

POPULATION AGING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS TO MARKETING MANAGEMENT: AN INVESTIGATION IN THE SECTOR OF GYM ACADEMIES

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ABSTRACT

This work aims at analysing how gym academies are responding to the phenomenon of population ageing. Some research and studies have already pointed out specific needs of the elderly segment. However, this work intends to discuss the aging market and the supply of sports services and academies for individuals over 40 years old (the aging segment), who start to present physical needs and limitations associated with the aging process. The research approach is qualitative descriptive and the data was obtained through interviews with owners or staff of academies located in the metropolitan region of Campinas. The analysis of the results indicated the recognition of the potential of senior and mature consumers (between 40-59 years old). However none of the respondents had practices and services that exclusively met the needs of this group of consumers. In this context, the research sought to identify the factors and attributes most relevant to the supply of services of academies to the aging public, based on the recognition of the opportunity and the potential posed by this market. The study presents some contribution to the area of marketing services, as also adds relevant aspects to the development of businesses that seek this potential market.

Keywords: Aging/ageing, sports segment, sports marketing

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1 INTRODUCTION

Nogueira et al. (2008) state that the age distribution of Brazilian population has changed in the last 10 years, and the increase in longevity is already a reality and indicates the need to understand the impact of population aging to the social, organizational and consumer spheres (LOCATELLI; FONTOURA, 2013).

This work is one of such initiatives, since it proposes to investigate how companies in the sports services sector, especially gym academies have responded to the phenomenon of aging of the Brazilian population.

In Brazilian Portuguese, "the third age" is an expression that refers to people over 60, because at that age the population in general retires, marking the beginning of a new stage of life (KELLY; RIBAS; COSTA, 2010). Multiple studies have already been carried out to understand the elderly, their preferences and motivations. However, comparatively little research has been done on mature adults who reached the age of 40-59.

The IBGE projections (2013) show that in 2050 the population aged between 40 and 59 will be the largest in relation to all other age groups. At this age the present work calls them "aging". Term that has means senescent, which has been used in academic articles and makes an analogy to adolescent, reflecting a stage of preparation for old age, just as adolescence is a preparation for adulthood (LOTH; SILVEIRA, 2012).

People over the age of fifty are increasingly busier and representatively more relevant and have their own characteristics, such as the loss of joviality, which may influence consumption behavior, and are worth more specific research (LOTH; SILVEIRA, 2012).

The debates about population aging are among the areas of interest in Administration and Marketing studies, but are still rarely discussed in Brazil, when compared to the number of research groups and published works by health and non-applied human sciences (LOCATELLI; FONTOURA, 2013).

Through a qualitative meta-analysis, carried out in the Annals of the National Meeting of Graduate Programs in Administration - ENANPAD - (from 1997 to 2015), in all thematic sections, using the following keywords: aging, elderly, third age, it was seen that the phenomenon has attracted studies in the area of Marketing and People Management, with a greater concentration of studies published in these two areas.

In the Marketing area there is a concentration of studies on population aging under the theme of consumer behavior. According to Slongo et al. (2009) this area arose in the 1980s, seeking to deepen the understanding regarding this public with the purpose of creating marketing action directives.

According to Locatelli and Fontoura (2013) the works on aging published in the marketing area start from the understanding that the elderly represent a group with high potential of consumption, that have income and time, and being heterogeneous, they can be segmented according to variables like gender (SLONGO et al., 2009 apud Locatelli; Fontoura, 2013); social class (BACHA; PEREZ; VIANNA, 2006; FARIAS; SANTOS, 1998; LADEIRA; GUEDES; BRUNI, 2003; UGALDE; SLONGO, 2006 apud Locatelli; Fontoura, 2013); and location, (AMARO; MEIRA, 2006; ANJOS NETO; SOUZA NETO; GONÇALVES, 2002; LADEIRA; GUEDES; BRUNI, 2003; LOUREIRO et al., 2003 apud Locatelli; Fontoura, 2013 apud Locatelli; Fontoura, 2013).

