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**RESEARCH OF SEASON TICKET  
HOLDERS' CUSTOMER  
SATISFACTION FOR JUKURIT HC**

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<b>Abstract</b>		
<p>The purpose of this thesis was to understand different aspects of service qualities that are affecting the level of customer satisfaction. Thesis was conducted with the ice hockey team Jukurit HC, located in Mikkeli, Finland and it measures season ticket holders' customer satisfaction.</p>		
<p>The aim of the thesis was to research the season ticket holders' satisfaction towards the services offered at the home events of Jukurit HC and also the quality of services. Improvement proposals are made based on received results from the survey. The research problem was not only to find out how satisfied season ticket holders' were to the current services and their quality, but also how this satisfaction could be improved. A survey was allocated to the holders of the season ticket.</p>		
<p>The theoretical part of the thesis covered the quality of service, and both the customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction.</p>		
<p>The survey was quantitative and conducted electrically at Webropol. Period of the survey was between December and 167 replies were received. SPSS program was used to analyze the results.</p>		
<p>The results showed that the season ticket holders' of Jukurit were quite satisfied with the current services and for their quality. Improvement proposals were made based on the open question at the end of the survey.</p>		
<b>Keywords</b>		
Customer satisfaction, service, quality of service		

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The thesis employer, Jukurit HC Oy, has not implemented any customer satisfaction surveys for the season ticket holders in a larger scale. Customer satisfaction is a remarkably important aspect that describes how well the offered service meets the customer's expectations (Ylikoski 2000, 149). Team Jukurit has had a long history in which its customer expectations, needs and interests might have changed a lot. In the early stages of activities the same facts did not necessarily cause satisfaction that nowadays are essential factors forming customer satisfaction. Through many years of activities also sport event packages, such as season tickets, have had a growing interest among the customers of Jukurit HC. Guaranteeing the satisfaction of this segment and improving it will increase the sales for the next season and assist in acquiring new customers. Therefore investigating the satisfaction level of the season ticket holders is needed. Through a customer satisfaction research a company's strengths and weaknesses can be clarified.

The aim of this thesis is to find out the current satisfaction level among the season ticket holders of Jukurit HC Oy. The satisfaction level is researched within the group of season ticket holders of the season 2016-2017 which is the first season Jukurit plays in the highest national league of ice hockey. The satisfaction level will be clarified for factors concerning both playing and other matters of sport events. The research problem is to investigate how satisfied the season ticket holders are with the service and its quality in home game events, and how the customer satisfaction could be improved. As a result of this study, the company will be presented with improvement proposals.

The theoretical framework of the thesis consists of service quality and customer satisfaction. The service quality includes explanations of concepts, total quality of service, measurement and customer expectations. The customer satisfaction will handle the concepts of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, customership and measuring satisfaction. After theoretical part, the employer will be introduced, Jukurit HC Oy, the research and its results, and improvement proposals developed from the results. A quantitative inquiry research is the chosen research method to investigate the season

ticket holders' satisfaction for service quality with methods of quantitative research. The inquiry was implemented as an internet survey.

## **2 SERVICE QUALITY**

It has been said that service quality is good when customer expectations are met. An excellent service quality requires that the providing company exceeds the expectations. (Hämäläinen et al. 2016, 49). Following chapters define service and the quality of service, and determine sports events from the marketing perspective to get the idea about ice hockey games as a service. Following chapters are about the total service quality and the aspects affecting that, and customer expectations.

### **2.1 Service and quality of service**

Services can be defined very broadly, but most simply they are defined to be deeds, processes and performances. Another, almost the same definition to services is deeds, efforts, or performances. It's also specified that services are intangible products, so they lack physical substance. In other words, the result of service can't be seen, tasted, heard or experienced in any way beforehand. Even though services cannot be stored, companies can try to keep their customers on hold. Grönroos (2009, 80) describes that kind of situation could happen when a restaurant is full and customers are asked to wait at the bar, for example. This intangibility makes consumers' judgments about services more subjective.

What comes to the attributes of services, not only they are intangible, but also inseparable, variable and perishable. Inseparability means that the service needs to be consumed at the same time as produced and the service provider is part of this interaction. The variability is a natural part of the service, because the quality and outcome of the service depends on its provider and context. The perishability is the consequence of intangibility, and it can be a problem if the demand increases, as previously stated, that services exist only at a certain time e.g. doctor's appointment. Usually services require encounter with the service provider, even when customers or providers are not aware of

it. These encounters have important role when talking about customer satisfaction. Basically services are used for satisfying customers' needs and solving problems. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 4-5, 57; Kotler & Keller 2012, 378, 380-383; Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 3.)

Grönroos (2015, 2-3) gives four key aspects of a service. The first one is a definition that "service is support for customers' individual processes in a way that facilitates their value creation, and this support is enabled when knowledge and skills are used on resources." The second one describes service as a mediator between the service provider and the customer, which enables value capturing to the provider from this relationship. Thirdly service can be specified as a process where there is interaction at some level between the service provider and the customer. The final aspect is that the service provider can have any kind of resources, such as services, information, physical goods or the combination of these, and other resources. The main characteristics of services is that the customer acts as a co-producer in the service production process, and that is why the company should guide the customer to act in a way that it has a positive impact on the outcome. The whole organization has to participate in monitoring the total quality the company produces. (Grönroos 2015, 2-3, 137-138.)

Services can be either recognized or hidden services. The recognized services are usually priced, such as repair, consultancy and maintenance, whereas the hidden services are for example complaints handling, documentation and invoicing. The recognized services usually also include hidden services as well. The problem with the hidden services is that they are not usually managed in the way that they would produce value to the customer. (Grönroos 2015, 21.)

There are three features that are common to every service available. The first one is that they consist of operation(s). The second statement is that services are provided, to some extent, at the same time as consumed. The last common feature is that the customer is somehow related to the production process and acting like a coproducer. Grönroos states that the most important

service attribute is that they are formed from functions that require for example people and other physical resources, such as knowledge, infrastructure and systems, so that the service provider is able to come up with a solution to the customer's problem. (Grönroos 2009, 78-79.)

The service quality is an abstract concept, and due to that reason it is really difficult to measure and define it. It is defined to be "an attitude formed by a long-term, overall evaluation of a firm's performance". The service quality is related to the customer satisfaction but the relationship between these two concepts is unclear. There has been one likely explanation, that "satisfaction assists consumers in revising service quality perceptions". The reasons to justify this statement are listed below.

- Consumer perceptions about the quality of service towards a certain firm which he/she has no prior experience are based on consumers' expectations.
- Adding up visits over time in the same company forms a customer service quality perception.
- Perceptions about service quality of a certain company will modify consumers' future purchase intentions.

The whole organization must be dedicated to the current task to be able to satisfy consumers and by these actions offer good quality of service. The amount of quality depends on a service provider, and their principles and strategy. The perceived quality is good as long as the expectations and experiences about the quality meet. When the service provider succeeds to exceed the customer expectations, in some cases also called customer delight, the customer is satisfied, and the situation creates a bond with the customer and the service provider. The positively surprised customer will remember the encounter and use word-of-mouth marketing about his/her positive experience. The negative side of the company exceeding expectations is that customers are used to getting a really good quality of service, and then expect even more and more, and in the end the company is not able to produce the good service quality profitably. Companies should



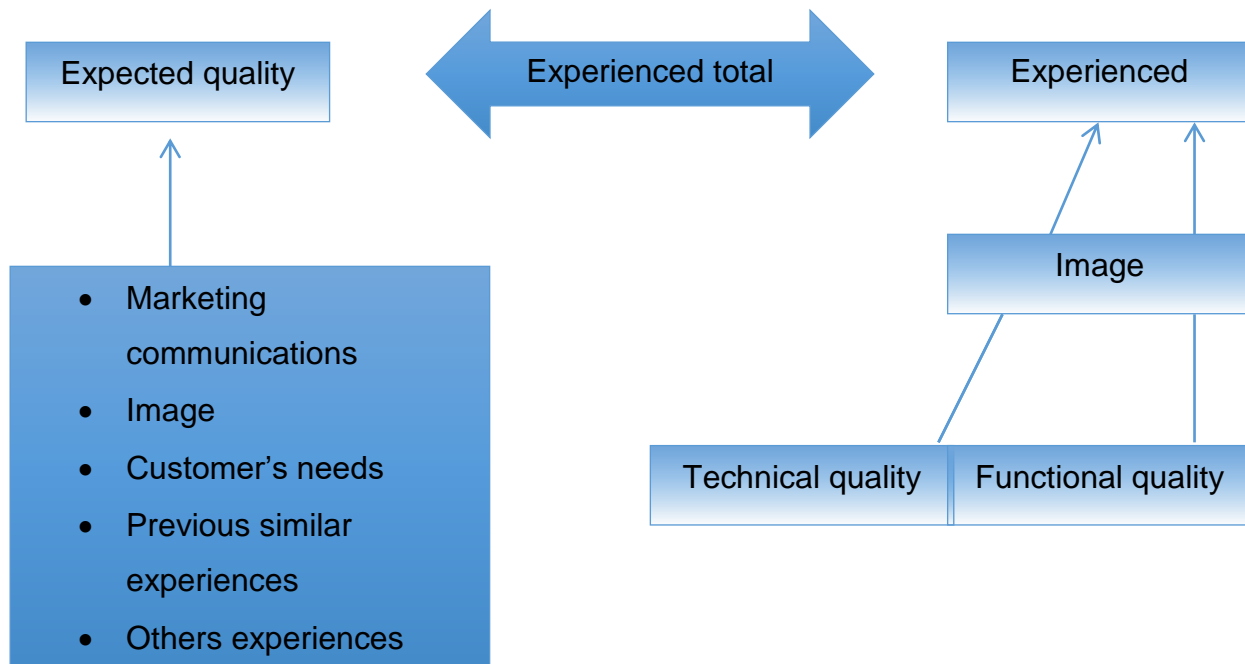
keep in mind that if they can't improve their service quality all the time, then they should not do it even once because this one time exceeded expectation is far more harmful for the company than just offering stable, perceived quality. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 324-325; Grönroos 2015, 128-129.)

There are some definitions and dimensions to determine quality. Firstly, quality has to be determined based on customers' needs and expectations. Secondly, it is a definition on how customers perceive delivered service, and thirdly, a quality is included in the service process/production process that consists of two parts, technical and functional qualities, which are discussed later on.

Service encounters are the places where the quality is produced, and that is why the planning of quality operations should be also done locally. Due to local appearances, the quality is really dependable on customer servants. (Grönroos 2015, 137-138.)

The service quality is highly connected to the customer satisfaction and the company profitability. There can be found a correlation between the quality and prices; the higher the price, the higher the quality, so when companies try to be cost effective they are also decreasing the quality. (Kotler & Keller 2012, 153.)

### Total quality of services



**FIGURE 1. Total service quality. (Hämäläinen et al. 2016, 52)**

The total quality of services is based on two qualities, expected and experienced quality. Customers' expectations based on the company's image, their marketing communications, customers' own needs and previous encounters with the company as well as other people's experiences equal the expected quality.

Figure 1 explains how the total quality is formed. On the left side there is the quality the customer expects to get and the points influencing the pre expectations. Marketing communication is basically traditional marketing, such as advertising, web sites and sales promotions. Companies have to be careful when designing new campaigns and activities so that they don't overpromise and make customers' expectations unable to reach. Grönroos (2015, 99) points out that it would be even better if company could under promise and then over deliver. The image includes customers' prior experiences and it is only indirectly controlled by the company. On the right side of the experienced

quality, the image is created through customers' experiences on the technical and functional qualities. (Grönroos 2015, 98-99.)

Customers' experiences of service are divided into technical (outcome) and functional (processional) quality. The technical quality is related to the whole service environment and its functionality, everything that the customer faces when coming to the company. Employees' knowledge and expertise are also in a big role at this part of the service quality. When doing business online, technical quality is basically how easy the website is to use and how understandable it is to the customer. When talking about the competitive advantage, the technical quality is in a big role if the company has a technical outcome that their competitors can't match. Nowadays finding some unique invention, that none of the competitors have, to support technical dimensions is rare. (Hämäläinen et al. 2016, 50; Grönroos 2015, 95, 97.)

Service encounters, atmospheres, interactions and encounters between the employee and the customer are all counted as the functional quality. Encounters can happen either face-to-face, on the phone, or online for example via Skype or chat. Both qualities, technical and functional, are important to the total quality of service. The base for the service quality is the technical dimension, but customers' expectations are exceeded when the functional quality is more than they expected. The functional dimensions are the ones companies can stand out with from competitors, because as mentioned previously, technical dimensions tend to be at the same level in every similar service company. This functional quality cannot be evaluated the same way as the technical quality can. Functional quality is perceived more subjectively whereas the technical one objectively. (Hämäläinen et al. 2016, 50-51; Grönroos 2015, 96-98.)

Companies can improve their total quality of services, but most of them tend to fail on upgrading their quality. Most common reason for failing the improvement is that managers are considering the quality development as a project or campaign instead of a permanent process. The quality improvement

needs ongoing revision from the top management as circumstances change. (Grönroos 2015, 128.)

### *Sports marketing*

Sports marketing has similarities with traditional marketing, which is any kind of process that creates value to customers, but this one includes also aspects from sports experiences. There are two kinds of variables in the sports marketing, marketing *of* sports, or marketing *through* sports. Both forms are common but marketing goods are a part of marketing *of* sports whereas marketing *through* sports connects with a partner to have some commercial benefits. Three characteristics are differentiating the sports marketing from other marketing forms. These three aspects are an affinity advantage, a positioning challenge, and experience-based relationships. An affinity advantage means that usually sports fans are creating emotionally based relationships to sports teams and athletes, and those fans are extremely loyal customers. Sports brands are facing challenges to position themselves since they are competing head-to-head and their offerings are so similar to each other's. Experiences are in a very important role of the value creation. There are many physical sports products, such as jerseys and clubs, but the most value comes from intangible objects. (Fetchko et al. 2013, 6-7.)

The sports industry is currently in the experience era, where customers are highly involved in the events and not just watching but also living the game through e.g. mobile phone apps or blogs, in other words the social media is defining the service experience. The reasons for a continuously growing sports industry are divided into business-driven and customer-driven factors. Increasing sports media and interest in sports sponsorships, trying to build a global brand, and adding sports in the economic planning process are business-driven factors whereas the increased interest in the women's sport, free time activities and personal fitness, and new sports introduction are customer-driven factors. (Fetchko et al. 2013, 11-12.)

The sports marketing includes all the tasks that are made for satisfying the needs and wishes of sports consumers. For this reason, sports are not only sports in the specific meaning of the word. Through commercialization sports have become entertainment. From the sports marketing point of view, sports are mostly creating entertainment when speaking about public marketing. The sport product has special features in comparison to normally spoken tangible and intangible products. (Alaja 2000, 28.) These features are discussed in the next paragraph.

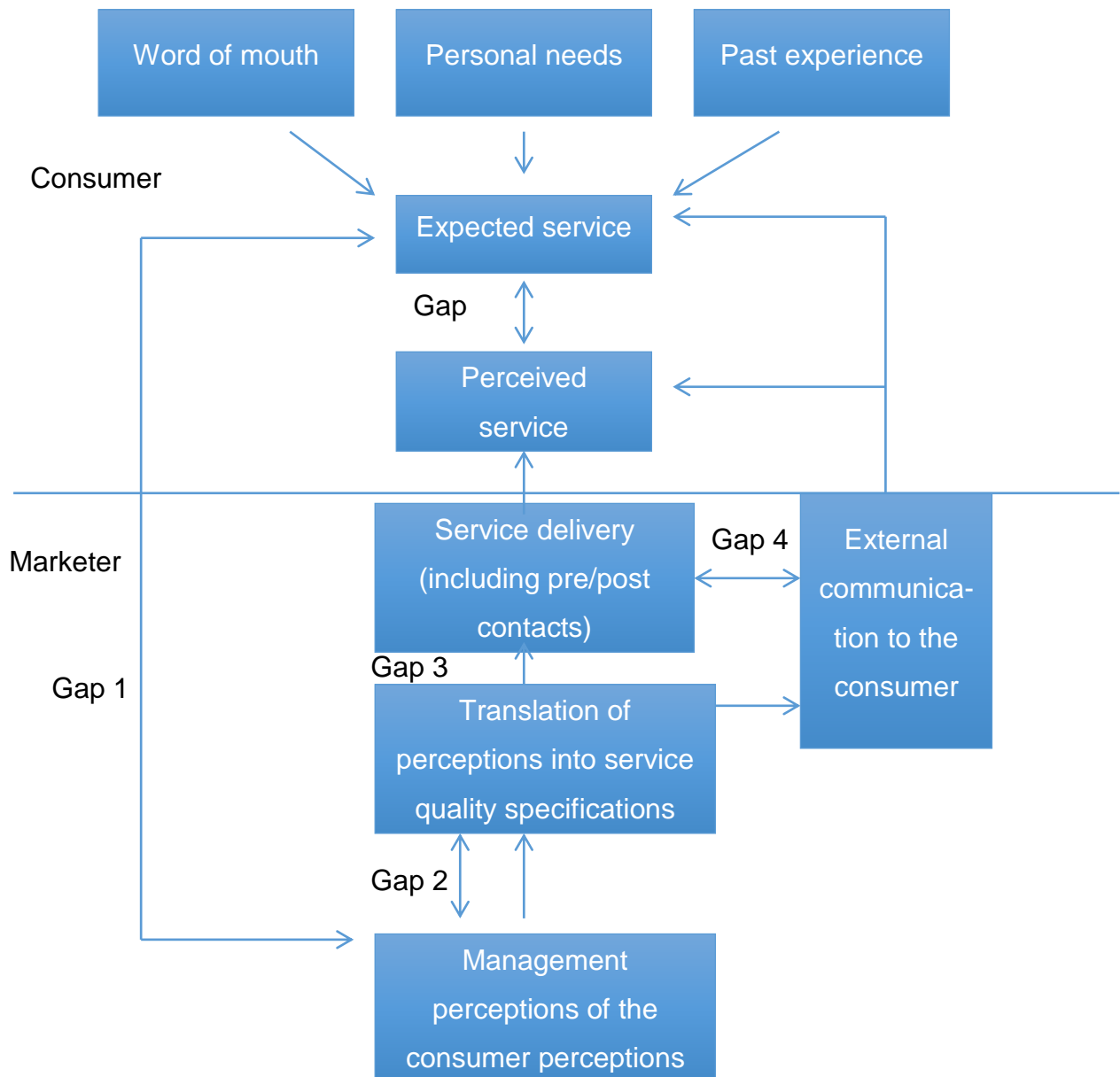
A sport consumer experiences sports always subjectively from own starting point. A sport event is always an individual experience because it appeals to emotional factors. Experiencing sports is more or less memorable. Reaching the consumer's world of experiencing requires lots of skills and sensibility from the sports marketer. Sport products never actualize in a way they have been actualized before. Even though the referees, location, arena, starting time of the event and the audience were the same in two ice hockey games played in two weeks, the games would still be different as products. Sports are included with a clueless amount of variables that affect the result of the game, and for that reason, affect the comfort and satisfaction of the audience. Sports are surprising, so anything can happen in any minute and that is also the main feature in sports. The fact that sports cannot be expected makes the sports marketing a challenging and difficult work field. Another feature of the sports events is that sport consumers are both consumers and producers at the same time. When consuming the product, the audience is also creating it. The audience of a sport event gives the general face and atmosphere for the event. (Alaja 2000, 28.)

Sport events are above all social happenings. Sports are consumed and enjoyed together with others. This means that the experienced satisfaction and quality of the sport event is often dependent on the common feelings experienced together with others. The sports event marketer has to carefully consider the meaning of social interaction. Sports cannot be controlled. Sport team's coach is responsible for the athletic success of the team, for that reason the coach gathers the team together, and trains them to be the very

best. The sport event marketer's role is to dissociate with this core product. The marketer has to focus marketing efforts on developing incidental services that satisfy consumers' needs. (Alaja 2000, 29.)

## **2.2 The gap analysis model of service quality**

The basis for the service quality is customer expectations. Mostly they are quite modest and customers are only waiting that the providing company does everything they promise, nothing more. Customers are also comparing the quality to the price: the higher the price, the more expectations they have towards the level of the quality. The same goes with marketing, as the expectations increase when the company has good marketing and communication with customers. (Hämäläinen et al. 2016, 49.)



**FIGURE 2. The gap analysis model of service quality. (Grönroos 2015, 130)**

Figure 2 represents the idea how service quality comes into sight. The upper part of the picture observes the gaps from the consumer perspective whereas the lower part is related to the service provider. There are five different gaps in the service quality that are explained below. (Grönroos 2015, 130.)

### *The management perception gap (Gap 1)*

This gap occurs when the management is not quite sure about consumers' quality expectations. There are many reasons that may cause this kind of situation. One explanation might be using false information from the market research and demand analyses. There might be different interpretations about the expectations or maybe the lack of demand analysis. A communication between company's groundwork employees and the top management can be bad or even non-existing.

