



Modern Approaches to Optimizing Operational Processes in Massage Studios

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Abstract: The article examines the essence and content of modern approaches to optimizing operational processes in massage studios. These business entities face an urgent need to streamline internal operations, a necessity that has become increasingly apparent against the backdrop of intensifying market competition and rising consumer expectations. The objective of this study is to systematize and analyze innovative solutions that facilitate the optimization of these processes while being tailored to the specifics of massage establishments as service-oriented organizations. Existing publications and scientific sources reveal contradictions between technological determinism and human-centered concepts, as well as discrepancies in the prioritization of factors influencing operational efficiency. The study substantiates the potential of integrating digital technologies, Lean methodologies, and flexible management approaches into the practical framework of operational models for massage studios. Special attention is given to the alignment of operational processes with strategic goals and the economic sustainability of businesses within this sector. The findings conclude that the key success factor lies in fostering and maintaining a culture of continuous improvement. The materials presented hold practical value for massage studio managers, healthcare service management specialists, and investors exploring business development opportunities within this market segment.

Keywords: Agile methodologies, customer orientation, massage studio, operational process, optimization, resource management, digitalization, workplace ergonomics.

Introduction: In recent years, the massage service industry has demonstrated steady growth,

accompanied by increasing competition among service-oriented organizations in this sector. The expansion of services into various directions broadens market coverage, while the integration of specialized technologies helps meet diverse client needs. Intense competitive conditions create challenges for individual specialists and businesses, while economic fluctuations influence consumer spending on additional services. These factors highlight the relevance of analyzing the optimization of operational activities.

Despite the clearly positive market dynamics, many studios face a significant challenge—inefficiencies in internal operational processes lead to decreased profitability and a substantial decline in service quality. It is important to emphasize that traditional management methods often prove inadequate against the backdrop of evolving consumer behavior and rising client expectations.

The core issue lies in the need to develop and implement innovative approaches to optimizing the operational activities of massage studios. Such approaches must address common inefficiencies and enhance the competitiveness of these establishments.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The analysis of publications on the subject highlights several key research directions: the economic aspects of massage studio operations, personnel management specifics, customer orientation, innovative service organization approaches, and market trends affecting the industry.

In the organizational and economic context of these businesses, Kh. Anam and co-authors [1] examine emerging economic opportunities, emphasizing service diversification as a key factor in enhancing competitiveness and profitability. An analytical online report [7] provides a comprehensive analysis of market trends, forecasting significant growth in the massage service industry over the next decade, which underscores the relevance of optimizing operational processes in this field.

The regulatory aspects of service organization are explored by K. Baek [2], who analyzes the boundaries of professional competence for massage therapists. A significant body of literature focuses on human resource management. J.Y. Kim and Ja.B. Lee [4] describe the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between professional competence and employees' subjective well-being. In contrast, H. Kuru [5] approaches this issue through the lens of Industry 5.0, proposing a systemic integration of technological innovations and human-centered management

practices.

Customer orientation as a factor in the operational efficiency of massage studios is investigated by Y.T. Prasetyo and colleagues [8]. Their study identifies key parameters influencing consumer choices in the massage industry and proposes process optimization based on these preferences. A complementary study by W. Li, D. Myagmarsuren, and co-authors [6] examines the impact of customer engagement on the effectiveness of innovation in the wellness sector, employing a fuzzy qualitative comparative analysis method.

Of particular practical interest is the study by E. Holzer [3], which focuses on the statistics and analytics of massage service bookings. The research identifies patterns in consumer behavior and suggests optimizing scheduling systems based on these findings, contributing to more effective resource planning and the reduction of idle time.

The sociocultural aspects of massage studio operations are explored in the works of S. Schrank [9] and Ts.Tf. Yen [10]. Their research highlights the intense transformation of consumer preferences and value orientations. The authors focus on regional specifics and industry development strategies, proposing the adaptation of operational processes to align with the cultural characteristics of the target audience.

The review of sources reveals gaps in research approaches. There is a clear dichotomy between technological determinism, which dominates studies on the digitalization of operational processes, and a human-centered perspective that prioritizes psychological aspects of interactions with clients and employees. Additionally, inconsistencies are observed in the assessment of priority factors influencing operational efficiency, with some authors emphasizing technological innovation, others focusing on staff competence, and a third group prioritizing customer orientation.