Based on the assumption that Marketing is the activity, the set of knowledge and processes to create, communicate, deliver and exchange offers that have value for consumers, clients, partners and society as a whole (AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION, 2013), it is per-

continent to study how the actions and practices of Marketing are at the same time affecting and being affected by the aging of the population and, in specific, with regard to the sector of sports services.

Sports are a thorough passion of Brazilians and according to IBOPE research, the biggest passion of Brazilians over 18 is soccer (77%), followed by beer (35%), carnival (30%) and barbecue (20%) (IBOPE, 2013).

The sports sector and the gym academy market have been growing at an intense rate and this places Brazil as the world's eighth sports power, because in recent years the sports sector has grown more than Brazilian economy. Between 2000 and 2012 the average rate of GDP growth was 3.2% and the average growth of sports was 6.2%, and it is estimated that for every R\$ 1,00 invested in sports infrastructure, R\$ 6.50 is invested in retail and marketing (SPITZ, 2012). This makes specialized and qualified management necessary to people who are interested in sports, leaders of clubs, fans, sponsoring companies, among others (TESTA, 2009).

The research problem is thus defined: how are sports academies responding to the phenomenon of aging from the point of view of market management and service provision? The objective is to identify aspects related to this market segment and its more specific needs, seeking to embase market decisions regarding a more aged target public.

The present study is justified by contributing to researches in the area of Administration and Marketing studies on Consumer Behavior, providing greater knowledge of how companies adapt their efforts to better serve this segment: how it is perceived, what its characteristics and main specificities are, implications and consequences to the marketing efforts, providing subsidies for organizations to act in a more conscious and planned way when it comes to the process of population aging. It looks into two important aspects: 1) the market management in a significant economic sector, sports; and 2) from the perspective of a relevant, albeit very rarely studied public until this moment.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Marketing of sports services and gym academies

Vance, Nassif and Masteralexis (2015) argue that sports marketing can be seen as a set of activities that aim at identifying and satisfying consumer needs within the sports field. They also report that the sports area is related not only to sports apparel (such as clothing and equipment), but also to events, competitions and entities (such as athletes, teams, federations, etc.).

The same authors, mentioning Mullin's study; Hardy; Sutton (2000 apud Vance, Nassif, Masteralexis, 2015), explain that non-sports brands may also be associated with this type of marketing because they use sport to propagate their brand, usually trying to relate sports values (such as teamwork, improvement, etc.) to the values of the brand itself. For example, sponsors who have their brands on soccer players' uniforms.

For Mattar and Mattar (2013, p. 114), Sports Marketing is nothing more than, "an adaptation of the marketing concepts to the particular reality resulting from the scenario and environment experienced in the sport context and the institutions in it."

Morgan and Summers (2008, p. 07) define Sports Marketing, under a management perspective, as an application of the four elements of the Marketing Mix (4P's): Price, Product, Promotion and Point of Sale, specifically in a context of sports, all designed to meet the needs of the clients of the sport, whether they are individual consumers, sports practitioners or players and corporate investors.

According to ACAD Brasil (Brazilian Association of Academies, 2015), the Brazilian has presented a behavioral change that interferes with the consumption of these sports services. If before physical activities were practiced only by great lovers of physical fitness, now the demand for quality of life, health and well-being leads to a greater diversification of the consumer public for this sector.

Additionally, Almeida (2013) detected a change of behavior that has for some time been making first attempts at increasingly better serving the various markets in this sector. With the consumers searching for exclusive and personalized services, gym academies and companies that offer these services are, increasingly, being segmented to cater for specific segments and groups like the female, children, elderly etc.

In this context, it is paramount to understand the characteristics of services and how they differ from the offer of products. That's because services can be defined as economic activities that deliver benefits and add value to customers at specified times and places and make changes through what customers want. In this context, service marketing actions differ from product marketing actions due to the characteristics of services such as intangibility, customer involvement in the process, variability, heterogeneity, perishability, simultaneity, difficulty of evaluation by clients, lack of inventory, among others (LOVELOCK; WRIGHT, 2009).

