

FACTORS INFLUENCING CUSTOMER CO-CREATION AND HAPPINESS IN FITNESS CENTER BUSINESSES

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Abstract

Current understanding of the effect of co-creation in the context of a fitness center is limited. This study aims to examine the factors influencing customer happiness in the fitness center businesses, with customer co-creation as the mediating variable, comparing the differences between businesses and providing insights into customer co-creation and happiness within the fitness center context. The study adopts a quantitative research design, collecting data from fitness centers located in Siam Paragon, CentralWorld, and Samyan Mitrtown, Thailand. A total of 598 respondents participated in the survey, while the collected data were analyzed using GSCA Pro software version 1.1. The research findings confirm that the sharing of experiences significantly influences customer co-creation, which in turn affects customer happiness and overall customer experience. Managers and marketers should establish close relationships with customers, allowing them to actively participate in creating their own experiences within the fitness centers. This direct involvement of customers is a critical factor directly impacting customer happiness.

Keywords: Continuous involvement, experience sharing, co-creation, customer happiness, fitness centers, Sport Management, SDG 8

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the current business landscape, the delivery of services has gained increasing importance due to its potential to create competitive advantages and drive strategic developments across various industries (Carbonell et al., 2009; Chutipongdech et al., 2023; Praditbatuga et al., 2022; Sinanuwong et al., 2021; Statsenko & de Zubielqui, 2020). Consequently, businesses are compelled to align their development efforts with customer needs, especially in highly competitive environments (Casidy et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2011; Heirati & Siahtiri, 2019; Ndubisi et al., 2020; Suwannakul & Khetjenkarn, 2022). Thus, businesses, particularly those in the service sector, must address customer requirements by focusing on processes that foster customer happiness and engagement (Hsieh et al., 2018; Jitsoonthornchaikul, 2022; Manosuthi et al., 2021a). Customer happiness is influenced by continuous active participation (Meeprom & Silanoi, 2020; Silanoi et al., 2022), experience sharing, interactions with service providers, customer motivation, perceptions of the physical environment (Buonincontri et al., 2017; Cheung et al., 2021; Cheung et al., 2020; Chuang, 2020; Im & Qu, 2017), and consumer experience co-creation (Manosuthi et al., 2022b). These factors directly impact customer happiness (Hughes & Vafeas, 2021) and create opportunities for delivering positive experiences to others (Wilson et al., 2012), particularly in the context of service delivery (Kaewkhav et al., 2023). Fitness centers, characterized by intense competition based on service quality and the nature of their offerings, operate as service businesses. Customers have expectations of satisfactory experiences when utilizing the facilities and engaging in various services. Consequently, research on customer satisfaction and service quality is of paramount importance, even in the fitness industry (Wang & Chiu, 2022). A comprehensive understanding of service quality fundamentals, such as equipment, programs, amenities, and supplementary services, is essential for enhancing customer satisfaction and

retention (Senachai et al., 2023). Customer satisfaction, in turn, leads to profitability for fitness businesses (Funk, 2017). Therefore, the development of service delivery within fitness businesses, particularly in high quality service environments, holds significant importance. This includes aspects such as cleanliness, equipment and amenity quality, and safety, similar to those in general service businesses (Fakfare et al., 2023). Providing customers with satisfactory experiences leads to the sharing of these experiences, particularly on social media platforms, where individuals often share their experiences through reviews, ratings, and rankings (Lee et al., 2014). Social media facilitates convenient sharing of information and experiences (Napontun & Senachai, 2023; Quach & Thaichon, 2017) and enables real-time interactions (Napontun & Pimchainoi, 2023). Despite the rapid growth of the fitness industry, research in this field remains limited (Eskiler & Safak, 2022). Existing studies primarily focus on traditional healthcare approaches (Eskiler & Safak, 2022), and there is a scarcity of research on creating sustainable positive customer experiences in fitness businesses. Consequently, it is crucial to understand the service environment in order to create customer experiences and foster customer involvement within the fitness industry. This study aims to address this research gap by investigating customer experiences, continuous involvement, and innovative services, that generate positive customer emotions in the fitness industry through experience sharing on social media. Unique experiences contribute to customer value and significantly impact customer satisfaction and loyalty (Funk, 2017). The findings of this research will serve as important factors in formulating strategies to sustain customer involvement in the fitness business environment.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concepts of Customer Experience and Co-Creation