While there are many reasons for this gap to emerge, there are also many solutions for companies to minimize the size of the gap. If the main reason for problems can be found from the top management, there must be either a change of management or enhancement in the management's knowledge about their duties. Grönroos states (2015, 131) that usually companies tend to prefer the second option, about adding more knowledge, since there typically is no complete lack of proficiency.

An important part of all possible options to minimize the gap is to conduct better research so that the service provider better recognizes customers' processes, needs and wishes. Companies should use also other methods than a traditional market research to more deeply understand the customers, their lives and businesses. These other methods may involve using customer feedback and complaints from previous encounters. (Grönroos 2015, 131.)

### *The quality specification gap (Gap 2)*

The second gap describes a situation where the management perceptions of quality are different from the service quality specifications. The quality specification gap is a result of inappropriate planning, faulty planning management, a shortage of organizational goal setting, and the top management's inadequate support towards the planning of service quality.



Quality specification gap's problems related to the potential planning are dependable of the size of the first gap. The company's planning of quality specifications may fail even though they might have enough, and more importantly, valid information. The failure is caused by the top management's shortage of committing to provide the service quality, since companies are not ranking the service quality highly on their priority list. Nowadays the quality is almost the most important success factor so service providers should pay attention to position that high in their priority list.

There is also a possibility that the problem can be found from the planning process. The quality aspects should be already taken into account when a company is planning their routines and setting goals. It would be an ideal situation that the whole company from the top management to all of the employees agree on goals and specifications so that the service quality is guaranteed. Even though it might sound professional to set strict goals and plans, it decreases employees' willingness to be flexible when providing services. (Grönroos 2015, 131-132.)

### *The service delivery gap (Gap 3)*

When there is a service delivery gap, it means that the quality specifications are not met when producing or delivering the service. The specifications might be too complicated, employees are not agreeing with the specifications or the specifications are not up to date with the current corporate culture. There might also be bad management of service operations, inadequate internal marketing or technology and systems are not supporting service providing. Normally the reason for the service delivery gap is complicated. Grönroos states (2015, 132) that reasons for this gap can be divided into three categories: management and supervision, the employee perception of specifications and rules/customer needs and wishes, and the lack of technological/operational support.

What comes to the management and supervision part, the supervisors might not be supportive towards the quality performance, or their control systems

may even be in conflict with the company's quality specifications. Some companies use awarding systems that are usually not supporting the service quality, since unimportant activities are encouraged by rewards and important things are left alone.

In the second category employees may be unclear about their role as a service provider. Employees may also encounter unpleasant situations when they, as customer service persons, are not able to behave like they would need in that situation due to organizational specifications. These kinds of situations may need changing the supervisory systems or conduct better employee training so that personnel is aware of the reasons for limitations. In the recruiting process the company should pay attention to applicants' attitudes and make sure they fit in their organization. The lack of technological/operational support means that those systems are not introduced to employees in a way they should have so that they would make service providing easier. (Grönroos 2015, 133.)

#### *The market communication gap (Gap 4)*

In a situation where marketing communication planning is not combined with service operations, there is a lack of coordination between traditional marketing and operations. The organization itself is not able to perform according to given regulations, and when the company promises too much, appears a gap where the delivered service is not meeting the promises made by marketing communication. This gap happens for two different reasons, the planning and executing of traditional marketing communications and operations, and a company's overpromise on sales and marketing communications.

When talking about the first reason, related to planning and executing, the solution is to cooperate with those involved in planning and those who will execute the planned operations. This kind of collaboration will give more realistic campaigns and accurate promises to the consumers. For the second

part, overpromising, there has to be better planning and closer supervising from the management of the company. (Grönroos 2015, 134.)

#### *The perceived service quality (Gap 5)*

The perceived service quality gap, in which experienced service is not meeting the expected service, is a result of the service quality problems, negative reputation of the company and lost business. This gap is dependable on the other gaps listed in this section, or even the combination of these gaps. To close this gap, the management has to find out the reasons why the experienced service is not meeting the expected one.

To be able to offer a good quality of services, companies should use a gap analysis to recognize the problems in the market research, planning and execution of services, and traditional marketing. When improving the previously mentioned factors, the company is able to make the customer expectations meet the experienced service quality. (Grönroos 2015, 134.)

The companies that are improving their quality of service are using a service quality information system, which is a continuous research process that will give relevant data to managers on how to make decisions that improve the quality of services. There are six different components that are affecting the service quality information systems. These components are a solicitation of customer complaints, after-sales surveys, customer focus group interviews, mystery shopping, employee surveys, and total marketing surveys. This whole information system is actually focusing on customer research (examines the strengths and weaknesses of a company from the customer point of view) and noncustomer research (examines competitors' strengths and weaknesses by the eyes of employees). (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 340-341.)

The main reasons for soliciting customer complaints is that complaints are given by unsatisfied customers and companies must somehow react before losing those customers to their competitors as well as by soliciting companies

will find out the possible weaknesses in their service delivery systems. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 342.)

After-sales surveys provide information about how satisfied customers are when the service encounter is recent. This survey type is most suitable to assessing customer satisfaction and also to identify improvement areas. After-sales surveys can reduce the amount of customer complaints and also give the company a more reliable image on their performance. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 342.)

Probably the most commonly used market research type is the customer focus group interviews, where 8-12 customers are in informal discussion and they are guided by a trained moderator. These group interviews are a good source of information because participants tend to relax when they are in a group. Group interviews cannot be used individually to confirm participants and their represented customers' opinions so another information system is needed to ensure the results. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 342-343.)

One form of service quality information systems is also when a noncustomer researcher shops at a company unannounced, and evaluates the service and employees. This is called mystery shopping and it is recommended to be carried on a quarterly basis. Mystery shopping gives information about employees' behavior, knowledge and appearance among other things. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 343.)

To get an internal sight about the service quality, companies can conduct a employee survey where the actual service performers can give feedback about their satisfaction. These surveys are a way to find what obstacles employees must overcome in their work every day. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 344.)

When a company want's to perform the best possible level of service quality and also find out how they competitors are doing, a total market service quality survey provides all the needed information. This type of survey,

including service quality measures such as SERVQUAL, allows companies to identify their needed improvements on providing service.

### 2.3 Customer expectations

It has been said in the service area of literature that the quality of service is anything that a customer expects it to be. Expectations are based on beliefs about the delivery of the service. When the customer experiences the service, the quality has either technical (based on the final outcome) or functional (based on the process) dimensions. The most important thing that the customer experiences is what they achieve when interacting with the company. This experience is just one part of the dimension of the quality instead of the whole quality of provided service, as most companies tend to think. It is vital to remember that customer's may have different levels of expectations since their reference points can vary. (Grönroos 2009, 100-101; Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 60.)

Customers' expectations have to be controlled by the service provider so that they are not expecting the impossible. The most important role as a service provider is to know what the customer is expecting. Customers' expectations can be characterized to three different categories: fuzzy, explicit and implicit expectations. (Grönroos 2015, 116; Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 60.) The following chapters will explain these categories in more detail.

#### *Fuzzy expectations*

Fuzzy expectations appear when the customer has a problem and expects the service provider to solve it even though the provider might have no idea what should be done. If the service provider is unable to satisfy these unrecognizable needs, the customer feels disappointed. For example, a manufacturing company needs a security system but don't know what to include in that system. The service provider, in this case a security company, has to recognize these needs and be able to offer their services at an appropriate level to satisfy the customer. In other words, the service provider

should be aware of the fuzzy expectations and try to make them appear in the form of explicit expectations. (Grönroos 2015, 116-117.)

### *Explicit expectations*

When the customer knows exactly what he/she wants from the service process, the expectations talked about are the explicit ones. Customers automatically assume that the service process fulfills their explicit expectations. The problem is that sometimes these expectations are unrealistic and the service provider's task is to make these more realistic. If the provider is able to do this, the probability to get the customer satisfied increases. The service provider must be careful when giving promises. The more ambiguous promises the provider gives, the more difficult it is to satisfy the customer. (Grönroos 2015, 116-117.)

### *Implicit expectations*

These expectations refer to parts of the service that the customer takes for granted without thinking or clearly expressing them. Usually the customer thinks implicit expectations after the service, when the provider has not been able to fulfill these customer's and that leads to the result where the customer is unsatisfied. (Grönroos 2015, 116-117.)

Grönroos (2015, 118) refers to Jukka Ojasalo who has offered a framework to manage these expectations. When the customer has fuzzy expectations, the service provider should try to make them concentrate on that expectation and turn it into as accurate as possible. If the experience is the implicit one, the provider's task is to find it out and turn it to the explicit expectation that is easier to fulfill. Lastly, if the customer has some high-flown, unrealistic expectations, the service provider should offer more realistic options that will still satisfy their needs. (Grönroos 2015, 118-119.)

## 2.4 Measuring service quality

Customers are usually only paying attention to the visible part of service, e.g. encounters with the service provider (Grönroos 2009, 80, 98). There are two major ways to measure the service quality. The first one is measuring the attributes that describe the service features, and the second is based on qualitative measuring, such as estimation of vital incidents.

Attribute-based models most commonly measure academic research and business practices. The most common attribute used to measure the quality of services is SERVQUAL instrument. In the qualitative measuring respondents are asked to describe the perceived service, most often using a critical incident method, that will be explained later. (Grönroos 2015, 101-102.)

In the mid-1980s, 10 service quality determinants were discovered that later on were reduced to the following five: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. These five dimensions represent the information organization about the service quality in the minds of consumers. Service employees can directly influence all of the mentioned dimensions. This SERVQUAL measures customer expectations and perceptions on five different dimensions that are listed and explained below. The test consists of two parts, in which the first one asks respondents to express their expectations of an excellent company in a certain industry. The other part is investigating consumer perceptions by asking respondents' opinions of a particular service company in the industry. The purpose of this test is to find out "gap scores" between the mean perceptions and the mean expectations. These gaps are the ones explained in the section of factors influencing the service quality. This SERVQUAL test should be used considerably and determinants should be assessed carefully to every situation since every service is different. (Grönroos 2015, 102, 104; Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 321; Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 334.)

### *Tangibles*

As Zeithaml & Bitner defines (2003, 98.), “tangibles are defined as the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials”. All the before mentioned represent the physical images of intangible services. Usually companies combine a tangible dimension with some other to create a strategy of a service quality for them. It is vital to consider the tangible dimensions because otherwise companies might get confused about their own strategy. Other customers in the same company at the same time can have a huge impact on how this particular customer feels, which might affect the following visits. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 98; Grönroos 2015, 102-103.)

### *Reliability*

Reliability is defined as “the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately”. The service company has to keep their promise since the beginning to be able to gain the customers’ trust and build reliability. This dimension has been described as the most important determinant in the minds of the consumer’s. They tend to find companies that are able to keep their promises particularly about the service outcomes and attributes of core services. The main reason why companies fail is that they are not providing their core service to consumers. When thinking about the reliability, companies must not forget the accuracy in billing and bookkeeping. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 95,97; Grönroos 2015, 102-103.)

### *Responsiveness*

As Zeithaml & Bitner describe (2003, 97.) this dimension is all about the propensity to help and provide precise service to customers. Responsiveness is all about how companies deal with customer feedback, complaints, questions and problems for example. To succeed in this dimension, companies must have a consumer point of view rather than their own, since businesses and individuals may have different opinions about the quality of



service. The responsiveness includes also informing the customer about the service delivery. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 97; Grönroos 2015, 102-103.)

### *Assurance*

In the area of business that includes high risks, this dimension about trust and confidence is extremely important. Assurance is about how well a company and its employees are able to inspire trust and confidence. This trust may be seen as a person who links the consumers to the company, in which the relationship is thought of personal and close. Companies should make their customers feel safe and have enough knowledge to answer to customers' questions. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 97; Grönroos 2015, 102-103.)

### *Empathy*

Service companies should operate at appropriate times, understand customers' problems, and then perform the wanted service in the customers' favor. Empathy is gained through customized service that makes consumers feel unique. The personnel in companies that are small, tend to know their customers by name, and by this build up their relationship which is a reflection of their personal knowledge on their customer's requirements. Many small companies have a clear advantage on empathy, and that is their advantage compared to bigger ones. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 98; Grönroos 2015, 102-103.)

Another method to measure the quality is the critical incident method where the idea is to ask customers, with previous experience of the certain service, to describe the situation where the service process was different from normal. Then the customer needs to describe what happened and why the service was different from normal. This kind of research gives information what to improve in the service process, e.g. the lack of technical skills or employee's negative attitude. (Grönroos 2015, 105.)

### 3 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

In this chapter, satisfaction and dissatisfaction together with the factors influencing the customer satisfaction are discussed. In the second subtitle customerships, the creation of customerships, the advantages and profitability of customerships are considered. The last subtitle handles the subject of measuring customer satisfaction.

#### 3.1 Customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction

A customer is the person who buys the product or service and pays for it. At the end, a customer is the funder for an organization's actions and developments. The goal for a business therefore is to create functional customer relationships and customerships, which leads into improving and developing business functions. (Selin & Selin 2005, 13, 17.) A customer's experience on how well a product or a service has met expectations is called customer satisfaction. (Ylikoski 2000, 149.)

Marketers call the comparing of the customer's expectations to perceptions of an actual service encounter as the expectancy disconfirmation model. Simply stated, if the customer's perceptions meet his expectations, the expectations are said to be confirmed and the customer is satisfied. When the customer's perceptions are not equal to his expectations, the expectation is said to be disconfirmed. Disconfirmation sounds like a negative experience but it isn't necessarily so. The disconfirmation can be divided into two different types, a negative disconfirmation and a positive disconfirmation. A negative disconfirmation is the result of an actual perception being less than expectations, causing customer dissatisfaction and can lead to negative word-of-mouth advertising. Vice versa, a positive disconfirmation is the result of perceptions exceeding expectations, thereby resulting in the customer satisfaction, positive word-of-mouth advertising, and customer retention. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 295.)

After using a service, a customer is either satisfied or dissatisfied, can be thought the idea is as simple as that. Nevertheless, the satisfaction factors

and the dissatisfaction factors are not opposites. If some factor, let's say, the customer service is weak and causes dissatisfaction might be that even when the customer service functions well, it does not cause satisfaction. Satisfaction is caused by factors that create positive surprises for the customer – factors that are functioning the way the customer expects are not satisfying factors. (Rope & Pöllänen 1998, 165.)

Satisfaction is often attached with a sense of fulfillment in the knowledge that one's needs have been met, Zeithaml notes (2006, 110) that the satisfaction can also be attached with other types of feelings depending on the context and type of service. For example, contentment – a feeling that creates a more passive response that consumers associate with services they don't think about or services they use routinely. The satisfaction can be attached with the feeling of pleasure – for services that make the customer feel good and the sense of happiness. Satisfaction can mean delight in services that overexceed the customer expectations. Sometimes a consumer might associate a sense of relief with satisfaction when a removal of negative problem leads into satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction requires having a contact surface between the company and the customer. In other words, every time a customer contacts a company, a surface has been built. The satisfaction is born when a customer determines how he feels and experiences that surface. The contact surface consists of:

- Staff contacts (customer service and sales staff), product contacts (product functioning and quality);
- Support system contacts (ADP-systems, ordering systems, billing, and direct marketing);
- Setting contacts (furniture of the office and tidiness).

All these contacts lead into experiences that are interpreted and compared according to upfront expectations. Interpretation defines the contact to be either the same as the expectations or negatively or positively differing from the expectations. (Rope & Pöllänen 1998, 28.)

Dissatisfaction happens when a service doesn't meet with the customer's expectations and needs. Although an organization invests in preventing mistakes, situations where a customer is dissatisfied cannot be avoided entirely. People experience different things as good service and satisfying factors than others. (Reinboth 2008, 103.) Not always a mistake in service leads to dissatisfaction. If the situation can be solved in a satisfying way for the customer, the customer will be more satisfied than those customers who didn't experience any problems. (Ylikoski 2000, 196.) On the other hand, it has been studied that even a problem solved in a satisfying way can decrease the customer satisfaction. So therefore, a mistake in service is either an opportunity to emphasize customer's trust or to lose it. (Grönroos & Järvinen 2001, 98.)

An organization needs to notice that dissatisfied customers often end their customership and usually this happens in a way that the dissatisfaction is not expressed in the form of feedback to the organization. (Mäntyneva 2002, 29.) Therefore, it is important to enhance customers to complain, and to tell what went wrong so that situations can be reacted to, and customerships can be saved (Ylikoski 2000, 196).

The customer satisfaction, trust and commitment are all objects of interest in customer-centered marketing. Handling complaints and dissatisfied customers is crucial from the point of view of maintaining customerships. The complaint management should be invested in since it betters the service experience of customers, and strengthens the customership. Successful managing of complaints both increases the customer's trust in organization and commits a customer to use an organization's services also in the future. (Ylikoski 2000, 196.)

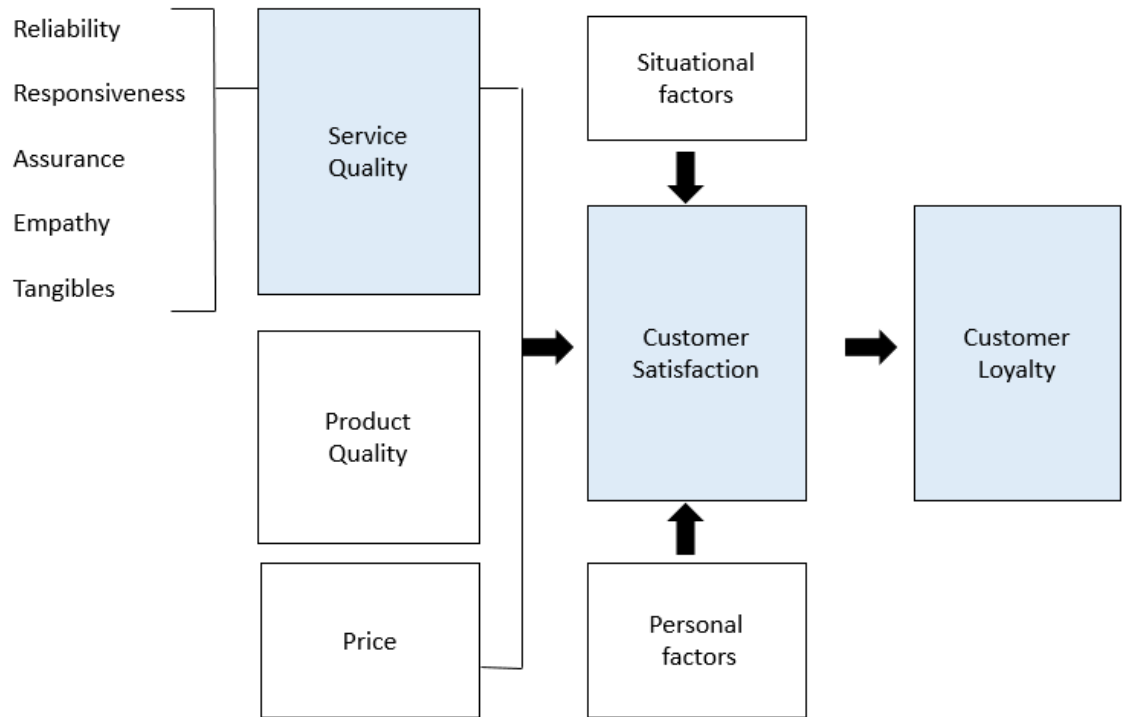
Sometimes a customer isn't satisfied even though the situation has been reacted to, clarified and compensated. It is hard to make a customer satisfied when a new customership is in question, and when a customer has already a negative image of the company and its quality. (Reinboth 2008, 105.) Turning

the customer satisfied is extremely hard also when fixing of the problem fails – a customer has been disappointed twice. Instead, when the customer is satisfied with the good situation handling, the customer is usually more loyal than before. Therefore, the best thing a company can do is to make it easy for customers to complain. Allowing quick, two-way communication will help to recover the customer goodwill. (Kotler & Keller 2012, 153.)

### *Factors influencing customer satisfaction*

Customers perceive services in terms of their satisfaction overall with the service and the quality of the service. Companies' need to be more competitive and effective than rivals has come to a realization that the goal can be achieved by distinguishing themselves with respect to service quality and improved customer satisfaction. (Zeithaml et al. 2006, 106.) This chapter covers the factors determining the customer satisfaction: product and service features, perceptions of product and service quality, price and additional factors (Zeithaml et al. 2006, 110).

Quality is one of the most typical factors influencing the customer satisfaction. The question on the service quality and customer satisfaction has been debated – are there differences between these concepts and if so, which one is experienced first. Consequently the terms satisfaction and quality are often used as synonyms for each other. The satisfaction is yet much larger concept and the quality is only one of the many factors influencing satisfaction. (Ylikoski 2000, 149.) The following picture presents customer perceptions of quality and customer satisfaction, showing that a customer first experiences the quality of service and after that the satisfaction or dissatisfaction for the service (Zeithaml & Bitner 2006, 107.)



**FIGURE 3. Customer perceptions of quality and customer satisfaction (Zeithaml & Bitner 2006, 107)**

The customer satisfaction is significantly influenced by the customer's perception of a product and service features. For the nature of services, every service has different features the customer values. For example, for a hotel, the features could be: the pool area, access to golf facilities, restaurants, environment, room comfort and privacy, attitude of the staff, room price and so forth. Most companies usually determine important features and overall service satisfaction through focus groups when conducting a satisfaction research. Studies have shown that customers compare different features with each other, depending on the criticality of the service and the service being evaluated – for example, a price level versus the quality. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2006, 111.)