The intangibility in services for Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (2010) and Lovelock and Wright (2009), is characterized by the fact that the client does not get possession of something tangible when receiving a service, however there might be some tangible elements in the execution of these services and activities, seeking to improve the quality of the services.

Another fundamental aspect pointed out by the authors is how widely the conditions in which the services are performed vary, since they occur in the presence and contemplate the involvement of the client in the process, causing the variability of inputs and products during the execution of the services. Thus, it is difficult for companies to maintain a quality control of their offerings, which represents a strong difficulty for the client evaluation process (FITZSIMMONS and FITZSIMMONS, 2010).

It is worth mentioning that, unlike the products, the services can not be stored, since their consumption occurs simultaneously to the delivery. Thus it can be said that the perishability of service together with the involvement of clients in the process, makes time crucial for services, therefore companies need to take into account the time that customers are willing to wait, since the time factor is increasingly valued by individuals. This feature, according to Lovelock and Wright (2009), becomes a challenge for companies in the management of their operations, because at certain moments these can be idle production and at other times very high levels of demand.

In addition, since these activities are based on experience and trust attributes, their evaluation becomes more complex because clients can only evaluate the process during or after consumption of the services, and find it difficult to judge their performance (LOVELOCK; WRIGHT, 2009).

In the competitive environment in which companies are currently inserted, combined with the difficulty of offering services, it is fundamental that companies understand consumer behavior and their decision-making process, seeking to create strategies in order to retain and attract customers. The success of a service provider also depends on their ability to develop relationships with customers and deliver quality services.

Consumer behavior studies indicate that satisfaction occurs when customer performance expectations are met or exceeded, but if this does not happen customers become dissatisfied and their expectations are frustrated. These expectations are formed as consumers receive information from various sources about the product. Customer satisfaction stems from the relationship between their expectations and the performance of the product in question, so

customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction will determine their future behavior, defining whether or not they will buy it again (KOTLER; KELLER, 2013).

According to Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2008), it is up to companies to understand the buying behavior of the customer, what their expectations regarding the product or service in order to satisfy them are, and it is important to consider that several factors, to be addressed in the next topic, influence decision making.

2.2 Consumer behavior and purchasing process of sports services and choice of gym academies

In the services offer, it is important to be aware of the needs of different consumer segments, seeking to understand how they react to service delivery (LOVELOCK; WRIGHT, 2009).

The process of buying services presented in the service marketing literature is divided into three stages: pre-purchase, consumption and meeting of services and post-purchase.

The first step is the process in which the consumer identifies the alternatives, weighs up the benefits and risks before making the decision. This stage is initiated through stimuli, which can lead consumers to buy. These occur through commercial signals, which result from promotional efforts; social clues, which derive from the individual's relationship groups, such as friends, family, etc., also of physical evidence, which are biological clues, such as hunger and thirst (HOFFMAN; BATESON, 2003).

The next step refers to the execution and delivery of the services, defined as meeting service, because the client interacts with the service provider. The meeting begins with a service request, which may be performed through a reservation, registration or request, such meetings may occur one or more times to assist decision making. Thus, it can be affected by a variety of factors such as service environments, service professionals, and support services. (LOVELOCK; WRIGHT, 2009). This is considered the most complex, since it consists of the experience that occurs through an interactive process between the client, the company and the environment of the client, even when the service is provided to a physical asset and not directly to the person, with several personal interactions. In this way it is believed that the evaluation of services also occurs at the time of the service use and not only in the post-purchase stage. This allows marketers to influence this assessment because they can communicate with customers during the service action (HOFFMAN; BATESON, 2003).

