The Classification of Service Attributes in Terms of Asymmetric Influences on Overall Spectator Satisfaction of Sporting Event

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Building and maintaining spectator relationships has long been perceived as enabler of hosting sport event. Higher attendance improves revenues from ticket sales and enhances the value of sponsorships. (Davies, J. and J. Williment 2008). For sport spectators, customer satisfaction has been viewed as a significant predictor of intentions to attend future sporting events (Masayuki Yoshida & Jeffrey D. James 2010). The previous study showed two types of satisfaction: Game satisfaction (Masayuki Yoshida & Jeffrey D. James 2010; Madrigal, 1995; Kwon, Trail, & Anderson; 2005; Trail, Anderson, & Fink, 2005) and service satisfaction (Masayuki Yoshida & Jeffrey D. James 2010; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996) constituted spectator satisfaction. Compared to game satisfaction, service satisfaction is much more easily managed and improved for the organizations of sporting events. Therefore, the organizations of sporting events need to identify what service attributes need be improved in order to increase spectator service satisfaction. The present study only focuses on the service satisfaction and doesn’t refer to game satisfaction.

Identification of the most important attributes in terms of their influence on overall spectator service satisfaction is still very complicated. Some researchers have found that the importance of an attribute varies according to importance of an attribute (Mittal and Baldasare 1996). And there is an asymmetric relationship between attributes performance and overall satisfaction (Johnston 1995; Mittal, Ross, and Baldasare 1998; Ting and Chen 2002; Matzler and Sauerwein 2002). Asymmetric relationship are virtually generated by two approaches: the prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky 1979) and the memorability of positive versus negative events (Mittal, Ross, and Baldasare 1998). In 1984, Kano classified quality attributes into three groups based on their asymmetric influences on overall customer satisfaction. This present study introduces an asymmetric impact-performance analysis (AIPA) that shows which service attributes should be improved by adapting the approach that there is an asymmetric relationship between attributes performance and overall spectator service satisfaction. The particular objectives of this study are to (a) classify service attributes according to their asymmetric influences on overall spectator satisfaction, and to (b) identify the service areas for increasing overall spectator satisfaction with AIPA that weighs the asymmetric effects of the service attributes on overall spectator satisfaction.

The current study used SPORTSERV (Theodorakis et al. 2000) which was divided into the five dimensions: tangibles, responsiveness, access, security and reliability. The items relate to game satisfaction have been deleted. Finally 19 items were used to scale the attributes’ quality. The overall satisfaction of spectators was measured by one item (I am satisfied with the service I have received on the site.). The 5-point Likert-type scale was used to scale the spectator satisfaction between “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree.” Four items (gender, age, occupation and education) were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the spectators.

Data were collected for the spectators who attended Shanghai ATP 1000 from October 10 to October 17, 2011. From the 2500 questionnaires distributed, 2064 were returned for a response rate of 82.6%. The total respondents are 2064 (80%) of the respondents lived in Shanghai and 413 (20%) of them didn’t live in Shanghai. In terms of gender, 56.3% of the respondents were male and 43.8% were female. In terms of age, 1490 (72.2%) of respondents were below 30 years old and 300 (27.8%) respondents were between 30 and 40 years old. In terms of occupation, 1008 (48.8%) were students and 603 (29.2%) worked in the enterprise. The majority of respondents (82.2%) graduated as college and bachelor students.

Dummy variable regression analysis was used to show the asymmetric relationship and then classify service attributes. The analysis result showed that access and security attributes are basic factors. When their performances are low, the basic factors will create spectator dissatisfaction. But when the performances are high, they will not necessarily cause satisfaction. The tangibles attribute is a performance factor. The attribute will ensure correlated satisfaction or dissatisfaction when the performance is high or low. The responsive and reliability attributes are the
excitement factors. The sport manager should try their best to improve the performance of the two attributes, which is the only way to increase satisfaction.

A Matrix was constructed by IA index (impact-asymmetry), which was positioned on the vertical axis and the attributes’ scores on the horizontal axis in order to identity the attributes which need to be improved under the condition of the limited resources. And the matrix clearly presents the attribute’s performance and influences on overall spectator satisfaction. The results show the reliability attribute belongs to low-performance excitement factor. The excitement factors can increase the overall spectator satisfaction when their performance is improved. At the same time, they don’t cause the dissatisfaction when their performance declines. The organizers of sporting event should allocate the resources to such factors if they are eager to enhance the overall spectator satisfaction. However, the responsiveness attribute is the high-performance excitement factor that means the performance won’t need to be improved and just need to be maintained at the same level. The access and security are the high-performance basic factors in need of maintaining. The tangibles factor belongs to a performance factor and will create dissatisfaction because it has a low performance score in the present study.

References