Understanding customer experiences

plays a crucial role in service businesses (Adhikari & Bhattacharya, 2016; Tynan et al., 2014), particularly experiences that customers perceive as exceeding mere service provision or product acquisition. Such experiences foster increased customer satisfaction levels and lead to customer loyalty (Meeprom & Silanoi, 2020; Wattanacharoensil et al., 2023). Consequently, many companies strive to promote customer responsiveness and relationships with services and other individuals, which transform customers into co-creators (Prebensen & Foss, 2011). Co-creation is a concept derived from Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), which asserts that customers are always value co-creators (Lusch & Vargo, 2006; Lusch et al., 2007; Vargo & Lusch, 2014, 2016). SDL is a framework that highlights the exchange of all thoughts related to service (Vargo & Lusch, 2014). Furthermore, SDL explains value creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2016) and reflects the transformational processes that lead to service exchange, with customers at the center of value creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2014). Within this perspective, customers are the determinants and co-creators of value (Vargo & Lusch, 2016), making customers the primary operational resource to achieve competitive advantage (Chen et al., 2009) in the SDL framework (Vargo & Lusch, 2014). Meanwhile, business roles involve delivering value to customers based on available resources (Lusch & Vargo, 2006), which can be tangible resources such as products, and employees, or intangible resources such as strategies, technologies, and social media (Chen et al., 2018). Value co-creation involves multiple parties, including organizations, suppliers, and customers (Vargo & Lusch, 2014), for mutual benefits (Vargo & Lusch, 2016).

SDL is applicable in this study as fitness businesses exhibit service characteristics that can be explained using SDL, where customers tend to co-create value through interactions with the company, rather than being passive recipients of services alone (Etgar, 2008; Grönroos, 1997; Grönroos & Voima, 2013).

2.2 Continuous Customer Involvement (Active participation)

Continuous customer involvement, categorized based on customer characteristics (Zaichkowsky, 1985), serves as a determinant of consumer needs, motivations, and goals, in engaging with products (Bezençon & Blili, 2010). It significantly impacts the value creation of customer usage. Therefore, customer and retailer involvement both play a crucial role in adding value to products or services, increasing customer dependency, and enhancing customer enthusiasm (Bezençon & Blili, 2010). Additionally, customers exhibit varying levels of involvement in terms of purchases, time, resources, and financial commitment, which are influenced by their level of engagement with the product and are contingent upon interests, preferences, and other characteristics (Kumar et al., 2020). Furthermore, continuous customer involvement (active participation) contributes to knowledge and understanding of service provision. This knowledge enables customers to assist others in problem-solving within the service delivery process and facilitates informed decision-making (Casaló et al., 2007). Based on the aforementioned discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Continuous customer involvement (active participation) positively influences the co-creation of consumer experiences.

2.3 Experience Sharing

The phenomenon of customer experience sharing has seen significant growth, particularly in the form of knowledge sharing through social media (Lee et al., 2014). Customer experience sharing is often conducted through reviews, ratings, and rankings (Lee et al., 2014). Social media platforms have become a preferred channel for customers to share information and experiences due to their convenience (Quach & Thaichon, 2017). Such sharing enables immediate real-time interactions (Payne et al., 2009) and holds valuable information that influences customers' purchasing decisions

(Lee et al., 2014). Furthermore, experience sharing on social media platforms creates opportunities for product or service delivery to others (Silanoi et al., 2022).

Luo et al. (2015) asserted that social media influences customer co-creation experiences and positively affects customers' attachment to brands. Sharing customer experiences is a means of delivering value to others through emotions and feelings. It aligns with the concept of service (Zhou et al., 2013) and directly influences customer co-creation experiences (Tajvidi et al., 2020). Based on the aforementioned discussion, it is evident that customer experience sharing on social media is closely related to customer co-creation experiences. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Sharing customer experiences with others positively influences customer co-creation experiences.

