The Role of Quality Mediator in Technology Relationship with the Loyalty and Satisfaction of Sports Clubs in Tehran

Maryam Hajebrahimi[1]*, Hossein Poursoltani Zarandi[2]

[1]Master of Sport Marketing Management,

[2]Faculty Member of Payame Noor University.

*Corresponding Author

Abstract: *The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between the knowledge of IT managers and the use of its types with the attraction and loyalty of the customers of Tehran's gym clubs. The research has descriptive-correlation method and field method. The statistical population of this research is Tehran's gym clubs' managers whose number is about 2000 people. The sample size was 400 people according to Morgan table. 384 questionnaires were used for data analysis. The method used to select samples was non-random and available method. The tools usedwereMohammadis21 questions questionnaire (2013), standardized questionnaire 6 absorption and standardized questionaires,6questions of effective recruiting, and8 questions of customer loyalty questionnaire. The content validity of the questionnaires was also approved by a group of university sport management professors. Reliability of the questionnaire was 0.88, 0.85, 0.80, and 0.79, respectively, through Cronbach's alpha. In order to analyze the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, binomial test and Spearman correlation coefficient were used and for cause and effect relationships, structural equations variables were used. The most important findings of the research showed that there is a significant relationship between the IT knowledge with the absorpation and variables and the effectiveness of customer attraction and loyalty(p<0.05), also according to (R2=0.09, GOF=0.941) and combined AVE and extruded structures were fitted to the approved model.*

Keywords: *Information Technology, Service Quality, Satisfaction, Loyalty.*

INTRODUCTION

Considering the elapse of a very long time since service quality and methods of its evaluation and assessment were first proposed, the paying of attention to the issue has not undergone a decrease rather it has been given a considerable role more than ever before due to its daily increasing importance in the country's economy (Reza'ei Kohan, Samira, 1999). (Ramezani Nasrin, 2004) Services have been extensively expanded and no business can survive without offering them. Therefore, the club managers should pay their greatest deal of attention to the needs, ideas and objections of their clients in regard of the services offered so as to be able to retain them, provide them with better services and contribute a lot to their retaining of their clients through an investigation of the problems and taking care of the ideas as well as via getting aware of the customers' satisfaction by heightening the qualities and speeds of service provisioning (Sa'atchiyan, Vahid et al, 2010) During the recent years, paying attention to the customers' needs and remaining accountable to their demands, both in production and service sectors, has been turned into the most original and most necessary duties and/or

objectives of the organizations. Since more than half of the gross production of the countries is attained from the service sector worldwide and due to the special characteristics of this sector (like direct contact with the customers), it is very much important to pay attention thereto (Sayyed Javadin et al, 2010). The quality does not mean anything more than what the customer wants. In other words, a product or service is said to be of a high quality when it is matching with the customer's needs. Quality should be defined as compatibility with the customer's needs (Shamsipour, Maryam, 2005). Studies show that interest in service quality has also been dragged to sport industry during the past two decades in such a manner that, nowadays, quality is one of the most important headlines in such areas as sport marketing. The investigation of the statistics and information extant regarding the amount of information technology expansion in countries around the globe, it can be discerned that there are comprehensive programs for equipping with such various facilities as computer and internet in a great many of the countries, including the developed and developing countries. According to the daily increasing expansion of IT and its incremental effects on the human life, familiarity with such a technology as well as proficiency in using its tools is amongst the necessities. Due to the same reason, meanwhile providing the individuals with the required facilities, some of the countries engage in instructing them to make the prepared for life in electronic world (Mohammdi, Esma'eil et al, cited in Jalali and Abbasi, 2007).

Study Background:

In the present era, human's power of innovation and genius has been accompanied by a novel technology called information technology and it is bearing witness to a great change with the expansion in the use of information and communicational technologies to the extent that the present era has also become known as Information Era (Hamzehpour, Kheradmardy, 2013). Modern information and communication technologies have changed the know-hows of living as well as the world we are living in and over 80% of the human life affairs will be depending on IT either directly or indirectly in near future. Service quality is defined as "a customer's perception of the success or failure levels of an offered service in satisfying the expectations or the differences between the expectations and performance" (Shamsipour, Maryam, 2005). Studies show that the interest in service quality has entered the sport industry during the past two decades in such a manner that quality is currently considered as one of the most important headlines in the area of sport marketing (Mahmoudi, Ahmad et al, 2010). Nowadays, the offering of service in sports is more concentrated on customers and this has to include not only the service quality of the existing stages but it has to also incorporate customers' awareness of the product. The managers of the service units most often use service quality scales and indices and customer satisfaction too assess the extent to which customers' needs have been met (Brink and Berndt, 2008). Nowadays, the managers of the governmental and service institutions in all the governmental and private sectors have figured out that the product quality alone cannot bring about distinction rather the focal point has to be shifted from marketing to customer-orientation. From the perspective of Mantle (2006), IT encompasses gathering, organizing, processing and dispersing audio, video, numerical and textual information that is carried out by means of computer and telecommunication instruments (Mo'meni, Mansour, 2007). Offering quality services is one of the most important factors giving rise to customer satisfaction and only institutions can continue their offering of such services in a sustainable manner that adopt comprehensive attitudes towards the customer and remain deeply committed thereto (Afchangi, Somayyeh, 2013). Service quality is the judgement about the general service superiority or service nature while satisfaction is the customer's judgment regarding the service effects (Behalkeh, Taher, 2008). Building of a reference organization and paying attention to the referrers is enumerated an optimal structure where the referrers' satisfaction is the main condition of an organization's survival (Hosseini, 2009). More satisfied customers are more likely to make repurchases (Honary, Habib, 2010). Customers become the source of profit when they receive certain services thus they club managers should attract more customers and more than that try to retain them and lose a lesser number of them because the costs of attracting customers is several times the cost of retaining them. Understanding the expectations of the

customers and becoming committed to fulfilling the assigned tasks provides for the possibility of excelling and appearing outstanding. There are many researches indicating that the optimum service quality causes customer satisfaction to eventually influence their loyalty. Sayyed Javadin and Almasi in a research in 2003 under the title of "evaluating service quality of social security from the perspective of employees" made use of service quality scale to investigate its fivefold aspect, named tangible factors, reliability, accountability, confidence and sympathy. The study population included all the staff members of Tehran's social security organization and the study sample volume was consisted of 123 staff. They employed a questionnaire comprised of four parts to gather the information. Hypothesis test indicated that the social security employees believe that social security organization works below the customers' expectation levels. Furthermore, the mean values obtained from the aspects' prioritization demonstrated that reliability is most important and tangible factors are least important. Krona et al (2000) found out in their study that high levels of service quality lead to satisfaction. Also, Olorunniwo et al (2006) utilized the aspects of service quality evaluation to evaluate customer satisfaction and recounted service quality as a basis for satisfaction. In the foreign studies conducted in this regard, Lim (2006) and Chan (2008) expressed that service quality directly influences customer satisfaction. It was also figured out that the customer satisfaction levels directly influence customer loyalty and the high levels of customer loyalty directly influence the customer's future purchase behavior. Liu (2008) showed that service quality and customer satisfaction of swimming clubs are important factors in retaining them (loyalty). Lee et al (2010), as well, asserted in a study that the club's service quality, cleanliness and modernity of the equipment are more important for the female golfers as compared to their male counterparts. Hak Lee et al (2011) came to the conclusion that the tangibility and sympathy are two important indicators of service quality that determine the customers' satisfaction and that they are influential factors indicating the customers' return. Pedragosaurora and Curia (2009) evaluated customer satisfaction in their study from three viewpoints of expectations, equipment and customer loyalty and concluded that satisfaction is a variable that is significantly associated with the customers' expectations and club equipment and it is of a great importance in the determination of customers' loyalty to the club. Nicholas Theodorakis et al (2013), as well, concluded in a study titled "service quality and satisfaction roles in predicting the behavioral goals of professional football onlookers" that service quality influences the satisfaction and they both exert effects on behavioral intentions. Chunk (2004), as well, concluded in an investigation of the intentions of re-attendance in sport clubs in the city of Tachunk that optimum service quality and satisfaction have positive effects on customers' intentions of re-attendance. Therefore, meeting the customers' expectations in terms of service quality attributes ends in their higher levels of satisfaction and causes them to remain loyal to the services and even recommend them to the other customers. During the recent years and according to the relative enhancement of the role and position of sports amongst the society members, the service quality management and customers' satisfaction evaluation have been turned to one of the major concerns of sport sector managers. Nowadays, the discussions on customer loyalty are quite common in sports (Kouzehchiyan, Hashem, 2009). Loyalty is defined as re-demanding of a product and recommending it to the others (Shoja'ei, Sohaila, 2012). It has to be note that high customers' satisfaction and high services qualities lead to the customers' return in future. Loyal customers contribute to the determination of predictable sale trend and profit increase by organizations. Mantle (2006) enumerates four characteristics for customers' loyalty. The first is word-of-mouth embracing cases like positive talks about an organization or a special service offered by another as well as recommending the organization or service to friends and the others. The second attribute is purchase intention indicating a customer's intention for reusing the services offered by an organization in future. The next attribute is price sensitivities meaning that the customer continues repurchasing the service in case of price increases and that the customer's attraction to the rival organizations offering the same service for a lower price is less likely to happen. Bitner (1992) identified service factors that were considered as determinants of the effect of physical factors on customers' behaviors in repeating and not repeating the purchase behavior; particularly, such physical-environmental factors as spatial design that influence the customers' perceptions and their behavioral moods. Bitner coined the term "service

escape" for describing the physical environment. He defined the term as the environment constructed by human or the physical environment in opposite to social or natural environment. Bitner indicated that the physical factors play a considerable role in increasing the customers' satisfaction and can bring about customer retention or customer behavior repetition. Bitner invented a work environment for comprehending the role of physical factors in the environment of customer service.

Cutler (1973) introduced tangible physical factors as causing effects on customers' behaviors. In another study, Donavan and Riterz, as well, identified the stimulant environmental factors influencing the happiness and sadness psychological states. These factors were color, lightness, rhythm and several other similar factors all of which were recounted as influential on customers' future behaviors. These results have informative and delicate points for the clubs' managers and owners and they might not seem as important in the first glance but their values can be discerned in a closer and more scrutinizing look. Pease and Zhang (2001) showed in a study that stadium design, stadium services and physical factors directly influence the spectators' tendencies for staying and participating in the games played in them. Also, Wakefield et al (1995), as well, found out that not only having loyal fans but also factors like services offered in the stadium's parking lots, cleanliness of the stadium environment, safe and secure management of the crowd, food services and controlling the behaviors of the fans in the stadium and guaranteeing the healthiness and comfort of the other spectators are amongst the factors that insure their remaining in and acceptance of the services offered in the stadiums. They also indicated that the stadium design and services offered therein directly influence the spectators' presence, remaining and paying more attention to the games held therein. In a study in sport and recreational centers, Mac Cogal and Lusco (2000) determined that service quality perceptions exert significant effects on the customers' future purchase behaviors. The point that has to be mentioned is that physical factors have been pointed out in various researches as factors that cause the customers to be more willing to prove presence in various sport centers. Wu (2004) conducted a study entitled "service quality and pervasive satisfaction of physical fitness clubs' members in South Korea". The study showed the club's service quality and customer satisfaction rates and the study results are an appropriate set of guidelines for the improvement of service quality in physical fitness centers. The aspects used in the study for the evaluation of service quality were: tangibility, reliability, accountability, exactness and sympathy. The same aspects were also used for completing the customer satisfaction evaluation methods. As it is evident, the aspects of service quality as used in the foresaid study, except exactness, are the same as the ones used in the present study. In this regard, Lin (2004) performed a study called "service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in Taiwan's sport centers". The study aimed at investigation of the customers' expectations before receiving the services and comparing them with their perceptions after receiving the services so as to become aware of the relationship between service quality, satisfaction and loyalty of the customers. The results indicated that the service quality and customers' loyalty can predict satisfaction (Yi Chin Liu, 2008). The interesting point of the study is that loyalty has been pinpointed as a variable predicting satisfaction while it is stated in the majority of the researches that satisfaction is a predictor of loyalty. Besides, in an investigation of the effect of IT investments on customer satisfaction, Rasouli and Bagherinejad (2010) concluded that there is a direct relationship between these two variables in a vast array of aspects. From their perspectives, the organizational strategy can be changed through proper and well-founded investment on IT in such a way that it can be accompanied by customer satisfaction and loyalty for the organization. The effect of IT investment is different in various manufacturing and service industries' sectors. It is via integration and coordination of information by the assistance of technology that the longevity of the organization's customer can be changed. Alex Andris et al (1999) in a study named "measuring the customer satisfaction in Greece's physical fitness centers" concluded that satisfaction is a multidimensional concept and their study results supported the statement that customer satisfaction is a multidimensional concept. As it can be seen, one substantial role of customer satisfaction is institutional profitability in regard of which Arel Numan (2001) pointed in a study to the role of customer satisfaction in increasing the profitability of the institutions and expressed that customer satisfaction is positively correlated with honesty meaning that

if customers find clubs honest in their offering of services they will have their satisfaction increased. Parallel to this, Chakrawati et al (2003) performed a study on profitability indices of customer satisfaction level. To do so, they investigated the relationship between customers' satisfaction levels and profitability through taking advantage of the information obtained from the customers and it was concluded that demanding extra costs from the customers results in reduction of their satisfaction level.

Study Method:

The present study is a descriptive-correlation r research that is grouped with the applied studies and it has been undertaken in a field study method of doing research. The study population includes all the body building gyms in Tehran reaching in number to 924 gyms and their managers reaching in number to about 2000. Tehran was divided into five regions (east, west, north, south and center) and 20 gyms were selected from each region (100 gyms). Four managers (400 in total) were selected from each gym following which the study sample volume was set at 400 based on Morgan's table and in consideration of sample volume falls. Questionnaires were administered to the gym managers and 384 questionnaires were finally returned. Sampling was conducted based on a non-randomized (convenience) method. Five questionnaires were used to gather the study required data. The questionnaires were: demographic characteristics questionnaire containing 21 questions on IT (Mohammadi et al, 2013), standardized attraction application questionnaire containing 6 questions, standardized attraction effectiveness questionnaire containing 6 questions (Haj Ebrahimi, 2016) and customer loyalty questionnaire containing 8 questions (Liu, 2008). Information technology knowledge questionnaire assesses three indicators, namely computer, internet and software. All of the questions were scored based on Likert's 5-point scale. The content validity of the questionnaires was confirmed through inquiring ideas from the sport management professors and gym managers reaching in number to 10 and reliability of the questionnaires were calculated equal to 0.87, 0.89, 0.88 and 0.79, respectively, based on Cronbach's alpha method. To perform inferential analysis of the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (for the determination of data normality), binomial test (status comparison), Spearman correlation coefficient (for the determination of variables' interrelationships) and variables' cause and effect relation evaluation through structural equation models were used. The data were analyzed in SPSS software, version 22 and PLS Smart software in an error level of 0.05.

Study Results:

The study sample volume was composed of 200 men (52%) with an average age of 35.47±1.16 and 184 women (48%) with an average age of 28.14±1.91.
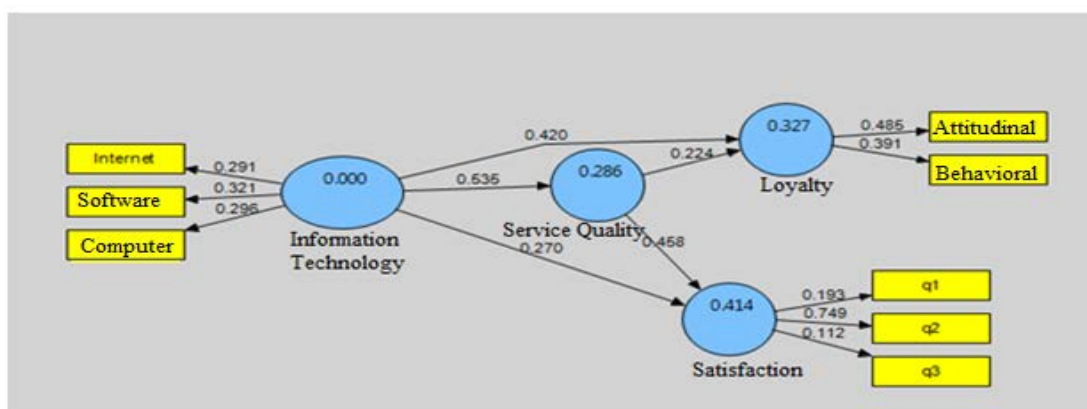
Structural Model Estimation:

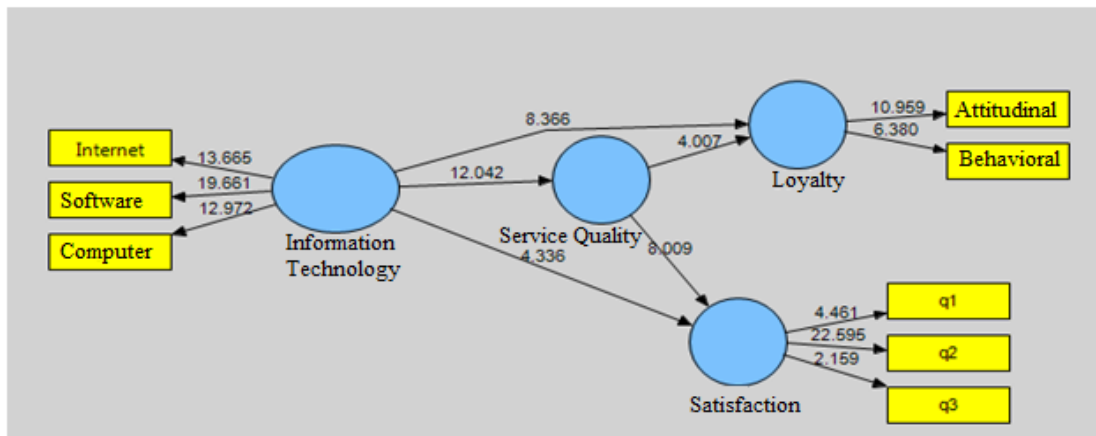**Figure 1:** study operational model in impact coefficient mode

Figure 2: study operational model in significance numbers state

Table 1: the effect of independent variable "IT" on dependent variables (service quality, loyalty and satisfaction)

Variables			Service quality	Loyalty	Satisfaction
Independent (exogenous)	Information Technology	β	0.535	0.420	0.270
		t-value	12.042	8.366	4.336

Significance level is set at ±1.96.

Based on the data given in table (1), the effect of IT on service quality is positive and significant (ß=0.535 and t-value=12.042), the effect of IT on loyalty is positive and significant (ß=0.420 and t-value=8.366) and the effect of information technology on satisfaction is also positive and significant (ß=0.270 and t-value=4.336).

Table 2: the effect of the intermediary variable "service quality" on dependent variable (loyalty and satisfaction)

Variables			Loyalty	Satisfaction
Independent (intermediary)	Service quality	B	0.224	0.458
		t-value	4.007	8.009

Significance level is set at ±1.96.

Based on the data given in table (2), the effect of service quality on loyalty is positive and significant (ß=0.224 and t-value=4.007) and the effect of service quality on satisfaction is also positive and significant (ß=0.458 and t-value=8.009).

