

Abstract

Title: Quality of sports services in private day care centers specializing in preschool education in Prague

Objectives: The primary aim of this dissertation is to propose a suitable procedure for measuring the quality of sports services in private institutions specializing in pre-school education in Prague, from the customer's point of view.

Methods: This study focuses on assessing the quality of sports services offered to children in private kindergartens. The study was conducted in the Czech Republic on a sample of ten private kindergartens based in Prague, which were selected from a register of private kindergartens compiled by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) model of service quality, which was modified for the kindergarten environment, was used for the measurement. 510 parents participated in marketing research, representing 534 children. The questionnaire used, which was originally validated in the US, was transculturally translated. Three translators specializing in pre-school education participated in this intercultural transfer. The results of the survey were subjected to structural modeling, namely confirmatory and explorative factor analysis, and new modified versions of the questionnaire were designed based on their results.

Results: Marketing research suggests that almost all of the private nursery schools surveyed do not meet parents' expectations. Only the Andílek and Trojská labuť kindergartens show a positive quality gap, with values of 0.98 (Andílek) and 0.73 (Trojská labuť). On the contrary, the parents perceive the worst quality of provided sports services in the PlayWisely (-13.87) and Happy Point (-12.83) kindergartens. No gap exceeds the -20 limit and therefore the sports services provided in the institutions under study can be considered to be of high quality. The overall gap observed in all kindergartens reached a value of -3.29, which can also be described as negligible. The resulting data was verified by confirmatory analysis, with the original model showing chi-square statistic at 866.41, CFI 0.870, TLI 0.890, RMSEA 0.091 and SRMR 0.111. Based on the data obtained, the model was simplified and the number of indicators was reduced to 7. The simplified version exhibited good chi-square statistic at 113.12, CFI 0.920, TLI 0.910, RMSEA 0.004 and SRMR 0.019 from the conceptual equivalence point

of view. The simplified version offers a quick and concise tool to verify the satisfaction of the parents with the service provided, but the results obtained are mainly truncated, and therefore the tool is only suitable as a framework. The results of the exploratory analysis have shown that more than five factors that have been redefined as a pro-client approach, individual approach, sports field, professionalism, and physical activity cannot be identified in the data. This model also shows relatively good fit indexes, namely chi-square 282.59, CFI 0.890, TLI 0.760, RMSEA 0.048 and SRMR 0.036. This version of the model is also suitable for assessing parents' satisfaction with the quality of sports services provided in private kindergartens.

Keywords: Private preschool day care centers, quality of service, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty