

The Relationship between the Quality of Sports Services and the Intention of Reappearance of Participants in the Activities of Public Sports

(Case Study: 6th District of Tehran Municipality)

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ABSTRACT: The aim of the study was the relationship between the quality of sports services and the intention of reappearance of participants in the activities of public sports (case study: 6th district of Tehran municipality). The population of the present study consisted of all participants in activities of public sports in the 6th district of Tehran municipality in 2016. To determine the sample size in this study, a simple random sampling method was used. In terms of the number of society and Cochran Table, 200 athletes were selected as research participants. The results showed that the effect of the quality of sports services on the willingness to reappearance of the participants ($p = 10.25$) was significant, in other words, the effect of the quality of sports services on the willingness to reengage the participants is statistically significant. Therefore, in general it can be said that the quality of sports services and the intention of reappearance of participants in the activities of public sports is effective.

Keywords: Quality, Sports Services, Reappearance, Public Sports, Municipality.

INTRUCTION

The quality of services has long been studied in business and commerce, but however, the concept of service quality in sports and leisure activities in the past two decades has attracted much attention. Today, the study of the quality of services in the sports industry of large and extensive sections have included professional sports (Fricr, 2000), programs of physical fitness activities (Kim et al., 2006; Papadimitriou & Karteroliotis, 2000), sports spectators (Griffin, 1996), and recreational activities, leisure and tourism (Howat et al., 1998). Chelladuraie & Chang (2000) performed the studies on different dimensions of the quality of services provided in sports organizations. The results of these studies showed that the quality of services provided in sports organizations was one of the most important factors for the success of such organizations. The service quality is a fundamental factor for achieving high levels of quality of services provided outside the organization and it is necessary that the organizations pay attention to this important point.

The quality of services is an important issue in marketing literature because understanding the quality of services is related to customer satisfaction and customer retention (Zeithaml et al, 1996). Organizations,

manufacturing companies and provider of products and services by understanding the importance of customer satisfaction also attempt to assess the value of customer satisfaction of respective

organizations using customer satisfaction measurement methods periodically and sometimes based on cases and situations and identify features which is a priority on the products and services for customers so that they can direct their company towards more customer-oriented using this information (Zeithaml et al, 1996). Because of the importance of public sports in promoting community health, the study of factors affecting the development of the sports has been considered by managers (Barbara & William, 2005). Research has been performed on the situation of public sports in our country that most of these studies have examined the situation of public sports among which the research of Qareh (2004), and Javadipour and Samizadeh (2012) can be mentioned. Public and team sports in our country have the history of several thousand years. Traditional games and team sports were based on pedagogical-educational function and today this can be considered a factor affecting the process of socialization and internalization of social norms, contributing to social cohesion and solidarity, help in achieving humanitarian goals and help socially acceptable ways to cope and adapt to environmental conditions. The use of management knowledge and its scientific achievements in sports organizations and sectors of our country are less considered. Today, sports are one of the things which are proposed in different titles in the world and a large group deals with in many forms. Some people are professional athletes and amateur athletes. Some of them are interested in sports and seeing programs, competitions and sports shows and some spend their lives through sports. In the meantime, the public sports are of great importance (Qareh, 2004). This study makes it possible to provide managers and planners sports in Tehran to pay special attention to this issue and they become aware of the role and impact of the quality of sports services on the behavior of the participants in public sports and adopt appropriate strategies regarding the consent of the people. Due to the foregoing, and the importance of service quality and its role in the reappearance of participants, the researcher is seeking the answer to this question whether is there any relationship between the quality of sports services and the intention of reappearance of participants in the activities of public sports in Tehran or not?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is a description of correlational kind implemented the field method. In this regard, the researcher has tried to describe and interpret while presenting a clear picture of the characteristics of the population, what it is without any influence and interference in the results. In other words, in addition to describing the objective characteristics of the subject, the analysis and interpretation of the relationship among variables was investigated. The population of the present study consisted of all participants in activities of public sports in the 6th district of Tehran municipality in 2016. Attendees and participants include individuals who regularly participate in public sports of the morning. According to the statistics of sports section of Tehran municipality, the statistical population size is a thousand and five hundred people who participate in the organized way in various public activities, including morning sports, health road, swimming, fitness, cycling, etc. The exact size of the study population based on quotations taken was determined from the sports section of Tehran municipality. To determine the sample size in this study simple random sampling method is used and In terms of the number of society and Cochran Table, 200 athletes are selected as research participants. In this study, to determine statistical data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used in two separate parts. In the first part, a descriptive analysis of the data was presented in the form of frequency tables, mean, and standard deviation. The questionnaire of the quality of the services: the instrument of the research is constituted by the questionnaire of the quality of the services of Parasurman et al (1998) which in 2008 Chin Lio created some changes in this questionnaire and used it in sports environment. He announced scoring the options based on Likert scale. This questionnaire measures 25pockets of response, the quality of the services at five dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, and assurance and empathy factors (Jao-Chuan, 2008).

