



## Study of The Degree of Loyalty of the Customers of Public and Private Indoor Swimming Pools in East of Tehran

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### ABSTRACT

developing customer satisfaction and gaining their loyalty is the key to the success of any business. In the current competitive market in equipping resources and marketing, some factors have key roles, and the presence of the appropriate background leads to customer satisfaction and loyalty. In recent years, the increasing number of public and private swimming pools and the necessity to equip resources and facilities and to elevate the quality for satisfying the customers is vital for the pools to continue their service and benefit ability of their business. The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty of customers in public and private swimming pools in east of Tehran. For this end, factors influencing customer loyalty have been identified considering the literature review of this study. In this study, which is a descriptive survey type study, the statistical population are the male and female customers using private and public swimming indoor pools in east of Tehran. A questionnaire is the research tool of this study which was distributed and answered randomly by 192 people. The obtained data was analyzed using SPSS software and finally it was determined that there is a meaningful relationship between customer satisfaction and its loyalty in the swimming pool industry. But all of the satisfaction indices do not have the same importance for the customers. The most important factor in customer loyalty is the quality, price, location and parking space, and the least important of them are size and area of the pool.

**Keywords:**management, customer loyalty, satisfaction, indoor swimming pools.

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### INTRODUCTION

One of the external factors affecting organizations is its customers. Management experts consider customer satisfaction as one of the most important tasks and priorities of the organizations and the necessity for a sticking steadily and consistently to commitment by senior executives in order to attract customers are considered as a prerequisite for success. In fact, one of the prerequisites for the success of the organizations and companies is to place the customer and his satisfaction as the objective of the organization. Full customer recognition, prioritizing and providing quality services are among the key factors in the success of today's business market. Nowadays, the definition of customer is completely different from what has been common in the past, such that the customer is considered not just a purchaser of goods or services, but an active and influential member on all business activities. Therefore, taking a new strategy, paying attention to important points in establishing, maintaining and expanding relationships with the customer and trying to satisfy him at all stages increases the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization and business in fulfilling customer-oriented goals, and in a long run it will bring about loyal customers. The terms, Customer and

customer satisfaction in service organizations; especially swimming pools are gaining more and more importance because they totally depend on customers for survival. Providing various services in order to maintain existing customers and attracting new customers and consequently occupying more market share in the competition between indoor swimming pools, both public and private reveal this importance. According to the above mentioned introduction, this study has been conducted to determine the loyalty of customers in public and private indoor swimming pools in east of Tehran.

Theories:

- 1- There is significant relationship between the quality of facilities and services of indoor swimming pools and customer loyalty.
- 2- There is significant relationship between the price of tickets and the cost of other services in indoor swimming pools and customer loyalty.
- 3- There is significant relationship between the location of swimming pools in terms of accessibility and ease of use and possessing car parking in indoor swimming pools and customer loyalty.

4. There is significant relationship between the quantity, size and area of indoor swimming pools and customer loyalty.

Marketing:

In a highly competitive market for recreational- sports services, the loss of only one customer leads to heavy costs for the owners and shareholders of the pools. The more important factor than anything else is the huge investment that pools offer in order to diversify services and improve the quality and desires of desirable services which all are conducted by the objective of satisfying current customers and preventing the loss of new customers (Rashidi, 1391). Dominic Thorpin regarded customer satisfaction as one of the first missions and priorities of the senior management, and he considered the lasting involvement and adherence of top executives to customer satisfaction as a prerequisite for success (Thorpin, 1998). Due to the quality of the service types provided, and considering the type of close relationship between this business and its customers, the importance of the customer becomes twofold, because customers are the only source of revenue for organizations and managers. There will be no income without them. Therefore, from the time it starts till the end of delivering service to the customer service, the opinions, tastes and desires of the customers must be fully addressed. Paying attention and valuing the ideas of the customers leads to attachment and loyalty to the recreational-sports centers, which not only create a sense of satisfaction in the client, but also to helps the customer consider himself as a member of this center. This satisfaction is the key to the success of a swimming pool. For these reasons, swimming pool managements focus on attracting new customers and satisfying the present customers.

Today, holders of swimming pools are required to see themselves in from the perspectives of the customers and try to perceive themselves in a context full of desires and wishes of their customers and to act in accordance with them to gain the full customer satisfaction from their center. In marketing, the cost of losing a customer is equal to the loss of the benefits of the service that the customer needs in his lifetime. The principle for a business like holding swimming pool is collective consensus and customer-orientation, and customer satisfaction by which all service providers face as a challenge.

Today, organizations are well aware this fact keeping a customer is much more cost-effective than attracting new customers. Researches indicate that by adding 5% to the costs associated with maintaining their current customer, organizations and institutes can increase their profitability up to 25%. (Caruana, 2014 A).

Customer loyalty:

Customer loyalty is a form of repurchasing behavior that indicates a conscious decision to continue buying and a positive attitude and a high commitment (Barley et al., 2002, 255). In today's competitive world, the services offered by competing companies are getting more and more similar to each other, and it's hardly possible to completely surprise a customer by providing new services in the long run, because the most

innovative service will quickly be imitated by sold in the market. Hence, investing in the area of customer loyalty is an effective and beneficial investment for service providing companies. Loyalty, through increasing profitability, decreasing the cost of attracting new customers, lowering customer sensitivity to prices, and reducing the cost of familiarizing customers with ways conducting the business in the company will lead to productivity in the company.