Model's Fit Estimation:

Table 3: variance extracted from the constructs and their reliability rates

Indices / Variables	Average variance extracted	Combined reliability	Criterion	Result	Cronbach's alpha coefficient	Criterion	Result
IT	0.58	0.73			0.73		
Service quality	0.40	0.81	0.70	Acceptable	0.79	0.70	Acceptable
Loyalty	0.42	0.71			0.78		
Satisfaction	0.52	0.76			0.75		

Fornel and Larker (1981) considered average variance extracted (AVE) equal to 0.50 and Magner et al (1996) considered the criterion above 0.40. Therefore, average variance extracted is acceptable. Also, the combined reliability (Dillon-Goldstein coefficient) and Cronbach Alpha coefficients of the constructs are acceptable. Thus, the model's convergence and reliability are confirmed.

Table 4: average variance extracted from the constructs and their inter-correlations

Variables / Variables	IT	Service quality	Loyalty	Satisfaction
IT	0.762			
Service quality	0.533	0.632		
Loyalty	0.542	0.438	0.648	
Satisfaction	0.484	0.618	0.351	0.721

The values given in the diagonal of table (4) are the square root of each construct (mentioned in table 3). Divergent validity of the model is confirmed if the square root of average variance extracted of each construct is found larger than the value obtained for the relationship between each construct and the other. As it can be seen, the divergent validity of the model is confirmed.

Table 5: model's determination coefficient values (R^2)

Variable	R^2	Criterion	Status	Result
Service quality	0.286	0.19 (weak)	Weak	The structural model (determination
Loyalty	0.327	0.33 (intermediate)	Intermediate	coefficient) is estimated
Satisfaction	0.414	0.67 (strong)	Intermediate	intermediate.

Based on the results given in table (5), the model's determination coefficients are generally in an intermediate level.

Communality index is used to investigate the quality of the measurement instruments. The index is obtained through dividing the sum of squared errors of hidden variables' prediction by the observed squares sum of the hidden variables minus one. The amounts obtained for this index for the studied hidden variable should be positive. According to table (6) and the positive values being obtained for the communality index, it can be stated that the measurement model enjoys an appropriate quality (table 6).

Table 6: the study constructs' results of communality index

Statistic / Construct	SSO	SSE	SSO/SSE-1
Service quality	1536	1387.94	0.096
Loyalty	768	688.99	0.1202
Satisfaction	1920	1847.53	0.038

*squares sum observed for the hidden variable (SSO)
*Squares sum of the prediction errors for the hidden variable (SSE)
* Communality index (SSO/SSE-1)

Structural Model Fit Estimation (GOF):

To estimate the model's fit, the mean value of the dependent variables' communality indices should be firstly calculated (which was obtained equal to 0.906 herein) following which the mean value of the determination coefficients of loyalty should be calculated (obtained equal to 0.327 herein) and, in a last stage, the values are inserted into the formula:

$$GOF = \sqrt{Communality\ index\ mean \times Rsquare}$$
$$GOF = \sqrt{0.906 \times 0.327}$$
$$GOF = \sqrt{0.314}$$
$$GOF = 0.560$$

Table 7: Structural model fit estimation (GOF)

GOF	Criterion	Status	Result
0.560	0.01	Weak	Structural model fit is estimated strong (appropriate)
	0.25	Intermediate	
	0.36	strong	

General result: based on table (7), the structural model fit is estimated strong (appropriate). Therefore, it can be stated in sum that the model's exogenous variable (IT) is effective on the model's endogenous variable. The structural model fit estimation index for satisfaction is equal to 0.612 that is indicative of the structural model's strong fit.

Discussion and Conclusion:

The present study dealt with the intermediary role of service quality in the causal relationship between IT and loyalty and satisfaction of the female customers of sport gyms in Tehran. The results obtained from the first hypothesis test indicated that IT positively and significantly influences the service quality (β=0.535 and t-value=12.042); information technology positively and significantly influences the loyalty (β=0.0.420 and t-value=8.366); and, IT positively and significantly influences satisfaction (β=0.270 and t-value=4.336). Therefore, according to this high correlation coefficient, modernity of the equipment, apparent aesthetical considerations of the gym and the staff members, accountability to the members' problems, privacy policy, extensiveness of the programs, speed in offering services and giving priority to the customers, satisfying customers' special needs, professional employees and trainers and exercising politeness and courtesy the way it can be perceived by the customers all can provide for the satisfaction of body building gyms' customers; in this regard, the results of the present study are in consistency with the results obtained in the studies by Shamsipour Maryam (2005), Mohammadi, Esma'eil (2003), Behalkeh (2005), Shoja'ei, Sohaila (2012), Hosseini (2009), Cutler (1973), Pease and Zhang (2001), Lim (2000), Wakefield et al (1995) and Lin (2004) and no opposite results were found in this regard in sport research. It can be seen in an investigation of the study background that the researchers in prior research on the today's communities and in regard of various sport fields have dealt with the relationship of the satisfaction of service quality and they have adjusted their provision of the services so as to increase the service clients' presence meaning that the increase in the quality of services provided in gyms has resulted in the customers' satisfaction. These results are in compliance with what has been found by Afchangi, Somayyeh (2013), Mo'meni, Mansour (2007), Kouzehchiyan, Hashem (2009), Wu (2004), Yi Chin Liu (2008) and Rasouli and Bagherinejad (2010). There are other studies performed in this regard in which the service quality has been introduced as the essential factor contributing to the prediction and securing of the customers' satisfaction. Amongst these studies, research conducted by Mac Cogal and Lusco (2000), Afchangi (2003), Lin (2004), Wu (2005), Chen (2005) and Lee Chun Lim (2006) can be pointed out. Therefore, it can be stated that besides the importance of a certain indicator of quality to the customers in every society, the service quality per se is of a great importance. In other words, the offering of services in an optimum and confident and proportionate level guarantees the survival and continuation of the organizations and institutions' activities by way of which they can cause satisfaction and loyalty in their customers through meeting their expectations and wants. Such an important goal cannot be accomplished unless the organizations and institutions, meanwhile paying the largest deal of their attentions to the quality of service as a concept incorporating the customers' expectations, do their best to maintain and enhance it (Mahmoudi, Ahmad et al, 2010). The study findings showed in regard of the relationship between satisfaction and each of the service quality indicators that the highest effect is exerted by sympathy and the lowest effect was scored by reliability. For instance, the results obtained by Behalkeh (2004) and Ramezani Nasrin (2004) indicated that the way of employees' treatment of the customers, i.e. the extent of the human relations governing the gyms, is significantly associated with satisfaction. These results are in accordance with what was found by Yi Chin Liu (2008) and Mantle (2006) and not in consistency with the results obtained in the studies by Ramezani Kohan, Samira (1999) and Li et al (2010). The inconsistency in the results might be due to gender differences. According to the present study, the findings indicated despite what was expected that age has no effect on satisfaction for such a reason as the non-identicalness of the objectives in various ages of referring to gyms. These results are in compliance with what was found by Hamzehpour Kheradmardi (2013) who showed that citizens' age increase

brings about an increase on their satisfaction. The results were found opposite to the results obtained in the studies by Lock (2008) and Lee et al (2010). Based on the present study's findings, education level exerts a positive effect on satisfaction and the individuals with MA degrees exhibited higher perception of the facilities and the method of using the services. These results are contradictory to what was obtained by Sa'atchiyan, Vahid et al (2010) and Theodorakis et al (2004). The latter researcher measured customer satisfaction in fitness gyms in Portugal and it was concluded that the women had lesser satisfaction in their use of equipment as compared to men. Customer's perception of service quality is generally effective on customers' satisfaction. Customers' perception of the service quality performance can be posited in relation to the satisfaction of their needs and demands in which case it is somehow closely interrelated with the satisfaction needs and attendance tendencies of the customers. According to the findings of the present study, it has to be stated that the service quality is correlated with the customers' satisfaction and it is the same service quality that the customers experience in these centers. These findings are in consistency with what has been found by Lin (2004), Wu (2004) and Yi Chin Liu (2008). The collection of the abovementioned studies has all been carried out in the sport area and it is mostly considerably correlated with all four variables, namely IT, service quality, satisfaction and loyalty. In sum, it may be possible to say that service quality is the basis as well as one of the most important factors giving rise to the increase in customers' satisfaction. Thus, it can be suggested considering the permanent changes that have come about with the addition of the competitors from the other centers and gyms that these sport clubs and gyms have to make efforts to improve their products and quality of their services in various sectors to provide for satisfying their customers. When an organization succeeds in attracting a new customer, customer satisfaction becomes the turning point of establishing a long-term relationship between the customer and the organization following which loyalty can be instigated in the customers. It is worth mentioning that it is necessary to firstly assess the needs to be able to attract the customers and it is based on the customers' needs that high quality services and products can be offered. Therefore, it seems that the emphasis on the quality and, in other words, on the needs and wants of the customers can bring about improvement in their satisfaction levels. Based thereon, the sport club and gym managers should take steps in line with the use of IT so as to be able to increase their customers' satisfaction. Lim (2006) expressed that the service quality directly influences customer satisfaction which is per se directly effective on customer loyalty and, finally, high levels of customer loyalty directly influences the customers' tendencies of future presence. Based thereupon, it can be possible to say that the increase in service quality causes the gym customers to have greater deal of tendency to return to the gym and make use of the services offered therein. The gym managers and owners should perceive the customers' needs and satisfy their expectations in case they are seeking to have more successful performance. The issue is of a greater importance because satisfaction can be considered as a useful competitive instrument when it leads to customer return. As it is known, there are not numerous studies, especially in sport area, that have dealt with the relationship between IT and the other three variables, named quality, satisfaction and loyalty. Due to the same reason, performing constant studies in this area can be of a considerable help to the gym managers so that they can become aware of the factors related to the decisions on customers' future behaviors. The issue can be very important in terms of securing the income resources of the clubs and gyms. Also, it is through subtle recognition of the customers that the ground can be set for continuous loyalty in regard of offering better services to keep them constantly satisfied following which the clubs can enjoy the countless advantages of the customers' reappearance. Corresponding to the study findings, all the service quality indicators significantly predict the customers' satisfaction. According to the obtained results, it can be figured out due to the importance of the customers' satisfaction that the gyms and clubs offering services should have sufficient knowledge and skill concerning customer satisfaction so as to be able to use their knowledge and awareness as well as their fundamental responsibilities to attract customers and, eventually, perceive and supply them with their needs. The entire indicators of service quality are highly correlated with customer satisfaction. In the meanwhile, it has to be noted that the customers from various communities might have different perceptions of service quality and/or individuals may have different perceptions and judgment in