Table 1. Distribution of the questionnaire questions of the quality of the services.

Variable	Dimensions	Questions
the quality of the services	Tangible items	1-6
	reliability	7-11
	responsiveness	12-16
	assurance	17-21
	empathy	22-25

The second part of the questionnaire of 5 questions of Rio et al (2010) measures the reappearance in the athletes. This questionnaire is measured based on a Likert scale of measurement (completely disagree = 1 to completely agree = 5). Rio et al (2010) reported Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire as 0.78. According to the research instrument was a questionnaire, the following for face and content validity were considered: the relevance of the questions of the questionnaire to the objectives and hypotheses, observing grammatical rules of consistent with the culture of the country, the appearance of questionnaire, legible type (the use of proper font, line spacing), the appropriate number of questions per page, how to write words correctly and to determine the validity and content were approved by was respected professors and advisors. To determine inter-rater reliability the questionnaires of the study, Cronbach's alpha was used by SPSS. To do this, the number of participants in public sports participated in a basic study and they completed questionnaires written. Then, the questionnaires were analyzed. For this purpose, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was considered for each of the questions chapters (sub-set of main variables of the research) presented in the Table below:

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of variables.

Row	Questions headlines	Cronbach's alpha coefficient (ms)
1	Tangible items	0.79
2	reliability	0.84
3	responsiveness	0.86
4	assurance	0.82
5	empathy	0.90
The questionnaire of the quality of the services		0.90
Reappearance		0.89

In this study, to determine statistical data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used in two separate parts. In the first part, a descriptive analysis of the data was presented in the form of frequency tables, mean, and standard deviation. In the section of descriptive statistics, SPSS was used. All statistical tests were significantly tested ($\alpha = 0.05$).

RESULTS

The findings showed that, the average age of subjects was 37.2 years and the minimum and maximum age of the subjects was 15 years and 75 years. In gender segregation, the frequency of male subjects is 80 (40 percent) and the prevalence of weight subjects is 120 (60 percent). The findings also showed, on the degree of the subjects, the most frequency is related to secondary school degree with 90 patients (45 percent) and the lowest frequency is related to MA and PhD degree with 3 patients (5.1 percent).

The average experience of participants in public sports is 9.78 years and the minimum and maximum experience of the subjects is 1 year and 30 years. The most frequency of 109 people on income is related to the group which is less than a million dollars and the lowest frequency of 11 people is related to income group of three million and one hundred thousand Toman and more of it.

An average willingness to reappearance of the participants was 4.12 and this value is more than the average level.

Table 3. The effect of the quality of sports services on the willingness to reappearance of the participants.

