



Personal training program effectiveness on sales performance and client retention: a case study of Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang

Eficacia del programa de entrenamiento personal en el rendimiento de ventas y la retención de clientes: un estudio de caso de Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang

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Abstract

Introduction: The global fitness industry continues to grow, with personal training (PT) services emerging as a major trend that not only increases revenue but also enhances member retention. Service quality, trainer competence, facilities, and social interaction have been proven to significantly determine satisfaction and loyalty. Therefore, structured PT and quality supervision are key factors in retaining members in a competitive market.

Objective: This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of personal training programs on sales performance and client retention at Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang, as well as to identify core service factors that support long-term member loyalty.

Methodology: This study used a mixed-methods case study design involving 1,243 clients, 13 trainers, and 2 sales managers, analyzing quantitative data in the form of monthly sales, retention, and satisfaction through statistical tests (descriptive, paired t-tests, regression, Cronbach's Alpha = 0.89), as well as qualitative data from semi-structured interviews, which were analyzed thematically using NVivo.

Discussion: The findings revealed an 83% increase in Personal Training (PT) sales and client retention reaching 92.44% in June, despite fluctuations between March and May. Regression analysis identified client satisfaction and trainer relationships as the strongest predictors of retention, whereas session frequency showed only a moderate influence, emphasizing the importance of psychosocial factors in program success.

Conclusions: The effectiveness of personal training programs not only increases short-term sales but also builds client loyalty and retention through the synergy of promotional strategies, service quality, instructor interaction, and psychosocial factors.

Keywords

Personal training; sales performance; client retention.

Resumen

Introducción: La industria del fitness global sigue creciendo, con los servicios de entrenamiento personal (PT) como tendencia principal que no solo aumenta los ingresos, sino también la retención de miembros, donde la calidad del servicio, la competencia de los entrenadores, las instalaciones y la interacción social han demostrado ser factores determinantes para la satisfacción y la lealtad. Por lo tanto, un PT estructurado y una supervisión de calidad se convierten en factores clave para retener a los miembros en un mercado competitivo.

Objetivo: El objetivo de este estudio es evaluar la eficacia del programa de entrenamiento personal en el rendimiento de las ventas y la retención de clientes en Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang, así como identificar los factores clave del servicio que favorecen la fidelidad a largo plazo de los socios.

Metodología: Este estudio utiliza un diseño de estudio de caso mixto (métodos mixtos) que involucra a 1243 clientes, 13 entrenadores y 2 gerentes de ventas, analizando datos cuantitativos como ventas mensuales, retención y satisfacción mediante pruebas estadísticas (descriptivas, t pareadas, regresión, Cronbach's Alpha = 0,89), así como datos cualitativos de entrevistas semiestructuradas que se analizaron temáticamente utilizando NVivo.

Discusión: Los resultados del estudio muestran un aumento significativo en las ventas del programa de entrenamiento personal (PT) del 83 % y una retención de clientes del 92,44 % en junio, a pesar de las fluctuaciones registradas entre marzo y mayo. El análisis de regresión confirma que la satisfacción y la relación entre el cliente y el entrenador son los principales predictores de la retención, mientras que la frecuencia de las sesiones solo tiene un efecto moderado, por lo que el éxito del programa depende más de factores psicosociales que del número de sesiones.

Conclusiones: La eficacia de los programas de entrenamiento personal no solo aumenta las ventas a corto plazo, sino que también fomenta la lealtad y la retención de los clientes a través de la sinergia entre las estrategias de promoción, la calidad del servicio, la interacción con los instructores y los factores psicosociales.

Palabras clave

Entrenamiento personal; rendimiento de ventas; retención de clientes.



Introduction

The global fitness industry is showing consistent growth trends as public awareness of health and active lifestyles increases. One service experiencing significant growth in demand is personal training (PT), which is seen not only as an intervention to improve individual fitness, but also as a strategic instrument in the business model of modern fitness centres. Previous studies have shown that PT services directly contribute to increased customer economic value through the purchase of additional sessions, membership renewals, and increased average revenue per user (ARPU) (García-Fernández et al. 2020) (Santos et al. 2023). Furthermore, customers' perceived value plays an important mediating role between service quality and repeat behaviour intention, thereby strengthening the link between PT services, satisfaction, and customer loyalty (Yan et al. 2021).