Additional factors influencing the satisfaction can be state of mind (emotions), attributions, perceptions of equity and fairness, and other consumers such as family members or co-workers. Emotions can be stable or induced by the consumption experience itself. Stable emotions are preexisting – mood state or life satisfaction. Evidently, a person who is on holiday has a good and happy

mood and will experience a service differently than in another state of mind. Alternatively, for a person in a bad mood, negative feelings may reflect in the way one responds to service, causing to overact or respond negatively to any small problem. A study implemented in a river-rafting context showed that emotions induced by guides had a connection to customers' overall satisfaction for the trip. Positive emotions enhanced the satisfaction and negative lead to diminished satisfaction. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2006, 112.)

The perceived causes for events, attributions, have an influence on the customer satisfaction as well. When a customer has been surprised with the outcome of the service (better or worse than expected) one will start looking for causes. The attribution determined will influence how the overall satisfaction is experienced of the service. The perceptions of equity and fairness also influence the customer satisfaction. Customers think whether they have been treated fairly compared to others, did other customers get better treatment and so forth. The notions of fairness are central to the decision of the customer's satisfaction of the service. In addition to emotions, the perceptions of equity and fairness, and attributions, also other people can influence the customer satisfaction. For example, in a family holiday, the satisfaction is influenced by the reactions and feelings of individual family members over the duration of the holiday. After the holiday, what family members express in terms of satisfaction or dissatisfaction over the holiday is dependent on the stories that are retold among the family. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2006, 112.)

Ylikoski notes (2000, 153) that the service experience is also influenced by the fact how much a customer feels giving of himself in comparison to the advantages of the service. When choosing a service, a customer considers which organization produces most value for him. The customer satisfaction, service quality and customer value are linked together and influence strongly on the service experience of the customer. These three factors can be influenced through marketing methods. Communication contacts with the staff, service environment, image and price influence quality, and they produce value for the customer, therefore, affecting satisfaction. In every situation, a

customer experiences all quality factors of the service – reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles. Good quality and customer satisfaction should be maintained in every customer contact. (Ylikoski 2000, 153, 155.)

### 3.2 **Customership**

Successful organizations have long understood that the quality and customer satisfaction is worth investing in. The customer satisfaction influences the organization's financial profit, and fact is that when customers are satisfied and stay as customers, profits increase, the profitability grows, and organization's growth possibilities increase. (Ylikoski 2000, 13.) Therefore, organizations have started to focus on the customer-centered view. Customer-centered organizations observe matters in customer's and customerships point of view, and focus on improving customerships continuously, providing new added value producing opportunities for customers. (Selin & Selin 2005, 20.) In the following chapter, the customership profitability, creation of customership, customer's service trail and customer loyalty are covered.

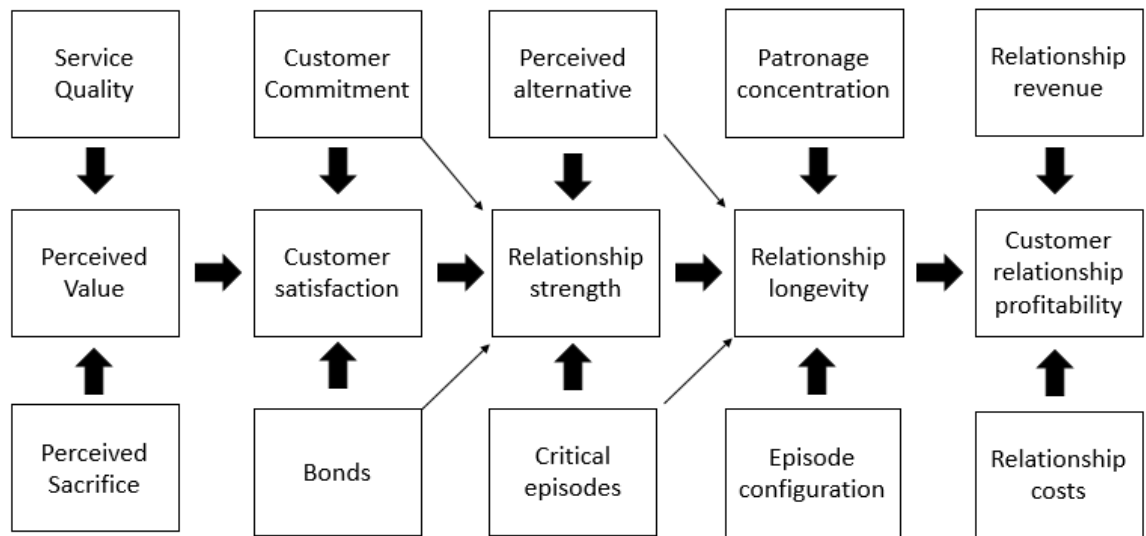
#### 3.2.1 **Customership profitability**

A company's important mission is to provide quality that a customer experiences satisfying because it also affects the customer loyalty, which forwards a customer's positive impact on a company's profits. This happens by the means of lowering relation costs and better pricing possibilities. Customership is valuable for an organization. Profitability can be pictured through the model of the customership profitability. The customership profitability model consists of four connections:

- From customer value to customer satisfaction
- From customer satisfaction to relationship strength
- From relationship strength to relationship longevity
- From relationship length to customership profitability

(Grönroos 2010, 201-202; Figure 4.)





**FIGURE 4. Customership profitability model (Christian Grönroos 2010, 201)**

In the connection from the customer value to the customer satisfaction presents the value of the customership through value and satisfaction. The customer perception of value and the total quality of the customership depends on how a customer experiences the quality of all services in comparison to sacrifices. Customers are satisfied with quality if the price and relationship costs – sacrifices - are not too big. (Grönroos 2010, 202.)

The customer satisfaction affects two factors that are relevant for the second connection of the model. Satisfied customers might commit to the service provider because they trust the company or are satisfied with the sacrifice level of the relationship. The customer satisfaction also affects connections between parties. Connections (that can be social, cultural, ideological, psychological, graphical etc.) commit customers to the service provider since it is easier, more convenient or economical for them to make business with the company in the future. Second connection of the model, from the customer satisfaction to the relationship strength, means that the customer satisfaction strengthens the length of the customership. The customer satisfaction has a straight connection to the relationship strength. The impact also extends to customers' commitment and connections between parties. It is important to

recall the commitment, satisfaction and connections need to be rather large before they affect significantly the strength of the customership. Satisfied customers are not always loyal customers. However, customers who say they are satisfied seem to have a strong relationship to the service provider. (Grönroos 2010, 202.)

In the third connection, from the relationship strength to relationship longevity, the customership strength affects the customership length directly and indirectly. The stronger the relationship, the longer it lasts. A strong relationship makes the customer feel that there are fewer alternatives that have a positive impact on the strength of the relationship. Long relationships have a positive influence on customerships. Firstly, when customers are satisfied with the on-going customership and when they have strong connections to the other party, they can be expected to buy more from a company. They become regular customers, and a service provider will receive a larger share of their “wallet”. Secondly, in longer relationships both parties learn how to adapt and co-operate in a way that customer uses a selection of services more efficiently and individually. Structures of the meetings become more cost-efficient. When a customership lasts long, a company can propose customers new ways of producing and using a service, for example using the internet for information changing and paying. Therefore, service can be produced with more inexpensive resources without disturbing the experienced quality or value. (Grönroos 2010, 203.)

The last connection, from the relationship length to the profitability, indicates the connection between the customership length and the customership profitability. The length of the customership increases the profit since costs of attracting customers can be minimized, and pricing can often be changed. A customership increases return flows of the relationship, and the relationship costs are lowered when meetings are more efficiently structured – unnecessary matters can be avoided, such as answering questions. (Grönroos 2010, 203.)

If all the positive impacts mentioned in the model occur service quality in comparison to sacrifices increases the customership profitability. Yet, connections are not completely solid, and some of them can be affected by unexpected external factors. (Grönroos 2010, 204.)

### 3.2.2 Creation of customerships

Customer loyalty is the basis for creating customerships. Over time a relationship develops between a loyal customer and a service organization. A customership is in question when a customer is committed to use the organization's services, and when an organization supports this commitment. (Ylikoski 2000, 178.) In another words, a customership has formed when a customer makes his first buying decision. A customership is always based on voluntarily decisions since a customer can make the decision. Timing and the right action towards the customer's needs are important factors influencing the creation of customerships. When timing and action's convergence meet, it is easy for the customer to make a decision to buy. (Selin & Selin 2005, 127.)

A fact that is often considered is how a product and a service are different, a product is physical and a service is more of an abstract matter. When customers and customerships are considered right and customer-centered, in the end it doesn't matter whether the product is a physical matter or intangible service. There is no "service companies" or "companies selling items" – only different customerships exist. (Selin & Selin 2005, 29.) A customership is more than a single purchase or a service situation. When a cooperation develops between a customer and a service provider, a customership can be called as a partnership or even a strategic alliance. A customer and a service provider are not opposite parties, as seen in an original trading view, instead they play in the same side: one's advantage is also another's advantage. (Pesonen et al. 2002, 52.)

In the creation of customerships, trading of knowledge and emotions with the customer is emphasized. Without knowledge a customership cannot exist. It can be also said, that without a feeling that the knowledge can be interesting or the sender of the knowledge can be trusted a customership won't exist. The

creation of a customership depends on how well a company accomplishes to receive a part of customer's thoughts and heart. (Storbacka & Lehtinen 2006, 87.)

A customership of course does not develop in a moment, certain stages can be defined in the process of development – consciousness, introducing, deepening the relationship, commitment and end of the relationship. A customership starts with consciousness – a customer observes that an organization provides possible services for one. For example a customer notices a new store opened in the neighborhood. In the stage of introducing, a customer uses the service for the first time and firms expectations of being possibly a more loyal customer. In the stage of deepening the relationship a customer uses services repeatedly and understands the advantages of being a customer of the organization. In the next stage a customer will commit: a customer decides to use services for a longer period of time, consciously or unconsciously. This can in practice be seen as contracts – for example, purchasing a season ticket for your sport team's home matches. In the last stage, the ending of the relationship, a customer can stop using the service (if wanted) or change the organization. In some cases also the organization can end the relationship if customer has not behaved according to the contract. However organizations often aim at maintaining the customership. (Ylikoski 2000, 179.)

Several different tools are used to create a new customerships. In a customership level, a tool used could be, for example, a spearhead development. The problem in creating new customerships is often attached to the question how to get a customer to try a new customership. Customers are seldom ready to transfer everything into one customership, therefore, the challenge concerned is finding the spearhead that will help to start the customership. New customership is born as a spearhead in a way that the customership usually concerns only one or two products or part of the company's knowledge. Usually customers want to start a customership calmly, learning from the customership experiences together with the company and in this way develop the customership. When a company

approaches a customer with too overall customership, the customer experiences the situation of deciding to be difficult. (Storbacka & Lehtinen 2006, 93.)

The problem in the spearhead method is that a customer cannot picture the effects which the new company's service category brings, impacting his own processes. Difficulties can also be attached to the idea that choosing a new company requires a lot of efforts from the customer and one doesn't have the time for it. Consequently, a company needs to create products or services, which are easily pictured, to be "spearheads". With the help of spearheads a customership is created. When a customer's trust for the company's knowledge has been born, a customership that is larger, more overall and impacting customer's own processes can be offered. (Storbacka & Lehtinen 2010, 93.)

#### *Improving and maintaining customerships*

A positive company image is important especially for service organizations – through a company image a business can make intangible services more concrete. A positive company image will create trust among customers, bring good publicity, strengthen customerships and therefore, function as a competitive weapon for the company. The company's own corporate image cannot be controlled entirely but company can actively affect its creation and content. (Pesonen et al. 2002, 52.)

A customer retention is about focusing company's marketing effects toward an existing customer base. Through methods of customer retention, the customer loyalty can be increased and created. The customer retention has become increasingly important because of several changes in the marketing environment. First, there are many consumer markets in the world that are stagnant. Although situation varies throughout the world, in many places the population growth has slowed. Therefore, there are not as many new customers as there once were. Another reason is the increase of the competition in the field. Increase of the competition includes the goods and

services in the market that are similar to each other and lack differential advantage, liberated industries who must now compete in the open market, the growth of online alternatives; and approachable market information that is available to more companies, thereby decreasing informational advantages among competing companies. Another reason why the customer retention has become more important are for example rising costs of marketing, changes in the channel of distribution, change in the customer's behavior and the increasing use of market's intermediaries, 'third parties', that assist in the transaction between a provider and a customer. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 391.)

Is it always worthwhile to keep a customer? Although the ultimate goal of a company is to build, maintain, improve and save customerships, many professionals now believe that every customer is not always worth retaining. Some guidelines for not to retain a customer includes the conditions of an account not being profitable anymore, the conditions specified in the sales contract are no longer being met, a customer is offensive in a way that lowers employee morale, customers' demands are beyond reasonable; and a customer's reputation is so poor that associating with the customer might lower the image and reputation of the selling company. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 395.)

### **3.2.3 Advantages of customerships**

Long-lasting customerships bring financial advantages to the company. The customer loyalty impacts significantly to the profitability. It has been studied that an increase in the customer loyalty will also increase the profitability, yet a loyal customer might not immediately be a profitable customer. The customer acquisition has usually high costs thus it might take several years before the profits a customer has produced exceeds costs. (Ylikoski 2000, 181.) Customerships benefit an organization through direct financial benefits, indirect benefits such as customer behavior, and human resource management benefits.

As mentioned in the chapter of customer satisfaction - a satisfied customer is important to a company. A satisfied customer is the best advertisement a company can have. A customer will relay his good service experience when an unsatisfied customer will certainly tell bad experiences to his friends. Marketing has developed into the direction of the customership marketing where the customer's needs and satisfaction are prioritized. In the customer-centered marketing, an organization builds long-lasting customerships together with the customers in which both parties' benefit. Earlier attention was given to business situations one at a time and the marketing was mainly luring new customers. The next step in development was to notice that repeatedly visiting customers are profitable. Regular customerships started to be even more appreciated and marketing invests focused on already existing customers. (Pesonen et al. 2002, 51, 54.)

The customerships length and the organization's share of customer's total purchase effect how profitable a customer can become. Over time a customer becomes more profitable for the reason that the impact of the marketing efficiency increases when the customer loyalty increases. (Ylikoski 2000, 182.) Past research has indicated that the cost of acquiring a new customer instead of keeping a customer is three to five times more. A trusting relationship that develops between customers and the company makes the existing customer more receptive to the company's marketing efforts, and consequently, easier to sell new services to. This decreases the cost of the company's marketing efforts. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 393.) Financial impacts of a customer can also be measured through defining the customerships' financial value. Value can be observed both in a short and a long period of time. The financial value of customerships is gained by taking into notice calculating all the costs of the customership and profits the customer has made. (Ylikoski 2000, 182.)

In addition to the direct financial impacts, the customerships have also indirect financial impacts. For example the customer's trust in the organization grows when the customer learns to know the company through positive experiences

and understands the services the company provides. A long-lasting customership increases the customer's usage of services. Another indirect financial impact is the lowering costs of customership when customership lasts long. When company receives more information on a customer, better service can be provided. And when a customer receives more information on a company, problems and conflicts occur less frequently than before. A loyal customer is occasionally willing to pay a higher price from a service as a result of the reason that the customership is safe and saves the customer's time and nerves. Also the fact that the uncertainty of the outcome is lessened or removed increases the willingness of a customer to pay more for purchases and to purchase more frequently. This is another indirect advantage of the long-lasting customerships (Ylikoski 2000, 182; Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 393.)

The long-lasting customerships are built when customers are satisfied with services, and a satisfied customer is the company's most important resource. Satisfied customers will come again as customers, and eventually, will become regular customers of the company. What makes regular customers so important is the fact that they have been already won from the competitors, and for that reason, the company should appreciate and invest on them. Investing on the regular customers is usually small, while acquiring new customers and compensating unsatisfied customers requires higher invests. (Alaja 2000, 23.)

Also positive marketing is an advantage of customerships as loyal customers are usually satisfied customers, and satisfied customers are likely to provide good word-of-mouth marketing for the company. This form of advertising can be better than any other paid advertising a company might have and it comes with the benefit of reducing the cost of attracting new customers. It is certain that loyal customers often talk a great deal about the company and will induce much for a business over the years. In addition to the word-of-mouth communication, the company can receive a benefit called customer voluntary work. Sometimes customers voluntarily perform in order to help the company to provide better service quality, for example in a restaurant environment this



could mean the customer cleaning up the table himself or reporting the employee of dirty restrooms. Although voluntary performance can be done by anyone, it is more likely that loyal customers do so because they want to see the company to perform well. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2006, 187.)

Human resource management benefits include firstly, a benefit of customer supporting the service delivery. Usually experienced customers can contribute to the coproduction of the service by assisting the service delivery, for example a patient in a hospital knows what certificates or information to bring with him for the visit, or how to schedule an appointment to mammography without an appointment with a doctor. Another benefit is an employee retention. It is easier to retain employees when a company has a steady base of satisfied customers. People enjoy working for companies whose customers are happy and loyal. Their jobs are more satisfying and they can use more time to maintain and retain customerships than attracting new ones. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2006, 187.)

#### **3.2.4 Customer's service path**

Service is a process that moves ahead in time and is formed from service moments next to each other. These moments create a service path of the actualization which is impacted by production processes and choices made by the customer. The meaning of a service path is to describe the service totality. A service path can be divided into different stages, for example, from a point of view where the customer value is pursued to be investigated. These stages are preservice, which is the preparatory stage of service, for example, buying a ticket from the shop to an event; core service, which forms the actual value for the service; and residual service in which the contacts are noticed after the actual service event, for example, by customer feedbacks. (Tuulaniemi 2011, 78-79.)

Service moments are defined to be essential encounters of service that are formed in the interaction between a customer and a service provider and from the service production. Service moments often form from a variety of different contact points through which a customer forms contact to the service with all

his senses. These contact points can be divided into four different categories: channels, objects, operating models, and people. (Koivisto 2011, 49-51.)

Channels can be physical, shops, or virtual, Internet or a phone. All the spaces, either physical or virtual, should be thought of carefully to ensure that the customer is pleased, for example with interior, and design of the web pages are immediately forming preconceptions in customers' minds about the service and its provider. The objects that the customer uses or objects that the staff uses in front of a customer impacting the service experience are a group in contact points. These objects should be found from the previously mentioned spaces quite easily and provide all the needed information to the customer. These objects could be, for example, a ticket to a game event or a sales point's counter in the game event. (Koivisto 2011, 52; Manninen & Ugas 2016, 34.)

Operating models are the production methods for a service in single service moments, for example, instructions for the staff about customer service processes including customer's role in it. Processes and routines can be dissembled into small details which are called service gestures. These small gestures that can have a large impact on the service experience can be modified and developed. A service gesture can be, for example, the way a customer servant greets the customer. It is possible to make changes to these routines on a daily basis if the organization thinks so. (Koivisto 2011, 52; Manninen & Ugas 2016, 35.)

People usually have a significant role in the point of view of producing a service. In the service design people are categorized into two groups: service consumers or customers and service producers or customer servants. Both groups have their own role in the part of producing a service. From the customer's point of view, personnel should be easy to recognize (by clothing for example) and to reach. Also their manners need to fit in to their role as a customer servicer. If the personnel are untidy, it is not giving the best impression about the service provider and service itself. A service design is used to impact, for example, what is the role of a customer servant in the

service production, is the work distribution clear between customer servants and is the customer service suitable for the brand. Service design for the customer or service consumer means that his part in the production of service can be observed, and in addition, the fact how much customer has to manage the service production as self-service. (Koivisto 2011, 52-53; Manninen & Ugas 2016, 35.)

### 3.2.5 Customer loyalty

Customer satisfaction creates ground for the customer loyalty. The customer loyalty is a requirement for developing long-lasting customerships. The long-lasting customerships cannot be created without goal-directed activities to develop a relationship. The customer loyalty cannot be created even with the most powerful marketing campaigns alone. If the customer is satisfied with the service given and has received superior added value comparison to the rivals, he will remain loyal. (Ylikoski 2000, 173.)

The terms loyalty and retention are linked strongly to the customer loyalty, and often business people use these terms interchangeably. Yet, the customer loyalty reflects an emotional attachment as well as a business attachment to the service firm. The customer retention is about focusing the company's marketing efforts toward the existing customer base. "It's not enough to have customer satisfaction. You need the hearts and minds of the customer to close the loyalty gap." one Harvard service guru said. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 383, 388.)

The customer loyalty is a multilateral phenomenon. It can be observed through the view of customer's buying behavior, thus facts like how long and how often customer has used the service matter. Loyal customers are then those who have used the company's service repeatedly in a long period of time. Customers using services loyally are yet different among each other – someone uses the service once a month and other once a year but both use always the same company. When researching the customer loyalty the buying behavior needs to be observed in detail. How often a customer has used services in a certain period of time, how regular is the consuming, how long

ago the last service experience was, and what is the monetary value or other content of the last occurrence. All of these factors effect on how much the customer brings money to the company as a whole. (Ylikoski 2000, 174.)