It is also notable that the analyzed literature does not sufficiently address the integration of massage studios into broader wellness service ecosystems, cross-industry interactions, or the synergistic effects of cooperation with related services. Moreover, limited research has been conducted on the environmental aspects of massage studio operations and the implementation of sustainable development principles.

From a methodological perspective, this study was conducted using content analysis, comparative analysis, statistical data processing, and systematization.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical data indicate that the massage therapy

services market was valued at \$65.23 billion in 2024. It is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 8.4% between 2024 and 2034 [7] (Fig. 1).

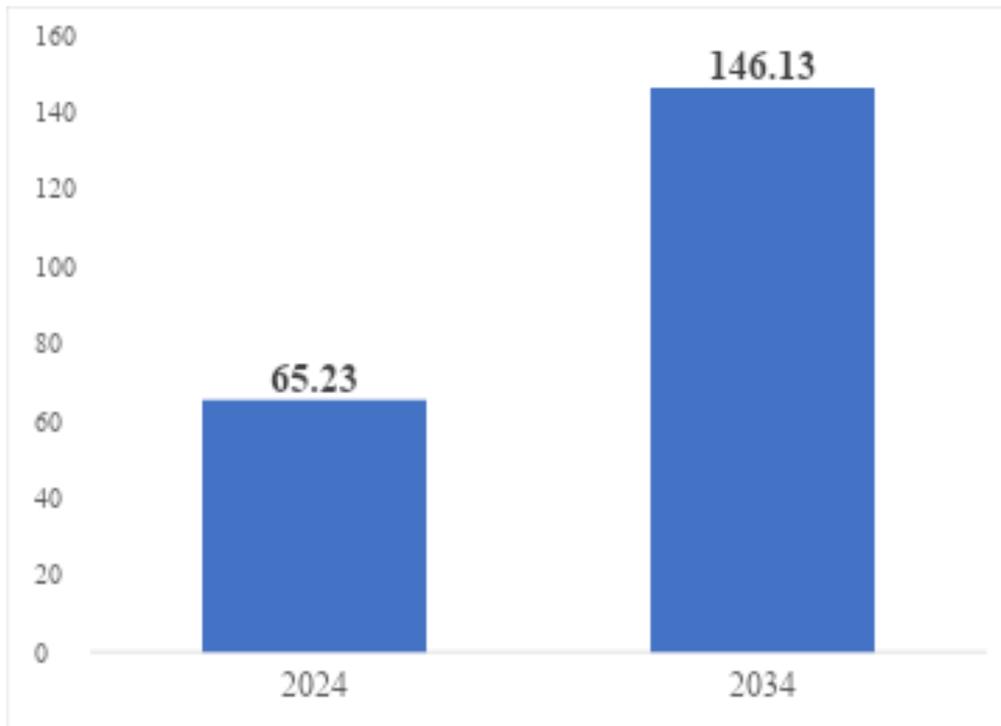


Fig. 1. Projected dynamics of the market volume of massage therapy services, billion US dollars (compiled by the author based on [7])

Operational processes in massage studios exhibit several distinctive features that differentiate them

from similar service industries. Figure 2 presents the key aspects that should be considered.