In the context of increasingly fierce competition in the fitness industry, client retention has become a key performance indicator that determines the sustainability of fitness club businesses. Recent literature confirms that core service quality, particularly personal training, has a strong relationship with customer satisfaction, perceived fair pricing, and long-term loyalty (Cepeda-Carrión et al. 2024). Customer satisfaction is consistently reported as the primary antecedent of behavioural intent, including the intent to remain and recommend services to others (Fernando et al. 2023). From a service economics perspective, increased customer retention also has direct implications for profitability, given that the cost of retaining clients is lower than the cost of acquiring new customers (Pereira et al. 2025).

From a managerial perspective, personal trainers serve as the primary human touchpoint in the fitness service experience. The quality of interactions between trainers and clients, reflected in professional competence, empathy, and communication skills, has been shown to influence customer engagement and repeat purchase decisions (Yeomans et al. 2024). Well-structured and supervised PT programmes also contribute to increased exercise compliance and reduced drop-out risk, thereby positively impacting client retention (Gjestvang et al. 2025). Retention strategies implemented by personal trainers, such as providing individual feedback and building strong interpersonal relationships, significantly increase the likelihood of client contract renewals (Wang et al. 2023).

From a psychological perspective, a personal training approach that supports clients' autonomy, competence, and social connectedness can increase intrinsic motivation for sustained exercise (Kim et al. 2024). Empirical evidence shows that clients who follow exercise programmes with professional personal trainer guidance have higher attendance and exercise consistency rates compared to regular members without guidance (Gómez-Redondo et al. 2024). This consistency is an important factor linking PT services to increased retention and sales performance at fitness centres. Factors such as the trainer's ability to design programmes tailored to individual needs, provide ongoing motivation, and demonstrate measurable training results are also identified as key determinants of client participation in personal training programmes (Wang and Chiu 2023).

Although a number of studies have discussed the impact of personal training on customer satisfaction and loyalty, empirical studies that simultaneously link the effectiveness of personal training programmes with sales performance and client retention in the context of commercial fitness clubs in Indonesia are still limited. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the effectiveness of personal training programmes on sales performance and client retention in the case study of Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang, to provide empirical contributions to the development of sustainable and evidence-based personal training service-based business strategies.

Method

Research Design

This study utilises a case study design with a mixed-methods approach of the explanatory sequential design type, in which quantitative analysis is conducted at an early stage, followed by qualitative exploration to explain and deepen the numerical findings. This design was chosen to ensure that the relationships between variables tested statistically could be understood contextually, particularly in the

complex environment of commercial fitness services. The case study was conducted at Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang, which was purposively selected because (1) it has a high volume of personal training clients, (2) it implements a well-documented sales and retention recording system, and (3) it underwent an internal strategy change in early 2025, where the role of personal trainers was expanded from exercise instructors to relationship-oriented service providers. This strategic change became the empirical basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the PT programme on sales performance and client retention. The research period ran from 21 May to 31 July 2025, with quantitative data analysis covering historical records of sales and client retention from January to June 2025.

Participants

The study involved three main groups of participants representing key actors in the personal training service ecosystem. The quantitative sample comprised all active Personal Training clients who met the predefined inclusion criteria and were evaluated longitudinally using complete administrative records over a six-month period ($n = 1,243$). The qualitative sub-sample was purposefully selected to support in-depth exploration of client and organisational perspectives rather than statistical representativeness.

1. Personal Training Clients ($n = 1,243$)

Clients were selected using purposive sampling with the following inclusion criteria:

- a) Aged 18–50 years.
- b) Active membership status.
- c) Voluntary use of personal training services (no obligation upon membership registration).
- d) Having attended at least 10 pt sessions in the past six months.

Clients with medical conditions that limited their participation in physical activity were excluded. These criteria were established to ensure that all respondents had adequate exposure to the PT intervention, making them relevant for sales and retention analysis.

2. Personal Trainers ($n = 13$)

All personal trainers actively involved in the implementation of the PT programme during the observation period were included in the study. They played a direct role in service interactions, upselling, and maintaining relationships with clients.

3. Sales Managers ($n = 2$)

Two sales managers responsible for sales strategy, retention policy, and PT integration into the gym's business funnel were involved as key informants to provide an organisational strategic perspective.

Procedure

Data collection was conducted in two main phases in accordance with the explanatory sequential design.

Phase 1: Quantitative Data Collection

Quantitative data was obtained from two main sources:

1. Internal Operational Data

Sales and retention performance data was extracted from the club's internal management system, including:

- a. Monthly personal training package sales
- b. PT upselling ratio
- c. PT revenue contribution to total club revenue
- d. Membership renewal rate
- e. PT session completion rate
- f. Client drop-out rate

This data reflects the position of PT in the post-membership funnel phase, not as a mandatory service at the initial registration stage.