The customer loyalty is a deeper convection to the company than a retention alone. It is an intuitive belief that the customer satisfaction leads to the customer loyalty that leads to the customer retention. Truth is that without the customer loyalty, the customer satisfaction may lead to the customer retention or it may not, and retained customers may not be loyal customers. The bottom line is that the customer loyalty should be separated from the customer retention – the company cannot assume that retained customers are loyal customers. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 384.) When the customer loyalty is researched in detail, also customers' attitudes are observed in addition to the buying behavior. The customer loyalty thus occurs but in the behavior also in a way that the customer reacts to the organization more positively than to the rival organizations. A customer can be regarded as a loyal customer, when one trusts in time that the organization satisfies completely (or for most parts) one's specific needs, that fill in the service category of the company. (Ylikoski 2000, 174.)

The satisfaction for services and the quality of services seems to forward the customer's willing to continue the customership and make repeat purchases, yet this connection is not linear. Only "very satisfied" customers, from the group together with "somewhat satisfied" and "satisfied", make repeat purchases and spread the positive word-of-mouth. For that reason, a company must offer a service package that customers are delighted to receive. It is important to surprise customers in a way that their quality experience makes them loyal and to do repeat purchases. In addition, trust is a significant factor influencing the customer loyalty. A company should treat its customers in a way that they can trust the company in all situations, at all times. The aim is not "zero mistakes" but "zero lack of trust". Customers' trust in an organization should never be deceived with negative service, inoperative physical product or the lack of information. The challenge is huge for the

companies but those who succeed in fulfilling it will receive competitive and profitability advantages. (Grönroos 2010, 178-179.)

### 3.3 Measuring customer satisfaction

A company with a customer-centered focus begins always with the idea that the customer satisfaction is a central measurement when clarifying and analyzing the company's success possibilities in the present and the future. When measuring satisfaction, it is good to remember that every customer has different perceptions and expectations; therefore, the customer satisfaction is a relative, individual and always subjective view. The corporate management may have a different view of the customer satisfaction compared to what an employee has, and both views can differ from the view of a customer. Consequently, the company cannot have a full knowledge over the customer satisfaction without measuring and investigating it. (Rope & Pöllänen 2000, 59.)

Every organization has some perception of whether its customers are satisfied or not. Complaints made by customers presents information on which factors or activities have caused dissatisfaction among customers. Complaints and perceptions are valuable information but yet do not explain customers' opinions in detail. (Ylikoski 2000, 155.) Every business needs to measure the customer satisfaction and proactively define it. Waiting for customers to complain in order to identify problems and development targets in the service is naïve. (Bateson & Hoffman 2011, 294.)

Hearing of customer satisfaction means a particular system, which enables the company to collect and record customer satisfaction feedback. The customer satisfaction's hearing system is often uncomplicatedly called by the term customer satisfaction research. (Rope & Pöllänen 2000, 56.) The customer satisfaction monitoring system is formed from researches and a system of direct feedback. When a customer is asked to give direct feedback in one's own words, it usually occurs instantly in the service situation. In a service organization it is relatively easy to receive direct feedback if so wanted. Different customer satisfaction researches and direct feedback

support one another. Combining the information gained from these methods, a company is able to get a more versatile general view. Although direct feedback supports the customer satisfaction monitoring system, researches' role in the measurement process is central. Since quality is one of the factors influencing satisfaction, the customer satisfaction research also produces information on the service quality. (Ylikoski 2000, 156.)

The customer satisfaction can be monitored, for example, by the amounts of recommendations, through direct feedback or customer satisfaction research. A direct feedback, as mentioned in the previous chapter, includes all the wishes, complains, improvement ideas and thanks a company receives from a customer. It is vital for the company that every kind of feedback is received. A company can have multiple channels for feedback, such as feedback given through Internet or Facebook pages, direct feedback given to staff or a traditional feedback form. In order to receive feedback, the process of giving feedback has to be done as easy and effortless as possible for customers. (Bergström & Leppänen 2009, 484-485.)

Customer satisfaction research is used to clarify customer expectations in relation to the functionality of the company and its products, and how they have actualized. A satisfaction research is implemented to the company's own customer base. (Bergström & Leppänen 2009, 485.) By measuring and observing the customer satisfaction, a company is able to have a look on its strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, the satisfaction customers experience has a straight impact on the result and customer loyalty of a company. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 91.)

In addition, monitoring the customer satisfaction enables a company to react fast in inoperative matters. When a company reacts fast and intervenes with problems, it secures the company from losing its customers. Customerships need to be monitored regularly in order to view the long-time development in the customer satisfaction. (Bergström & Leppänen 2009, 484.) The customer satisfaction research results are beneficial for companies from the point of view of observing the company's functions. With the help of the customer

satisfaction research, a company can measure the overall satisfaction and also the satisfaction in sections. When the satisfaction is observed in sections, it means that for example, different departments, product categories, quality, pricing singular products or customer service is investigated. (Bergström & Leppänen 2009, 484.)

## 4 JUKURIT HC OY

This chapter is about the commissioning organization of the thesis and its operations, strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, there is information about the season ticket, how the service concept is formed, and what the benefits of this service are.

### 4.1 Organization

Jukurit HC Oy is a hockey team located in Mikkeli, Finland. The team was established in 1970 and its main focus was to specialize in ice hockey. Their home rink, Ikioma Areena, (former Kalevankankaan ice rink) was built 1982 (Viitamies 2001, 113.) In the past years Jukurit has played the first division, Mestis, and was one of the most successful teams in that level by their 7 wins and four second places during seasons 2000-2016. (<http://www.jukurit.fi/fi-fi/article/etusivu/seura/57/>)

The season 2016-2017 was different from the previous ones, since Jukurit played for the first time in Liiga, the highest level of ice hockey in Finland. That was the main reason for conducting this customer satisfaction survey. The brand survey for the hockey team Jukurit (Parkkinen et al. 2015) researched the image and brand of the team as well as the satisfaction and expectations of target groups. In that survey there was also question about the services offered at the arena. The results were good, although the survey were not showing the answer "Can't say", which was a noticeable part in some of the questions. Consumers' especially appreciated the easiness to buy the ticket either beforehand or at the arena and VIP/lodge services. Participants did not find the catering and convenience stores' services, and the variety and loudness of the music played at the events so pleasant.

The Organization's biggest strength was their good branding. According to Parkkinen et al. (2015), Vuokko (2003) brand is formed from a name, symbol or logo, or a combination of those, that helps to recognize the services or products this particular brand offers. In the survey Parkkinen et al. (2015) found out that 94,9% of the respondents recognized the logo of the hockey team Jukurit, and that the team's image was positive and seen as forward-looking.

Where branding was seen as a definite strength of the organization, there were some weaknesses with their image. Local people felt embarrassed if they were seen publicly wearing a fan clothing. Team was seen distant and people were not talking that much about the games or anything related to Jukurit. There had been also a problem with the lack of audience. The most common reasons why people were not buying season tickets were that they were too busy, the current division was not high enough (games were not seen as interesting because of the low quality of participating teams), and the overall atmosphere didn't meet the consumers' expectations. (Parkkinen et al. 2015)

#### **4.2 Season ticket holders' services**

The service this chapter describes is a season ticket to the home events of the hockey team Jukurit. The service usually includes reserved seating to all regular seasons games, a faster entry to the events, and a possibility to reserve the same place to the play offs and finals if the team qualifies to the play offs. There might be some other benefits included in the season ticket such as discounts from the cooperation partners of Jukurit. According to the community manager of Jukurit, there were not any special offers or deals for the season ticket holder's in the season 2016-2017.

The season ticket holder usually visits the home events regularly, so their perspective to the events is a bit different from that of the viewers that are coming to the event every once in a while. That is why their service chain has to be clearly planned and executed. This service chain includes service



touchpoints as well as service moments. The touchpoints are described in the chapter 3.2.4 Customer's service path, but briefly they are channels, objects, operating models and people. Since the season ticket holders are monitoring and experiencing these touchpoints often, they should be carefully thought of when planning the season ticket holders' services.

One part of describing the season ticket holders' services is the nature of them. The nature of the service act focuses on the fact whether the service is tangible or not, and to whom or what it is mainly addressed to. This chosen season ticket service is mainly intangible, since consumers are not able to physically touch or feel the game, and the service's recipients are people. (Payne et al. 2011; Chapter 2, referred 6.4.2017.)

It has to be noted that there are huge construction works going on at the Kalevankangas area that may have had a major impact on the services at the Ikioma Arena. The constructions happened right next to the arena and for example the parking space is limited and located further away than the last season. Entering the arena is also narrowed and the traffic arrangements have been causing jams. These conditions have been going on the whole season and they may have affected the results of this survey, which has to be considered while analyzing the outcome.

## **5 METHODOLOGY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH**

In this study, a quantitative research was implemented. A quantitative research is the best option for our purpose since the target group is large. Through a web-survey season ticket holders can be reached easily. With the help of the inquiry, Jukurit HC Oy's service quality and their season ticket holders' satisfaction could be clarified. First, the research goal and target group is introduced and then introducing the theory of a quantitative research. An inquiry research is also explained and described in more detail. Lastly, the implementation of the study, gathering of the research data and analyzation are introduced.

## 5.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative research is the traditional mainstay of research and it is sometimes also called “survey research”. In a quantitative research there is a set of structured questions with predetermined response options to a large number of respondents. The purpose of a quantitative research is specific and this research is used when exact information is needed. A data format and sources are clear and well defined, and the formatting of the data largely follows numerical methods. (Burns et al. 2017, 143-144.) A quantitative research can also be called statistical research. This refers to the questions related to amounts and percentages. Matters are described through numerical values, and results are demonstrated with tables and figures. Correlations between different matters and changes in the research subject are often investigated. The results gained from the data are pursued to be generalized in a larger scale than when investigated with the help of statistical analysis. A quantitative research helps to chart the existing situation but often does not investigate the reasons adequately. (Heikkilä 2014. 15.)

The data in a quantitative research can be acquired from different sources gathered by others, such as statistics, registers or databases or information is gathered by one's own. Ready-made statistics are rarely in a form that can be used directly in a quantitative research. They might be modified, combined and inspected before use. Ready-made information is often used only as information that can be used to compare the data one has gathered on his own. When one is gathering data on his own, the right research method which functions together with the research problem has to be decided. In the few past years questionnaires made via Internet became more popular. They are suitable only for investigating universes in which every participant is able to use Internet. (Heikkilä 2014. 16-17.) When considering challenges in statistics the sampling theory has a key role. Uncertainties in the data acquisition can be controlled through the developed methods of sampling. (Vehkalahti 2014. 42)

A qualitative research is regarded as the pair for a quantitative research. The qualitative research focuses on understanding the quality, features and meanings of the target comprehensively. The qualitative research includes collecting, analyzing and making conclusions from unstructured data by observing what people say and how they behave. (Burns et al. 2017, 144.) In the qualitative research, cases are often limited to a small amount but they are pursued to be analyzed as precisely as possible. Targets of examination are chosen carefully and generalized statistics are not pursued for. (Heikkilä 2014, 15.)

## 5.2 Survey research

When executing a quantitative research survey research is often selected as a data collecting method. In a survey research, a researcher presents questions to a participant with a questionnaire. With the help of the survey research, complicated and multidimensional matters can be investigated, such as society's phenomena and people's opinions, attitudes and values. (Vehkalahti 2014, 11.) In this part survey research and questionnaire, which is needed in the survey research, will be acquainted with. Also the composing of a questionnaire will be covered.

As the name of the survey research already reveals, a survey research is a research where a researcher presents questions to an examinee using either a questionnaire or by interviewing a participant on one's own (Vehkalahti 2014, 11). In order for the research to be successful, the researcher has to choose the right research method and target group. Often research goals, resources available and approaches define which method is chosen. (Heikkilä 2014, 12.)

### *Sampling*

A sample is formed from a population by the target persons of the research. The research data, information received, presents the target group's opinions, attitudes and judgments widely. These different phenomena are pursued to be compared, explained and described with the help of the research data. The

survey research can be conducted by investigating the whole population. This type of research is called a census study. Usually, the population is too large for the researcher to include members in the research. In this case, the research is conducted by investigating a small sample that represents the whole population. (Heikkilä 2014, 12-17.) Often the census study is more used when a quantitative research is conducted. The basic principle is that the census study is used when participants are above the amount of hundred. In the survey researches the amount of participants could easily exceed that limit. (Heikkilä 2014, 31.)

### *Questionnaire*

In a survey research, the measurement is executed with a questionnaire (Vehkalahti 2014. 20). Other methods for data collecting are post surveys, Internet surveys, surveys, omnibus-research, panel researches, and tests. The internet has become a more popular tool for conducting Internet and email surveys. Part of the reason for the popularity is that the costs and effort can be lowered but instead the amount of participants can be small. When conducting an Internet survey, e-mails and programs such as Webropol can be benefitted. (Heikkilä 2014. 17; Mäntyneva et al. 2008, 49–50.)

A questionnaire is the key in the survey research. The new technology enables the data research through internet questionnaires and answers can also be received straight to the program of statistics. In a survey, it is vital that the questions are planned and formed carefully since the form of the answers is one of the major causes of mistakes. (Heikkilä 2014, 45.) When a participant does not think similarly than the researcher implies, the results become distorted. This has to be noticed in the survey research because the researcher cannot specify the meaning of the answers. Therefore, the questions should be unequivocal and the risk of misunderstanding should be minimized. (Valli 2015, 42.)

In the composition of the questionnaire one should pay attention to the amount of questions and the length of the questionnaire. It is important that

the participants retain their interest from the beginning to the end of the questionnaire. If the questionnaire is too long, the participants easily quit answering or answer carelessly. (Valli 2015, 43.) The appearance of the questionnaire is one of the factors that a participant uses to decide whether he wants to answer to the questionnaire. The more pleasant appearance of the questionnaire and the more pleasant it is to answer, the more answers will be received and the percentage of answers will grow. In addition, the questions should proceed logically and the instructions for answering should be clear. Leading questions should be avoided and the interdependent question series should be located next to each other. Generally, it is easier for the participant to understand short questions than long ones. A researcher should avoid general questions and instead, present specified questions. The general questions give participants more space for interpretation than the specified questions. Common advice is that the general questions are in the beginning of the questionnaire, and the specified questions are located in the end. Also, the questions that are easy to answer are often located in the beginning of the questionnaire. These easy answers are often attached to the background information of the participant. (Heikkilä 2014, 46; Valli 2015, 43; Hirsjärvi et al. 2014, 202–203; Mäntyneva et al. 2008, 53.)

### *Data analysis*

The central part of the research is interpretation, analysis and drawing conclusions from the research data. First, one should clarify what the researcher wants to investigate with the research and then, the method that is suitable can be chosen. Generally analysis happens after the research data is collected and organized. The quantitative methods for analysis include statistics that give information of the distribution's location, such as averages, medians and fractiles. Instead, the statistics that present the form of the distribution are the standard deviation, kurtosis and obliqueness. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2014, 221–223; Mäntyneva et al. 2008, 59; Heikkilä 2014, 161.)

In order to analyze the research data, the researcher needs to familiarize oneself with the data. The thorough preparation of the data creates the basis

for the actual analysis. Browsing of the data is a good tool to confirm that everything is fine with the data. (Vehkalahti 2014, 51-52.) When the data is familiarized, modified and summarized, the analysis can be done. The results received from the research data is pursued to be modified into the synthesis because the pure analysis of the results does not present the results of the research. Therefore, the answers to the research problems are received with the help of these synthesis. The results from the research have to be written and described to the reader in an understanding form. This means that the results should be interpreted and explained in a way so that is easy for the reader to understand. In addition, it is the researcher's job to consider the results gained and draw the conclusions from the synthesis created before. (Heikkilä 2014, 189; Hirsjärvi et al. 2014, 229–230.)

In the analysis of the open answers in the end of the questionnaire we applied the content analysis. When the content analysis is used, the aim is to get open answers in a as compact and clear form as possible but still preserving the essential information and message. It can be hard to extract the main matters from the data, therefore clear, reasonable and consistent information is pursued to be received with the help of the content analysis. The basis on analysis of the data is the logical inference and interpretation. First the data needs to be sectioned and conceptualized, after the data is combined again into a logical totality. (Sarajärvi & Tuomi 2009, 108.)

According to Eskola (2001; 2007) the content analysis can be divided into the matter oriented approach, theory bound and the theory oriented approach. In the analysis of open questions, the matter oriented approach was used. In the matter oriented approach, the theoretical totality is made from the data. (Sarajärvi & Tuomi 2009, 95.) The analysis is composed from three different stages, which are data reduction, clustering and abstracting. In the stage of reduction, the data is reduced in a way that irrelevant matters are eliminated, and the data is sectioned and summarized. The data is summarized by modifying open answers into plain expressions by elevating the matter's feature or conception. (Sarajärvi & Tuomi 2009, 10, 109.) In the clustering stage, the concepts and matters describing similarities and differences are

searched from the data. Those plain expressions and matters that are meaning the same is composed from a subclass which describes inclusively the content of the group's hyponyms. Next the subclasses are grouped under classes and those classes are combined to main headings. After these stages there is still one class combining the grouping. (Sarajärvi & Tuomi 2009, 110.)

### **5.3 Implementation of the Webropol survey and data analysis**

The customer satisfaction survey investigating the satisfaction of the season ticket holders was implemented for a local company, Jukurit HC Oy. In the research customers' satisfaction for the service and its quality was examined. When our thesis employer offered us this subject, he gave us the freedom to examine and create the research ourselves. Some matters were discussed which were important for them to know but they were almost all already included in the research from our point of view. With the help of the theory part of the thesis, the good structure for the inquiry research could be built. First the draft of the questionnaire was given to our employer and thesis supervisor so that it could be considered whether the subjects in the questionnaire were clear and providing the information wanted in the research. The employer was satisfied and approved the questionnaire. The questions in the questionnaire and answer options were still modified with our thesis supervisor until the questionnaire and its functionality was approved. Then the questionnaire was modified to the Webropol-website and made sure that the questionnaire's layout was clear and simple. For the research method of the survey research, the quantitative method was chosen and the questionnaire we made was used. Implementing the quantitative research, the positioning of the questions was more disciplined and limited than in the qualitative research. (Laadullinen ja määrällinen tutkimus 2015.) Therefore, the data was gathered through a questionnaire. This method was the most suitable for our research, and by modifying the questionnaire to the Internet, it was guaranteed that it were easy for the participants to participate. The chosen research method also supported our research problem. In the questionnaire open questions were included, and also in some questions the answer options were classified for the participants.

### *Questionnaire and cover letter*

From the beginning, the cover letter was drafted into Microsoft Word (Appendix 1). The survey made was implemented as an Internet survey (Appendix 2). For this reason the questionnaire had to be created in the Webropol-system. The questionnaire was divided in to smaller sections so that filling the survey would be more convenient and simpler for the participants. All in all the questionnaire included 13 questions. The structure of the questionnaire was built in a way that the first the background information of a participant was asked (Appendix 2, questions 1-6). The theoretical framework of the thesis consisted of the service quality and customer satisfaction so also the questions in the questionnaire were based on these themes. The service quality that the customer experiences has already been mentioned to be composed from many different factors. The quality itself consists of the customer when his own expectations or needs are fulfilled. In other words, the customer defines the quality for himself. Mirroring the theoretical framework, selected subjects were chosen so that it would be most convenient, simple and easy for the customer to tell about his own satisfaction for the service and its quality. The season ticket holders were asked to evaluate Jukurit HC's services, service quality and the environment in the home games with the help of different claims (Appendix 2, question 8). In the theoretical framework, it was mentioned that when the customer begins to use the company's services, he most likely wants to satisfy a need or some of the needs that he has. In that case, the content of the services creates different benefits for the customer and different features of services provide these benefits. In the end of the questionnaire the participants were asked to evaluate the atmosphere and services in general in the home events (Appendix 2, questions 10-12). The aim was also that the participants are free to describe their own proposals, so the last questions gave the participants the freedom to describe their ideas for the home events (appendix 2, question 13).

The author of the research should clarify for the participant the background of the research. The researcher should also motivate the participant to answer the questionnaire. (Heikkilä 2014, 59.) For this reason a separate cover letter



was made in addition to the questionnaire (Appendix 1). A cover letter is held as a façade for a company. With the help of a façade, basic information is communicated to participants, for example, what the questionnaire is about, who is executing it or what the results are used in the future. (Vehkalahti 2014, 48). In the cover letter for this questionnaire, the researchers are presented together with the meaning of the research. It is also explained what is attempted to be clarified with this research. The cover letter also explains that all the answers are treated anonymously and confidentially, and that it is not possible to know from an answer which participant has written it. From the basis of the cover letter, the compressed text was written, which was attached to the beginning of the electronic questionnaire. In this text the same areas were covered than in the cover letter but this summary was attached straight to the questionnaire to give information to the participant.