regard of service quality even in the same community. Based on these findings, satisfaction in respect to service quality is a stronger predictor of customer's presence tendency. It is worth mentioning that the service quality should not be disvalued and disregarded for the reason that it is a weaker predictor in contrast to satisfaction. The truth is that the customers' expectations have undergone an increase in contrast to the past. The increase in the customers' expectations can be attributed to several factors, including increase in the awareness and knowledge levels of the customers, organizational advertisements and the competitors' performance (Sayyed Javadin, Kimiasi, 2010). The issue of a far greater importance here is that the gym managers and officials can play a more distinct role for satisfying their customers through offering optimum services that are compatible to the customers' expectations. Such a satisfaction can finally lead to the customers' return and survival and sustainability of the service organization can be warranted. The results indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between service quality and general satisfaction as well as between general satisfaction and presence tendency of the customers in the gyms around Tehran. To put it differently, quality of gyms' services influences the general satisfaction of customers which is per se effective on their tendencies for re-attending them. Also, a positive correlation was evidenced between the aforementioned variables. Moreover, the cause and effect relationships between the variables were also investigated within the format of regression equations and it was observed that there are cause and effect relations holding, as well. This way, it can be stated that the increase in service quality has been accomplished as a goal. In fact, the increase in services in various aspects can lead to the increase in customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers are more willing to prove presence in the gyms and this can guarantee the gym's profitability in the long run.

Acknowledgement:

References

1. Afchangi, Somayyeh; Hadavi, Sayyedeh Farideh and Elahi, Alireza, (2013), "predicting satisfaction and re-presence tendency using relationship-based marketing in sport gyms", study of female aerobic gyms in Mashhad, journal of applied research in sport management, (4): 63-70.
2. Alexandris, konstantio & Euaggetial, palialin (1999). Measuring customer satisfaction in fitness centers in Greece: an exploratory study. Manging Leisure. 216- 226.
3. Alvani S. M. (2010), public management, Tehran; Ney publication.
4. Behalkeh, Taher; Hamidi, Mehrzad and Goudarzy, Mahmoud, (2008), "investigating the factors related to customer satisfaction in 58 private covered pools", journal of Harekat, (37): 49-58.
5. Bitner, M.j. (1992). The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees, Journal of Marketing, 57-71.
6. Brink ،A. ،& Berndt ،A. (2008). Relationhip Marketing & Customer Relationship Management. Lansdowne ،South Africa: Juta and Co Ltd.
7. Chakrarthi narasimhan, machendra gupta, Georg foster. rakesh niraj. (2003) Choi.Jong. Pill (2001)."The influence of service quality on customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions at fitness clubs in south korea". Dissartation.The University of New Mexico.
8. CHun, A.V. (2008) Total quality control, 3rd Edition, New York, MC Grave-Hill.
9. Chunk, A., Spark, L., Tzokas, N. (2004). Are loyalty schemes a manifestation of relationship marketing? Journal of marketing management, vol.15:541-562.
10. Cutler, Phillip; Gary, Armstrong, (2000), "principles of marketing", tr. Bahman Foruzandeh, 5th ed., Tehran, Atropat.