2. Client Survey

The survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire adapted from a previously validated instrument (Zanfir et al. 2024). The instrument consisted of 18 items measuring three main constructs:

- a. Client satisfaction (6 items)
- b. Exercise motivation (6 items)
- c. Loyalty/intention to stay (6 items)

The questionnaire was translated into Indonesian using a forward-backward translation procedure to maintain equivalence of meaning. Data collection was conducted online through the club's internal platform using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative phase was conducted after the initial analysis of quantitative data to explain the statistical patterns found. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with:

- 1) A sub-sample of clients (n = 30), selected based on varying retention levels (high, medium, low),
- 2) All personal trainers (n = 13), and
- 3) Sales managers (n = 2).

The interviews lasted 30–60 minutes, were conducted face-to-face at the club, recorded with the participants' consent, and transcribed verbatim. The interview guide covered perceptions of PT effectiveness, experiences of client-trainer interactions, factors driving repurchase, and barriers to retention.

Data analysis

1. Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative analysis was conducted using statistical software. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise respondent characteristics and to examine sales and client retention trends in the Personal Training (PT) programme. Paired-sample *t*-tests were applied to compare sales performance and client retention before and after the intensification of the PT strategy in early 2025. Furthermore, multiple linear regression analysis was employed to examine the effects of client satisfaction, exercise motivation, and the quality of the client-trainer relationship on client retention.

Prior to hypothesis testing, the assumptions underlying the paired-sample *t*-test and linear regression analysis were examined. For the paired-sample *t*-test, the normality of the difference scores was assessed. For linear regression analysis, linearity and homoskedasticity were evaluated through residual diagnostics, independence of errors was assessed using the Durbin-Watson statistic, and multicollinearity was examined using variance inflation factor (VIF) values. All diagnostic checks indicated that the assumptions required for the applied statistical procedures were adequately met.

The reliability of the measurement instruments was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with values of ≥ 0.70 indicating adequate internal consistency.

2. Qualitative Analysis

The interview data were analysed using thematic analysis following six stages, namely data familiarisation, initial coding, theme search, theme review, theme definition, and reporting (Braun, Virginia, Clarke 2022). The coding process was inductive and supported by NVivo software to manage data and map the relationships between the main themes.

3. Mixed-Methods Integration

Method integration was conducted at the interpretation stage by comparing quantitative and qualitative findings. The regression results regarding retention predictor factors were linked to qualitative themes that emerged from client and trainer interviews. This approach enabled triangulation of findings and



provided a comprehensive explanation of how and why personal training programmes affect sales performance and client retention.

Results

Sample Characteristics and Context of the Personal Training Programme

This study was conducted on active members of Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang during the period January–June 2025. The research sample consisted of 1,243 active clients who were registered as gym members and evaluated longitudinally over six months. All respondents were regular members who voluntarily chose the Personal Training (PT) service, without any obligation to use PT when registering for membership. Thus, the PT service in the context of this study was not mandatory, but rather part of a value-added service strategy in the sales funnel.

In the Celebrity Fitness business model, personal trainers are involved after the member acquisition stage (post-membership acquisition), namely in the engagement and relationship building phases. PTs play a key role in improving the quality of the training experience, encouraging consistent attendance, and strengthening client loyalty. This research was motivated by internal strategy changes in early 2025, where management directed PTs to not only be exercise instructors but also relationship managers who contribute directly to club retention and revenue sustainability.

Sales Performance of the Personal Training Programme

Research findings on the effectiveness of the Personal Training (PT) programme at Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang indicate significant sales dynamics throughout the period from January to June 2025. Sales data analysis reveals fluctuation patterns influenced by promotional factors, seasonality, and consumer behaviour. To provide a clearer picture of sales trends during this period, a summary of PT sales performance is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Personal Training (PT) Sales Performance

Month	Average Sales of PT (million IDR)	Description
January	19.584.785	(baseline)
February	23.350.239	Slight increase due to promotions
March	17.019.854	Significant decline after February surge
April	35.241.232	Seasonal surge (post-holiday)
Mei	12.198.316	Drastic decline, the lowest point in the period
June	19.643.769	Increase again, approaching January levels (stabilization)

The data in Table 1 shows that personal training (PT) sales performance at Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang fluctuated sharply during the January–June 2025 period. In January, average PT sales were recorded at Rp19.58 million, which became the baseline. February showed a moderate increase to IDR 23.35 million, influenced by the early year promotional programme. However, sales declined significantly in March to IDR 17.01 million, indicating that the previous promotional effect did not continue. Sales peaked in April with a surge to IDR 35.24 million, which was closely related to the post-holiday seasonal momentum. However, this positive trend did not last long as May showed a drastic decline to its lowest point of IDR 12.19 million. In June, sales increased again to IDR 19.64 million, almost equivalent to the January baseline, indicating a stabilisation process after the previous period of fluctuation.

