



The relationship between the qualities of services (SERVQUAL method) with pool customers' satisfaction of Ardebil

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ABSTRACT

The main goal of this study is to investigate the relationship between qualities of services (SERVQUAL method) with pool customers' satisfaction of Ardebil. Methodology was descriptive-solidarity from the application and approach points of view. The population was formed from total pool customers of Ardebil in 2013. From 10000 populations, 420 people which 220 people were men and 200 people were women were selected as random-cluster. The research tool was included SERVQUAL services quality questionnaire (Parasoraman and Zitamel, 1988) and the researcher's questionnaire which was distributed and gathered after verifying the reliability and validity through the research sample was made from customers' satisfaction. The results showed that there was significant and meaningful relationship among quality of services' five-dimension (sensible factors, assurance, reliability, responsiveness, empathy) with pool customers' satisfaction of Ardebil ($P < 0.05$). In base of prioritizing the quality of services' factors from customers' points of view, the most mean was determined for assurance (4.20) and the less mean was determined for empathy (2.30).

Key words: quality of services, SERVEQUAL method, customers' satisfaction, pool

INTRODUCTION

The service managers use the quality of services and customers' satisfaction to know to what extent they solve and answer the customers' needs, so the quality of services and customers' satisfaction have attended the attention of scholars and service markets to themselves. One of the effective factors in service organizations' success is to achieve the goal of satisfying the customers by improving the presenting services' quality (Parasoraman et al., 1988). So that by improving the services' quality, the customers' satisfaction is increased, too. Customers' satisfaction's increase leads to behavior results like commitment, desire to stay (keeping the customer) creating the double-bond connection between service presenter and customer, increasing the customer's bear to problems in presenting services and word of mouth advertising (Jamal and Naser, 2002).

Through the sport places, pools and Recreational water centers are so attended by people. So, the pools' managers try to save more by improving the quality of services and finally increasing the customers' satisfaction. Swimming is one of the sports and one of the suitable entertainments for people in different ages, especially in hot season. This entertainment has so many fans not only in hot season but also in winter. The lack of attention to the quality of services in pools leads to customers' discontent and finally the reduction of their returning to the pools; which in one hand causes to reduce the society's health and on the other hand causes to reduce the pool's income. A pool can attend the customers when a pool attends to different dimensions like physical conditions and facilities, attention to customers' problems, answering their needs and utilizing the engaged staffs. Therefore, the common model for evaluating the quality of services is SERVEQUAL scale which was established by Parasorman, Zitamel and Bery in 1988. They presented ten dimensions of the quality of services which they summarized them in five dimensions (sensible factors, assurance, reliability, responsiveness, empathy) after sifting them. So, they used these dimensions as a basement for making a scale for evaluating the quality of services (Parasoraman et al., 1985). Therefore, exploring the quality of services and customers' satisfaction and discovering the suitable relationships of these variables can be suitable in understanding the customers' needs, improving the pool services and regulating and using the suitable marketing strategies. Therefore, the main goal of this study

is to investigate the relationship between quality of services (SERVEQUAL method) with effective factors on attracting the customers and creating a customers' satisfaction from pools.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology of the research which was executed as fieldwork was descriptive-solidarity from the application and approach points of view. The population of the research was the customers of the pools of Ardebil province in 2013. From 10000 participants of the populations, according to Morgan Table, 370 participants were needed, and more samples (440 people) were used because of varying samples for reducing the dispersion, while 20 questionnaires were not usable for researcher. 420 participants; 220 men and 200 women were selected as random-clustering. From 16 pools, by attending to the limited pools of the province, all pools were selected and different times were selected as random-clustering method from different times of these 16 pools. 3 pools were being repaired from 16 pools and 2 pools were not usable because of lack of cooperation. 1 pool was specialized for men from 11 pools and the others were for both men and women. And since different customers were attended in this research and since the samples were varied and it was tried to select the samples through the week in different times randomly. Data was gathered as fieldwork and by using two questionnaires which included SERVEQUAL service's quality (Parasorman et al., 1988) and the questionnaire made by researcher for customers' satisfaction. The questions of these questionnaires were done by attending to the research's goal in sport environments and its face and content validity was verified by sports management professionals. The internal validity of the research tools was accessed by Cronbach α as 0.94 and 0.94 respectively. The descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency) was used for analyzing the data and the Kolmogorov - Smirnov test was used in inferential statistics for exploring the normalization of the scores' distribution, the parametric statistic (T-test and Pearson correlation) was used for variables which have normal distribution, and the nonparametric statistic (Spearman correlation) was used for exploring the relationship between variables which have abnormal distribution and the Friedman test was used for prioritizing the quality of services factors and the SPSS software version 18 was used for analyzing the data.