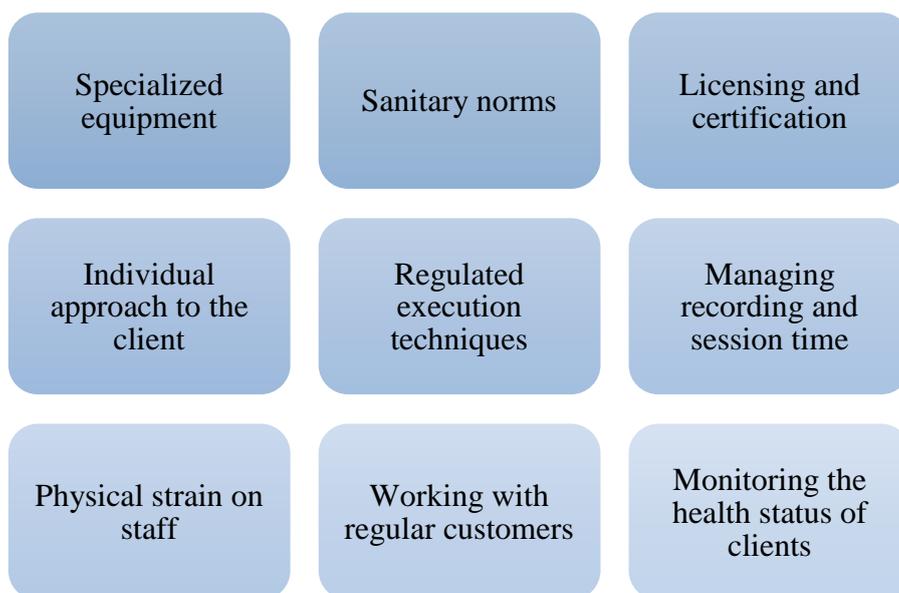


Fig. 2. Features of operational processes in massage studios (compiled by the author based on [1, 2, 4, 9])

A high degree of service personalization is a defining characteristic, driven by individual physiological characteristics and client preferences. Additionally, massage procedures consist of multiple stages, including preparation, the session itself, and post-session care, all of which require careful resource and time coordination.

Operational efficiency in this sector depends on several key factors, including optimal staff scheduling, efficient

use of space, well-structured logistics for consumable materials, and synchronized information flows among all participants. Each of these factors requires a customized optimization approach tailored to the specifics of a given establishment.

An objective assessment of operational performance is impossible without implementing a comprehensive key performance indicator system. The most informative metrics are outlined in Figure 3.