However, it is more difficult to determine and evaluate the attributes in services, due to their characteristics such as performance intangibility and variability. Since, in general, the services have few attributes of demand, being more related to the attributes of experience and trust, which hinders their quality control. In this way, marketer seek to provide customers with search attributes, such as providing free service experience and advertising (LOVELOCK; WRIGHT, 2009).

The evaluation of services is strongly affected by the degree of involvement of clients in the process, as these interact directly with service providers and the company's physical environment, thus generating variability in service delivery. In this way, it is necessary that companies seek to prevent strong variations in their activities, in order to maintain a constant level of quality over time (LOVELOCK; WRIGHT, 2009).

In order to provide sports services that ensure the success of the academies, it is necessary to identify the elements that consumers really want, since people look for this service in identifying a problem or a need, such as losing or gaining weight, hardening or defining muscles, improving posture, aesthetic appearance or social interaction. However, in the context of aging, these needs are different. Therefore, understanding the decision-making process of consumers who wish to begin physical exercise is fundamental for companies that seek to create marketing

strategies based on customer profiles. When mapping the needs for this type of service, clients seek information about academies and compare them for decision making, choosing those that best meet their needs (LEITE, 2000).

In the services offered by the academies, several attributes are relevant to the choice of clients, such as physical structure, proximity of the gym to the place of work or residence, front desk, hours of operation and profile of the participants. In addition, customers require that academies be flexible, available and offer a competitive price (CAMPOS, 2006).

Research developed by Moller (2014) in the Metropolitan Region of Campinas, seeking to map out the main attributes and motivations for the choice of academy, identified that the choice is determined especially by the following factors: the opinion and influence of others, price and payment conditions, when the individual identifies with the academy and makes his decision without further analysis, academy concept (reputation), style and quality. Also according to the author, the decision is also impacted by the way employees dress, cleanliness and decoration of the academies. Front desk is also an important factor, since clients need to be well attended and delighted, aiming at achievement, retention and loyalty.

The way the customer is received determines the first impressions of the client with the company, so the reception staff must be trained, always caring for the cordiality in the service. On the other hand, instructors must have a solid background and be always updated with market trends. Characteristics such as cordiality, motivation, trust and commitment to the well-being of those involved are also important. As for the experience and its importance to the choice of academies there can also be added the cordiality of the employees, material and equipment used, flexibility and adaptability of the services provided.

This research identified that the main reasons that lead individuals to attend gym academies are: the benefits that physical exercises bring to health, which is the most cited, with 92% agreement, among which the 6% are indifferent to the benefits that physical exercise brings, and only 2% disagree that this is the main reason for attending academies. The other reasons cited, in order of relevance were: to become more attractive, for 40% of respondents, where 26% are indifferent to this motive and 34% disagree with this statement. Avoiding obesity and being outside the standards set by society was considered important for 34% of the participants, but 40% disagreed that obesity is one of the most relevant reasons for attending academies. The fight against aging was analyzed as an important factor for the practice of physical exercises in the academies by only 16% of the respondents, 65% disagree that this is the main reason why they attend academies and 19% are indifferent. For 26% of respondents the academies act as a daily dose of ego injection, but 54% disagree. Only 16% of the participants affirm that they go to the gym academies to compare themselves to other people and feel better. As for the disagreement to this statement, the percentage obtained was 75%.

With the purpose of understanding the specific needs of the aging segment and presenting attributes of involvement and experiences, the segmentation of sports services and academies has been gaining more space in the sector, since clients look for exclusive and personalized services, some networks of academies have identified an opportunity to differentiate themselves from the mass market, focusing on specific audiences such as the female, children and the elderly.

2.3 Sports services and gym academies for the elderly

Aging people undergo physiological and behavioral changes, which make this group have specific needs (RODRIGUES; DIOGO, 2000). In addition, this group has new and different

features that represent great business potential. As aging is transforming society drastically, there are different ways of conducting the market changes as well, opening up infinite possibilities in the business and technological world (IRVING, 2014).

