

The relationship between applying aesthetic elements and customers' loyalty in sport centers of zone 13 of Tehran

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Abstract:

The present study aims at investigating the level of applying aesthetic elements in sport centers of zone 13 of Tehran and its relation with customers' loyalty. This is a correlation research and is carried out through field method. The research population includes all people who registered for exercise in sport centers of zone 13 of Tehran, which numbered 100,000. The research sample included 384 of intended population. The sampling method is random-clustering. For data gathering purpose, Allen's customers' loyalty questionnaire (1990) and Shalika's aesthetic of sport center questionnaire (1392) are used. For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics (Spearman correlation coefficient) are used. Also, for data processing, SPSS software, version 20 is used. The research results revealed that there is a significant relationship between aesthetic elements (environment, space, form and appearance, harmony, colour, and light) and customers' loyalty in sport centers of zone 13, Tehran ($\alpha=0.05$).

Key words: Aesthetic elements, customers' loyalty, sport centers/facilities

INTRODUCTION

Exercise is one of the activities and communicational canals in which environmental messages change to personal meetings. In this policy, exercise, organized physical and competitive activity are defined which consist of correlative/interdependent and collaborative training, equipments and facilities, and auxiliary activities are related to physical activities (Ebrahimi, 1388). In broad sense, aesthetic is a theory in beauty concept, in which both sense of beauty, i.e. natural beauty and artistic beauty are proposed. The most important challenge of architects and planners has been in content, structure, and location of sport centers. Loyalty is defined as customers' deep commitment for further and persistent purchase of a preferred product or service (Oliver, 1999). The main reason of organizations' great emphasis on loyalty concept could be related to more profitability of loyal customer in comparison with other customers (Halwool, 1996). Moreover, loyal customers, probably, participate in positive word of mouth communication which would lead to attracting new customers and changing these customers to loyal ones. Hussein et al (1392) in their research about the influential factors in the loyalty of email customers concluded that the positive impact of electronic quality, electronic satisfaction, and electronic trust on electronic loyalty are confirmed. Ghobadi Yegane (1392) in a study regarding the relationship between support, team simulation, and loyalty to football and the tendency to football video games among boy teenagers concluded that there is a significant relationship between support and collaboration level. There was no significant or meaningful relationship between the variables of team simulation and team loyalty with

collaboration level; however, there was a significant relationship between sport supporting, team simulation, and loyalty with victory preference (the victory of one's favorite team vs. the competitor team). Lee et al (2010) in a study investigated the effects of service quality on customers' satisfaction and further purchasing intention of Korea's golfer clubs. Results suggested that in comparison with male golfers, for female golfers, clubs' service quality, clean and new club facilities has higher priorities. Wang (2010) in a research regarding service quality, perceived values, organizational image, and customers' loyalty with respect to the handling fee concluded that customers' perceived values, service quality, and organizational image are influential on customers' loyalty. When the customers handling fee is high, these impacts decrease. Ahmad et al (2014) in a study, about the effects of applying relational marketing on Egypt' business bank performance investigated the relations between domestic marketing, customers' loyalty, and business performance in Egypt' business banks. The achieved results showed that domestic marketing has a significant influence on bank performance through customer loyalty and creating domestic marketing strategies causes improving bank performance and ultimately, attracting and keeping foreign customers. Also, it should be mentioned that the relationship between sport centers aesthetic and its relation with customers' loyalty has not been investigated in sport centers and clubs of Tehran municipalities, yet. Hence, the main objective of this study is investigating the level of applying aesthetic elements in sport centers of zone 13 of Tehran, and its relation with customers' loyalty.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is practical in terms of objective and correlation in terms of strategy. The research population includes all people who registered in sport centers of zone 13, Tehran who number in over 100,000. Research sampling of this study in random-clustering and includes 384 from the abovementioned pool. The research tools consist of Allen's customers' loyalty questionnaire (1990) which is composed of 3 components of emotional (question 1-4), normative (question 5-8), and persistent (question 9-12); and Shalika's aesthetic of sport center questionnaire (1392) which involves 6 components of light, colour, voice, environment, harmony, form and appearance. For data analysis and for determining data natural distribution, Kolmogorov Smirnov test was used. Since the data distribution was not natural, for determining the relationship between research variables, spearman correlation test was used. Also, SPSS software, version 20 was applied for data processing.