RESULTS

Table1. Quality of services descriptive table

	N	Median	mean	Standard dev.	Variance	Min	Max
quality of services	420	3.75	3.79	0.67	.443	2.06	5.00
Sensible factors	420	3.71	3.64	0.70	.488	1.50	5.00
reliability	420	3.62	3.75	0.83	.693	1.00	5.00
responsiveness	420	3.72	3.67	0.82	.677	1.00	5.00
confidence	420	4.10	4.14	0.75	.563	1.00	5.00
empathy	420	3.53	3.50	0.86	.747	1.00	5.00
satisfaction value	420	3.85	4.00	0.73	.526	1.95	5.00

According to table 1, the mean of quality of services was 3.75, the less volume was 3.06 and the highest volume was 5. The mean of sensible factors was 3.71, the mean of reliability was 3.62, the mean of responsiveness was 3.72, the mean of confidence was 4.10 and the mean of empathy was 3.53. The most mean was related to reliability dimension which was 4.10 and the least mean was related to empathy dimension which was 3.53, and the mean of satisfaction value was about 3.85, the least value was 1.95 and the highest value was 5.

Table 2. The results of Friedman test for prioritizing the quality of services factors

variable	N	Rank mean	Chi-square	df	Sig.
Reliability	420	4.2			
responsiveness	420	2.97			
sensible factors	420	2.91	386.018	4	.000
Confidence	420	2.62			
empathy	420	2.3			

According to table2, the Friedman test was used for prioritizing the quality of services factors. The chi-square was 386.02, the degree of freedom was 4 and the significance level was 0.000. Since the significant level is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$), it can be resulted that there is significant difference between quality of services factors' mean, and the prioritizing from much to less included assurance, responsiveness, tangible factors, reliability and empathy.

Table3. The results of Kolmogorov – Smirnov test for exploring the scores' normal distribution

	N	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Sig.
Quality of services	420	.912	.376
Sensible factors	420	1.164	.133
Reliability	420	2.465	.000
Responsiveness	420	2.416	.000
Confidence	420	2.342	.000
Empathy	420	1.589	.013
Satisfaction value	420	1.373	.102

According to table3, by attending to significant level, it can be resulted that the total score of the quality of services and the total score of satisfaction scale have the normal distribution. Also, the sensible factors have normal distribution (significance level is higher than 0.05) but the reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy have the abnormal distribution (the significance level is less than 0.05). The Pearson correlation was used for exploring the relationship between quality of services with satisfaction in normal distribution, and the spearman correlation was used for abnormal distributions.

Table4. One-Sample T-test results for exploring the quality of services values and the satisfaction value

	Test Value = 3						
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference
Quality of service	420	3.75	.665	23.18	419	.000	.752
Satisfaction	420	3.85	.725	24.04	419	.000	.851

The mean of quality of services value is 3.75 and the significance level of the test was 0.000. by attending to this fact that the significance level is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$) the null hypothesis was rejected. On the other hand, since the mean is higher than 3, it can be resulted that the quality of services is higher than moderate. The variable mean of the satisfaction value is 3.85 and significance level of the test is 0.000. By attending to this fact that significance level is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$), the null hypothesis was rejected. On the other hand since the mean is higher than 3, it can be resulted that the satisfaction value is higher than moderate.

Table 5. Correlation test for quality of services and the satisfaction value

	Satisfaction
Quality of service	0.90 **
Sensible factors	0.767 **
Reliability	0.804 **
Responsiveness	0.743 **
Confidence	0.808 **
Empathy	0.859 **

** $p < 0.01$

According to table 5, the Pearson correlation coefficient for quality of services was (0.900), sensible factors (0.767), reliability (0.804), responsiveness (0.743), assurance (0.808), and empathy (0.859) and satisfaction and significance level of the test was 0.000. By attending to this fact that the significance level is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$), the null hypothesis was rejected, therefore, a significant and direct relationship can be seen.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

By attention to this fact that the SERVEQUAL model was designed and codified , in using it in inner researches , the cultural, economy and social problems should be considered and by attention to the situations, the results of the analyses should be explored. According to the results of the present study, the dimensions of the SERVEQUAL has the direct relationship with customers' satisfaction, but this relationship is not similar among all dimensions of the model with satisfaction, by prioritizing the effective dimensions on customers' satisfaction, pool can codify and execute the marketing strategies.

The results of the present study about the relationship with quality of services with customers' satisfaction of Ardebil's pools showed that there was significant relationship between SERVEQUAL models' dimensions (quality of services) with customers' satisfaction of Ardebil's pools. These results are consistent with results of (Mohammadi et al., 2011) and Al Alak (2012). On the other hand, when the quality of services is increasing, customers will be more satisfied. It is considered that for presenting the

better function by pools and attracting the customers for using the pools, the presented quality of services should be suitable and should attract the customers' ideas in all five-dimension fields.

There is positive and significant relationship between sensible factors dimension and customers' satisfaction in Ardebil's pools. These results are consistent with researches of Mehdipour (2012) and Calabuig (2010). On the other hand, the facility and physical facilities, pool healthy, staff, coaches, savors and other agents related to physical factors in pool impact on customers' satisfaction from services. According to customers' points of view, the quality and quantity of facilities are so effective in attracting customers and their satisfaction. The sport environments are the environment in which the update facilities, environment health, designing and creating the suitable physical environment, the recreational facilities equipped for all ages are the important factors in customers' satisfactions.