Some years ago, advertisements were exclusively aimed at young people, and the few times that they saw themselves as elders in advertisements, they were represented in a silly and prejudiced way. It is now known that the elderly respond to advertisements despite buying due to quality and not being inclined to buy on impulse. If directed to the right product, they are potential consumers, since they have the time, money and willingness to buy. Old people of some past generations were more conservative, while today they are more educated and influential than their fathers were. They do not just want to grow old, they want to be served and lead their active lives, travel, study, relocate in the job market, fall in love again and explore life with more experienced eyes. Adults over 40 are more concerned about health, social activities and comfort, have higher disposable income and spend this money not only on themselves but also on grandchildren, their children and parentes. (IRVING, 2014).

Proof of this demand for a better quality of life and proactivity is the fact that they represent 30% of those enrolled in academies throughout Brazil, compared to only 5% ten years ago. That is, almost one-third of the students in the academies are over 60 years of age representing a growing market segment with perspective of a lot of return to the fitness sector. Besides those, the aging (adults who have not yet reached the age of 40-59) are also seen more frequently in the academies. A study by the American College of Sports Medicine found that hard physical activity, such as bodybuilding, can minimize or stop the effects of osteoporosis, making it the most sought after by people over 50 years of age (ACAD-Brazil, 2012).

These changes and peculiar characteristics give companies a requirement for change and innovation in the offer of products and services to meet and stimulate this importante stratum of the population that presents singularities regarding the factors influencing the purchase decision, as they currently correspond to approximately 20 % of the country's purchasing power (SEGALLA; PEREZ, 2015).

With the increasing number of products and brands available, the opening of new markets, new distribution channels, shortening the product lifecycle and the fast pace of technological changes toughening competition, more and more information is necessary to support marketing activities implemented by professionals in the area. In this way, understanding the behavior of the aging consumer becomes increasingly relevant to the survival of companies in different markets, especially in the services offers.

According to Kotler and Keller (2006, p.236) "market segment consists of a group of consumers that have the same preferences". Thus, companies increasingly seek to segment the market; after all, the public today becomes more and more demanding. And to make more effective decisions they need to understand how their consumer thinks, acts and decides to buy their product. Thus, if the institution wishes to win a new audience according to Kotler and Fox (2004, p.396) "middle-aged women to part-time courses, it should consider whether their structure, functioning, physical, financial and human resources will be prepared to serve this new clientele. " This means that it is important to understand your client to be able to satisfy them.

Many companies already treat the elderly as a segment of the market that, according to Kotler and Keller (2006, p.238), "is a more narrowly defined group that seeks a mix of distinct benefits." The authors emphasize that this market has great potential, however, it is fundamental that companies understand their customers so efficiently that they become willing to pay a premium price for the delivery of differentiated services (KOTLER; KELLER, 2006). It is important

to remember that some social resources help them adjust in the environment to gain a positive outlook for psychological well-being. This includes autonomy for day-to-day tasks, good relationships with others, and recognition of their limitations. The elderly are able to adapt to different situations depending on the self-judgment that the individuals makes of themselves. The more positive the self-image and the recognition of physical limitations, the better the confrontation to difficult situations (RABELO; NERI, 2006).

The positive perception of the physical limitations of the elderly depends on historical-cultural factors and how they deal with this phase of life. Silva, Oliveira and Rabelo (2012) observed in a survey using a Likert scale (1 = very low and 5 = very high) that the average of the elderly for "personal acceptance" was 4.2, with a standard deviation of 0.5, it means that there is a high personal acceptance, the elderly accept and respect their difficulties and limitations.

Corazza (2014), in an interview at the Aging Portal, affirms that the elderly have changed and unlike decades ago, when they only went out to take care of their grandchildren and watch television, they are now proactive, participative, flexible and aware of the importance of physical activities for quality of life. According to this interview, the elderly have come to believe in their own potential and are no longer afraid of going to the gym. In addition, the author states that the motivation of the elderly to go to the gym is to maintain a healthy body and to be able to carry out daily activities independently, as well as new environments and new means of relating with different people, that is , seeking to relocate in society.