FINDINGS

According to table 1, 46.7% of the participants of the study are men and 53.3% are women, 19.5 have below 5 years, 27.2% have 6-10 years, 33% have 11-15, 2.6% have 16-20 year, and 5.7% over 21 years of sport background. 2.6% of the participants are below 20 year-old, 5.2% are 20-24, 15.1% are 25-29, 40.6% are 30-34, 16.9% are 35-39, and 19.5% are over 40 year-old.

Table1: demographic features

variables		age							Sport background					gender	
options		Below20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-45	Over40	Below5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Over20	male	female
Statistical index	frequency	10	20	58	156	65	75	120	105	127	10	22	179	205	
	Frequency percentage	2.6	5.2	15.1	40.6	16.9	19.5	31.2	27.3	33	2.6	5.7	46.7	53.3	

Table 2: descriptive statistics of the research variables

major components	Statistics/variables	Mean and standard deviation
Aesthetic of sport centers		2.58±0.834
Aesthetic components	Environment dimension	2.32±0.77

2.73±0.87	Space dimension	Sport centers
2.27±1.01	Form dimension	
2.60±1.00	Harmony dimension	
2.76±1.08	Light dimension	
2.82±1.05	Colour dimension	
3.36±0.71	Customers' loyalty	
3.28±0.89	Emotional dimension	Customers' loyalty components
3.59±0.92	Normative dimension	
3.22±0.72	persistent dimension	

As it can be seen from the table2, all aesthetic components of sport centers have mean below the average and all loyalty components have mean above the average.

Table 3: correlation coefficient results of aesthetic elements and customers' loyalty

Environment element component			
variables	correlation coefficient	Significant level	No.
	(r)	(sig)	(N)
Customers' loyalty	0.270	0.001	384

***Correlation in significant at the 0.05 level.**

Considering the achieved spearman correlation coefficient test and presented results in table 3, it can be seen that, statistically, there is a direct and significant relationship between aesthetic elements customers' loyalty ($r=$). Therefore, as environment elements component increases in building sport centers, customers' loyalty increases, too.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The study results showed that there is a significant relationship between the components of aesthetic elements in building sport centers and customers' loyalty in zone 13 of Tehran. This was in line with Amiri (1393) and Mousavi (1386). Aesthetic elements in different places such as clubs and salons are highly significant. Nowadays, engineers and planners try to present innovative and creative ideas in building sport centers in which form element is appropriately implemented. The importance of this element in making new places is clearly obvious. The existence of aesthetic elements in sport places of zone 13 of Tehran can cause deep influence in customers. This element can easily penetrate on customers' mind and thoughts. The existence of a stronger relation between the components of emotional loyalty and form element, and other loyalty components on the other hand including normative and persistent is a reason on the importance of form element on its effect on customers' mental features. Bently et al (2010) and Defrech (2010) investigated the relationship between environmental dimension and customers' presence and satisfaction from sport centers and areas. They concluded that environmental aspects does not cause customers' satisfaction and loyalty. This result is not compatible with the present study results. It seems that differences in statistical population and concentration on walking exercise caused the incompatibility of this study and Bently et al (2010) and Defrech (2010). Strubzipcher (2002) in his study indicated that light attract people to sport centers and causes their satisfaction. Shafiee (1388) considered the importance of lighting in different places and found this as a considerable issue. Masm Yetsu Kamad et al (2009) in their research investigated the impact of lighting of the path in encouraging rural woman in doing physical activities. McCormack et al

(2010) concluded that light could affect people's tendency to physical activities. The results of the present study suggested that by taking advantage of various components, aesthetic elements could remarkably cause customers' loyalty in zone 13 of Tehran. The managers of these places should use this potentiality by applying architecture specialists. This would definitely create enthusiasm among customers and gradually lead to their loyalty. Using aesthetic potentialities in sport centers of zone 13 of Tehran can indeed improve the performance of these centers though taking advantage of customers' loyalty.

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