

Effect of Service Quality and Perceived Value on Satisfaction: An Exploratory Study of Basketball Spectators

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Abstract

Introduction

The existing relation between service quality, satisfaction and perceived value is a recurrent subject in the literature of services [1]. This interest has been transferred to the study of service quality and users' satisfaction in sports centres [2] and is spreading to sporting events, especially basketball.

In this sense, some works analyzed the perceived quality of basketball spectators and determined that the strongest dimensions predicting spectator's satisfaction are reliability and the tangibles [3]. Other works, pointed out that the most important attribute is related to the game experience, although they accepted that this is not liable to be changed by managers [4]. A different study [5], analyzed the influence of service quality on the future intentions in a professional basketball league and found that the social and demographic variables determined the level of perceived service quality. Some remarkable contributions, which studied the relation between tangible elements, value and satisfaction in other sports are those by other authors [6, 7]. A research found [8] that tangibles had an influence on the satisfaction of ice hockey spectators as a whole rather than as individual elements (i.e. comfort accessibility). This study intends to go deeply into this subject by means of providing new data to show how service quality dimensions and the perceived value have an influence on the general satisfaction of basketball spectators.

Methodology

Sample

A questionnaire about perceived service quality, value and satisfaction was handed out to 2190 spectators, out of which 144 were basketball spectators. The basketball sample consisted of 60.4% male and 39.6% female, with an average age of 33.23 years ($SD \pm 11.2$).

Instrument

The instrument used for the analysis of the perceived quality (EVENTQUAL) consisted of 22 items with an answer alternative of seven-point, ranging from "totally disagree" (1) to "totally agree" (7). The scale consisting of 5 items and a response alternative of seven points was used to determine general satisfaction [6]. The cost

value was established with a single item (i.e. “attendance to the event is worth the cost”). The EVENTQUAL scale of perceived quality obtained a Cronbach alpha index of 0.93. Two items of the perceived quality scale were eliminated as they indicated a correlation with the total of the scale below 0.4.

Results

An exploratory factor analysis of the important factors with varimax rotation showed the following quality dimensions (variance explained is in parenthesis): tangible elements (18.58%), with a Cronbach alpha of 0.83, staff (15.57%), with a Cronbach alpha of 0.85, extra services (12.97%), with a Cronbach alpha of 0.76, and accessibility (10.32%), with a Cronbach alpha of 0.68.

A correlation analysis was carried out to determine the amount of association between the studied variables. It was observed that both all quality variables and value correlated in a positive and significative manner ($p < 0.001$) with satisfaction. The value indicated a high correlation ($r = .745$), followed by tangibles ($r = .542$), complementary services ($r = .512$), staff ($r = .358$) and accessibility ($r = .304$).

A subsequent regression analysis was conducted taking quality dimensions and the value as independent variables, and general satisfaction as dependent. It was observed that both quality dimensions and the value were predicting 62.3% of the variance of general satisfaction (Mult. $R = 0.789$, $R^2 = 0.623$, $R^2 \text{ ajust.} = 0.606$, $F(5, 112) = 12.83$, $p < 0.001$). The coefficients indicated that both value ($\beta = .611$, $p < .001$) and the dimension of tangibles ($\beta = .279$, $p = .001$) had the strongest influence on satisfaction. Following these, although not closely, were complementary services ($\beta = .108$, $p = .154$), accessibility ($\beta = .024$, $p = .728$) and staff ($\beta = -.093$, $p = .236$).

Discussion

The results of this study suggest that both tangible elements and the perceived value by basketball spectators in a mega sports event are crucial to explain the general satisfaction of spectators. Besides, it can be noted that the value has, on its own, a strong effect on satisfaction. Therefore, it needs to be taken very seriously by the managers of these events if their intention is to improve the level of satisfaction of spectators. The above results were partly similar to those obtained by other authors [3], as they look into the same effect of tangibles on spectator's satisfaction, although there is a difference regarding the role of accessibility and staff. On the other hand, other author state that both reliability and security have the strongest influence on satisfaction and both tangibles and security are at the top of the list predicting repurchase intention [5]. Consequently, sport events managers should make every effort to improve the quality of tangibles and the cost value in their venues as this will improve spectators' satisfaction and will keep them coming back.

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