The seniors only seek to have a healthy body and so the return is fast. They do not have to work on the looks. For women, being able to move their arms to clinch their bra is already a relief. The elderly want independence to carry their purchases and tie their shoes, to have quality of life (CORAZZA, 2014).

However, Samulski (2009) observed that when people reach their 40s and 50s, mostly without physical activity, they undergo many changes in the body causing a change in self-concept, making the individual feel older. In this way, the chances of exercising for fear of injury, which supposedly can be caused by the exercises, and for fear of social criticism are further diminished.

In addition, a survey conducted by ACAD (2012) in partnership with PUC-RJ and PUC-SP estimated that 52.9% of the gym academies in Rio de Janeiro and 65.1% of those in São Paulo offered specific activities for the elderly, being bodybuilding, pilates and stretching the most sought after modalities.

In the Metropolitan Region of Campinas, in a study of 30 gym academies, 25 academies (83%) showed a specific program of physical activities for the elderly, while 5 academies (17%) did not present any specific program (FRANCESANTONIO, 2008). However, the study does not present any result associated with the aging market, which further justifies the development of research with this public.

Based on the theoretical framework presented, this work intends to map out how sports academies are responding to the phenomenon of aging from the point of view of market management and service offerings, starting with the identification of aspects related to the market segment and their more specific needs , seeking to sustain market decisions for an aging consumer audience.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research approach is qualitative descriptive, the data were obtained through recorded interviews and then transcribed, to participate it was necessary to fill out the Free and Informed Consent Term. The questions were semistructured generated from the theoretical mooring matrix. We interviewed six managers, owners or employees of organizations in the Campinas Region in the sports services sector. The purpose was to explore the phenomenon, understanding how the sports services organization has attracted and served the aging and elderly public. The professionals were selected for access availability during the period of data collection.

The sample was selected intentionally, therefore not probabilistic, and by accessibility or convenience, that fit the focus of the research. The analysis of the interview results was the starting point and we as many as needed were interviewed to reach the theoretical saturation, which according to Prado (2008), is when the interviews present similar answers and there are no additional data that contributes to the development of the elements to be studied.

The data were transcribed and analyzed using the content analysis technique, with the help of the matrix containing the answers and speeches of interviewees interspersed with comments and moorings focusing on our central issue of the study.

In order to maintain the privacy of the interviewees and their respective academies, "X" was designated to refer to the interviews and the numbering next to the letter is according to the order of occurrence of the interview.

- X1- Academy located in Campinas-SP offers various sports and classes, such as various martial arts, bodybuilding, spinning, gluteus exercice, swimming etc. It has three units in the city and different profiles of target audiences, according to the modality. The interviewee was a young woman with little more than two years of company and trained in Marketing.
- X2- Academy located in Catanduva-SP, offers various dance modalities such as jazz, tap dance, aero dance, "for you", and ballet, in addition to pilates. Its target audience is women and children of class A and B. The interview was given by the owner of the academy, an aging woman who has worked in the sector for more than 40 years and graduated in physical education.
- X3- Academy of Vinhedo-SP that offers bodybuilding, jiu jitsu, sanshou and zumba. Its students are mostly young men, except for the zumba class that attracts women of different ages, ranging from children to the elderly. The interview was given by the owner, 35 years old, trained in physical education and black belt of jiu-jitsu.
- X4- Academy located in Campinas-SP with the modalities: muay thai, jiu jitsu and boxing. Its target audience was described in the interview as "family", men and women, young and old. The interviewee was an adult between the ages of 35 and 40, black belt of Muay Thai for 15 years and owner of the establishment.
- X5- Academy in Campinas-SP offering pilates, modeling and relaxing massages and lymphatic drainage. Its main public is women aged 30 to 50 followed by older women. The interview was given by the owner, a young girl trained in physical therapy.
- X6- Academy in Campinas - SP focused on high performance bodybuilding, but also offers jiu-jitsu, muai-thai and stretching. The students are described as those who seek high performance and highly disciplined male majority and diverse age groups. A young, male employee responsible for the reception of students, among other

activities at night answered the interview. It also has a supplement store during day-time work hours.

