasing and well -maintained cafeteria with the area of the club”, “a smoking and non-smoking area”, “complete set and well maintained sports and recreational facilities”. Since large most of the members are men the smoking and non-smoking area ranked second to the last rank. Since summit is a recreational type of business, only limited smoking area is provided to the customers. Fullen (2003) believes that visible and perceived sanitation issues should be a paramount concern for every facilities. It should use a manufacturing process that reduced amount of waste or changed or produced a less hazardous waste.

Table 4. Level of Customer Satisfaction in terms of Food and Beverages

Food and Beverages	WM	VI	Rank
1. Healthy, natural and organic food using fresh ingredients in this country club.	3.10	Satisfied	4.5
2. Food in the country club is delicious.	3.09	Satisfied	6
3. Food in the country club is appealing and presentable.	3.08	Satisfied	7
4. Food in the country club is in reasonable prices.	3.12	Satisfied	3
5. Food gives satisfaction to the customers in terms of proper variation.	3.17	Satisfied	2
6. The country club serves different classic food that suit the taste of the guest.	3.10	Satisfied	4.5
7. The country club serves a great taste coffee, tea, and offers refreshments like juices, shakes, sodas and energy drinks.	3.18	Satisfied	1
8. The country club serves different kinds of liquor, wines, cocktails and spirits and strictly set limits when availing drinks with alcohol content.	3.06	Satisfied	8
Composite Mean	3.11	Satisfied	

The table 4 shows the Level of Customer Satisfaction on the Services Offered by the Summit Point Employees in terms of Food and Beverages. The over-all rating on the level of satisfaction of food and beverages was 3.11 and interpreted satisfied. The country club serves a great taste coffee, tea, and offers refreshments like juices, shakes, sodas and energy drinks as indicated by the weighted mean of 3.18 verbally interpreted as satisfied. Since Summit Point is sports type of business it serves healthy and energetic drinks for the players and also there are some juices like summit burst that only Summit Point can offer.

The table 5 shows the Level of Customer Satisfaction on the Services Offered by the Summit Point Employees in terms of Customer Service. The

over-all rating on was 3.55 and interpreted Highly Satisfied. Among the personal aspect, the Summit Point employees are courteous and always wearing a smile question obtained the highest weighted mean of 3.61 and verbally interpreted of Highly Satisfied. Since Summit Point is a leisure type of business it is ensure that the employees are courteous and wear a hospitable in order to make the customers feel better and feel welcomed by the club anytime. The Summit employees especially in the receptionist area always greet the guests before they register and after they leave the club.

A fresh warm greeting is a big impact to the customer, a smile and bright word of welcome costs nothing. It can be noted that the customer wants to expect a great deal of attention to customer satisfaction.

Table 5. Level of Customer Satisfaction in terms of Customer Service

Customer Service	WM	VI	Rank
1. The country club offers excellent service beyond customer's expectation.	3.52	Highly Satisfied	8
2. The country club provides good service every time.	3.54	Highly Satisfied	5.5
3. The country club provides security all the times.	3.56	Highly Satisfied	3
4. The country club employees are courteous and always wearing a smile question.	3.61	Highly Satisfied	1
5. The country club employees are knowledgeable enough to answer any question.	3.59	Highly Satisfied	2
6. The country club services make an excellent impact, establish good will, create value and provide benefits for the customers.	3.53	Highly Satisfied	7
7. The country club has well-trained employees that give prompt services.	3.51	Highly Satisfied	9
8. The country club ensures that every transactions made are in private.	3.54	Highly Satisfied	5.5
9. The country club has good communication ability with customers.	3.55	Highly Satisfied	4
Composite Mean	3.55	Highly Satisfied	

The table 6 shows the Summary on the Level of Customer Satisfaction on the Services Offered by the Summit Point Employees. The table presents that the over-all rating on the level of satisfaction was 3.37 and interpreted as Satisfied.

Table 6. Summary Table on the Level of Customer Satisfaction on the Services Offered by the Summit Point Employees

Level of Customer Satisfaction	WM	VI	Rank
1. Facilities and Amenities	3.44	Satisfied	2
2. Food and Beverages	3.11	Satisfied	3
3. Customer Service	3.55	Highly Satisfied	1
Composite Mean	3.37	Satisfied	

Among the customer satisfaction, intends customer service achieved the highest weighted mean of 3.55 and verbally interpreted Highly Satisfied. It is proof that the Summit Point employees are giving excellent service to their customer all the time. Like accommodating them from the time they make a reservation for their tee time, giving them a safety and adequate parking spaces, making them feel comfortable and enjoy the time they play and stay in the club, and serving the best food of different dishes.

Customer Service is often associated with marketing and sales that to be a customer service representative, one has to sell an idea, a product or service. This has been a

great contributor for each industry's development and success. In today's business, consideration on customers' opinion is critical to every business. Customer service staffs are considered to be the front lines of the business and are expected to perform at their best whenever possible.

The next in rank was the Facilities and Amenities with the weighted mean of 3.44 and verbally interpreted as Satisfied. Lastly, the Food and Beverages ranked third with the weighted mean of 3.11 with verbal interpretation of satisfied.

Difference of Responses on the Level of Customer Satisfaction When Grouped According to Membership Profile

The computed F-values of reasons of joining the club (3.433), its shows that the members of the club are satisfied in the club facilities because it gives the members time to relax while you are just simply enjoy the view educational attainment (3.204) this means that the members of the club and who are playing the golf are all educated and most of them are businessman and frequency of playing in the club (2.514) were greater than the critical/tabular value and the resulted significant values were less than 0.05 level of significance, thus the hypothesis of no significant difference between the membership profile and level of customer satisfaction in terms of facilities and amenities and customer service is rejected. This means that their responses differ as to their

reasons of joining the club, their obtained degree and the frequency of playing in the club.

The simplest way to make sure that the client base is not hampered owing to lack of customer satisfaction is to make sure that you the company adhere to the quality of products or services that it offers, and creates a customer focused environment - with the latter playing the most important role in improving customer satisfaction. Being in the business firm, important to quality must be prioritize. As far as customer focused environment is concerned, simple steps like paying personal attention to customer needs, following up with after sales service and maintenance support (as and when required), interacting with your customers, paying attention to customer queries and problems, can be of great help. Consequently, customers will appreciate the fact that they feel their worth. Putting some efforts to do so many bring customer loyalty and satisfaction.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Majority of the golfers in terms of demographics are in the middle age, male, educated and mostly businessmen while in terms of psychographics majority of the golfers are members of the club for more than three to five years and most of them are playing with their friends especially on weekends. The members of the Summit Point Golf and Country Club are generally satisfied in terms of facilities and amenities, food and beverages and customer service. There is no significant difference between the membership profile and level of customer satisfaction in terms of facilities and amenities and customer service. This means that their responses differ as to their reasons of joining the club, their obtained degree and the frequency of playing in the club.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The image of the Golf Club congruence and perceived value indirectly contribute to member's loyalty by satisfying members. In turn, satisfied members spread positive word of mouth to others and show a greater willingness to continue their membership. It is important to talk to the members about what amenities they want their club to offer and how the club can improve their current amenities. The management of the country club should offer a larger number of amenities which can enhance customer satisfaction. The needs, wants, and

motivations of the customers are what service providers must satisfy to achieve long term success.

The country club needs to serve different kinds of liquor, wines, cocktails and spirits but need to set limits when availing drinks with alcohol content. The country club should maintain good services and quality amenities within the club. These may give them higher member retention rates.

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