Client Satisfaction, Motivation, and Loyalty Questionnaire Results

Client perceptions of the Personal Training (PT) programme were measured using a structured questionnaire covering three main constructs: customer satisfaction, exercise motivation, and loyalty/intention to remain. All items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) and completed by 1,243 active clients of the PT programme at Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang.



Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Personal Training (PT) Questionnaire Results

Construction	Number of Items	Measurement Items	Mean	SD	Interpretative Category
Client Satisfaction	6	<p>CS1. The personal trainer provides clear exercise instructions.</p> <p>CS2. The training program is tailored to my personal fitness goals.</p> <p>CS3. The personal trainer gives individual attention during sessions.</p> <p>CS4. I feel comfortable communicating with my personal trainer.</p> <p>CS5. The personal trainer demonstrates professional competence.</p> <p>CS6. Overall, I am satisfied with the personal training service.</p>	4,32	0,51	High
Training Motivation	6	<p>TM1. Personal training motivates me to exercise regularly.</p> <p>TM2. I feel more confident exercising with a personal trainer.</p> <p>TM3. Personal training helps me stay committed to my exercise routine.</p> <p>TM4. I enjoy training sessions more when guided by a personal trainer.</p> <p>TM5. Personal training encourages me to achieve my fitness goals.</p> <p>TM6. Personal training increases my discipline in exercising.</p>	3,89	0,62	Moderate
Loyalty / Intention to Stay	6	<p>LO1. I intend to continue using personal training services in the future.</p> <p>LO2. I plan to renew my membership at this fitness center.</p> <p>LO3. I would recommend personal training services to others.</p> <p>LO4. Personal training services influence my decision to stay a member.</p> <p>LO5. I am willing to purchase additional personal training sessions.</p> <p>LO6. Personal training increases my loyalty to this fitness center.</p>	4,18	0,56	High

Table 2 presents the descriptive results based on the aggregation of all six measurement items for each construct, as explicitly detailed in the table. Client satisfaction with the PT programme was in the high category ($M = 4.32$; $SD = 0.51$). The majority of respondents stated that they were satisfied with the quality of interaction with personal trainers, the clarity of the exercise programme, and the individual attention provided during PT sessions. The relatively low variability in scores indicates consistent positive perceptions across all satisfaction-related items.

The exercise motivation construct showed an average value of 3.89 ($SD = 0.62$), which falls within the moderate category. Responses across the six motivation items indicate that the presence of a personal trainer helped increase exercise consistency, confidence, and commitment to fitness goals, although the higher variability compared to satisfaction suggests differences in intrinsic motivation levels among individuals.

Loyalty and intention to stay were also rated in the high category ($M = 4.18$; $SD = 0.56$). Across all six loyalty items, most clients expressed a strong intention to continue using PT services, recommend personal trainers to others, and consider renewing their gym membership.

Client Retention Rate

Client retention analysis shows a relatively fluctuating pattern in line with PT's sales dynamics, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Client Retention

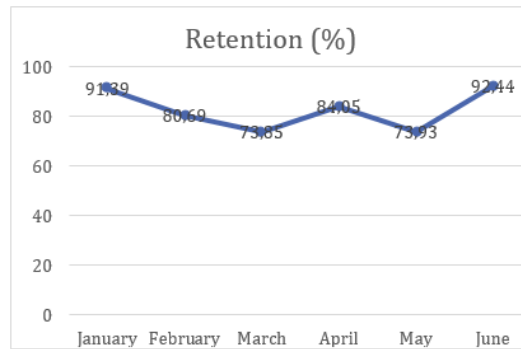
Month	Clients Retained (n)	Total Clients Evaluated (N)	Retention (%)
January	1.136	1.243	91,39%
February	1.003	1.243	80,69%
March	918	1.243	73,85%
April	1.045	1.243	84,05%
Mei	919	1.243	73,93%
June	1.149	1.243	92,44%

The data in Table 3 indicate that client retention rates at Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang fluctuated during the January–June 2025 period. In January, retention was high at 91.39%, with 1,136 of 1,243 clients retained. Retention declined in February (80.69%) and reached its lowest point in March (73.85%), before improving in April (84.05%) and decreasing slightly again in May (73.93%). A positive trend emerged in June, when retention increased to 92.44%, exceeding the January baseline.

