

## The Ways of Attraction Women to the Fitness Club: A Case Study in Esfahan (Iran)

Mohammad Ehsani

Department of Physical Education, Tarbiat Modarres University, Tehran, Iran

**Abstract:** Marketing for women's sport and fitness includes any combination of skills related to the promotion, selling and advertising of women's sport services and products through an organization whose primary product or service is related to sports or physical activity. This study explores the motives behind corporate purchase of fitness clubs participation as indicated by individuals who make such decisions. The results were showed that women's motivation to participate in fitness clubs were 65.8% for health keeping, 60.8% for fitness and 42.5% for losing weight. Also, instructors experienced, location of the clubs and admission fee were most important factors for their participation. This study has examined and shown the mismanagement and lack of knowledge of instructors and clubs' staffs were major problems of the clubs and it caused decreasing of the customers' motivation and participation. Admission fee and location of the clubs (transportation) might be a reason for participation, motivation and attraction of the customers.

**Key words:** Attraction % Women % Fitness clubs % Sport marketing

### INTRODUCTION

Understanding customer behavior is central to the development of any successful marketing strategy. In sports marketing, many studies have been conducted that explain aspects of customer behavior. For example, Robertson and Pop studied attendance to professional sports in Australia. It was examined sports marketing at Division 1A universities in the United States. Analyzed

Attendance at basketball, baseball and football games. The study included both professional and Division 1A teams [1-2].

The organization's objectives may be to attain funds, goods or services, raise awareness, increase credibility and/or create or enhance an image [1]. The sport organization must also clearly identify its property assets and what it has to offer a prospective customer [2].

There are over six million jobs in sport-related careers, a field which was once an exclusively male preserve. Over the past 30 years, barriers to the employment of women have diminished. Even though the sports industry is still predominantly male and more subtle methods of discrimination remain, most of the overt barriers are down or in the process of coming down. Men and women who grew up in the '70s and thereafter believed that their daughters could and should play sports and become anything they wished [3].

These parents are now the 40-50 year olds in the workforce who are attaining the seniority necessary to hold the purse strings for sports sponsorships and the hiring and decision-making power in sports-related businesses. While some dinosaurs remain, most of the employment and other barriers should be completely removed over the next decade. That process of welcoming women to the sports-careers workforce has been hastened by five developments which are fueling demand for the female professional:

- Ⓒ The active female consumer.
- Ⓒ Females as spectators of men's and women's sports.
- Ⓒ Males and Females as spectators of women's sports.
- Ⓒ Women's sports being accepted by the sports media.
- Ⓒ Corporation using sports to sell to women [4].

These developments have created exciting sports career opportunities. However, women entering these fields must be prepared to face stiff job competition and the vestiges of gender discrimination in a historically male-dominated and very popular field. Seven "must do" tips will contribute to successful placement in the sports career she desires:

- C Self-evaluation and exploration of career options.
- C Goal-setting.
- C Education.
- C Experience.
- C Entering the job market.
- C Networking.
- C Risk-taking.

As Canadian Synchronize consider the strength, weakness, opportunities, threats and challenges with respect to its preparation for customers. Also, expenditure on infrastructure sometimes exceeds regional economic benefits and the long-term demand for the infrastructure. It should be noted that as a club manager evaluation and control of the objectives may very important issues.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of this study is to determine the motives behind corporate purchase of fitness clubs participation as indicated by individuals who make such decisions.

The study is descriptive and based on quantitative data. The study was carried out among, 120 customers, 12 managers and 12 instructors at the selected areas of Esfahan which is one of the biggest (second) cities in Iran. The variables used in this paper were the starting point for developing a questionnaire that was likely to reflect the characteristics important for attending fitness clubs.

At the beginning of the study, personal interviews were conducted with approximately thirty costumers, managers, instructors at the clubs.

These interviews were used to modify the variables used in previous studies to reflect variables important to customers at the clubs. In this study, factors such as the role of managers and instructors experienced, quality and quantity of facilities and services, club location, interior space and admission fee are offered by the clubs were identified. The data was collected and analyzed by SPSS/10. A principal component analysis was performed. Only those components with eigen value greater than 1.0 were retained and rotated with a Varimax Rotation (Orthogonal Factor Analysis). All items were satisfactory (at least 0.35) and Cronbach's Alpha was 0.96 which was satisfactory [5].

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 indicates the percentage and frequency of the level of education of customers 48.3%, instructors 58.3% and 41.7% of managers were Diploma. 8.3% of customers and 33.3% of managers were B.A. In the M.A level 5.8% of customers, 8.3% of instructors and 16.7% of managers, also in the Ph.D. level just 4.2% of customers were found.

As you can see in Table 2, most of the customer prefer to participate in sporting activities in early morning (8-10 am) %38, then in (4-6 pm) %35.2 and

Table 1: Education Level of Customers, Instructors and Managers' Club

Education Levels	Customers		Instructors		Managers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
- Diploma	35	29.2	-	-	1	8.3
Diploma	58	48.3	7	58.3	5	41.7
+ Diploma	5	4.2	4	33.3	-	-
B.A	1	8.3	-	-	4	33.3
M.A	7	5.8	1	8.3	2	16.7
Ph.D	5	4.2	-	-	-	-

Table 2: Time table of the customers' participation and managers' view

Time Table	Customers		Managers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
6-8	5	3.5	-	-
8-10	54	38	11	91.7
10-12	3	1.2	4	33.3
12-14	4	2.8	-	-
14-16	7	4.9	2	16.7
16-18	50	35.2	9	75
18-20	20	14	5	41.7

Table 3: Customers' Goals in order to Participate Fitness Club from the point of view of Customers, Instructors and Managers