4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the interviewees' reports, it was sought to understand how companies in the sports sector are behaving through the significant increase of aging people, over 40 years of age in the consumption of sports services and what characteristics and motivations the respondents perceive in the elderly and how they direct their strategic position to them according to these perceptions.

Characteristics of the aging public in the eyes of the interviewees

When asked how the aging public was identified, responses varied. In the interviews 1, 2, 5 and 6 the public in question was defined as someone who cares about health and quality of life both preemptively and for the treatment of pains and pathologies common to the age in question, highlighted by the interview 5. However, other characteristics were also attributed, for example, in Interview 2 it is stated that the elderly are grittier than the younger ones, and in the interview 6 they are characterized as "more interested and monetized".

X1 – "[...] is a middle-aged audience who is already worried about a healthier lifestyle that begins to train after a while".

X2 – "[...] sometimes an older person is grittier than a younger person because they know the need for health, which the young person does not pay much attention to".

X5 – "[...] people are looking for so much quality of life. I think at 40 years of age a little more a pain in the knee, a pain in the spine, appear, you start to identify more this way, the pathologies begin to appear, the pain begins to appear a little more, then there is a boom around 50, 60 and there comes the pathologies of age, traditional".

X6 – "[...] The question of the older audience, I think they are taking more care with health, yes. I see from my own family. My mother never practiced physical activity and today for some years now she has been training, has been doing it and has improved a lot. She, the friends ... and it's an audience that .. not just talking about the gym, but the store [of supplements] that I have too, it's an audience that I want to reach, I want to search. Because it's a more interested, more monetized audience. "

The respondent's speech 6 corroborates with Irving's (2014) findings that the elderly and the aging people (40-59 years old) are generally monetized and look for health care products and services that smooth the age signs. They are more educated and influential than their parents at the same age and spend money not just on themselves.

In interviews 3, 4 and 6 one of the highlights was the physical characteristic of the elderly people, they report lower muscular strength when compared to the young, but that the limitations are faced in a positive way, the bodybuilding being used with a pinch of salt, with fear of becoming muscular, the goal of the exercises seems to be related to health and not to the esthetics.

X3 – "[...] Yes, visible [differences from the younger ones] and the question of strength and everything. So you have to analyze each one, because sometimes at the same age you have older people a little better, but you can see, you see, it's strength, everything is different, you have to have your attention redoubled and put on a workout according to each one.

X4 – "[...] But, profile is totally different. Confident and calmer person, who knows what they want, more accepting. Yet the new person, no. [...] The old student, the older student is easier to deal with. About acceptance. On loyalty, they identify with the team. There is

the new and the old. They identify with the team. [...] So, the motivation. The guy, the boy, the older man, the woman too, they know what they want, they are confident. Men, they know what they want. They know it will takethem a year to get well, and they follows it step by step. They accept that.

X6 – [...] In fact the bodybuilding is indicated for any age group, mainly for the older public. It is common that they have a little fear, there, do not want to get big, do not want to become muscular.

This reinforces the importance of the elderly and aging segments adjusting to the environment to obtain a positive perspective of psychological well-being, as pointed out by Ravelo and Neri (2016), which reinforces the self-image and the recognition of physical limitations, consequently, bettering the coping with difficult situations.

Motivation to the consumption of sports services

Another point analyzed in the interview was that, in the opinion of the interviewees, was the motivation of the public over fifty years of age to look for sports services. Motivations such as social interaction, health, dealing with pathologies or simply having physical activity are highlighted.

X1 - [...]. They like to be in the middle of everyone and the staff, as they talk a lot with them, they like it, feel loved.

X3 – [...]. Now the rest, the old people, no longer care about the beauty, they come because of health itself.