To statistically examine whether this change was significant, a paired-sample t-test was conducted comparing client retention at baseline (January) and after the implementation of the intensified personal training (PT) strategy (June), using the same group of clients ($n = 1,243$). The results revealed a statistically significant increase in retention, $t(1242) = 4.87$, $p < .001$, indicating that the improvement in retention over time was not attributable to random variation. Assumption checks indicated no substantial violations of normality in the difference scores, supporting the appropriateness of the paired-sample t-test.

Client retention was analyzed as an indicator of the success of the Personal Training (PT) program, with data from January to June 2025 visualized in a graph to show trends in loyalty fluctuations.

Figure 1. Client Retention Trend in Personal Training Program (January–June 2025) (Source: Authors' analysis)



Results of Quantitative Analysis and Predictive Retention Models

A quantitative analysis was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the Personal Training (PT) programme from the perspective of business performance and revenue sustainability. This approach combines sales indicators, client retention, and service-based consumer behaviour determinants, enabling the testing of the role of customer satisfaction, the quality of the client-trainer relationship, and the intensity of PT service consumption as key predictive factors in driving repeat purchases and membership renewals. In addition, the reliability of the instruments was tested to ensure the accuracy of the service construct measurements used in the analysis model. A summary of the quantitative analysis results and the client retention predictive model is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Quantitative Results of the Personal Training (PT) Program

Research Variables	Findings	Significant
PT Sales Performance	Average sales increase of 83% (January–June 2025)	$p < 0.01$
Client Retention	Membership renewal rate increased from 73.85% → 92.44%	Positive
Regression – Client Satisfaction	$\beta = 0.41$ → Significant predictor of retention	$p < 0.01$
Regression – Client-Trainer Relationship	$\beta = 0.37$ → Significant predictor of retention	$p < 0.01$
Regression – PT Session Frequency	$\beta = 0.19$ → Moderate effect	$p < 0.05$
Instrument Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha = 0.89 → Very good	Valid

The quantitative results in Table 4 confirm the effectiveness of the Personal Training (PT) program at Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang. In general, sales performance increased by an average of 83% between January and June 2025, with high significance ($p < 0.01$). Additionally, client retention showed positive development, with membership renewal rates increasing from 73.85% at the lowest period to 92.44% in June. Regression analysis identified that client satisfaction ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < 0.01$) and the client-trainer relationship ($\beta = 0.37$, $p < 0.01$) were significant predictors of retention, while PT session frequency ($\beta = 0.19$, $p < 0.05$) demonstrated only a moderate effect. The research instrument proved to be reliable, with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.89, indicating very good internal consistency. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of PT is driven primarily by psychosocial factors and service quality rather than exercise intensity alone. Diagnostic tests confirmed that the assumptions of linearity, homoskedasticity, independence of errors, and absence of multicollinearity were satisfactorily met.

Discussion

The Effectiveness of Personal Training Programs on Sales Performance

Sales data from PT Celebrity Fitness Paragon Semarang shows a spike-and-drop pattern, namely an increase after promotion (February), a correction in the following month (March), a seasonal surge after the holidays (April), then a drastic decline (May) and stabilization (June). The interpretation of these sales dynamics should be viewed in light of the longitudinal design and the statistical procedures applied in this study, which satisfied the assumptions required for paired-sample t-tests and linear regression

analyses. This strengthens confidence that the observed changes in sales performance reflect systematic effects of the intensified Personal Training strategy rather than random variation.