2.4 Customer Happiness and Experience

Customer happiness is a crucial consideration for service businesses and an essential aspect that businesses should prioritize (Vargo & Lusch, 2014). In service industries with high market competition, businesses must be aware of the importance of customer experience, as it affects word-of-mouth communication and consumer goodwill (Buonincontri et al., 2017; Grisseman & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012). Creating experiences for customers is thus pivotal, as customers are integral to the service process (Vargo & Lusch, 2014). Furthermore, businesses in service-related industries, such as travel and hospitality, must recognize the significance of customer experience. The impact of positive experiences on customer happiness is evident, while inappropriate service experiences can lead to negative emotions, particularly in service-related industries (Buonincontri et al., 2017; Grisseman & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012).

Brakus et al. (2013) examined customer experiences that contribute to happiness in two consumption contexts: direct consumption and vicarious consumption. The results

revealed a linkage between all four dimensions of customer experiences (i.e., emotions, impact, intellectual stimulation, and behavior) and customer happiness. Additionally, they identified three dimensions of happiness: hedonic happiness, eudaimonia happiness, and participatory happiness. Carter and Gilovich (2010) demonstrated that memorable experiences, when recorded, enhance customer happiness, thereby impacting the business image and competitive advantage. These findings highlight the ways in which businesses can enhance customer emotions, behaviors, and happiness (Kerr et al., 2012; Lin & Utz, 2015; Liu et al., 2019). Thus, customer happiness serves as an indicator of customer success in the context of customer experience co-creation. Based on these discussions, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: Customer experience co-creation positively influences customer happiness.

H4: Active participation positively influences customer happiness.

H5: Sharing experience positively influences customer happiness.

2.5 Mediating Analysis of Customer Experience Co-creation

Previous studies by Buonincontri et al. (2017) and Lambert et al. (2013) have found that active customer participation and sharing of experiences have a positive impact on customer happiness. Additionally, Silanoi et al. (2022) found that active customer participation significantly influences customer happiness, with customer experience co-creation as a mediating variable. Active customer participation is considered an independent variable, while customer happiness is the dependent variable. Furthermore, sharing of experiences with others has a positive influence on customer happiness.

However, there is a lack of research specifically investigating the relationship between active customer participation, sharing of experiences, and customer happiness in the fitness center context. Therefore, the researchers are interested in examining this

relationship in the fitness center industry.

Based on these considerations, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H6a: Customer experience co-creation mediates the relationship between active customer participation and customer happiness.

H6b: Customer experience co-creation mediates the relationship between the sharing of experiences and customer happiness.

2.6 Control Variables

To enhance the effectiveness of the conceptual model testing, this study incorporates control variables to account for differences in age, gender, and the type of online social network usage among users. These control variables ensure that the observed results are not influenced by confounding factors.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study consists of six hypotheses and four variables, as illustrated in Figure 1.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey method. The primary data collection tool employed in this research is a questionnaire.

Questionnaires were distributed by the research team to individuals who had experience using fitness centers located in the vicinity of Siam Paragon Center and Samyan Mitrtown in Thailand. The purpose of the sur-

vey was to investigate the customers' experiences of active participation in fitness center businesses through social media sharing. Tye-Din et al. (2010) suggest that a sample size of at least 200 participants is appropriate. Therefore, for this study, a sample size of 598 participants was deemed suitable.

3.1 Data Collection Tools and Instrument Validation

The data collection tool utilized in this research was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into five sections: Section 1 included demographic information about the sample population, Section 2 collected data on customers' active participation, Section 3 gathered information on customers' experience sharing, Section 4 focused on data related to customer experience co-creation, and Section 5 gathered data on customer happiness. The research instrument was developed based on the study of Silanoi et al. (2022) on customer experience through social media sharing and was adjusted to fit the specific service context as presented in Table 1.

All constructs were measured using multiple items. Compared to single-item measures, multiple-item measures are considered more reliable and valid (Manosuthi et al., 2021b). All items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The measure for experience sharing was derived from Su et al. (2021), and the measure for customer experience co-creation was adapted from Ponsignon et al. (2015) and Manosuthi et al. (2021a), which

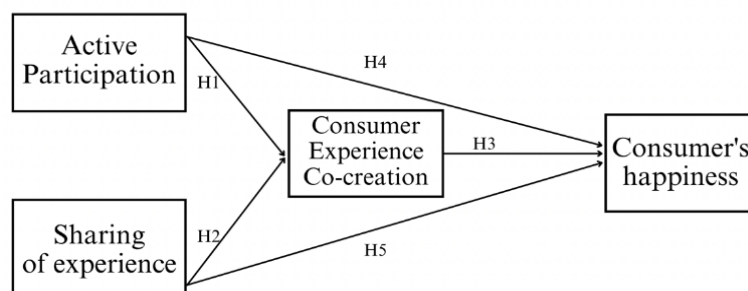


Figure 1: Structural Model and Hypotheses of the Research

focuses on co-creation experiences with employees. The measure for customer happiness, as an outcome variable, was adapted from Fatima et al. (2020). Since the target population consisted of customers who visit fitness centers, all measures were developed based on the study of Silanoi et al. (2022).