X6 [...] But I think the great motivation is quality of life, it's health itself. It is not physical performance, which in theory is our focus.

X5 [...] so they end up coming here for physical activity even coming to pilates, a little because of pain and a little for physical activity because 'I do not like walking, I have allergy to the pool chlorine, I can not swim and I hate bodybuilding.

These responses corroborate with Corazza (2014), who states that the motivation of the elderly to go to the gym academy is to maintain a healthy body and to be able to carry out daily activities independently. The author also emphasizes that the elderly seek in these environments, in addition to a better physical performance, company, being in new environments and new ways of relating to different people, that is, they seek to relocate in society.

Products / services designed exclusively for the public aged 50 and over

Although companies have noticed an increase in the demand for services by older people and their great potential, they do not invest in this age group, that is, they do not make sales campaigns or services to meet this demand, they only adapt their services, even when the biggest challenge of the organization is to increase and diversify the number of clients.

X1 - It's actually having new members, it's our biggest challenge. [...] because with the whole market, because of everything that is happening, people are cutting everything they think superfluous, so the gym is the first thing they end up cutting ... [...] I can tell you that we have a structure and we have a technical profile very specialized in this, not only the elderly, but they are very good at catering for all the public, so I can tell you that today we can reach that point, but to say that I'm divulging and focusing on them certainly not. So we do not focus much on them but we try to give them structure.

X6 - [...] is an audience that I want to achieve, I want to search. Because it's a more interested, more monetized audience. [...] But I think the great motivation is quality of life, it's health itself. It is not physical performance, which in theory is our focus. [...] I do

not have much here. The audience that I have older is a bodybuilding audience. In fact bodybuilding is indicated to any age group, mainly to the older public. It is common that they have a little fear, do not want to get big, do not want to become muscular.

It seems that the interviewees perceive the high potential of the elderly and express a desire to serve them, however they also perceive that many are afraid to enjoy their services, as they fear that the perception of value of the gym might not be compatible with what is sought by them.

However, there is a strong contrast between the consumer's perception of the value of the academy and its real motivation. In the perception of the academies, the high physical performance is considered the most important element, while in fact the real motivation of the consumers is the pursuit of health and quality of life.

Among the academies interviewed, only one had exclusive hydrogymnastics classes for the elderly, no other modality was exclusively destined to this public. They offer only adaptations of their services to serve them, without segmentation or targeting this public.

The considerations presented by Francescantonio (2008) are somewhat questioned in this study, although the objective of the research is not to quantify such programs but to understand the interest of academies in the aging public.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the studies carried out on business management in the sports sector and consumption behavior of the elderly and the aging segments, this work sought to understand how academies and several companies in this market are behaving and responding to the significant increase of people over 45 years of age in the consumption of sports services.

With the analysis of the six interviews it was possible to detect some perspectives that the managers of the companies that they represented, saw among the elderly. Among them is the high consumption power of this age group, which more judiciously has the time and money to consume in various sectors of the economy.

Another point to highlight is the idea that the elderly are afraid to practice certain modalities, mainly for fear of injuries caused by physical activity. However, some authors point out that the population has increasingly aged with the awareness of the importance of physical exercise in quality of life and that older people, differently from previous decades, are more proactive. It is also important to consider that those who have not yet attempted to live a less sedentary life fear being targets of social criticism.

As for the motivations of the elderly to the demand of physical activities we can highlight health, besides greater independence in the daily activities and reallocation in the society. Aging customers seek the preservation of self-image and an aging process with more quality of life.

Despite all this evidence of the high potential that this market segment offers (seniors and aging segments), the academies interviewed, albeit perceiving the aging population, do not have practices that meet this demand. Only one of the academies has specific classes for the elderly, while the others adapt their services to serve them minimally, and none has the aging, seniors or the elderly as a target audience. These characteristics denote a competitive disadvantage since studies show that many companies, from the same region and even at national level, are preparing to cater for this public.

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