11. Hak Lee, J. et al. (2010)," The influence of service quality on satisfaction and intention: A gender segmentation strategy". Sport Management Review xxx.
12. Hamzehpour kheradmardi, M. (2013). The relation of service quality, consent and loyalty to the customers' future intention in Mazandaran body building clubs, M. A Thesis shomal university.
13. Honary, Habib, (2010), "investigating satisfaction, needs and problems of the physical fitness and aerobic gyms' users", abstract from the articles offered in the first international scientific conference on physical fitness and aerobic, Tehran, p.120.
14. Hosseini, (2009), "sport management guide", journal of Bamdad.
15. Kouzehchiyan, Hashem; Gowhar Rostami, Hamidreza and Ehsani, Muhamamd, (2009), "comparing satisfaction of private and state male bodybuilding gyms' customers in Tehran", journal of Harekat, no.1, sport management exclusive, pp.37-49.
16. Krona, P. R. (2000), Service Quality and Satisfaction- the Moderating Role of Value, European Journal of marketing, Vol. 34, No. 11/12, pp. 1338-1352.
17. Lee, J-H., Kim, H-D., Ko, Y. J., Sagas, M. (2011). The influence of service quality on satisfaction and intention: Agender segmentation strategy, Sport Management Review 14, 54-63.
18. Lim (2006), " Quality without Tears: The Art of Hasher Free Management" Mc Grow Hill, New York.
19. Liu, Y-Ch. (2008). an Analysis Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty of Commercial Swim Clubs in Taiwan. A Dissertation Project Submitted to the Faculty of the United States Sports Academy in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of Doctor of Sports Management.
20. Mahmoudy, Ahmad; Moradi, Aram; Sajjadi, Sayyed Nasrullah and Hamidi, Mehrzad, (2010), "investigating the factors related to customer loyalty in bodybuilding centers in Tehran", abstract from the articles offered in the first international scientific conference on physical fitness and aerobic, Tehran, p.148.
21. Mantle ‹P. (2006). "The massive impact of IT on accounting firms". The accounting bullitn. Aprill. PP: 4-5.
22. Mcdougall, G.H., & Berry, L.L., & Yadav, M.S. (2000). Customer satisfaction with servicePutting perveived value into the equation. Journal of service Marketing, 392-410.
23. Mo'meni, Mansour, (2007), "statistical analysis using SPSS", Tehran, Ketab-e-Now press, 1st ed., p.193
24. Mohammadi, Esma'eil, (2003), "customer-orientation: client veneration", 1st ed., Tehran, Rasa cultural services institution, pp.43-87.
25. Nicholas D. Theodorakis, K. A., Nikolaos Tsigilis, S. K. (2013); Predicting spectators' behavioural intentions in professional football: The role of satisfaction and service quality, Sport Management Review, Volume 16, Issue 1, February 2013, Pages 85-96.
26. Olorunniwo, F.; Maxwell, K. H.; Godwin, U. (2006), Service Quality, Journal of Services Marketing, Vol. 20, No.1, pp. 59-72.
27. Pease & Zhang, B. f. (2001) ((Systera-SQ: a new measure of bank service quality))/International journal of Service Industry management, Vol.13, No.4.
28. Pedragosaurora-S. T., Smadi, S. M (2005). "A comparison of service quality in the banking industry, some evidencefrom Turkish-and Greek- speaking areas in Cyprus". International Journal of Bank Marketing, 23(7).
29. Pollack, B. L. (2008), the Nature of the Service Quality and Satisfaction Relationship, Managing Service Quality, Vol. 18, No. 6, pp. 537-558.
30. Ramezani, Nasrin, (2004), "investigating the factors influencing customer satisfaction in women-specific body building gyms in Tehran", MA dissertation, Tehran University, pp.14-45.
31. Rasouli Poshteh, Behtaj; Bagherinejad, Jeffry, (2010), "investigating the effect of IT investment on the customer satisfaction", seasonal specialized journal of parks and growth centers, (22): 55-64.

32. Reza'ei Kohan, Samira, (1999), "customers' expectations of service quality in physical fitness centers in Mashhad", MA dissertation, physical education department, Ferdawsi University, Mashhad, pp.6-35.
33. Sa'atchiyan, Vahid; Rasouli, Mahdi; Eskandary, Issa and Elahi, Alireza, (2010), "the effect of service quality, satisfaction and loyalty on customers' future behaviors and future decisions of presence in physical fitness and aerobic centers", articles from the first international scientific conference on physical fitness, Tehran, p.126.
34. Sayyed Javadin, Sayyed Reza; Khanlary, Amir and Astiry, Mehrdad, (2010), "a model of evaluating the effect of service quality on the loyalty of sport services customers", journal of Olympics, 18(52): 41-54.
35. Schneider B, W.S. (2005) Service quality: research perspectives. London: Foundations for Organizationalsciences.Sivadas, E.; Baker-Prewitt, J. L. (2000), An Examination of the Relationship between Service Quality.
36. Shamsipour, Maryam, (2005), "investigating the theories on the customers of female bodybuilding gyms in Isfahan", MA dissertation, Isfahan University, p.4.
37. Shoja'ei Barjou'ei, Sohaila (MA graduate), (2012), "determining the relationship between service quality and perceived value with customers' satisfaction and loyalty in Tehran's pools", MA dissertation, Payam-e-Nour University, Tehran Branch.
38. Wakefield, K.L., & Sloan, H.J. (1995). The effects of team loyalty & selectd stadium factors on sportscape, Journal of Sport Management, 15- 31.
39. Wu, T.Y. (2004). A study of service quality and total satisfaction for members in Kaohsiungsitness Clubs.Master dissertation, Dayeh University, Changhua, Taiwan.
40. Yi Chin Liu. (2008). An analysis service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyaltyof commercial swim clubs in taiwan, unpuplished dissertation, daphne Alabama university.