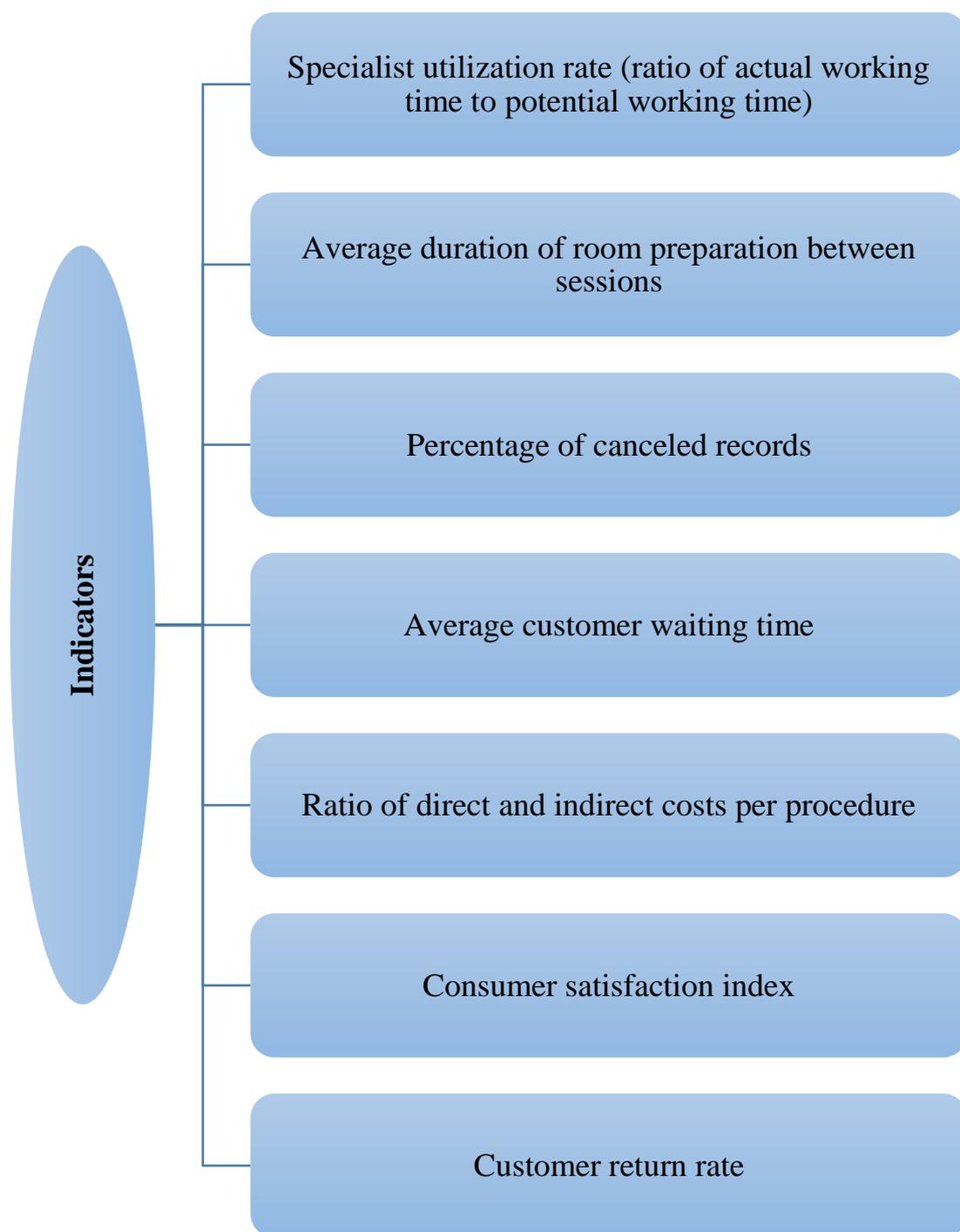


Fig. 3. Key performance indicators in the massage business (compiled by the author based on [1, 4-6, 8, 10])

Monitoring these parameters enables the timely identification of bottlenecks in operational processes and supports informed managerial decision-making. It is important to interpret these indicators while accounting for seasonality and regional market characteristics.

Modern massage studios are actively adopting digital solutions to automate client interactions. Multifunctional CRM systems tailored to the industry allow for electronic scheduling, the creation of client databases with detailed information on preferences, contraindications, and visit history.

Self-service online platforms that enable clients to book appointments independently significantly contribute to

workflow optimization. This also enhances customer loyalty, as clients value flexibility and autonomy in their interactions with service providers. In total, 43.38% of massage therapy sessions are booked online, while 56.62% are scheduled via phone, in-person booking, or automatic repeat appointments [3].

The implementation of automated appointment reminder systems is a noteworthy practice. Such systems help reduce the number of missed appointments, positively impacting specialist workload distribution and the studio's financial performance. The end of the week is the busiest period for massage therapy sessions (Fig. 4).

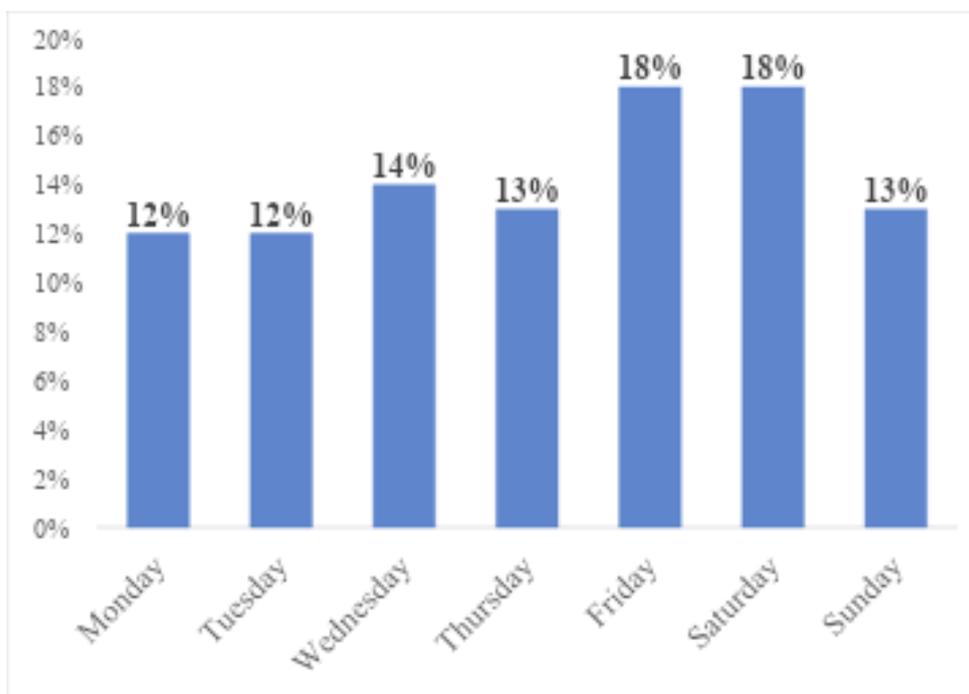


Fig. 4. Data on the workload of massage therapy specialists by day of the week (compiled by the author based on [3])

The spatial organization of a massage studio directly impacts the effectiveness of operational processes. Innovative approaches to space planning are based on Lean management principles, aiming to minimize unproductive movements of both staff and clients. The rational arrangement of functional zones, considering the sequence of work operations, helps reduce time spent on preparation and procedure execution.