There is significant and positive relationship between reliability and customers' satisfaction of the pools of Ardebil. These results are consistent with results of Sharifimam (2010), Alidoust and Ahmadi (2010). On the other hand, pools' staff's ability in correct servicing and doing the commitments on time and promised services supply the customers' satisfaction effectively. There is positive and significant relationship between accountability and customers' satisfaction of the pools of Ardebil. The results of the study of Al Alak (2010) verified these results. On the other hand, in this research, desire to help the customers and presenting the fast services by pools' staff impact on customers' satisfaction from quality of services. The results of the research show that there is significant and positive relationship between confidence and customers' satisfaction from the pools of Ardebil; that is, confidence dimension has the most relationship with customers' satisfaction. These results were consistent with results of Mehdipour (2011), Mohammadi et al., (2011) and Kim (2006). It means that by attention to the work's sensitivity in pools, the savors had a great and hard responsibility in saving customers' lives in pools, and they should have had enough familiarity and experience in this field. Pools' staff could increase the reliability sense in customers by creating the polite and respectful relationship with customers and impacted on customers' satisfaction from quality of services and attracting their satisfaction.

There is positive relationship with customers' satisfaction and empathy in pools of Ardebil. These results were consistent with results of researches of Ehsani and Shamsipour (2005). Soita (2012) and Al Alak (2012), the staff's special attention to customers, ease of access and calling with organization for solving the customers' problems and informing the customers about services in a special way which is comprehensible for customers are the factors on customers' satisfaction. Because of close and long relationship of the customers and pools' staff, through the time when customer is in pool, the staff's behavior with customer is so important; so, when the customer feels that staffs attend to him and demand to reply and help him, he will be satisfied.

The descriptive statistics' indexes by attention to Friedman test's dimensions show that highest average rating is specified to confidence (4.20) and accountability dimension (2.97), sensible factors (2.91), reliability (2.62) and empathy (2.30) are in second to fifth priorities. The results show that confidence dimension and empathy dimension have been determined as the affective and non-significant factors on customers' satisfaction respectively. On the other hand, the most weak of pools are understood as the lack of executing the correct and real servicing and the lack staffs' special attention to customers, and the customers believe that pools' staffs were successful in presenting the services at the earliest possible time correctly, staffs' politeness and their ability in inspiring the reliability and confidence and their familiarity with work responsibility and their ability to answer the complaints and increasing the services effectively. These results were consistent with results of the study of Paramason et al., (1985) in prioritizing. In both researches, confidence dimension accessed the highest rate.

The results of the study showed that there is not significant relationship between men and women customers' satisfaction of the pools of Ardebil. This issue didn't were consistent with the results of the researches of Rajabi et al., (2012), Salamat (2011) and Mehdipour (2012). Therefore, according to women and men of Ardebil's pools' customers' points of view, there was no significant difference in presented services' quality and customers' satisfaction and both women and men were satisfied from presented services. Rajabi pointed through his research that there had not been difference among satisfaction of men and women.

There was no significant relationship between age and customers' satisfaction in Ardebil's pool. On the other hand, people's age did not impact on their satisfaction from quality of services and the customers with different ages were satisfied similarly from quality of services.

There is significant relationship between levels of education in Ardebil's pools' customers' satisfaction. This issue was consistent with results of research of Divandary and Delkhah (2005). The level of satisfaction in under-diploma customers was more than other customers significantly. Through the present research, the people with low educational level were more satisfied. This issue can be happened because people should be in high level in scientific dimension to increase their expectation about services.

So, these people did not have much information about equipment standards, pools' environments' healthy and so on. There was not significant relationship between income value and customers' satisfaction of Ardebil pools. This issue shows that people's income level isn't related to their satisfaction value. This issue is not consistent with results of the studies of Alidoust and Ahmadi (2012). These days, there are different pools which are responder for customers' needs with different facilities for all segments of society like low-income and high-income segments throughout the cities. People with different incomes can use suitable pools.

It is suggested to establish and create the educational classes or course for staffs and clerks of Ardebil's pool to increase the staff's ability level in job knowledge of pools (savers, coaches and staffs), and also for increasing the sensible factors (quality of services) which include (physical conditions, decorative, elegance appearance and location of service delivery, staff appearance and elegance, health of Pool), and also it is suggested to equip the pools of Ardebil to novice service tools and equipment. And the present study suggests creating and establishing the counseling classes and periods for staffs for understanding and checking and helping customers. The other suggestion of this study is to establish educational classes for staffs of the pools for learning how to behavior with pools' customers of Ardebil. Of course, the mentioned classes should help pools' staffs to be at service of customers, and these functions can be increased and developed by interviewing the pools' customers about pools' quality of services.

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