#### *Research data*

Research data was gathered with the above-mentioned questionnaire. The target group of the questionnaire was the season ticket holders of Jukurit HC. The target segment was rather large and other than segmenting the season ticket holders, no other segmentation was made. The company has their own regular customers who visit the games regularly and have owned many season tickets over the years, in addition there were customers that visit the games seldom and have had a season ticket for couple times or customers that own the season ticket for the first time. The participants were gathered from different kinds of season ticket holders. Executing a quantitative research, Webropol-program is often used for gathering data and creating a questionnaire (Heikkilä 2014, 66). Before the actual publication of the survey we tested the questionnaire. By doing the testing, we aimed at securing that the questionnaire's general understandability is distinct and the electronic form functions effortlessly.

The questionnaire was published in the Internet on the first of December and available for the participants who received the invitation to participate via email. The link for the questionnaire was sent by email and the organization

reminded the season ticket holders including a tiny reminder to the monthly email sent to the holders. The season ticket holders' email addresses received was 395. Total amount of emails sent was the same amount. The questionnaire was also marketed in the monthly email for Jukurit HC's season ticket holders and in the home events in December. The questionnaire was open from the 1<sup>st</sup> of December until the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. We received 167 answers to the Webropol-system that represents approximately 42,3% of the overall amount of the season ticket holders.

The webropol-program saved all the answers and through the program the data could be easily viewed. For the data analysis SPSS-program was used. The data was first moved from Webropol to SPSS. The questions in the questionnaire were documented to SPSS together with the answers. The program insists coding the answer alternatives. The coding was made with the help of numbers, for example, 1=Woman, 2=Man. Through the numerical codes the system recognizes the participant's answer, and is able to calculate the amount of participants and percentages. Creating the codes requires extreme accuracy so that the results of the research do not endure from the coding that is done incorrectly. The open question in the end of the questionnaire was not registered in the SPSS-program. From the frequency and distribution tables it can be seen how the answers were divided both in percentage and numerically (Appendix 3).

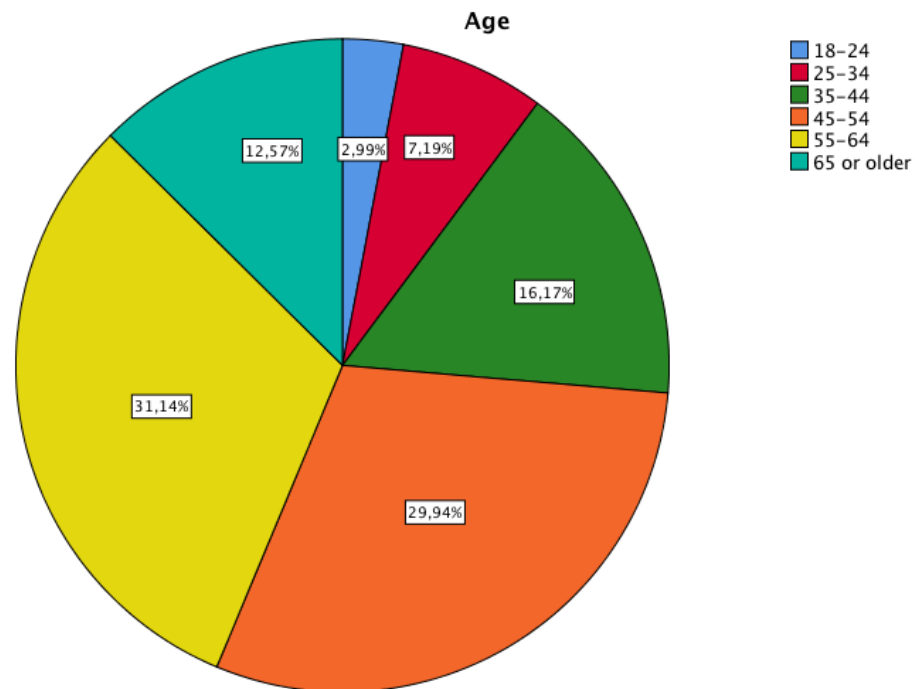
## **6 RESULTS**

In this chapter the results from the customer satisfaction survey are going to be analyzed. The results are analyzed in the same order they have been presented in the survey form (Appendix 1). In addition to the results, the frequency tables made by SPSS-program are presented (Appendix 3). The survey was answered by 167 persons. The results are divided into three categories regarding to different topics of the survey. First, the background information of the participants is considered, secondly, the quality and accessibility of the services are covered. The third part reports the customer satisfaction of the services.

## 6.1 Background information

The first question was about the gender of the participant (N=167). The majority of the persons who answered were male (85.63%, 143 participants), and the rest of the participants were female (14.37%, 24 participants).

In the next question, the participant's age was asked (N=167; Figure 5). The majority of the persons who answered the survey were above the age of 45. The majority of the season ticket holders using the services were in the age group of 55-64 (31.14%). The second biggest group was the age group of 45-54 (29.94%). The minor group was the persons between the ages 18-24 (2.99%). Figure 5 represents the age distribution of the participants.



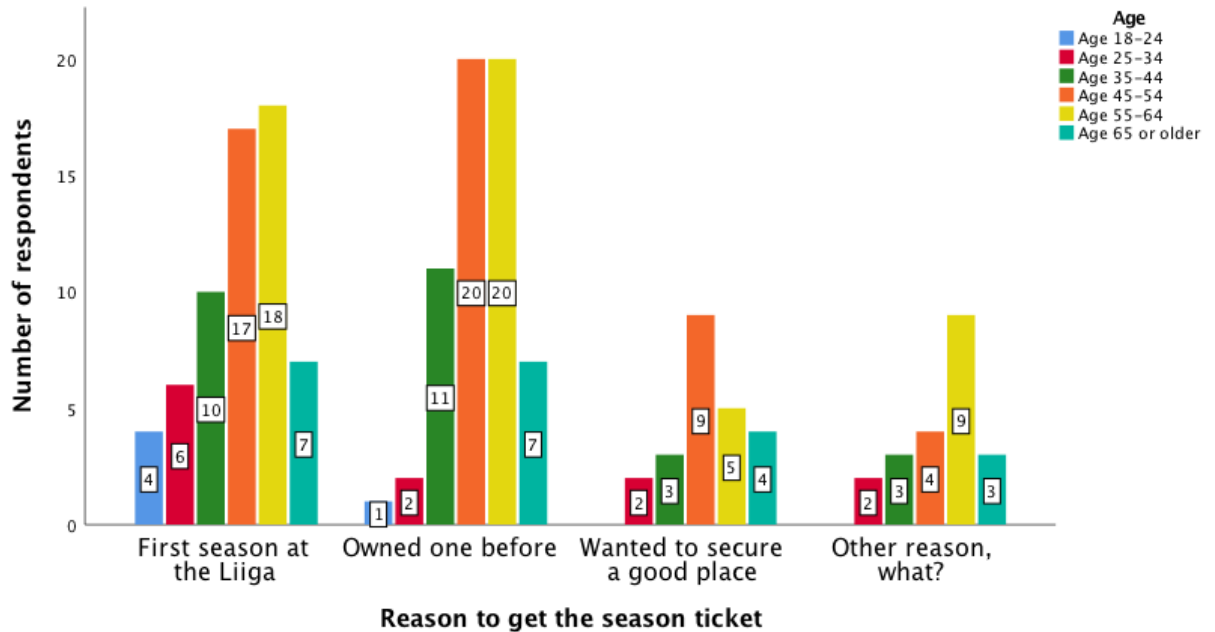
**FIGURE 5. Participant's' age distribution (N=167)**

In the third question participants were asked to determine how many years from this season to five previous ones they had been season ticket holders (N=167). For the majority of participants on-going season was the first season they own a season ticket (46.11%). A minority, 24.55% of participants, had

owned a season ticket now and one or two seasons before, whereas the second biggest group, 29.34%, had been season ticket holders for more than three years.

The fourth question to the season ticket holders asked their seating sections (N=167). Majority of the participants, 72.46%, had a season ticket to the seating sections while a small group of the participants, 25.15%, had standing places. The minority of the participants, 2.4%, had their season tickets located somewhere else than for the above-mentioned places. These other places were a fan section (standing places), player's section, and VIP seats.

The fifth question asked the participants to define the reason why they bought the season ticket this year (N=167). There were two reasons that most of the participants had chosen. The first one was that Jukurit were playing at the Liiga (37.13%) and the second one was that the respondent had previously owned a season ticket (36.53%). The minority of the participants (13.77%) wanted to secure a good seating and others answered to the open question "other reason, what?" (12.57%). Other reasons for buying the season ticket were mostly that the participants had received the ticket as a present, work schedules had changed so the participants had more time to attend to the events, the participants wanted to support the local team and cooperation with Jukurit. In the figure 6, below, the main reasons can be seen by the age group. For the youngest (18-24), the second youngest (25-34) and the oldest (65 or older) groups the main reason was that this season was the first one for Jukurit at the Liiga. The reason that the participant had owned one before was enough for all the other groups than for the age 18-24 and 25-34 to get the season ticket for this season too.



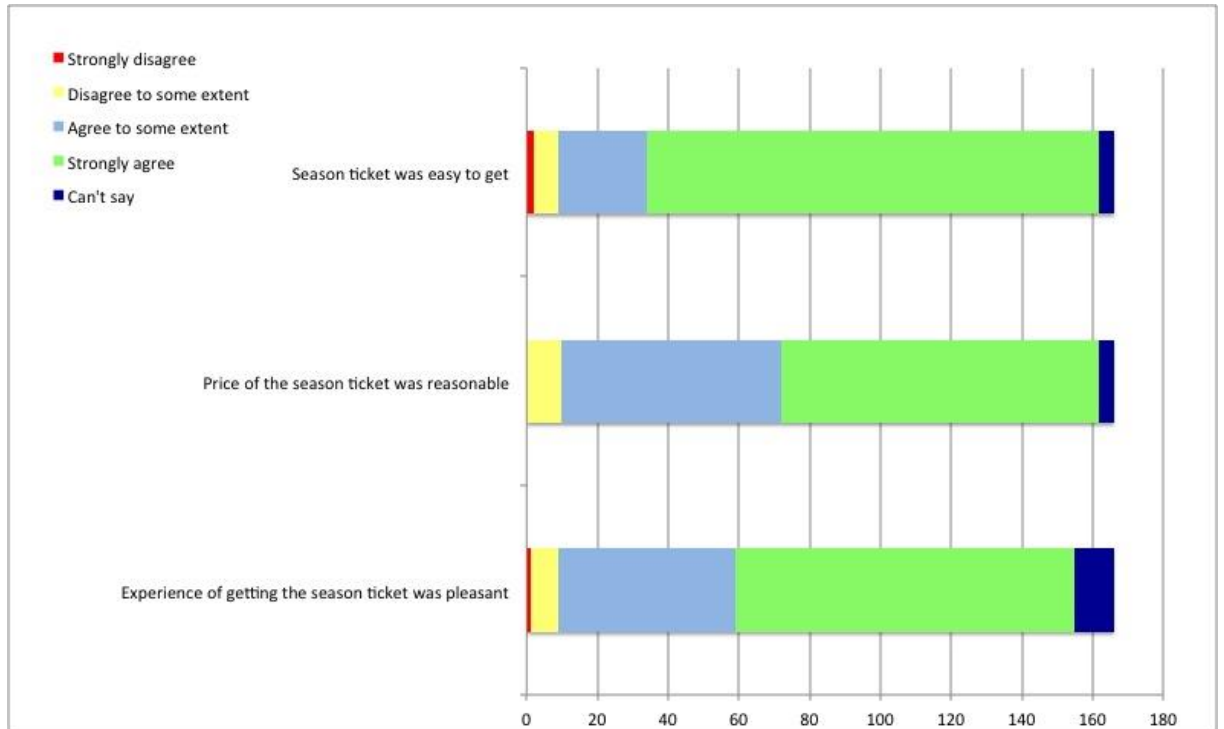
**FIGURE 6. Reasons to get the season ticket shown by the age groups N=167**

The last background questions asked where the respondents bought/received the season ticket and how they usually arrived to the Ikioma Arena (N=167). The Jukurit shop in the center of Mikkeli was the most common place to get the season ticket (65.27%). Other ways to get the season ticket were either using employer's ticket (17.37%) or the respondent had bought it online from Nettilippu.fi (7.78%).

Most of the respondents arrived to the arena by car (67.66%). 22.75% of the respondents used a bus for transportation, and 8.98% walked or cycled to the game.

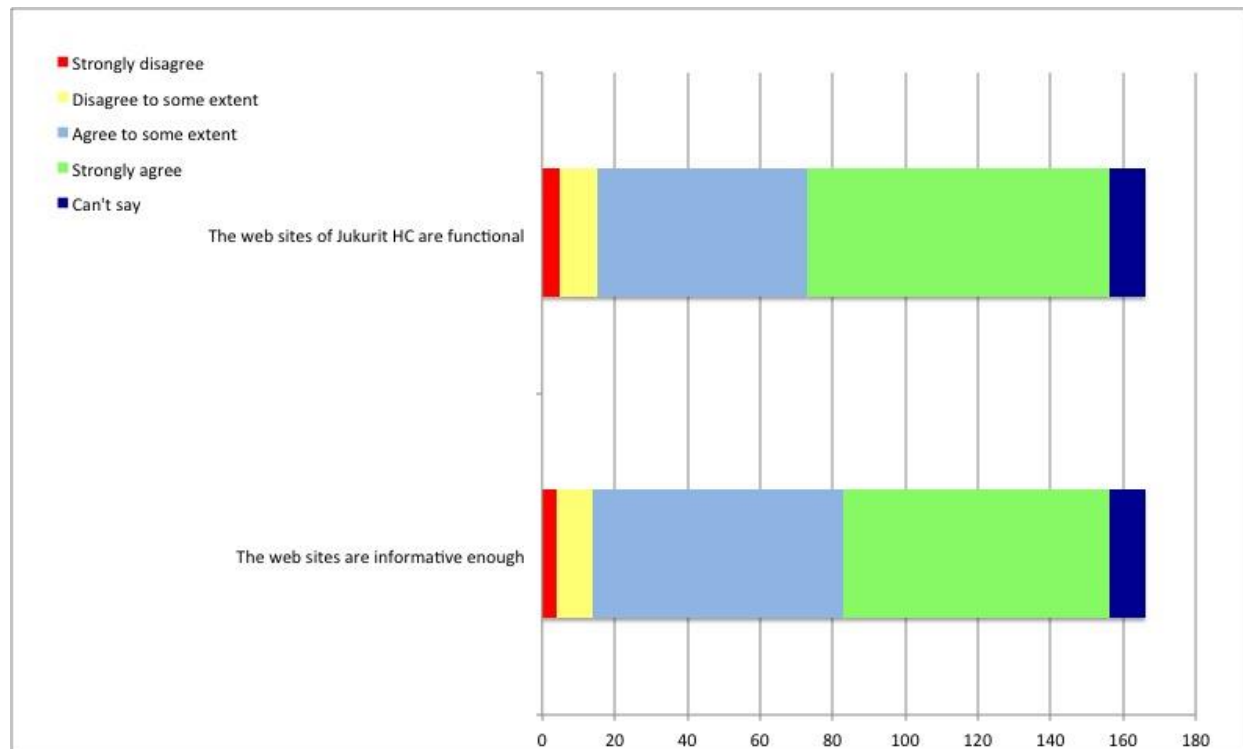
## 6.2 Quality and accessibility of the services

In this part of the survey the respondents were asked 21 statements about the quality and accessibility of the services. These statements were answered by choosing the best alternative from strongly disagree, disagree to some extent, agree to some extent, strongly agree or I can't say. The alternatives were not numbered.



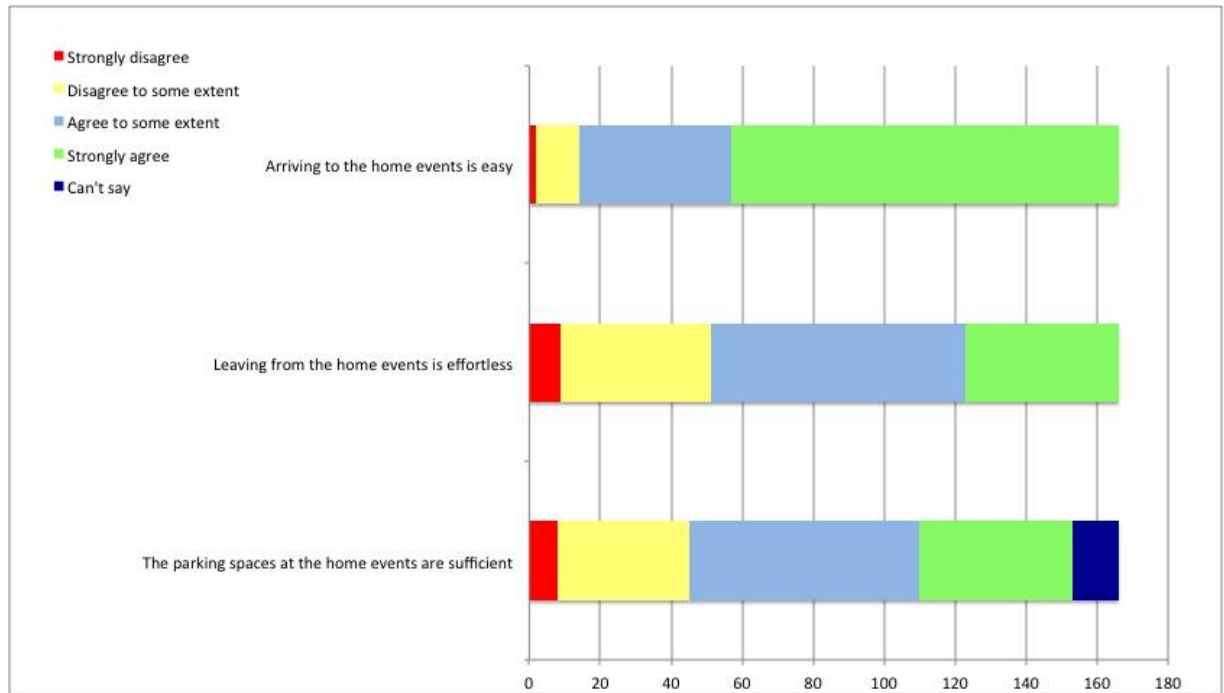
**FIGURE 7. First three statements concerning the season ticket N=166**

The first three statements were concerning the season ticket (Figure 7). The first claim was that acquiring the season ticket was easy (N=166) and 77.11% of respondents strongly agreed on that. 54.22% also strongly agreed that the price of the season ticket was reasonable (N=166), and 57.83% strongly agreed that the buying experience of the season ticket was pleasant (N=166). Only two participants thought the acquiring of the season ticket was difficult (1.2%). From the results we can conclude that overall the participants thought that the acquiring and purchasing of the season ticket was pleasant.



**FIGURE 8. Statements considering the web sites of Jukurit HC N=166**

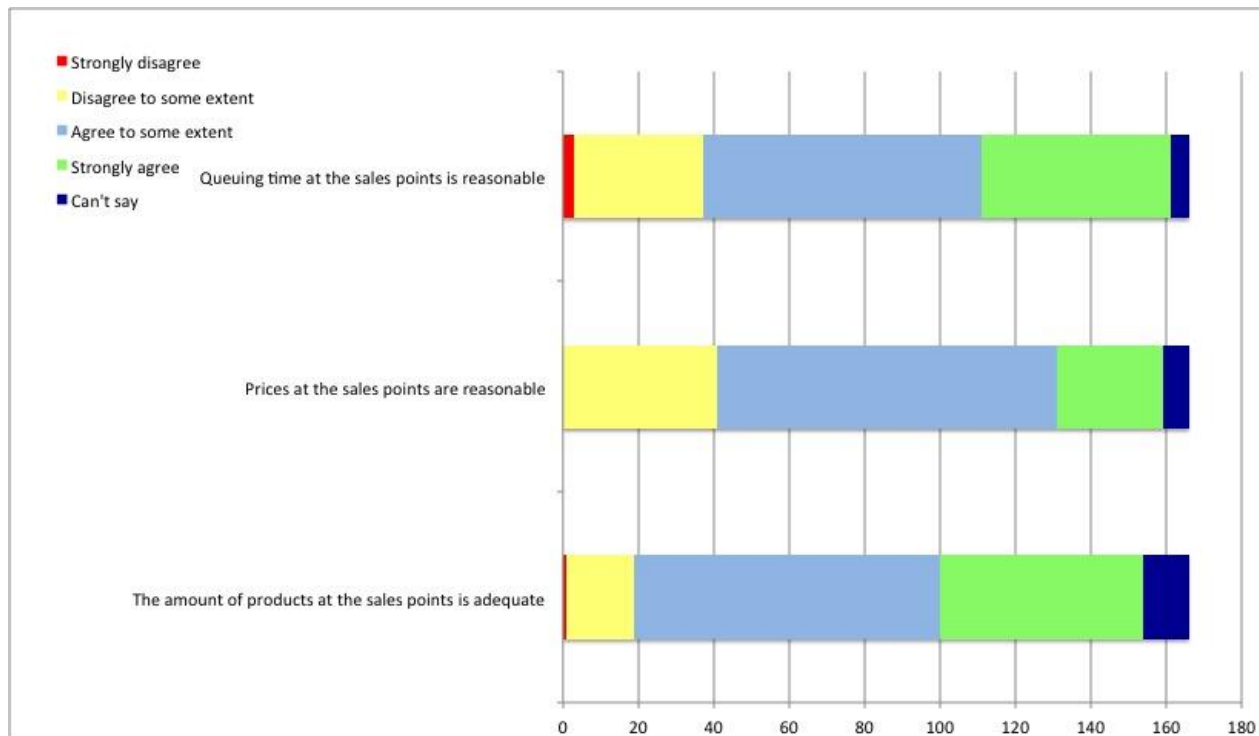
From the figure 8, the statements concerning the website of Jukurit can be seen. The season ticket holders generally thought that the website of Jukurit was practical but the website could include more information (N=166). Half of the respondents strongly agreed that the website of the hockey team Jukurit was practical (N=166), whereas 34.75% somewhat disagreed. Only 3.01% did not consider the website practical. When the participants were asked about the information in the website (N=166), 43.98% fully agreed the website had enough information but almost the same amount of the participants (41.57%) only somewhat disagreed.