Table 1 Analysis Results for Demographic Data

Characteristic	Number	Percent
Gender		
Male	298	49.83
Female	300	50.17
Total	598	100.0
Age Range		
21-37 Years (Y)	188	31.44
38-52 Years(X)	410	68.56
Total	598	100.0
Usage Location		
Fitness Center: Siam Paragon	194	32.44
Fitness Center: Central World	223	37.29
Fitness Center: Mitrtown	181	30.27
Total	598	100.0
Income		
Less than 15,000 baht	135	22.58
Less than 50,000 baht	148	24.75
Less than 100,000 baht	205	34.28
100,000 baht and above	110	18.39
Total	598	100.0
Residential Area		
Nearby Area (within 3KM)	288	48.16
Distant Area	310	51.84
Total	598	100.0
Membership		
First-time	197	32.94
Renewal	401	67.06
Total	598	100.0
Past Experience		
Changed location	322	53.85
Remained at the same location	276	46.15
Total	598	100.0
It is expected that after expiration		
Expected to change location after membership expires	68	11.37
Likely to change location	154	25.75
Likely to renew membership	191	31.94
Will not change location	185	30.94
Total	598	100.0

4.RESULTS

4.1. Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 presents the analysis of the demographic characteristics of the sample group. Out of the total respondents (N = 598), 49.83% identified as male, while 50.17% identified as female. The majority of respondents fell within the age range of 38 to 52 years, accounting for 68.56% of the sample. Regarding the location of their fitness center usage, the majority of respondents frequented the Central World location, accounting for 37.29%. In terms of monthly income, 34.28% reported earning less than 100,000 baht. Additionally, 51.84% of respondents lived far from the fitness center in their residential area. Regarding membership status, 67.06% of respondents were members of the fitness center. Furthermore, 53.85% of respondents indicated that their past experiences at the fitness center had influenced them to change their location. It is estimated that 31.94% of respondents are likely to renew their membership after it expires.

4.2 Evaluation of the Structural Model

Internal consistency and convergent validity were assessed in this study. The Dillon-Goldstein Rho coefficient was used to measure the internal consistency, with a

recommended threshold of Rho greater than 0.7 as suggested by Hwang and Takane (2014). The results indicated a high level of internal consistency, with Rho values ranging from 0.83 to 0.90 across all constructs. Convergent validity was evaluated using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with a threshold of AVE greater than 0.5 as recommended by Hwang and Takane (2014). The findings revealed satisfactory convergent validity, with AVE values ranging from 0.57 to 0.70. Additionally, construct validity was examined through Factor Analysis to group similar items within each variable. The factor loadings were assessed, and a threshold of 0.7 or higher was adopted following the recommendation of Hair Jr et al. (2020). The results indicated high interrelatedness among the components, as all factor loadings exceeded 0.7, demonstrating construct validity according to Hair Jr et al. (2020). These findings are summarized in Table 2. The GSCA Pro software was utilized to assess the structural model in this research study. The Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) were employed as criteria for model fit evaluation. The recommended thresholds for GFI and SRMR are 0.9 and .08, respectively, as suggested by Hu and Bentler (1999). The research findings revealed a GFI value of 0.994 and an SRMR value of 0.033, indicating a good fit of the structural model. Furthermore, Discriminant

Table 2 Internal Consistency and Convergent Validity

Measurement Items	Mean	(SD)	loading	Rho	AVE
Active participation				.87	.57
I have experienced improvement in my fitness center visits due to my active participation in various activities.	4.997	1.223	.781		
I actively seek challenging situations to enhance my skills and abilities at this fitness center.	5.160	1.136	.807		
I consistently engage with the fitness center's Facebook page.	4.877	1.277	.735		
I regularly post messages and actively respond on the fitness center's Facebook page with frequency and enthusiasm.	4.795	1.355	.698		
I am eager to participate in the events and activities offered on the fitness center's Facebook page.	5.325	1.031	.754		
Sharing of Experience				.86	.68

