

Effects of entrepreneurship communication skills of sport business managers on customer satisfaction

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Abstract— Sport as a great economic, social and cultural sector has a dynamic and constructive interaction with entrepreneurship. Since the young are the audience of this (sport) business, for considering and meeting needs of this class of society, communication is addressed, because it is a competitive advantage and a main element of success. This research is a descriptive and correlational field study and an applied one in term of results. To collect data, questionnaire of Azmoodeh et al (2011) was used. After the existing information was evaluated and summarized by SPSS (Version 13), they were tested under Microsoft Windows. Statistical studies showed that there is a positive significant relation between communication skills and customer satisfaction ($p \leq 0.01$). Based on the results obtained from hypotheses and data analyses it can be concluded that there is a significant relation between communication skills of managers of private sport clubs in Shiraz including interpersonal skills (verbal skills, empathy, active listening, respect, feedback) and nonverbal skills (cheerfulness and appearance), and customer satisfaction.

Index Terms— customer, communication skills, satisfaction, loyalty, sport business

I. INTRODUCTION

Sport and physical activities as a way of spending leisure time and a means of health, have gained importance, which many people place great values on it.

Other factors also affect popularity of sport throughout the world including media and satellite channel covering sport events, increased televised sport matches, various games, political role of sport, increasing interest in hosting international games in order to obtain global revenues, and professional role of in global development. Undoubtedly, allocation of governmental material and human resources to sport sector has many reasons. Olympics and huge sport events have provided a golden opportunity for host countries [2].

In his paper, Taghizadeh (2008) concluded that application of communication skills (verbal and nonverbal) by midwives is undesirable. Client satisfaction from verbal and nonverbal skills was, %48 and %50, respectively, which was significantly related to midwife's communication skills [1]. Yousefzadeh (2005) found out that there is a positive

significant between managers' communication skills and employee's job satisfaction. Among these skills, empathy and social skills were strongly related to job satisfaction [7]. Sun Jung (2010) in a research activity "effects of nonverbal communication skills of family restaurants on positive emotions and customer satisfaction" concluded that there is a positive relation between nonverbal communication skills and customer satisfaction. [9].

Today sport trade has become a multibillionhuge industry as it has earned 252 billion dollars in 2005. Usage of sport products is so high that it has attracted sport-related marketing researchers. A great deal of literature [4] confirms that efficient communication has close relationship with performance. Since the most profitable and desirable strategy for businesses particularly sport clubs is customer care, sport business managers should understand the changes and obtain customer satisfaction and success by using efficient communication and meeting audience's needs.

In today world, power is defined as the ability to create and impress others. Any human has some goals, which are achieved in case different individuals and sector can cooperate and this cooperation is only possible through frequent communication and contacts. Hence, the ability to impress the young and teenagers and persuade them to sport, health and their use of sport facilities entails effective communications of managers and experts in such businesses.

II. METHODOLOGY

In terms of typology, this research is a descriptive and correlational field study and in terms of results, it is an applied one. To collect data, questionnaire of Azmoodeh et al (2011) was used. Here, in addition to α value reported in previous studies, Cronbach's α for the questionnaires were calculated by using SPSS software ($\alpha=0.88$), and necessary modifications to ensure validity were made by interviews and surveys from the experts. The statistical population included all full members of private sport clubs in Shiraz (estimated to be 913, in 2013), sample volume was determined to be 373 persons based on Morgan table, and finally 352 questionnaires were collected and returned. After the existing information was evaluated and summarized by SPSS (Version 13), they were tested under Microsoft Windows.

III. RESULTS

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Table 1. Regression coefficients

Significance level	Correlation coefficient	Standard error	Abundance	mean	Parameter	Title
0.000	0.689	2,40683	352	15.7165	Verbal skill	Communication skill
0.000	0.674	2,34964	352	11.2008	Active listening	
0.000	0.678	2,72816	352	15.4016	feedback	
0.000	0.712	2,68740	352	15.3425	Respect	
0.000	0.563	2,74362	352	14.7087	empathy	
0.000	0.655	2,69022	352	15.5984	Cheerfulness	
0.000	0.612	2,79758	352	15.9134	Appearance	

In deductions, statistical studies showed that there is a positive significant relation between communication skills and customer satisfaction ($p \leq 0.01$).