**FIGURE 9. Statements considering traffic arrangements N=166**

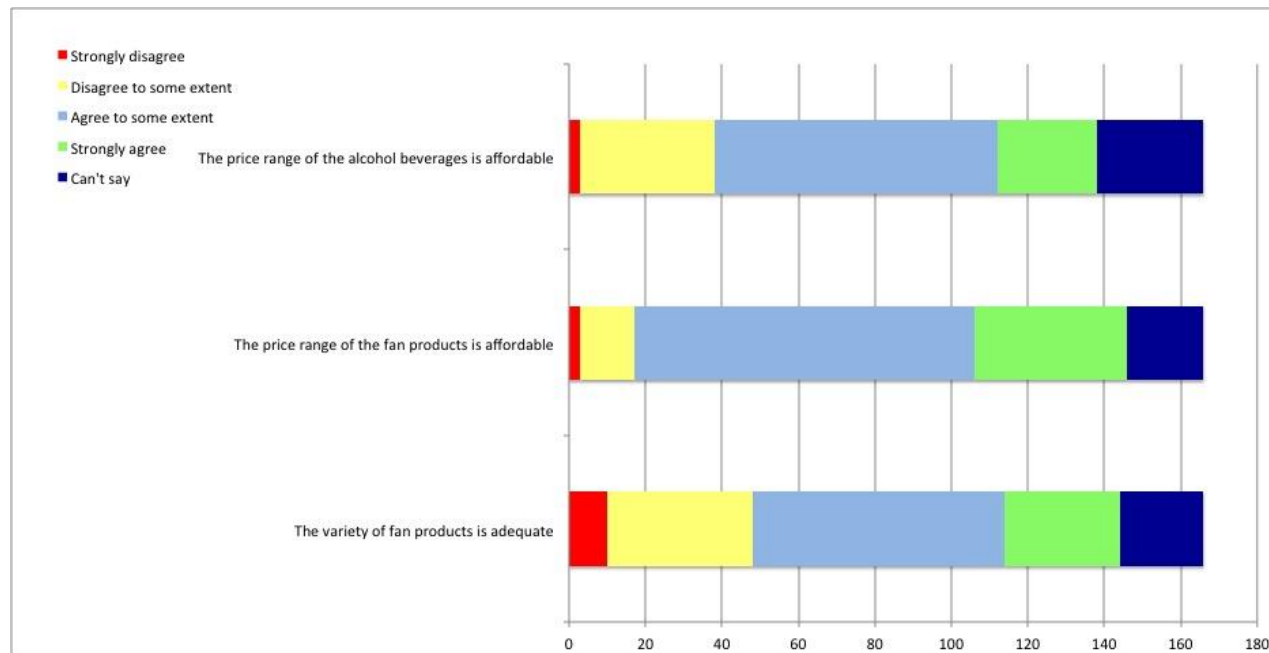
The next couple of statements were about the traffic arrangements and parking at the home games. The results can also be seen from the figure 9. The respondents clearly felt that it was easier to come to the home games than leave (N=166). Only 7.23% disagreed to some extent that it was easy to come to the home games whereas 25.3% disagreed to some extent that leaving from the home game was easy. The majority of the respondents (39.16%) mostly agreed that there was enough parking opportunities at the home games (N=166) but also at the same time 27.11% either strongly or somewhat disagreed.





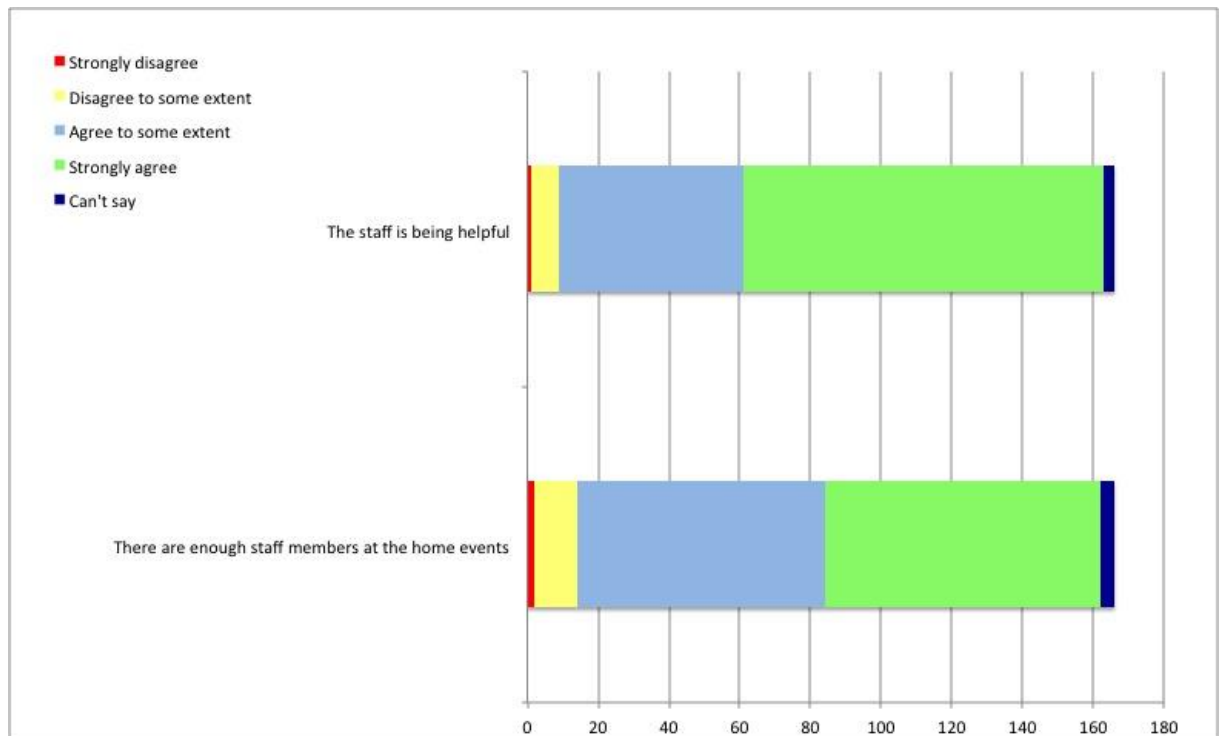
**FIGURE 10. Statements considering sales points N=166**

The following statements cover the sales points at the Ikioma Arena from the service quality, accessibility and price point of view (N=166; Figure 10). Most of the respondents (74.7%) somehow or strongly agreed that queuing time at the sales points was reasonable. The respondents were glad with the amount of products in the sales points, most of the season ticket holders (81.33%) agreed or somewhat agreed with the claim.



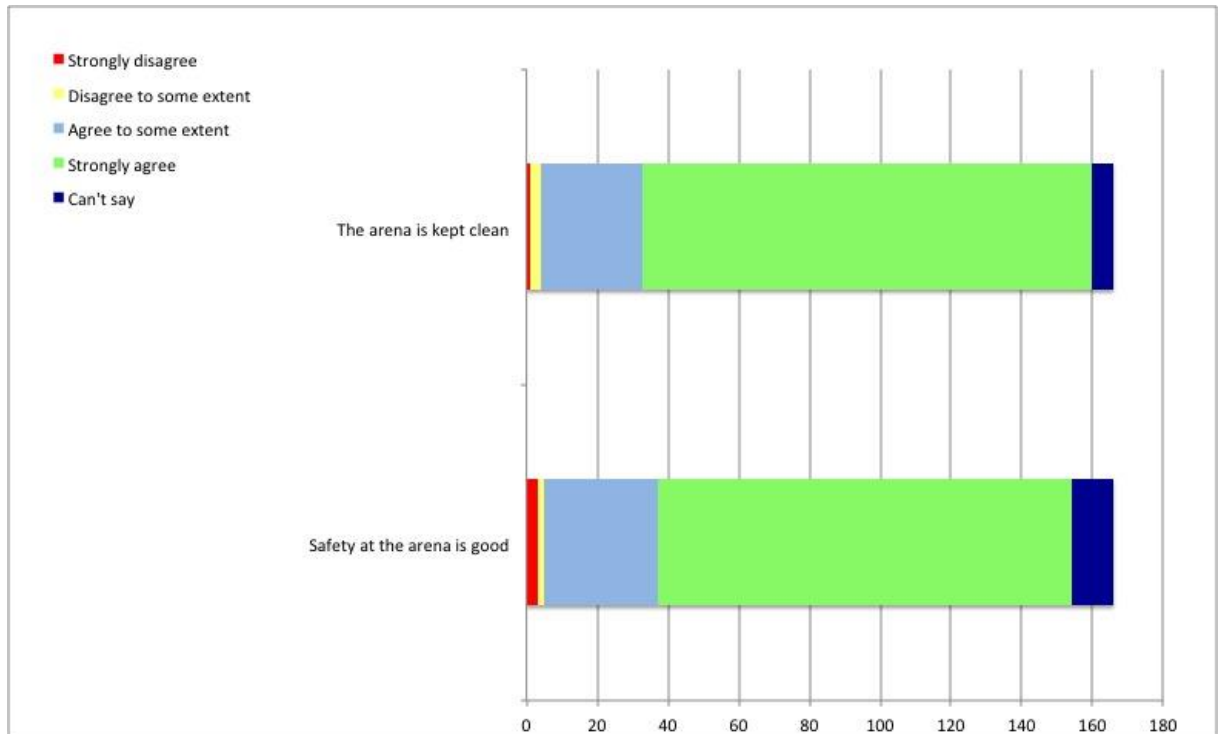
**FIGURE 11. Statements considering the price range and variety of alcohol beverages and fan products N=166**

The price range of alcoholic beverages generated different opinions (N=166). The majority (44.58%) somewhat agreed that the prices were suitable. The second majority (21.08%) somewhat disagreed that the prices were suitable. When the participants were asked about the price range of the fan products the distinct majority somewhat disagreed (53.61%) that the price of fan products was suitable (N=166). We also wanted to clarify whether the season ticket holders considered that there was a sufficient amount of fan products available (N=166). 39.76% somewhat agreed with the claim but 22.89% of the respondents somewhat disagreed. Figure 11 gives more detailed information about the respondents' opinions.



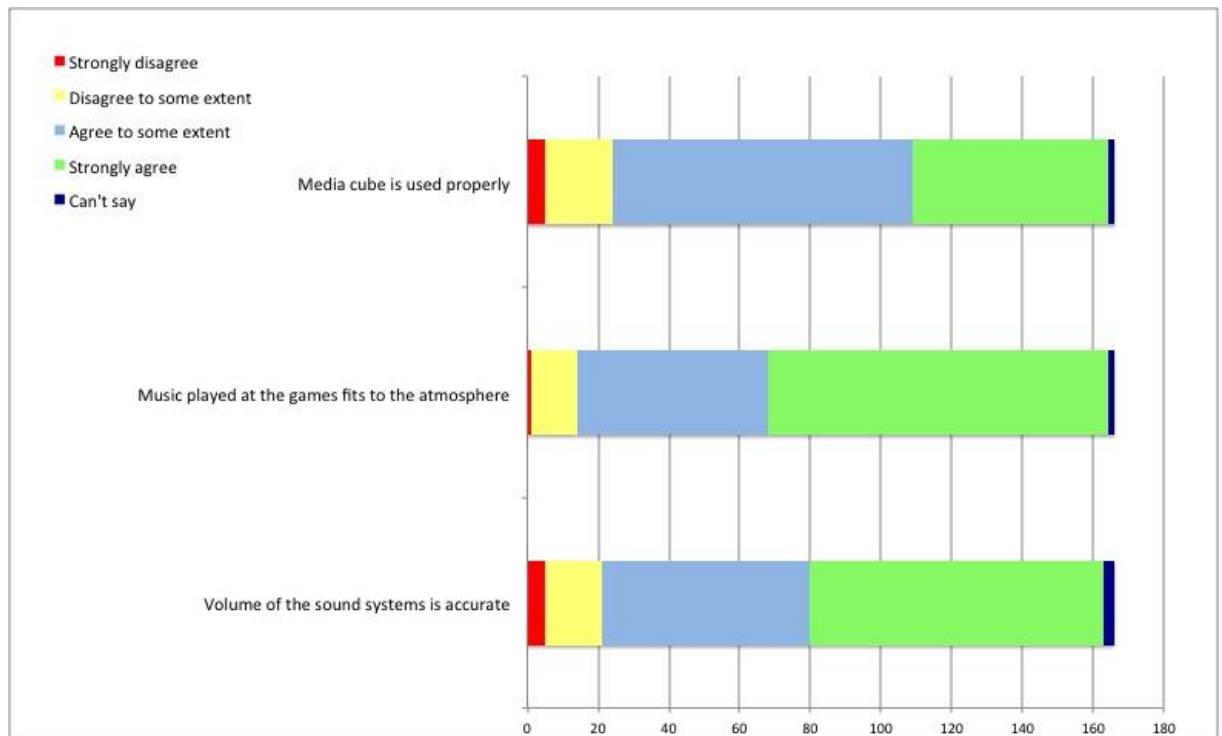
**FIGURE 12. Statements considering the staff N=166**

The following two questions clarified whether the staff was helpful and if there was enough staff present (Figure 12; N=166). The respondents generally thought the staff was helpful, the majority of the participants (61.45%) fully agreed. The respondents were also happy with the amount of staff working at the home games. 46.99% fully agreed that there was a sufficient amount of staff present and 42.17% somewhat agreed.



**FIGURE 13. Statements considering the environment and surroundings N=166**

The environment and surroundings of the home game were researched with two claims: the security in the home games is good, and the arena is kept clean (Figure 13; N=166). Both questions had a clear distribution in the answers – the majority of the participants agreed fully that the security was good (70.48%) and the ice rink was kept clean (76.51%).



**FIGURE 14. Statements considering music and the media cube N=166**

The last three claims concerned the music played in the home events and the media cube (N=166). The participants were presented two claims about the music and musical devices: Volume of the sound system is convenient, and the music played is suitable for the event. The majority of the participants fully agreed with both claims. 50% of the participants felt the volume of the sound system was convenient and 57.83% thought the music played suited well the occasion.

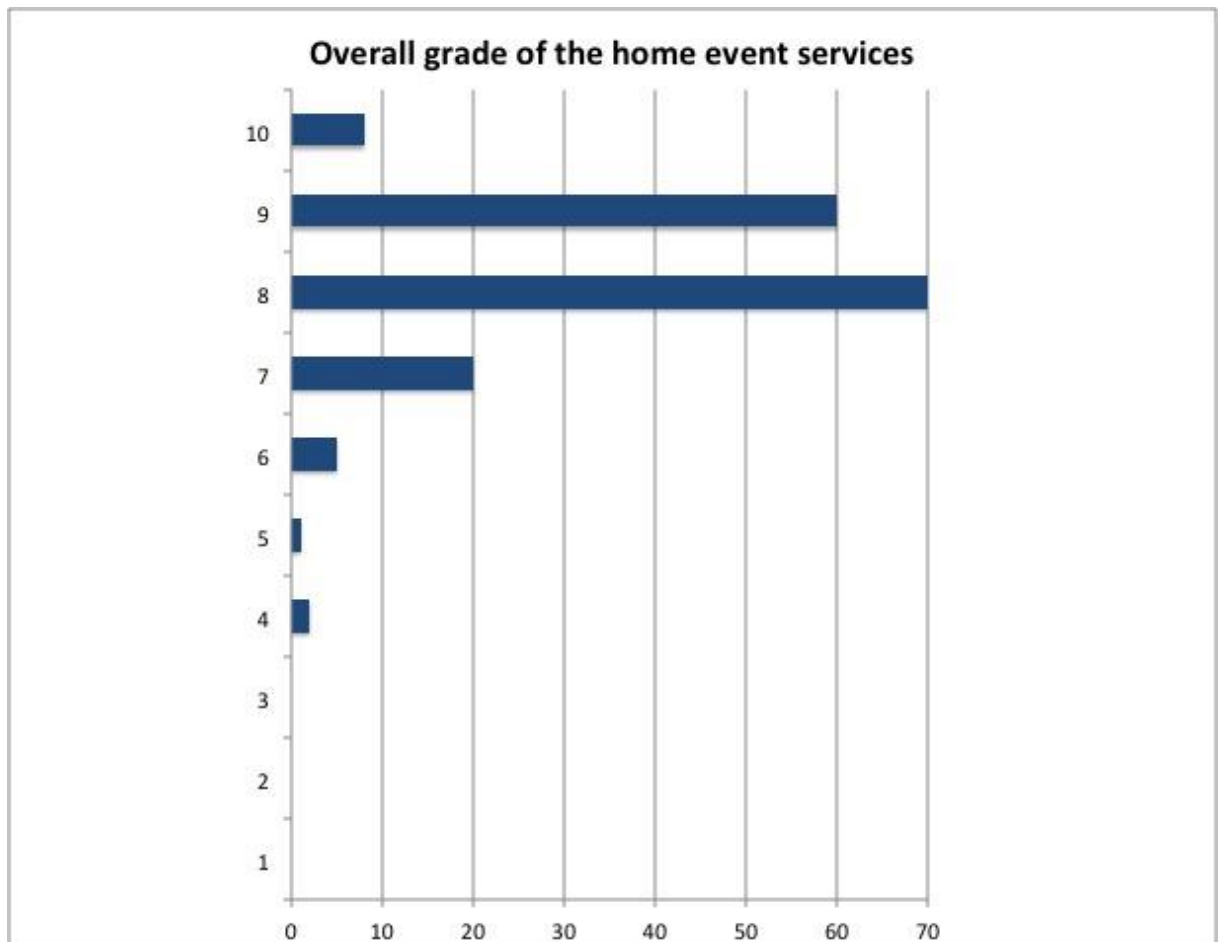
When participants were asked whether the use of media cube is proficient, the participants' answers distributed more evenly. The majority of the participants (51.2%) agreed to some extent and the second biggest group (31.13%) agreed fully that the use of media cube was proficient. Figure 14 shows these three questions in a bar chart.

### 6.3 Customer satisfaction in general

The last part of the questionnaire investigated the customer satisfaction of the season ticket holders in general. The first question asked the participant about

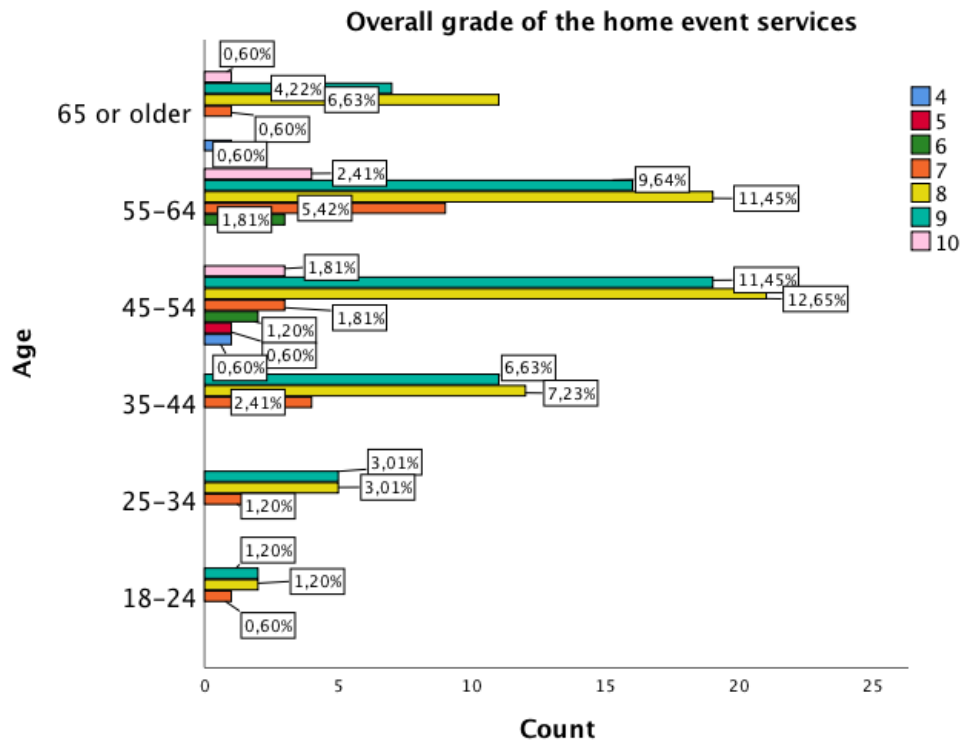
the new service for this season, free bus transportation (N=166). The majority of the participants (57.83%) were not aware of the new service. The rest of the participants (42.17%) had used the service, and from them, a majority (32.53%) was satisfied with the service. Those who were not satisfied with this service left open comments that were mostly criticizing the amount of busses and people in them, as well as their timing (arriving too early to the arena/leaving too soon after game), and uncertainty since a couple of times the bus didn't arrive or broke down during the transportation.