Table 2 (Continued)

Measurement Items	Mean	(SD)	loading	Rho	AVE
I share my fitness center experiences with others.	5.433	1.078	.814		
I inform others about my experiences at the fitness center.	5.655	1.028	.837		
Sharing knowledge and information about my fitness center experience through social media is rewarding.	5.612	.947	.827		
Consumer Experience Co-creation				.83	.70
I feel comfortable engaging and interacting with the fitness center staff.	4.142	.734	.837		
The location of the fitness center enables efficient communication with the staff.	4.223	.728	.844		
Consumer Happiness				.90	.70
This fitness center experience has rewarded me in various aspects, and I feel significantly better about myself after experiencing the fitness center.	5.462	.865	.822		
I actively contribute to my own happiness through my participation in the fitness center.	5.490	1.052	.848		
My fitness center experience stimulates my sensory nerves.	5.580	1.074	.802		
Time flies during my fitness center visits.	5.517	1.039	.860		

Table 3 HTMT

Active Participation (AP) ↔ Consumer Experience Co-Creation (CE)	.6048
Sharing of experience (SE) ↔ Consumer Experience Co-Creation (CE)	.7054
Consumer Experience Co-Creation (CE) ↔ Consumer's happiness (CH)	.7760
Active Participation (AP) ↔ Consumer's happiness (CH)	.6293
Sharing of experience (SE) ↔ Consumer's happiness (CH)	.5946
Active Participation (AP) ↔ Sharing of experience (SE)	.6429

Table 4 Estimates of Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Relation	Estimates	Std.Error	95% LB	95% UB	Results
<i>H1</i>	AP → CE	.2434 *	.0446	.1549	.3351	Not Rejected
<i>H2</i>	SE → CE	.3486 *	.0484	.2489	.4331	Not Rejected
<i>H3</i>	CE → CH	.3436 *	.0449	.2497	.4208	Not Rejected
<i>H4</i>	AP → CH	.3008 *	.0406	.2224	.3979	Not Rejected
<i>H5</i>	SE → CH	.1709 *	.0407	.0790	.2622	Not Rejected

* Statistically significant at 0.05 level ($P < 0.0$)

Validity was analyzed by assessing the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, which should be below 0.85, as recommended by Henseler et al. (2015). The research results indicated that all components exhibited HTMT values below 0.85, ranging from 0.59 to 0.77, demonstrating satisfactory Discriminant Validity for all components, as presented in Tables 3-4.

The results of the path coefficients, along with the standard errors (SE) and 95% confidence intervals (CI), are presented in Table 5 and Figure 2. The research findings indicate that the path coefficients are statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$). Regarding the relationship in the structural path model, active participation was shown to have a positive effect on consumer

experience co-creation ($H1 = .2434^*$, $SE = .0446$, $95\% CI = 0.1549 - .3351$, $P < .05$), providing support for hypothesis 1 ($H1$). Similarly, sharing experience positively influences consumer experience co-creation ($H2 = .3486^*$, $SE = .0484$, $95\% CI = .2489 - .4331$, $P < .05$), supporting hypothesis 2 ($H2$). Furthermore, the research supports hypothesis 3 ($H3$, which suggests that consumer experience co-creation has a positive effect on consumer happiness ($H3 = .3436^*$, $SE = .0449$, $95\% CI = .2497 - .4208$, $P < .05$). Hypothesis 4 ($H4$), which proposes that active participation positively influences consumer happiness, was also supported ($H4 = .3008^*$, $SE = .0406$, $95\% CI = 0.2224 - .3979$, $P < .05$). Additionally, sharing experience has a positive impact on consumer happiness ($H5 = .1709^*$, $SE = .0407$, $95\% CI = .0790 - .2622$, $P < .05$), providing support for hypothesis 5 ($H5$).