Advanced studios in this field implement the concept of modular spaces, allowing for flexible adaptation of premises to various procedures and fluctuating client flow. Mobile partitions, transformable furniture, and multifunctional equipment enable rapid reconfiguration, positively affecting the facility's operational efficiency.

Ergonomic organization of the massage therapist's workspace is also a critical aspect. The strategic placement of tools and materials within easy reach, without interrupting procedures, optimizes workflow and significantly enhances service quality. Individual anthropometric characteristics of specialists should be considered, along with the ability to personalize workspace settings.

Effective management of consumable material inventory is one of the key factors in operational optimization. The implementation of a just-in-time system, where materials are supplied in quantities matching the facility's current needs, is particularly important.

A promising approach to supply chain management is the formation of procurement pools that unite multiple massage studios. This strategy allows for better cooperation with suppliers by increasing order volumes, thereby reducing service costs. Notably, such collaboration is feasible even among competing entities, as it does not directly affect core business operations.

The use of automated inventory control solutions integrated with a massage studio's information systems is also noteworthy. These systems enable real-time monitoring of material consumption and automatically generate restocking orders without staff intervention, mitigating the risk of shortages and associated operational disruptions.

Efficient use of energy resources is both an economic and environmental necessity for modern massage studios. Implementing energy-efficient equipment, smart lighting systems, and climate control solutions significantly reduces operational costs while simultaneously enhancing comfort for both clients and employees.

Water consumption optimization plays a particularly important role. The installation of water-saving faucets, recirculation systems, and water purification technologies helps reduce utility expenses and aligns with contemporary eco-standards. Furthermore, such measures are positively received by consumers who are increasingly prioritizing environmental responsibility when selecting service providers.

The issue of human resource management in the context of optimizing operational processes requires further examination. Effective scheduling of specialists' working hours is one of the key tasks in massage studio management. Traditional scheduling methods, which rely on an even distribution of workload, often fail to account for natural fluctuations in client flow and the individual characteristics of employees. An alternative approach involves implementing flexible schedules adapted to changes in demand and employee preferences.

A promising direction is the use of analytical tools to forecast client activity. Analyzing historical data while considering seasonality, days of the week, and time of day helps create schedules that maximize specialist utilization during peak demand periods. During lower-demand intervals, training sessions, equipment maintenance, and other auxiliary operations can be scheduled.

The implementation of cross-functional training systems, which involve acquiring additional specializations, deserves particular attention. This

approach enhances flexibility in workload distribution and allows for a rapid response to shifts in client preferences.

Motivational mechanisms directly influence the quality and intensity of work performed by massage studio staff. Personalized programs that focus on individual preferences and employees' value orientations play a central role. Non-material incentives, including public recognition of achievements, opportunities for professional development, and the creation of a positive psychological climate, also have a significant impact.

Traditional approaches to operational process optimization, based on long planning cycles and slow implementation of changes, often prove ineffective in an environment of high external instability. As an alternative, Agile methodologies enable an iterative approach to improvement and rapid adaptation to changing conditions.

The application of Scrum principles in massage studio operations leads to the formation of cross-functional teams responsible for implementing specific optimization initiatives. Short planning cycles (sprints) allow for quick hypothesis testing and minimize the risks associated with large-scale transformations.

Special attention should be given to the practice of conducting regular retrospectives aimed at analyzing achieved results and identifying potential areas for further improvement. This approach ensures continuous optimization of operational processes and fosters a culture of ongoing innovation within the studied institutions.

CONCLUSION

Comprehensive optimization of operational processes in massage studios is a multifaceted task that requires a systematic approach while accounting for the specific characteristics of this industry. The conducted research highlights the potential of integrating digital tools, Lean management principles, and Agile methodologies into the operations of such organizations.

The effectiveness of optimization measures largely depends on their alignment with the strategic goals of the massage studio and the engagement of personnel in the transformation process. A key success factor is the establishment of a culture of continuous modernization, based on the ongoing search for additional opportunities.

In the future development of the industry, service personalization based on big data analytics and the integration of massage studios into wellness service

ecosystems will become particularly important. These trends emphasize the need for adaptive operational models capable of responding swiftly to shifts in consumer preferences and technological advancements.

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