The second question clarified the main matters affecting season ticket holders' satisfaction in the home games. The participants were asked to choose three most important matters (N=166). From the results we can conclude that there were two facts that affected the season ticket holders' satisfaction the most; 95.18% answered that the fact the team played satisfyingly, and 91.57% said the fact the atmosphere was good. The other alternatives distributed the answers more evenly. The third most important matter (40.36%) was that there were a sufficient entry and exit at the home events. The other alternatives were not considered as the most important among all of the participants – 33.73% said that it was important that the queuing time was reasonable, 18.67% thought it was important that the staff was helpful, and the least important fact (7.23%) concerned the product category in the sales points.



**FIGURE 15. Overall grade of the home event services N=166**

In the next question the participants were asked to give a general grade of the fluency of the services in the home games (Figure 15; N=166). The grading scale was from 1, extremely bad, to 10, excellent. The majority (42.17%) answered the grade 8. The second biggest group, 36.14%, chose the grade 9. No participants chose the grades from one to three and only few (4.9%) gave the grades from four to five. 4.82% of the participants gave the highest grade.



**FIGURE 16. Cross tabulation of overall grade of the home event services by age groups N=166**

The overall grades of the home event services were also examined by the age groups to see if some of the groups were more satisfied than others. The grading scale was from 1, which was definitely would not recommend, to 10, definitely would recommend. Figure 16 represents these results and shows only the grades from 4-10, since there were no grades under 4.

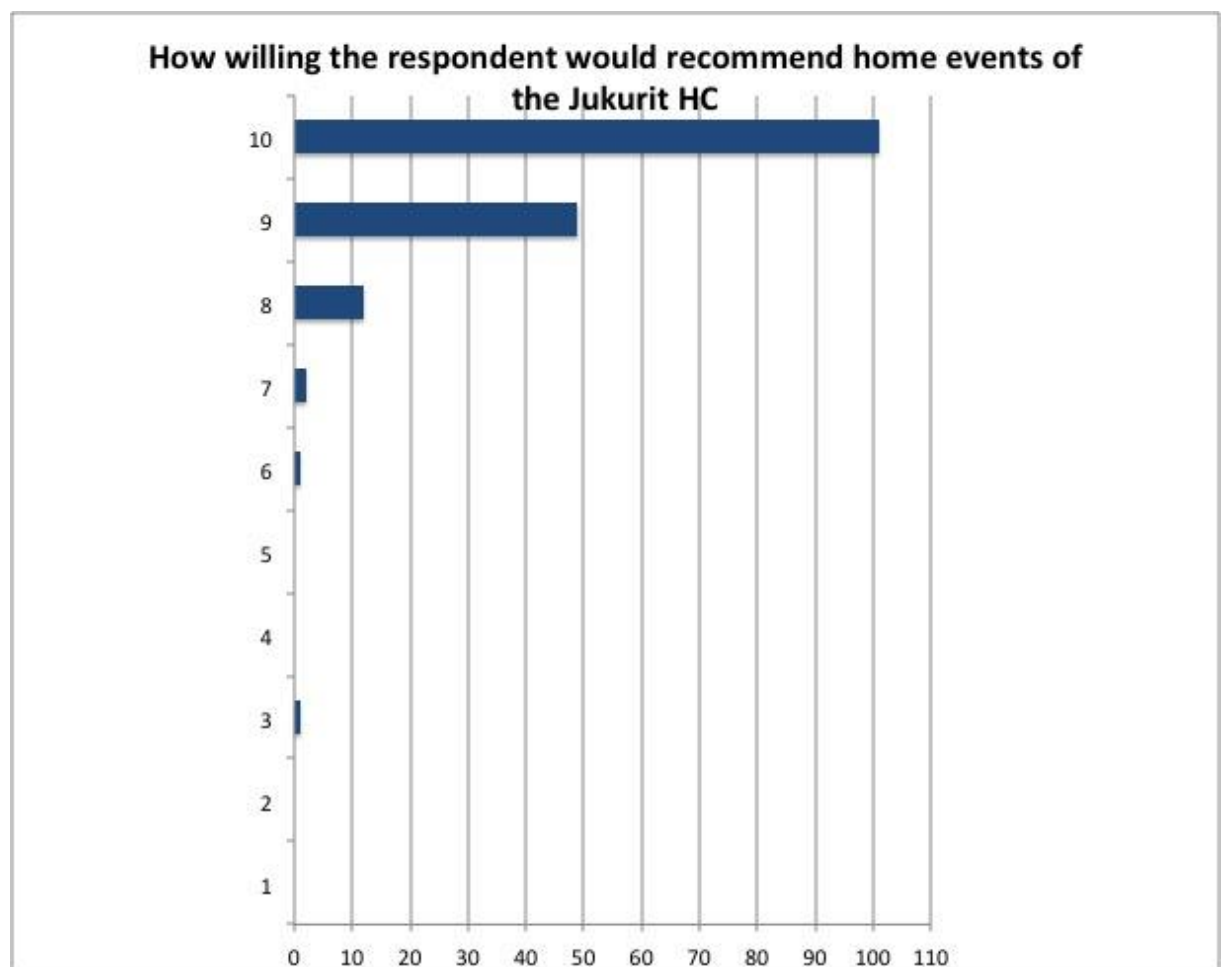
By age groups, the most satisfied group was aged 35-44. In that group 7.23% of the respondents gave the grade 8 and the lowest grade was 7 that was given by 2.41% of the respondents. The diversity of the grades at the age group 35-44 was not big and the mean was 8.26. There were 27 respondents in this group.

The least satisfied group was respondents aged 55-64. The range in that group was from the grade 6 to the grade 10. 11.45% of the respondents in that group gave the grade 8. The second most given grade was 9 by 9.64% of



the respondents. The mean of this group was 8,18. This group was the largest by 51 respondents.

All of the groups were really satisfied since all the means were between 8,18 and 8,26 on the scale 1 to 10. This small gap between the overall grades of the services means that the overall satisfaction towards the home event services is thought to be good. The cross tabulation was tested by the chi-square test and the result was 0,947 so there is no statistical signification between these two variables.



**FIGURE 17.** How willing the respondent would recommend home events of the Jukurit HC N=166

In the second last question the respondents evaluated how willing they would be to recommend the home events of Jukurit (Figure 17; N=166). The grading scale was from 1, definitely would not, to 10, definitely would. Overall we can

conclude from the results that the season ticket holders of Jukurit are highly willing to recommend the home games to others. Most of the participants (60.84%) gave the highest grade, 10. The second biggest group (29.52%) gave the second highest grade. Only 2.4% of season ticket holders gave grade 7 or below.

The last question of the questionnaire was an open question and gave the participants the freedom to leave their own comments concerning the improvement proposals for the home game events. From 167 of the participants', 96 left improvement proposals and other comments.

Open question gave the participants an opportunity to leave improvement proposals for the home events of Jukurit HC. Like it was already mentioned in the text earlier, answers for the open question were analyzed by using the content analysis. First, all the answers were written in a way that answers including more than one matter were divided, so the data was sectioned and sentences of the answers were summarized. Answers concerning the participants own interest and enthusiasm for the team were left outside of the content analysis. These answers, in our opinion, did not answer to the question "What improvements do you wish for the home events?" Answers that are rich in content were searched for rather than participants' own interest for the team. Plain expressions were started to be compared and expressions meaning the same were put into one subclass.

There were five subclasses formed. The first subclass was safety, which included the overall security in the home events, the lightning, and moving indoors and outdoors. The second subclass was the traffic arrangements and this subclass included the traffic, the parking spaces and the free bus service. The third subclass was called products and services, and this subclass summarized the service and the quality of the sales points, the fan products and other improvements for the breaks of the game when participants were using the services of the home events. The fourth subclass was VIP services and the environment in the home events. The last subclass included other appeared issues such as the program of the home events. The class that

combines all the subclasses is named as the satisfaction in the home game events. These five subclasses are used in the basis of our improvement proposals in the next chapter.

The first subclass of safety included improvement proposals regarding overall security of the home game events. The participants hoped improvements especially for the efficiency of the security check and the action of the security guards. The security check is wished to be more efficient and the security guards are hoped to be younger and more qualified for the job. What comes to the security of the environment, the lightning should be on longer when game begins and more railings are hoped for the stand.

The second subclass considers the traffic arrangements. Overall the participants hoped for better traffic arrangements when leaving from the home game events. Also parking spaces should be larger and the parking guidance should be more professional. Many participants wished for a new arrangement for the leaving from the home games, for example, using an alternative route of Kalevankangas to exit from the event. What comes to the free bus service of the season ticket holders, the participants wished better timing and clear information of the bus stops and destinations.

The third subclass includes products and services of the home game events. The participants wanted faster service when visiting the sales points. Ques of the sales points should be proficient and quick. More staff could be hired so that sales points are working more fluently and long ques can be prevented. Moving in the hall during the game breaks would be more fluent if there would be different lanes for the people walking in different directions. This would bring clarity to the moving indoors. Some participants felt like there were not enough sales points and the traffic jams could be avoided if there would be more sales points in the different sections of the ice hall. Especially, the sales points are hoped for section A. Also, there could be a sales point outside of the hall to help with the ques at the sales points. A clock in the corridor would help the customers to keep track of time and to know when the game starts

again. The time of the game break should also be shown in the media cube and announced.

The fourth subclass includes VIP services and the general environment. The VIP area is considered to be too small and the food has been disappointing. The participants have written that the food had regularly been late and poorly tasting. Also the informative labels and lists of food could be presented. What comes to the environment in the ice hall, the participants hoped that the toilet areas would be kept tidy during the home game events. Soap and hand towels could be supplemented when needed. The fan section needs more trashcans, and also fan colors and flags are hoped to be overall the ice hall.

Other appeared issues regarded the program of the home events. The participants wished that the media cube would be visible from all sides of the audience, sometimes advertising has been in front of it. Also the media cube could be used more in different ways, for example, showing also penalties and saves. Some of the participants felt like the short movie of Jukurit is not elevating the atmosphere and it should be replaced. Also the music of the home games should be diversely. The breaks between the periods could be filled with some games or programs or for example, interviews and issues regarding the game.

## **7 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPROVEMENT PROPOSALS**

In this chapter conclusions are introduced, which are based on the results received from the research. In addition, improvement proposals will be provided relating to Jukurit HC Oy's operations at home game events. This chapter will also clarify whether we have discovered a response from the research results to our research problem. The conclusions and improvement proposals provided are based on our own views and opinions that nevertheless are founded on the results of the research. In the end reliability and competence of the research will be evaluated.

## 7.1 Conclusions

The company wants to achieve the satisfaction of the customers, and in order to do that the company needs to fulfill the perceptions of the customers. Knowledge and professionalism are required from the company if they want to be able to clarify what customers hold as quality. (Bateson & Hoffman, 2011, 295.) Based on the results gained from the research, it can be said that the season ticket holders of Jukurit are mainly satisfied with the services and quality. In other words, the company has fulfilled the season ticket holders' expectations. The staff is recognized as helpful, the waiting time in the queues is reasonable, and there is a sufficient amount of products in the sales points. Also the visibility in the media and the first season in the highest national league attracts the season ticket holders. It has been covered that experienced total quality is formed of different factors. In a service situation customer's total quality is composed from expected and experienced quality. (Hämäläinen etc. 2016, 50.) The season ticket holders' experienced quality is formed of different areas of service quality. These areas were measured with 21 statements in the questionnaire. In the opinion of the participants, different areas of quality together with the factors including in them are also experienced as satisfying. Considerably half of the participants fully agreed with all of the statements but in some parts the answers distributed more evenly with the other alternatives.

The season ticket holders of Jukurit consist mostly of middle aged and senior males, between 35-64 years old. The reason that young people are not season ticket holders could be that the price for the season ticket is rather high when compared to the income of a young person in general. This age group of middle aged and elderly people visit the home game events regularly and most of them have owned a season ticket at least already during the previous season. Still, a large group of season ticket holders have acquired the season ticket for the on-going season. A reason for this could be the upgrade to the highest national league of ice hockey. As it has been already mentioned in the text, one of the factors strongly influencing the profitability is the customer loyalty. This customer group of season ticket holders can be held as loyal based on regularity in the visits and intentions to acquire the

season ticket. In addition, they are also held as regular customers of the company. In the theory part, it was also mentioned the importance of regular customers to a company. This particular group of season ticket holders is important already for the profitability reasons but in addition, when customers speak about their satisfaction to others it serves as free advertisement for the company. (Ojasalo & Ojasalo 2010, 126–128; Ylikoski 2000, 181–183.) With this kind of profitable customership, a company intends to create customerships that produce value for both parties, for the company and for the customer.

It has been said that the customer service situation begins with a need that the customer recognizes (Grönroos 2009, 320-321). In this situation to satisfy an existing need, a season ticket holder turns to Jukurit for buying a season ticket. From the research it emerged that for many season ticket holders the choice of buying a season ticket was because they have already owned one before and they want to support the local team. Another important reason was the upgrade to the highest national ice hockey league. In our opinion this was not a surprise. When considering sports event services, we believe that almost every customer has a service provider whose services they use regularly and have an emotional bond for the brand. Most of the season ticket holders can be held as high commitment fans. Fans of high commitment are typically living based on emotions or with the team, and are also participating the small events and following the team through hard times. In addition, it is typical for fans of high commitment to see themselves as some sort of fans. (Fetchko etc. 2013 33–34.) Also the answers of the most important factors in a Jukurit home game events supported this theory. Two clearly most important factors were that the team plays well and the atmosphere in the home games was good.

The staff professionalism was in a good level from the point of view of the participants. The answers given to the presented questions were all in all positive. Some participants gave negative feedback in the last open question that asked for improvement proposals. Customers expressed in the open question that the queues in the sales points were too long and the amount of

customer servants in the sales points was too low. When the same questions were asked in the questionnaire, most of the season ticket holders thought the waiting time in the queues was reasonable and there was enough staff present. In sport events, customer service has a straight impact to the customer satisfaction even though customers want the service to be functional and quick. In ice hockey games the time a customer can spend in sales points between the game periods is short and this causes long queues. Probably most of the customers are willing to wait but still want the queue to be functioning quickly enough.

The satisfaction in the presented matters shows that the overall satisfaction of the game event of Jukurit is good in the point of view of the season ticket holders. As a whole, Jukurit HC's service quality and accessibility were satisfying for the season ticket holders. The environment of the ice rink during the games was said to be safe and clean, only one feedback was written about the rest rooms of the ice hall. The magnitude of the sound system is said to be suitable and the media cube, as well as the music played in the games, is satisfying. It has been told that if the total picture is experienced as good, also the small faults are forgiven more easily. (Grönroos 2009, 102; Reinboth 2007, 33.) From the results, it can be interpreted that the arrival to the home game events is effortless and also the leaving from the home events is fluent. The season ticket holders thought that the parking spaces of Jukurit are not sufficient. The variety of negative feedback was received regarding the arrival to the home games, leaving from the home games and the parking spaces. The most probable reason for this is that the parking spaces and the main road leading to the ice rink were under renovation, which disturbed the traffic and the parking spaces. It became clear from the results that the season ticket holders thought the website of Jukurit is functional but they could be more informative.

Customer satisfaction is essentially affected by the price of the service or product. The customer himself perceives that the value of use and visualization needs to be greater than the service price. (Rissanen 2001, 22.) When the season ticket holders were asked about the prices of the season

ticket, fan and kiosk products, the participants thought the price level was appropriate. It was easy to acquire season ticket and the buying experience was pleasant. Most of the participants had acquired the season ticket from the Jukurit shop that is located in the center of Mikkeli. The variety of fan products was asked to be larger. One of the reasons for the small variety of fan products could be that Jukurit has grown fast since they were upgrading to the higher league and the marketing team has not had the time to focus on the fan products yet.

The overall grade of the service fluency at the home game events was divided with two grades. Most of the participants gave the grade 8 and 9. From the results it can be interpreted that the overall service fluency was satisfying but the dissatisfaction in some factors, such as the parking spaces and waiting times in the queues, can be seen from the answers. The variety between the overall grades can be explained with the idea that people experience different things as good service and satisfying factors than others. In addition, the existing needs of a customer affect the fact how a person experiences satisfaction. (Reinboth 2008, 103; Ylikoski & Järvinen 2001, 27.)

Nevertheless, the season ticket holders are willing to recommend participating in the home game events of Jukurit. This is a desirable outcome for the company because it tells that something has been done correctly. Consumer that revisits the event often relates the customer has been satisfied with the received service. A satisfied customer will likely speak about his satisfaction to others. Often these recognitions of satisfaction and other preferences are spread best by the word-of-mouth or through the social media. (Grönroos & Järvinen 2000, 96.) It has been noticed that often the most efficient marketing for the company is the positive feedback. (Ylikoski 2000, 181-183).

## **7.2 Improvement proposals**

The presented improvement proposals taken based on the survey conducted online at Webropol. The survey was answered by 167 persons, of which most were male. These improvement proposals are mostly considering the points the respondents criticized the most or had the most diversified opinions. From these improvement proposals, the organization receives possible ideas how to



potentially improve their actions and make the season ticket holders even more satisfied and committed. Improvement proposals are based on the content analysis made for the answers received in the open question.

### *Safety*

The overall safety at the home events was considered to be good but there were some issues that might be improved. These issues are mostly related to the lighting, the efficiency of the security check and the action of the security guards.

Participants hoped improvements especially for the efficiency of the security check and the action of the security guards. The security officers were considered to be quite old and not doing their job properly. People would feel safer when there were enough security workers. These security officers have a huge role in creating the safe atmosphere especially during the intense games where other team's fans are also coming to the arena. In order to guarantee the professionalism of the security guards, trainings for the event guarding should be organized and common rules for the home game events should be set together.

When the intermission starts and the people start moving, the lights are turned off too quickly. At least one elderly respondent has fallen down at the stairs because of this sudden dimming. The same issue can be found outside of the arena too especially during the dark winter days. The amount of streetlights should be increased particularly during the construction so that people are able to see where they are going.

### *Traffic arrangements*

As noted earlier, there are big constructions going on at the Kalevankangas area and they are having an impact on the traffic arrangements as well. There is a free bus from different areas of the town to the arena for the season ticket holders. Some respondent gave open feedback that the bus had been late/too

early, and there were not enough information about the routes and timing. To improve this issue, we suggest that Jukurit could place more information to their web sites, showing the routes both on the map and with approximately timing.

Overall the participants hoped for the better traffic arrangements when leaving from the home game events. Also the parking space should be larger and the parking guidance should be more professional. Many participants wish for a new arrangement to leave from the home games for example using an alternative route of Kalevankangas to exit. Jukurit could discuss using a new route through Kalevankangas.

### *Products and services*

The queues of the sales points should be proficient and quick. We suggest that more staff is hired in order that the sales points will be working more fluently and the long ques will be prevented. The moving in the hall during breaks between periods would be more fluent if there were different lanes for the people walking to different directions. Also, the people are not sure where the line for the kiosks goes. This line could be separated from the others by the light fences that guide the line to the right direction and prevents crashes.

We suggest that the amount of sales points is increased and there could also be a sales point outside of the ice hall to help with the queues in the sales points. Many participant wish knowledge of the time during the breaks between periods. A clock in the corridor would help the customers to keep track of the time and to know when the game starts again. The time of the game break could also be shown in the media cube and be announced.

The current fan products sold at the arena are basically just for adults. Respondent wished for example kids earmuffs because there is so much noise at the games that is not healthy for younger viewers. Shirts and other clothes could also be sold in kids' sizes at the arena. There is more variety of products at the Jukurit shop in Hallituskatu, but not all have access to the

store. Pet accessories are more and more popular nowadays and would bring more visibility to the team when pets are walked in their Jukurit leashes for example.

#### *VIP services and environment*

The room where VIP catering is located has only one door and people are bumping to each other when trying to get in or out. One wall is made of discs and has the door in it so it would be easier to use that door to exit and the other one to get in for example. The participants have written that the food has regularly been late and poorly tasting. For the allergists, the informative labels and lists of food could be presented.

What comes to the environment in the ice hall, the rest rooms should be kept tidy during the home game events. The soap and hand towels should be supplemented when needed. More trash cans could be added to the fan section to prevent trashing and to improve the general environment. Also adding the fan colors and flags overall the ice hall would improve the atmosphere.

The food left out from the VIP catering could be sold to the normal ticket buyers because at the moment there is no possibility to buy normal food from the game unless you have VIP ticket. One open feedback was concerning the food catering also for the others than the VIP ticket buyers or at least some better snack than a hot dog or a similar product.