4.3 Mediation Analysis

In this research, mediation analysis was conducted using the approach recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008) to analyze the mediating role of consumer experience co-creation. This approach was deemed appropriate and convenient for testing the mediating variables. Following the guidelines

of Preacher and Hayes (2008), the bootstrap method was employed to examine the 95% confidence intervals, as presented in Table 6. Hypotheses $H6a$ and $H6b$ were tested, with the results indicating that consumer experience co-creation mediates the relationship between active participation and consumer happiness ($H6a = .084^*$, $SE = .022$, $95\% CI = .047 - .134$, $P < .05$), as well as the relationship between sharing of experience and consumer happiness ($H6b = .120^*$, $SE = .021$, $95\% CI = .072 - .162$, $P < .05$). The confidence intervals did not include zero, providing support for $H6a$ and $H6b$. These findings are summarized in Table 6.

5. DISCUSSION

The objective of this research was to identify factors influencing consumer happiness in the fitness center industry, with a focus on consumer experience co-creation as the mediating variable between active participation and sharing of experience. The study found that the most significant factor contributing to consumer happiness was consumer experience co-creation. This finding is consistent with previous research by Grisseemann and Stokburger-Sauer (2012), and Silanoi et al. (2022), which highlighted the role of co-creating experiences in

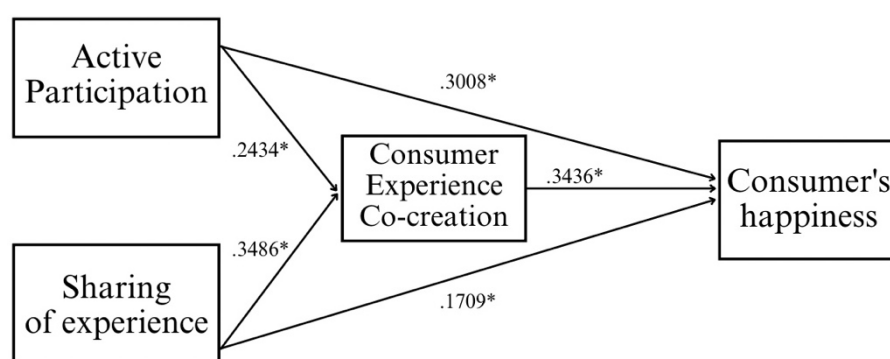


Figure 2 Structural Path Coefficient

Table 6 Mediation Analysis

Hypothesis	Relation	Estimate	Std. Error	95% LB	95% UB	Results
H6a	AP → CE → CH	.084*	.022	.047	.134	Accepted
H6b	SE → CE → CH	.120*	.021	.072	.162	Accepted

customer happiness through sharing on social media. This aligns with the concept of service-oriented perspectives.

The study observed that the sample group evaluated their happiness based on their involvement in co-creating experiences with the staff within the fitness center. Therefore, it can be concluded that co-creating experiences with customers is crucial as a mediating variable when studying factors influencing consumer happiness.

The variable of consumer experience co-creation serves as a mediating factor influenced by two factors: active participation and sharing experience. The study revealed that sharing experience had the strongest impact on consumer experience co-creation, followed by active participation. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Tajvidi et al. (2020), which emphasized that sharing experiences on social media platforms directly affects customer co-creation experiences. Moreover, active participation acts as a determinant of consumer desires, motivations, and goals in engaging with services (Carter & Gilovich, 2010). It also supports the notion that consistent customer involvement aids in service co-creation in the long term (Bezençon & Blili, 2010).

Active participation, ranked as the second most important factor, was found to influence consumer happiness. This implies that when customers actively participate on the fitness center's social media platforms, it contributes to their increased happiness. This finding is consistent with the research of Silanoi et al. (2022), which suggests that consistent customer involvement positively influences customer happiness. Additionally, Casaló et al. (2007) indicate that active customer participation influences knowledge and understanding of service delivery, enabling them to assist other customers in problem-solving during service encounters and decision-making processes.