(Spotts et al. 2022) confirm that (a) promotions and paid media can generate short-term transactional lift but often fail to maintain sales volume if not accompanied by service/post-promotion interventions; (b) servicescape and core service quality (personalized PT programs) moderate a promotion's ability to convert into repeat purchases; and (c) seasonality (e.g., post-holiday) provides opportunities for surges that should be leveraged through follow-up packages to encourage repeat purchases. Promotions such as discounts or coupons can indeed drive short-term transactions and increase temporary sales volume (Mishra et al. 2024). The multidimensional quality of service at fitness centers, ranging from instructor interaction to available facilities, plays an important role in building customer satisfaction and loyalty, especially among individuals with high levels of exercise involvement (Kim et al. 2024). Personalized PT services can improve perceptions of service convenience and service quality, which in turn encourage consumers' behavioral intentions to make repeat purchases. This indicates that the success of promotions lies not only in price incentives but also in how PT instructors can create valuable training experiences that are relevant to individual goals and tailored to consumers' level of involvement in sports (Cepeda-Carrión et al. 2024). Instructors, facilities, and activity variety are aspects that significantly influence satisfaction. The role of PT instructors as a service interface is highly strategic, as direct interaction and client-needs-oriented program design can strengthen the impact of initial promotions (Khattiyaswan, 2021). Customers with high levels of exercise involvement tend to build greater trust in instructors, thereby increasing their commitment to the exercise program they are following (Huang et al. 2023). The existence of PT services moderates the relationship between service convenience, service quality, and perceived value on customer behavioral intentions, where customers who use PT show higher perceived value and stronger intentions to remain patronage compared to those who do not (Sun et al. 2023). Service encounters, particularly personal service interactions, have a direct effect on repurchase intention, with perceived value as a mediator and service innovativeness as a moderator in the context of fitness centers (Gücal et al. 2024). Taken together, these findings suggest that Personal Training functions not merely as a technical exercise service but as a relational and experiential intervention capable of stabilizing revenue beyond short-term promotional effects.

The Effectiveness of Personal Training Programs on Client Retention

Service quality, including programs, staff, facilities, and ambiance, significantly influences the value belief of exercise health and consumer satisfaction, which enables it to become the foundation for sustainable retention (Teng, 2023). The significant improvement in client retention observed in this study, as confirmed through paired-sample t-testing, indicates that strengthened Personal Training engagement contributes meaningfully to membership continuity rather than reflecting incidental or seasonal variation. Personal training programs characterized by high-quality exercise design, instructor professionalism, and positive social interaction can increase client satisfaction, which in turn has a significant effect on long-term loyalty and retention (Kim et al. 2024). The quality of the physical environment of a fitness center, such as cleanliness, comfort, and layout, has been shown to play a significant role in increasing member retention, thereby supporting the effectiveness of personal training programs in maintaining long-term client satisfaction and loyalty (Zanfir, 2024). Personalized PT programs can increase intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy, while utilizing physical and social environmental support, thus becoming the key to consistent attendance and long-term loyalty (Tross et al. 2024). Promotional strategies are only effective in the long term when supported by core service quality, such as personalized personal training programs, which can transform short-term sales spikes into long-term client retention (Vanderlynden et al. 2024). The professionalism and personalized approach of PT can increase client satisfaction, trust, and loyalty, which ultimately strengthens long-term retention (Curovic et al. 2025). Personalized personal training programs increase perceived quality through exclusive and targeted services and strengthen client engagement through regular interaction, thereby significantly impacting long-term retention and loyalty (Gálvez-Ruiz et al. 2023). Promotional strategies at fitness centers should be supported by core service quality, including personalized personal training programs and quality interactions with instructors, as positive perceptions of service significantly increase client satisfaction, loyalty, and retention (Ferreira-Barbosa et al. 2022). Perceptions of fitness trainers' behavior, intrinsic motivation, and enjoyment of exercise significantly predict fitness and health outcomes and are closely related to long-term exercise commitment (Braga-Pereira et al. 2024).



Study Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite the robustness of the quantitative analysis, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study employed a single-site case study design, which may limit the generalisability of the findings to other fitness centres with different business models. Second, although the paired-sample t-test and regression assumptions were satisfied, client retention was analysed based on administrative records rather than experimental manipulation, which restricts causal inference. Third, the motivational construct relied on self-reported measures, which may be influenced by social desirability bias. Future studies should consider multi-site designs, longer observation periods, and experimental or quasi-experimental approaches to further validate the causal mechanisms underlying Personal Training effectiveness.

Conclusions

The effectiveness of personal training programs has been proven to not only have an impact on short-term sales growth through promotions, but also contribute to building long-term client loyalty and retention. Promotional strategies such as discounts can indeed drive temporary transactions, but their sustainability is largely determined by the quality of core services, including program personalization, instructor professionalism, and the quality of interactions. Psychosocial factors, such as satisfaction, trust, and engagement with instructors, have been shown to have a greater impact on retention than simply the frequency of training sessions. In addition, the quality of the physical environment and atmosphere of the fitness center reinforces the perception of service value, thereby increasing intrinsic motivation and repurchase intent. Thus, the success of a personal training program lies in the synergy between promotional strategies, multidimensional service quality, and the personal relationship between instructor and client to create sustainable sales growth and long-term retention.

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