#### *Extra programs for the season ticket holders*

Buying a season ticket bonds people to the Jukurit community and it would be beneficial for the organization's image to host some parties/gatherings for the season ticket holders. They could be hosted at the Ikioma Arena, and there could be good catering and the possibility to buy drinks and socialize with other ticket holders. The players could come and give a couple of interviews so the holders are more engaged to the activities at the home events. These

kinds of programs can lower the gap mentioned in the Jukurit Brand survey (Parkkinen, etc. 2015) that prevents people from supporting the local team.

### *Mobile application*

There should be a mobile phone application for Jukurit HC. The application could be personal and free of charge. The purpose of this app is to inform customers before, during and after the games. Information through this application would be more efficient, faster and reach more customers, than just informing the social media channels or web sites because of the applications possibility to notify through the phone. This application has so many opportunities and next few ideas for the app is provided.

Before the game customers would be able to see the overview of upcoming home event and have their ticket on the application to make the entrance easier. Customers would also be able to see the menu beforehand with accurate information about the allergenes and prices to ease the decision-making. During the game there could be notifications about the goals and assists, and some statistics related to the game. The same slow-motion videos of highlights of the game, such as goals, hits and saves, shown at the media cube could be seen from the app also. During the intermissions or other breaks the organization of Jukurit could arrange some kind of interactive game through the app, such as guess the time of the next goal, and the closest/right guess wins some prize. The clock that shows the time left before the period starts would be included in the app and make it easier to get on your seats on time.

After the game, the cooperation partners could publish some discount benefits through the app, and people could share opinions about the game at the discussion forum on the app.

### *Other appeared issues*

There could be more cooperation with other local organizations at the home events. Some sport team could walk around the arena and sell popcorns or beverages around the stands so people could avoid standing in lines in front of the kiosks. These organizations could make some programs during the intermissions so it would not be so boring to just sit and wait for the next period. There has already been this kind of activity of performances with the figure skaters before, but there could be more. In addition, sometimes the breaks between periods could be filled with interviews and issues regarding the game.

Participants wished that the media cube would be visible from all sides of the audience, sometimes advertising has been in front of it. Also the media cube could be used in different ways for example showing penalties and saves. Some participants feel like the short movie of Jukurit is not elevating the atmosphere and it should be replaced. A new fresh program could be invented so that the customers would feel that Jukurit is innovating and starting fresh each season even though they are still the same team.

### **7.3 Reliability and validity of the research**

The reliability and validity can be used as the evaluation criteria when research's quality and content is evaluated. The aim is to prevent mistakes when conducting research, nevertheless, the reliability and validity of the results often vary. The reliability is the fact how precisely matter is being measured and the validity, in turn, shows whether the matter is being measured that was intended to be measured. (Vehkalahti 2014, 41.)

The good reliability produces results that are not random, in other words reliable results. The less coincidence affects the results, the higher the reliability of the research is. (Hirsjärvi etc. 2014, 231; Valli 2001, 92.) When research is conducted as a survey, it needs to be noticed that the amount of answers in some cases can be low and therefore affecting the reliability of the research (Heikkilä 2014, 28). The percentage of answers describes how many

from the chosen sample answered the survey. If the percentage of the answers stays low, it can be interpreted that the representativeness of the sample is questionable. (Vehkalahti 2014, 44.)

The validity evaluates whether the research measures exactly the information desired to be investigated with the research. Often when evaluating the validity, the attention is directed to a question how well the research methods and sample correspond to the phenomena investigated. (Mäntyneva etc. 2008, 34.) The research needs to have clear goals in order that the researcher does not investigate unnecessary matters. The validity can be secured in the beginning of the research by careful planning and discretionary data collecting because examination beforehand is difficult. (Heikkilä 2014, 27.) Before the beginning of the research, the questionnaire was tested with test participants. After testing, the questionnaire was presented for the actual participants. By testing the questionnaire, it was assured that the questionnaire functions in a correct way, and also correctly from the point of view of understandability and technical functionality. With the help of pre-testing, the possible creation of mistakes was prevented.

The questionnaire was implemented in a way that the participants answered the survey individually through the link on the email. The amount of the answers was a rather small in its entirety, the answer percentage was 42%. Therefore, generalizing the results of the research is not possible. The reliability of the answers is often questionable when the survey is implemented as an Internet survey. The participants fill out the questionnaire alone when it is not possible to know who has given the answer in reality. Participants answer to the questionnaire based on their own experiences and satisfaction, therefore it is hard for a participant that has not used the services before to give a correct answer to the questions presented. Nevertheless, the results of this research can be held as rather reliable. There did not appear any misunderstandings or confusions.

The questionnaire was tested beforehand and all the questions were answered consistently, and they gave an answer for the research problem.

Open questions in the end supported the answers of structured questions. Even though the answer percentage was low, the participants answered all the questions in the questionnaire, in other words, there was no disappearance of answers.

## 8 SUMMARY

In this chapter we are going through our thesis process from beginning to the end, and to evaluate our process in general. This thesis was conducted to find out season ticket holders' satisfaction towards services and their quality offered at Jukurit HC's home events at Ikioma arena. Some improvement proposals were made based on the received results so that the organization has a possibility to use them if wanted and improve their actions to satisfy the season ticket holders' more. In 2015, researchers from Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences conducted a brand survey for Jukurit HC that was used to determine the organization's current strengths and weaknesses.

Our thesis process started after receiving a commission from Jukurit HC. The organization was familiar to both of us beforehand, and the subject was interesting and invigorated us to work hard. Since we are both sports enthusiasts, it was nice to link this interest to the thesis process. This season was historical for Jukurit since it was their first season playing at the Liiga, which made this thesis current.

After meeting with the commissioning party, the actual topic of the thesis and content of the quantitative survey were quite clear. The theoretical part was chosen with our thesis instructor to support the subject. The target group was selected together with the commissioning party to the season ticket holder's because they are using the offered services often.

We chose the quantitative method for our survey because it was the most suitable way to conduct information gathering. The online survey made it possible to reach as many season ticket holders as possible. Our plan was to conduct the online survey earlier on September or on October but after talking with the commissioning party we decided together to postpone the survey so

the season ticket holders' would have better opinions about the services and their quality.

We didn't have any experience of conducting online surveys but luckily Webropol was easy to use. We also used the SPSS program to analyze the results, and after short revising, there were not any particular problems with the program.

Our cooperation was easy, and we divided parts of the thesis equally and helped each other when needed. Writing was conducted through One Drive so it was easy to keep the process updated all the time. Our aim was to gather usefull information to the commissioning party so that they would have advantage on it. We also wanted to conduct the whole process from the beginning to the end as well as possible.

This process was challenging sometimes, especially when we both coped with work and competitive sports. That is why our way to handle the writing process through One Drive was suitable for us since we had so different timetables. Our working methods were similar, and that was one of the reasons why we chose to do this project together. We learned a lot of problem solving and how to work together, and the benefit of doing this thesis as a pairwork was that we could always rely on each other on difficult issues.

If the thesis had be done again, more time would be used for the marketing of the research. Marketing could have enabled a greater amount of answers and that way affected the reliability of the research. All in all, we are satisfied with the amount of the answers received. The theoretical part of the research was large and there was a lot of information. The field of the research was limited and therefore, all the matters were not researched so deeply. In case the company wants to research matters even more, it is possible to focus on the matters more precisely that were investigated briefly in this research.

In the end we would like to thank everyone involved in this thesis process, especially our supervisor Heli Aaltonen.



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Hei,

Olemme liiketalouden opiskelijoita Mikkelin Ammattikorkeakoulusta ja suoritamme opinnäytetyönämme asiakastytyväisyyskyselyn Jukurien kausikorttilaisille. Tavoitteenamme on saada tietoa Jukurien tämän hetkisten palveluiden tilanteesta sekä luoda kehitysehdotuksia tulevaan.

Voitte osallistua kyselyyn alla olevasta linkistä.

<https://www.webropolsurveys.com/S/01B4588E5C3036A1.par>

Kyselyyn vastaaminen vie noin 5 minuuttia, ja osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista. Kyselyyn vastataan nimettömästi ja saadut vastaukset käsitellään kokonaistuloksina.

Vastaamalla kyselyyn ja jättämällä yhteystietonne olette mukana arvonnassa, josta voitte voittaa kaksi istumapaikkalippua. Kyselyn viimeinen osallistumispäivä on 31.12.2016.

Vastaamme mielellämme opinnäytetyötä koskeviin kysymyksiin.  
Kiitos yhteistyöstä.

Petra Kähönen ja Meri Kuusela

Mikkelin Ammattikorkeakoulu

Business Management

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## Kausikorttilaisten asiakastyytyväisyyskysely

Arvoisa Jukurien kausikortin omistaja,

Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää asiakastyytyvyyden lisäksi tyytyväisyyttä palveluun, ja sen laatuun Jukureiden kotiotteluissa. Vastaamalla tähän kyselyyn, annatte tietoa palveluiden kehittämisen hyväksi. Kyselyyn vastaaminen vie noin 5 minuuttia.

Kaikki vastaukset käsitellään luottamuksellisesti. Yksittäisiä vastauksia ei julkaista, vaan tulokset käsitellään ainoastaan kokonaistuloksina. Pyydämme teitä vastaamaan 31.12. mennessä.

Jos haluatte osallistua arvontaan, **jättäkää** yhteystietonne kyselyn lopussa aukeavaan ikkunaan. Osallistumalla **tähän** kyselyyn voitte voittaa kaksi kappaletta istumapaikkalippuja! Yhteystietoja ei **käytetä** muihin tarkoituksiin.

### Taustatiedot

#### 1. Sukupuoli \*

- Mies
- Nainen
- Muu

#### 2. I k ä \*

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 tai yli

**3. Olen omistanut Jukureiden kausikortin viimeisten 5 vuoden aikana \***

- Nyt ensimmäistä kautta
- Nyt ja 1-2 kautta tätä ennen
- Nyt ja useampana kuin 2 kautena tätä ennen

**4. Omistan kausikortin \***

- Seisomapaikalle
- Istumapaikalle
- Muulle paikalle,  
mille?

**5. Mikä sai teidät hankkimaan kausikortin? \***

- Liigaan nousu
- Olen ennenkin omistanut kausikortin
- Halusin hyvän paikan
- En osaa sanoa
- Muu syy, mikä?

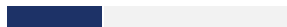
**6. Mistä olette hankkineet viimeisimmän kausikorttinne? \***

- Ostamalla osoitteesta Nettilippu.fi
- Jukurit Shopista, Hallituskadulta
- En osaa sanoa
- Käytän työpaikan kausikorttia

**7. Saavun kotipeliin yleensä \***

- Kävelen tai polkupyörällä
- Autolla
- Kausikorttilaisille maksuttomalla  
bussikuljetuksella
- Jollain muulla, millä?

33% valmiina







### Kausikorttilaisten asiakastyytyväisyyskysely

8. Seuraavaksi pyydämme teitä arvioimaan kausikortin hankkimista, kotiotteluiden palveluita ja tunnelmaa yleisesti. \*

	Täysin eri mieltä	Jossain määrin erimieltä	Jossain määrin samaa mieltä	Täysin samaa mieltä	En osaa sanoa
Kausikortti oli helppo hankkia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kausikortin hinta on sopiva	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kausikortin hankkimisen ostokokemus oli miellyttävä	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jukureiden verkkosivut ovat toimivat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verkkosivut ovat tarpeeksi informatiiviset	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kotiotteluihin sisään pääseminen on vaivatonta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kotiotteluista lähteminen on sujuvaa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kotiotteluiden pysäköintitilat ovat riittävät	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jäähallin myyntipisteissä jonotusaika on kohtuullinen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kioskituotteiden hinnat ovat sopivia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kioskituotteita on riittävästi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anniskelun hinnat ovat sopivia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX 2(4).  
Questionnaire

Fanituotteiden hinnat ovat sopivia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fanituotteita on riittävän laaja valikoima	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kotiotteluiden myyntipisteiden henkilöstö on palvelualtista	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Henkilöstöä on riittävästi töissä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jäähallin turvallisuus on hyvä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jäähallissa on siistiä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kotiotteluiden ääntentoiston (kuulutukset, musiikki) voimakkuus on sopiva	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peleissä soitettava musiikki sopii tunnelmaan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mediakuution käyttö on onnistunutta (mainonta, hidastukset yms.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

66% valmiina





### Kausikorttilaisten asiakastyytyväisyyskysely

9. Miten tyytyväinen olette maksuttomaan kausikorttilaisten bussikuljetukseen? \*

- Olen tyytyväinen
- En ole tyytyväinen. Miksi?
- En ole käyttänyt palvelua

10. Mitkä kolme tekijää vaikuttavat tyytyväisyyteesi kotiotteluissa eniten? \*

Valitse kolme tärkeintä.

- Joukkue pelaa hyvin
- Henkilökunta on palvelualtista
- Peliin saapuminen ja poistuminen on sujuvaa
- Jonotusaika erätauoilla on kohtuullinen
- Tunnelma kotiotteluissa on hyvä
- Myyntipisteissä on hyvä valikoima

11. Pyydämme teitä antamaan yleisarvosanan kotiotteluiden palveluiden sujuvuudesta \*

\*

Arviointiasteikko: Erittäin huono (1), Erinomainen (10).

Yleisarvosana kotiotteluiden palvelujen sujuvuudesta  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  
sujuvuudesta

12. Kuinka valmis olisitte suosittelemaan osallistumista Jukureiden kotiotteluihin? \*

Arviointiasteikko: Ehdottomasti en suosittelisi (1), Suosittelisin ehdottomasti (10)

Kuinka valmis olisitte suosittelemaan Jukureiden kotiottelua  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

**13. Mihin asioihin kotiotteluissa toivoisitte parannuksia?**

200 merkkiä jäljellä

100% valmiina



**GRAPH 1. Respondents' gender (N= 167)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Male</b>	143	85,6%
<b>Female</b>	24	14,4%
<b>Other</b>	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	167	100%

**GRAPH 2. Respondents' age (N= 167)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>18-24</b>	5	3,0%
<b>25-34</b>	12	7,2%
<b>35-44</b>	27	16,2%
<b>45-54</b>	50	29,9%
<b>55-64</b>	52	31,1%
<b>65 or over</b>	21	12,6%
<b>Total</b>	167	100%

**GRAPH 3. Seasons respondent has owned the season ticket during the last 5 seasons (N= 167)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Now for the first season</b>	77	46,1%
<b>Now and 1-2 seasons before this one</b>	41	24,6%
<b>Now and more than 2 seasons before this one</b>	49	29,3%
<b>Total</b>	167	100%

**GRAPH 4. Section the season ticket is located (N= 167)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Standing section</b>	42	25,1%
<b>Seating section</b>	121	72,5%
<b>Other section, what?</b>	4	2,4%
<b>Total</b>	167	100%

**GRAPH 5. Reason to get the season ticket (N= 167)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>First season at the Liiga</b>	62	37,1%
<b>Owned one before</b>	61	36,5%
<b>Wanted to secure a good place</b>	23	13,8%
<b>Can't say</b>	0	0%
<b>Other reason, what?</b>	21	12,6%
<b>Total</b>	167	100%

**GRAPH 6. Place where respondent got their current season ticket (N= 167)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Buying online from Nettilippu.fi</b>	13	7,8%
<b>From Jukurit Shop, at Hallituskatu</b>	109	65,3%
<b>Can't say</b>	16	9,6%
<b>Using company's season ticket</b>	29	17,4%
<b>Total</b>	167	100%

**GRAPH 7. Usually arriving to the home events (N= 167)**

	Total	%
By walking or cycling	15	9,0%
By car	113	67,7%
By season ticket holders' free of charge bus ride	38	22,8%
By something else, what?	1	0,6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100%</b>

**GRAPH 8. Respondents' evaluating season ticket, services at the home events and the overall atmosphere (N= 166)**

		Strongly disagree	Disagree to some extent	Agree to some extent	Strongly agree	Can't say	Total	Mean
<b>Season ticket was easy to get</b>	N	2	7	25	128	4	166	3,75
	%	1,2%	4,2%	15,1%	77,1%	2,4%	100%	
<b>Price of the season ticket was reasonable</b>	N	0	10	62	90	4	166	3,53
	%	0%	6,0%	37,4%	54,2%	2,4%	100%	
<b>Experience of getting the season ticket was pleasant</b>	N	1	8	50	96	11	166	3,65
	%	0,6%	4,8%	30,1%	57,8%	6,6%	100%	

APPENDIX 3(4).  
Distribution tables

<b>The web sites of Jukurit HC are functional</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,5</b>
	%	3,0%	6,0%	34,9%	50,0%	6,0%	100%	
<b>The web sites are informative enough</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,45</b>
	%	2,4%	6,0%	41,6%	44,0%	6,0%	100%	
<b>Getting in to the home events is easy</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,56</b>
	%	1,2%	7,2%	25,9%	65,7%	0%	100%	
<b>Leaving from the home events is effortless</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>2,9</b>
	%	5,4%	25,3%	43,4%	25,9%	0%	100%	
<b>The parking spaces at the home events are sufficient</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,1</b>
	%	4,8%	22,3%	39,2%	25,9%	7,8%	100%	
<b>Queuing time at the arena's sales points is reasonable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,12</b>
	%	1,8%	20,5%	44,6%	30,1%	3,0%	100%	



APPENDIX 3(5).  
Distribution tables

<b>Prices at the kiosks are decent</b>	N	0	41	90	28	7	166	3,01
	%	0%	24,7%	54,2%	16,9%	4,2%	100%	
<b>The variety of products at the kiosks is sufficient</b>	N	1	18	81	54	12	166	3,35
	%	0,6%	10,8%	48,8%	32,5%	7,2%	100%	
<b>Prices of the alcohol beverages are decent</b>	N	3	35	74	26	28	166	3,25
	%	1,8%	21,1%	44,6%	15,7%	16,9%	100%	
<b>Prices of the fan products are decent</b>	N	3	14	89	40	20	166	3,36
	%	1,8%	8,4%	53,6%	24,1%	12,1%	100%	
<b>The variety of fan products is satisfactory</b>	N	10	38	66	30	22	166	3,1
	%	6,0%	22,9%	39,8%	18,1%	13,3%	100%	
<b>Sales persons at the home events are helpful</b>	N	1	8	52	102	3	166	3,59
	%	0,6%	4,8%	31,3%	61,5%	1,8%	100%	

APPENDIX 3(7).  
Distribution tables

<b>There are enough staff members working at the home events</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,42</b>
	%	1,2%	7,2%	42,2%	47,0%	2,4%	100%	
<b>Safety is considered at the arena</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,8</b>
	%	1,8%	1,2%	19,3%	70,5%	7,2%	100%	
<b>The arena is clean</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,81</b>
	%	0,6%	1,8%	17,5%	76,5%	3,6%	100%	
<b>Volume of the sound systems (announcements, music) is proper</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,38</b>
	%	3,0%	9,6%	35,5%	50,0%	1,8%	100%	
<b>Music played at the games fits to the atmosphere</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,51</b>
	%	0,6%	7,8%	32,5%	57,8%	1,2%	100%	
<b>Media cube is used well (marketing, replays etc.)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3,18</b>
	%	3,0%	11,5%	51,2%	33,1%	1,2%	100%	

**GRAPH 9. How satisfied the respondent is to the season ticket holders' free of charge bus ride (N= 166)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	54	32,5%
<b>Not satisfied, why?</b>	16	9,6%
<b>Haven't used the service</b>	96	57,8%
<b>Total</b>	166	100%

**GRAPH 10. Three factors influencing the satisfaction level the most at the home games?  
(N= 166)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>The team plays well</b>	158	95,2%
<b>Staff is being helpful</b>	31	18,7%
<b>Arriving and leaving from the game is easy</b>	67	40,4%
<b>Queuing time during breaks is reasonable</b>	56	33,7%
<b>The atmosphere at the home events is good</b>	152	91,6%
<b>The variety of products at the sales points is good</b>	12	7,2%

**GRAPH 11. Overall grade of the home event services on the scale 1-10 shown by genders (N=166)**

		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	Mean
<b>Gender</b>	Male	2	1	5	18	61	49	6	142	8,15
	Female	0	0	0	2	9	11	2	24	8,54
<b>Total</b>		2	1	5	20	70	60	8	166	

**GRAPH 12. Overall grade of the home event services on a scale 1-10**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	Mean
<b>Overall grade</b>	0	0	0	2	1	5	20	70	60	8	166	8,21
	0%	0%	0%	1,2%	0,6%	3,0%	12,1%	42,2%	36,1%	4,8%		
<b>Total</b>	0	0	0	2	1	5	20	70	60	8	166	8,21

**GRAPH 13. How willingly would the respondent recommend the home events of Jukurit HC on a scale 1-10 (N= 166)**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	Mean
<b>Overall grade</b>	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	12	49	101	166	9,46
	0%	0%	0,6%	0%	0%	0,6%	1,2%	7,2%	29,5%	60,8%		

**GRAPH 14. How willingly would the respondent recommend the home events of Jukurit HC on a scale 1-10 shown by genders (N=166)**

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	Mean
<b>Gender</b>	Male	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	9	42	87	142	9,46
	Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	7	14	24	9,46
<b>Total</b>		0	0	1	0	0	1	2	12	49	101	166	