The study findings suggest that the sample group evaluated their happiness based on their own participation in various activities organized by the fitness center on Facebook. Furthermore, the sample group posted text

and interacted on the fitness center's Facebook page, resulting in increased satisfaction with the fitness center's services. Sharing experience, ranked as the third factor, was found to impact consumer happiness. When customers share their service experiences with others on social media, it enhances their happiness. This aligns with the research conducted by Silanoi et al. (2022), which highlights that increased sharing of customer experiences, particularly in the form of knowledge sharing through social media, contributes to customer happiness. Moreover, sharing experiences on social media provides opportunities for delivering products or services to others (Lee et al., 2014) and serves as a popular tool for customers, often in the form of reviews, ratings, and rankings. These findings align with the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) concept, which emphasizes that the role of businesses is to deliver value to customers through existing resources (Lusch & Vargo, 2006), with social media being one of the necessary resources for fitness businesses (Hollebeek, 2019). Social media enables co-creation of value between fitness businesses and customers (Vargo & Lusch, 2014), leading to mutual benefits (Vargo & Lusch, 2016).

6.CONCLUSION

This study has found that customer happiness is derived from customer interactions with friends or staff within the fitness center and the variable known as consumer experience co-creation. The findings reveal that customers engage in sharing experiences through reviews and knowledge sharing on social media platforms based on their usage of their own fitness centers. The factors that contribute to customer co-creation experiences through social media are sharing experiences on social media and active participation, in that order. This research enhances understanding of the factors that contribute to customer happiness in the context of fitness center services. It may assist in future business planning for fitness centers to leverage social media platforms to

differentiate and enhance the effectiveness of their service offerings.

6.1 Theoretical Contributions

This study reaffirms the theoretical concept of Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), which suggests that customers are co-creators of value (Lusch & Vargo, 2006), emphasizing the role of businesses in delivering value to customers through resources, particularly employees and social media (Hollebeek, 2019). Furthermore, it highlights the ability of businesses to generate shared value in service-based industries (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). Specifically, in the context of fitness centers, active participation, sharing of experiences, and consumer experience co-creation significantly contributes to customer happiness in utilizing fitness center services, particularly among Generation X.

The findings from this research also shed light on the structural characteristics of each business, resulting in differences in various dimensions. These differences arise from variations in service delivery and customer experiences within each business group. For instance, Silanoi et al.'s (2022) study on customer participation experiences in coffee businesses through social media sharing reveals that when customers share their personal stories and experiences within the establishment on social media, it positively affects their happiness. This differs from the approaches to enhancing customer happiness in the fitness center industry, where customers perceive their happiness to stem from engaging in dialogue, conversations, and co-creating experiences with staff members. Nevertheless, both industries find that sharing experiences on social media affects customer happiness, but this varies in the way it is employed in fostering customer happiness in fitness centers. Fitness center customers associate their happiness with having interactions, conversations, and co-creating experiences with staff or individuals within the fitness center. However, both industries recognize that sharing personal experiences on social media has implications for customer

happiness, as it contributes to the co-creation of value between the business organization and its customers.

6.2 Practical Implications

Based on the findings of this research, the research team suggests guidelines for managers or executives of fitness centers to prioritize consistent consumer experience co-creation. This is crucial as it directly impacts customer happiness, which is a significant factor influencing customer return behavior. Additionally, it also affects the word-of-mouth communication of customers' experiences within the fitness center, reaching a wider audience.

To foster customer and organizational co-creation experiences, it is recommended to increase interactions between staff members and customers. For example, regularly seeking feedback from customers regarding their experiences and soliciting suggestions for service improvement. Such interactions can help to establish closer relationships with customers who utilize the services. Furthermore, it is essential to establish convenient and easily accessible communication channels for customers to contact the fitness center. This helps to create and develop mutual value between the service provider and the customer, as well as tailor service delivery according to customer needs.

6.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This research study primarily focused on respondents between the ages of 38 and 52 who utilize fitness centers in the Bangkok metropolitan area. Therefore, for future research, it is recommended to study a sample group consisting of individuals aged 18 to 37 or a sample of individuals residing in different provinces. This will allow for the investigation and comparison of customer behaviors in the context of fitness center businesses within the demographic and geographic context. It ensures that the obtained results are not biased towards any particular age group.

Furthermore, this research employed a quantitative survey methodology for data collection. It is suggested that future studies incorporate qualitative data collection methods to supplement and enrich the research findings. For example, using a fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) (Manosuthi et al., 2022a) to investigate customer behaviors in various dimensions or conducting a necessary condition analysis (Meeprom et al., 2023) to find a single essential factor for the desired outcome. Additionally, conducting further research on the impact of customer happiness on customer loyalty can contribute to the development of effective and suitable service strategies.

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