Barroso Castro and Martin Armario (1999) believe that loyal customers not only increase the value of commerce, but also allow businesses to keep their costs lower compared to the costs of attracting new customers. According to Jacob and Camyss (1973), Angs loyalty is created by behavioral responses (it is not accidental), and over time, they are used by decision-makers as part of a person, family, or organization.

The relationship between customer loyalty and profitability:

Customer loyalty has been the root cause of profit growth for four reasons, which has created a progressive profit for the seller. These factors are ranked by the order of their importance as follows:

1. Profitability by more purchases: agent customers often increase over time and, as a result, purchases are made in greater quantities. As people grow older, and the family members increase also increases their purchasing power. These two types of customers, based on the quality, may decide to buy their services from a single seller.
2. Profitability resulting from lower operating costs: by increasing customer service experience, the expectation form the seller decreases, customer mistakes are also reduced when participating in operational processes, which increases productivity.
3. Profitability from the joining by other customers: Ideal oral recommendations are just like advertisements but free, which will reduce the company's investment in this field.
4. Profitability from higher selling prices: Generally, new customers exploit early promotional discounts, while old customers pay the most common price. Besides, if customers trust the seller, they will be willing to pay higher prices in traffic hours to do the tasks faster.

Data analysis (inferential statistics):

Testing the first hypothesis:

- There is significant relationship between the quality of facilities and services of indoor swimming pools and customer loyalty.

Table 1: Testing the First Hypothesis (Spearman correlation)

		Quality and facilities
Customer loyalty	Pearson correlation coefficient	0.752
	Significance level	0.001
	N	193

It is observed in Table 1 that a significance level in the numerical value is less than 5% and, so, the correlation mentioned in the hypothesis is confirmed. As the table 1 indicates, at 0.5 error level, we have:

$$0 \cong Sign < \alpha = .05$$

which means that the quality of facilities and services of indoor swimming pools has a significant relationship with customer loyalty.

- Testing the second hypothesis:

- 2- there is significant relationship between the price of tickets and the cost of other services in indoor swimming pools and customer loyalty.

Table 2: Testing the Second Hypothesis (correlation Solidarity)

		Prices and Costs
Customer loyalty	Pearson correlation coefficient	0.215
	Significance level	0.025
	N	192

According to the results presented in Table 2, it is observed that, at error level of  $\alpha = .05$  we have:

$$0 \cong Sign < \alpha = .05$$

this means that the hypothesis is confirmed.

- Testing the third hypothesis:

- 3- There is significant relationship between the location of swimming pools in terms of accessibility and ease of use and possessing car parking in indoor swimming pools and customer loyalty.

Table 3: Testing the Third Hypothesis (Spearman correlation)

		Location and parking lot
Customer loyalty	Pearson correlation coefficient	0.312
	Significance level	0.011
	N	192
Introducing new customer	Pearson correlation coefficient	0.412
	Significance level	0.006
	N	193

According to the results presented in Table 3, it is clear that at

$$\alpha = .05 \text{ error level we have: } 0 \cong Sign < \alpha = .05$$

and this means that the hypothesis is confirmed.

- Testing the fourth hypothesis:

- 4. There is significant relationship between the quantity, size and area of indoor swimming pools and customer loyalty.

2. Table 4: Testing the Second Hypothesis (Spearman correlation)

		Quantity and area
Customer loyalty	Pearson correlation coefficient	0.215
	Significance level	0.01
	N	192

According to the results presented in Table 4, at a = 01level of

error, we have:  $0 \cong Sign < \alpha = .05$  which means that the hypothesis is not confirmed.

**Conclusion:**

Marketers were only thinking about finding a customer until yesterday, and the sales team were buy hunting new customers, but in today's perspective, marketing means growing the customer which is seeking his satisfaction and quality from his point of view. Today, the art of marketing is that the customers of an organization inside a company are colleagues and outside the organization, they are the supporters and sponsors of the organization. Today, engaging the customers to the commitments has found a special place. As stated above, loyalty means creating sense of commitment to the customer, to deal with a particular organization, and to buy goods and services on a frequent basis. In other words, loyalty refers to a strong commitment to re-purchasing a product or a superior service in the future, so that the same product or services, in spite of the potential impact of its competitors, are bought and used. Thus, Loyalty happens when customers totally feel that the organization or the company, in the best possible way, satisfies their needs better than the other competitors.

Investigations on the loyalty and studying loyalty to the brand and loyalty of customers have been expanded by many researchers. Loyalty creates a positive mindset in the minds of the listener. Everyone expects loyalty from a friend, husband or colleague. In most cases, loyalty emerges from the relationships in which both sides win.

The aim of this paper was to investigate the loyalty of customers in public and private

indoor swimming pools in east of Tehran. In order to do this, were defined four hypotheses as follows:

- 1- The quality of facilities and services of indoor swimming pools has a significant relationship with customer loyalty.
- 2- The price of tickets and the cost of other services in indoor swimming pools have a significant relationship with customer loyalty.
- 3- Location of the swimming Pool in terms of accessibility and ease of access and having car parking lot has a significant relationship customer loyalty and introducing a new customer.
4. The quantity, size and area of indoor swimming pools have a significant relationship with customer loyalty.

After analyzing the collected data by SPSS software, we conclude that the first three hypotheses were confirmed and the fourth hypothesis was rejected. In other words, quality, price, location and parking lot are the most important factor in customer loyalty, and the least important of them is the size and area of the swimming pool.

Marketing experts have proposed a lot of advantages for loyalty, some of the most prominent ones are:

Reduction in the cost of attracting new customers; 2. Reduction of the customer sensitivity to changes and prices;

2. Benefits derived from the value of customer's life span

3. Positive performance by increasing predictive power

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