Component	Desire to attendance	
	β	t
the quality of sports services	0.74	10.25
n= 200		

$$-1.96 \leq t \text{ value} \leq +1.96$$

The findings in Table 3 show that the effect of the quality of sports service on the willingness of reappearance of the participants was significant. In other words, the effect of the quality of sports service on the willingness of

reappearance of the participants is not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is confirmed and it can be stated that the quality of sports services on the intention of reappearance of participants in public sports in Tehran is effective. The findings also showed that the effect of the variable of reappearance on tangible qualitative cases of the participants of public sports in Tehran had a significant and positive impact. Therefore, the null hypothesis is confirmed and it can be stated that the quality of sports services on the intention of reappearance on tangible qualitative cases of the participants of public sports in Tehran is effective.

Subscale of reappearance has not the impact on the variable of the trust of the participants. Therefore, the null hypothesis is confirmed and it can be stated that the reappearance on the variable of the trust of the participants of public sports in Tehran is effective. The effect of the reappearance on the responsiveness of the participants has not significant effect. In other words, the effect of the reappearance on the responsiveness of the participants in Tehran is not statistically significant.

On the fifth hypothesis testing, the results showed that the effect of the reappearance on the trust of the participants had not significant effect. In other words, the reappearance on the trust of the participants in Tehran is not effective.

Table 4. The effect of the reappearance on the trust of the participants.

Component	Trust	
	β	t
Reappearance	-0.006	0.060
n= 200		
$-1.96 \leq t \text{ value} \leq +1.96$		

The findings of the Table5 showed that the reappearance had a significant and positive effect on empathy. In other words, the reappearance on the ability of empathy of the participants of public sports in Tehran is effective.

Table 5. The effect of the reappearance on empathy of the participants.

Variable	Empathy	
	β	t
Reappearance	0.58	4.39
n= 200		
$-1.96 \leq t \text{ value} \leq +1.96$		

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study performed on demographic variables in the society indicated the following cases:

- The study of the status of the age of subjects showed that the average age of subjects was 37.2 years and the minimum and maximum age of the subjects was 15 years and 75 years.
- The results of the gender of the subjects showed that among 200 people of the sample under investigation, 80 people are men (40 percent) and 120 people are women (60 percent).
- The most subjects of the research (45 percent) were related to secondary school degree. Then, the degree under diploma (24.5percent), associate degree (15percent), bachelor's degree (14 percent) and Master Degree and PhD (1.5), respectively were then ranked.
- The study of data showed that the average experience of participants in public sports is 9.78 years and the minimum and maximum experience of the subjects is 1 year and 30 years.
- The results of the research on the amount of income of the subjects showed that the highest frequency is related to income group less than a million toman.

The results of the research on the description of the quality of services and the experience of reappearance of the participants of public sports included the following cases:

- Among five dimensions of the service quality, factors of reliability with the average4.03 and standard deviation 0.82 have the highest average and the reliability of empathy with the average3.83 and standard deviation 0.98 have the lowest mean. The results also showed that the average of the service quality is 3.89 which indicate that public sports service quality from the perspective of the participants are in the average level.

- The results showed that the average reappearance of the participants is 4.12 and this value is above the average.

The need for organizations to use customer-centric approach in their marketing strategy has increased dramatically. Organizations have learned that it is easy to attract customers, but turning customers into the loyal customer to the organization is a difficult task. Today, the research has shown that customer satisfaction is not enough, but what is important is to keep customers and increase their loyalty. This issue has exceeded care organizations and other sectors such as sports were also involved. Today, one of the main concerns of the clubs and sports marketing is to attract athletes and maintain them. In this regard, Chelladuraie and Chang (2000) state that to attract athletes to the sports environment, precision marketing programs that can meet the needs of the athletes, seems necessary.

The results showed that the service quality on the willingness to the reappearance of the participants of public sports in Tehran was effective. This finding is consistent with the results of Bahlakeh et al (2008), Ahmadi (2008), Howat et al (1998), Papadimitriou and Karteroliotis (2000), Chang and Chelladuraie (2000) and Calabuig et al (2008).