Customers' Goals in order to Participate Fitness Club from the point of view of Customers, Instructors and Managers	Customers (Hierarchy)		Managers		Instructors	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Health	79	65.8	1	8.3	2	16.7
Fitness	73	60.8	6	50	-	-
Aspiration	69	57.5	-	-	-	-
Happiness	66	55	-	-	-	-
Lose Weighting	51	42.5	-	-	5	41.7
Physical Fitness	41	34.2	-	-	3	25
Social (partnership)	32	26.7	-	-	-	-
Recreation	28	23.3	4	33.3	1	8.3
Leisure	20	16.7	-	-	-	-

Table 4: Distribution of Customers as their Hierarchy to choose the Fitness Clubs

Reasons for selected Fitness Clubs	Very much		Good		Somewhat		Little		Very little	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Instructors' commitment and expertise	76	63.3	6	5	15	12.5	-	-	23	19.2
Near to House	58	48.3	6	5	42	35	-	-	14	11.7
Appearance of Instructor	52	43.3	12	10	8	6.7	7	5.8	41	34.2
Managers' behavior and commitment	49	40.8	26	21.7	23	19.2	7	5.8	15	12.5
Equipment	37	30.8	33	27.5	14	11.7	7	5.8	29	24.2
Admission	37	30.8	6	5	55	45.8	8	6.7	14	11.7
From friends and relative	30	25	6	5	32	26.7	-	-	52	43.3
Club Structure	29	24.2	14	11.7	35	29.2	15	12.5	27	22.5
Customers' satisfaction	23	19.2	-	-	47	39.2	6	5	44	36.7
Different Activities	21	17.5	21	17.5	28	23.3	13	10.8	37	30.8
Advertisement	14	11.7	6	5	43	35.8	-	-	57	47.5
Bath	-	-	-	-	16	13.3	12	10	92	76.7
Coffee Shop	-	-	7	5.8	30	25	-	-	83	69.2

the least interested was found in(10-12 am). From (%91.7) the point of view of club managers, customers are interested to participate in 8-10 a.m.

From the point of view of customers, instructors and managers, they were interested to participate in sporting activities in health club which indicates in Table 3. Customers (%65.8) were intended to participate to fitness club in order to keep their health, %60.8 of them for fitness while the least was (%16.7) just for spend leisure time. From the %50 managers' opinion (fitness) and %41.7 of instructors (lose of weight) were customers' goals to participate to the fitness club.

As you can see in Table 4, %63.3 of customers believed that good and commitment managers and instructors can effect and attracted customers to the clubs. Customers (%48.3) were believed that fitness club should be close to their house. The least item was (%11.7) advertisement and publicity of the clubs.

As you can see in Table 5. distribution of education of managers was shown just %8.3 of managers had education related to physical education.

In Table 6. there is distribution of instructors in different sporting activities' coaching and degree of their sports. The instructors (%41.7) had level (3) of coaching, %25 level (2) and %33.3 level (1) who were worked in the clubs. Also, %8.3 of them had silver medal in their own sports, %8.3 of instructors were coach of team sport, %8.3 instructors were referee level (2) in their own sports.

It appears that the views offered by the respondents the role of managers and instructors who were experts, commitment and had good behavior, was attracted women to the clubs. The results of this study were shown the same as investigations [6-7] which suggested that the clubs managers and instructors should have qualified in their areas[6].

Table 5: Distribution of education of physical education managers

Education	Frequency	Percentage
No response	1	8.3
Science	4	33.3
Humanities	2	16.7
Physical Education	1	8.3
Engineering	4	33.3
Total	12	100

Table 6: Distribution of Instructors in terms of Sport background

Sport background	Frequency	Percentage
Coaching level (1)	4	33.3
Coaching level (2)	3	25
Coaching level (3)	5	41.7
Referee level (2)	1	8.3
Club coaching	5	41.7
Team coaching	1	8.3
Silver medal	1	8.3

In this study although the managers and instructors believed that equipment and facilities were important to the customers' attraction, but the results were shown the customers did not believe the same as them. The current study confirmed the researchers like [8-9], who believed that the customers are looking for fitness education rather than equipment and facilities. In this case the findings were shown poor equipment and facilities in Esfahan. The service which offered by the clubs were important factor from point of view of customers. Also, researchers [10-12] suggested that quality of service (e.g., food, drink) can attract women to the fitness clubs.

Location of clubs can affect on customers' motivation particularly women, because of transportation and availability. As many studies showed that even decoration of the club can attract women to the clubs [10]. The results of the study were shown the clubs were located in the good area with enough parking and availability of transportation had more customers, unfortunately in Esfahan the clubs were not established for such a this purpose. and monthly in order to attract them to the fitness clubs.

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As has been mentioned above, the study has shown that most customers consider about fitness education rather than equipment. Unfortunately, in the absence of any national or local data related to participation in fitness in Iran, it is impossible to compare these findings and to draw more definite conclusions. It is worth noting that

factors such as lack of facilities, religion (Islam), culture, politico-ideological environment and economic factors could have affected these constraints dimensions in Iranian females.

Although it is not statistically possible to generalize the findings of this specific study, data obtained from the participants give us important clues about the women customers. Base on the findings, it may be concluded that advertisement factor was unimportant from point of view of customers which were opposite of managers and instructors' opinion. Mass Media could be one of the important factors to attract customers to the fitness clubs. According to [13-14], who suggested that publicity can influence customers to participate in fitness clubs for physical activities and so on. Even now fitness club connected to internet and have web as well.

Admission fee was one of most important factors which could influence on customers' participation in the fitness clubs. This study was the same as studies [13-15] which they suggested the more attraction of customers should notice to the reduction or pay weekly.

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