Table 2. Regression coefficients

Significance level	T	standardized coefficients	Non-standardized coefficients		Parameters	
		Beta	B	Standard error		
.235	1190-		6460-	50431	Constant	گام 6
.010	2584	.153	1026	397.	feedback	
.004	2877	.153	1045	3630	Respect	
.003	2996	.169	1284	.429	Verbal skill	
.002	3198	.174	1183	.370	cheerfulness	
.001	3518	.175	1145	.326	appearance	
.001	3511	.198	1543	.439	Active listening	

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Table of Regression coefficients shows that coefficients related to verbal skills: active listening, feedback, cheerfulness, appearance and respect at the level 0.01, which are determinants of customer satisfaction in the society under study. Thus, these parameters explain 0.621 of customer satisfaction variations and they can be applied as predictors of customer satisfaction. By calculating non-determination coefficients, we figure out that %379 of variations remain unexplained, which its scientific reason according to the conducted research is that communication skills are only factor of customer satisfaction. Totally, based on various models, customer satisfaction factors are supply of goods and services, modern equipment, good relation with customers, reasonable prices, promotion, etc.

In Section 1, the research results revealed positive significant effects of verbal skills of managers on customer satisfaction, which is in accordance with Hanzizadeh (2007) and Blanchard (1996) in whose opinion communication and verbal skills are major factors in an effective relation and employment. They are also in harmony with Taghizadeh (2006) who discovered a positive significant relation between use of verbal and nonverbal skills of midwives and client satisfaction. As a results, the ability to express feelings and transparency of speech can be an important communication skills to increase customer satisfaction.

Effects of managers' empathy on customer satisfaction were analyzed in Section 2. The results showed that managers' empathy increase customer satisfaction, which is in agreement with Yousefzadeh (2005) who thinks managers' empathy increase employees' job satisfaction and with Hashemi Tari (2008) who found positive significant between empathy and organizational climate. Therefore, empathy is another interpersonal communication skill to reduce job stresses, emotional exhaustion and customer satisfaction, which should be enhanced by sport club managers.

In Section 3 of this research, effects of active listening on customer satisfaction were evaluated. The results suggested that at the level of 0.01 there is a positive significant relation, which is consistent with Jorgnia Ballarin (2006) who perceives necessary role of active listening in communication skills and with Khanifar (2009) who found a positive significant between active listening on customer satisfaction. Regarding the findings of this research, which revealed that customer satisfaction is mostly affected by active listening and listening actively to customers is a basic rule of success. It also leads to decreased misunderstanding, more clarified goals and more effective human relation.

Effects of true respect of managers on customer satisfaction are studied in Section 4. The results show that there is a positive significant relation at the level of 0.01 between true respect of managers on customer satisfaction. They are in

accordance with Hashemi (2008), Bahlake (2005) and Rabeti (2001) who believe social contacts and human relations can increase customer satisfaction.

Section 5 deals with effects of getting feedbacks by managers on customer satisfaction. According to the results, there is a positive significant relation between getting feedbacks by managers on customer satisfaction. These results are in agreement with Bahlake (2005) who thinks management and planning style affects customers satisfaction and also with Hanzizadeh (2009) who observed a significant relation between organizational climate and feedback.

In Section 6, effects of managers' cheerfulness on customer satisfaction were analyzed. The results indicated that there is a positive significant relation at the level of 0.01 between cheerfulness on customer satisfaction. This skill is a strong and hidden key to business achievements.

In Section 7, effects of managers' appearance on customer satisfaction was explored. The results suggested that there is a positive significant relation between managers' appearance and customer satisfaction. This skill come second to active listening, sport-related business managers should, therefore pay enough attention to it. As noted in Islamic principles, usage of light colored sportswear with sport logos could be a key to success.

Based on the results obtained from hypotheses and data analyses it can be concluded that there is a there is a significant relation between communication skills of managers of private sport clubs in Shiraz including interpersonal skills (verbal skills, empathy, active listening, respect, feedback) and nonverbal skills (cheerfulness and appearance), and customer satisfaction. Hence, these variables explain %0.621 of customer satisfaction variations. %0.379 of the variations remain unexplained which due to scientific research, the communication skills are the only factor but a considerable one. Other factors are supply of goods and services, post-sale service prices, modern equipment, etc.

With regard to the findings of this research and because communication skills explain %60 of customer satisfaction variance; training and expansion of effective communication skills and proper behavior towards customers should be taken into consideration as an important part of business development in entrepreneurship courses. Communication skills are an important factor of customer satisfaction, it is recommended, therefore, to select personnel and staff in direct contact to customers based on their communicative abilities, because inability to establish a proper relationship with customers will result in losing them.

As the results showed, active listening is the most important and most difficult interpersonal communication skill. Therefore, successful managers should develop this important skill in themselves in order to understand the purpose of message source, i.e. customers. In facilities such as kindergarten, schools and houses for the aged, where the customers are emotionally vulnerable, use of highly flexible, well-dressed managers and personnel having good nonverbal communication skills is recommended. Since nonverbal skills are hidden tools of business achievement, focus on this subject is of particular importance. Because customer satisfaction is the beating heart of any business, periodic

survey from customers and attention to their criticisms and recommendations will lead to business development.

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