Athletes are considered important components of the sports industry regardless of kind of sports field and kind of sports need (recreational, amateur or professional). Robinson (2006) argues about the importance of athletes in the sports industry: as the customer is important for other industries, the athletes for the sports industry are important and valuable. To protect athletes, providing appropriate services for them is essential (Qasemi, 2009).

The quality of services has long been studied in business and commerce, but however, the concept of service quality in sports and leisure activities in the past two decades has attracted much attention. Today, the study of the quality of services in the sports industry of large and extensive sections have included professional sports, programs of physical fitness activities, sports spectators, and recreational activities, leisure and tourism and sports managers in these sports sectors have realized the importance of service quality (Di Xie, 2005). Chelladuraie and Chang (2000) performed the studies on different dimensions of the quality of services provided in sports organizations. The results of these studies showed that the quality of services provided in sports organizations was one of the most important factors for the success of such organizations. As Di Xie (2005) states, today, the quality of services in recreation and sport activities for all such programs is also considered by managers. In this regard, he states that since the participants in recreational and public activities in their spare time often spend in recreational and public activities and do not pay any cost, the managers for such activities should act by providing sports programs with high quality and attractiveness of to keep up such people. Gohar Rostami et al (2010) also consider the quality of public sports programs and the quality of devices available in exercise stations among the most important factors affecting interest of people on public activities. Therefore, based on the cases mentioned it can be said that the service quality of sports activities is one of the most important factors affecting willingness to reappearance of the users of such programs (Yazdi Fazeli, 2011).

The results showed that the reappearance on empathy of the participants was effective which this finding was consistent with the results of the research of Howat et al (1998), Lai Lai (2004) and Lien et al (2011). Predicting factors affecting the behavior of athletes in sports environments has always been one of the most important challenges facing sports managers. Chang and Chelladuraie (2000) state that sports administrators should provide their preservation field by predicting factors affecting the behavior of the athletes. Providing a quiet environment for the athletes and good interaction with the athletes, addressing the problems of athletes, providing sports services consistent with the need of the athletes, the confidence in the athletes through the services provided, innovation in services provided to athletes and determination of the appropriate price for services provided to athletes are among cases that according to Calabuig et al (2008) they can result in satisfaction of the athletes and oral advertising from the sports services of the club to others and improve the reappearance of the athletes. On the other hand, knowledge of the expectations and needs of their athletes can cause emotional allegiance of the athletes to a sports club. Athletes loyal to sports clubs are an effective factor in verbal advertising and they can also reduce many marketing costs. Based on the cases mentioned, it can be stated that satisfaction of the athletes with the quality of sports programs can be effective on their behavioral tendencies in the future. Therefore, sports administrators can use this issue as a factor for advertising of their programs.

It is suggested that the problems of the athletes participating by coaches and sports administrators be identified and measures be acted to solve them. Creating a database of athletes and the problems may be useful in this regard. To improve, recruitment and training of human resources programs of public sports including staff of sports spaces for interaction with athletes and coaches and understand their needs and desires are recommended. It is suggested that tangible factors in sports spaces (including health services, tools used in gyms, sports halls visual space, heating and heating pavilions, restroom athletes and additional services) and parks (including sports equipment and stations) be examined and their situation be improved in line with the welfare of the athletes. It is recommended that special

needs of the athletes according to their gender and age be considered and trainers and managers of public sports to solve them be attempted. It is suggested that the type of services provided to consumers of public sports in the sports spaces and parks be determined and also, time of providing services be examined carefully and the athletes be aware of the kind of services. It is suggested that sports managers with assessment and use of the best programs, facilities and human resources can cause to satisfy consumers of public sports and while maintaining current athletes through them, promote their work to others.

It is suggested to perform similar studies in other cities of the country where public sports are conducted and the results be compared with the present results. It is proposed that services offered in public sports in Tehran from the perspectives of the athletes and managers be compared so that the present gaps are determined. It is suggested that other factors affective willingness of the reappearance of the participants, including innovation in services and management of customer relationships be investigated.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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