



The Partial Role of Relationship Marketing Dimensions in Attracting Females to Football Academies (Case Study: Female Football Academies in Kerman)

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Because of the importance of attracting females to football academies and the prosperity of academies in the sustainable development of female sport, the current study aimed to study the partial role of relationship marketing dimensions in attracting females to football academies in Kerman.

Methodology: This field study was descriptive-survey research and a practical one. The research population included all the females in football academies in Kerman, and 150 females were studied through total sampling. Data was collected using a researcher developed scale for measuring Relationship Marketing components as well as attracting customer questionnaire developed by Geib et al. (2005). The reliability of the tools was confirmed based on Cronbach's alpha, and the validity of the research tools was confirmed by conducting face validity, content validity, and construct validity.

Finding: The research findings, by applying structural equation modeling, demonstrated that the relationship marketing dimensions, including Trust, Commitment, Communication, Conflict management, Loyalty, and Quality, have a positive and significant effect on attracting females to football academies in Kerman. According to the research finding, focusing on relationship marketing and its dimensions can attract females to football academies, which could ultimately lead to a boom.

Originality: This research is one of the few studies conducted in attracting women to football academies, emphasizing the role of relational marketing that can effectively develop women's football and the prosperity of football academies.

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1. Introduction

In the present era, where sport and its various dimensions are proliferating with specialized and technical approaches, training athletes and their growth will also be possible through academic and educational channels (Da Costa et al., 2021). The growth and development of academies related to sports education can play a vital role in the development and promotion of sports at various levels of public and championship fields (Aljaloud et al., 2022). Attention to sports academies and colleges will be even more critical when these institutions act as a center for identifying, attracting, and developing sports talents in training athletes (Nikander et al., 2022). Strengthening sports training centers requires special attention to the various pillars of sports and marketing. In these centers, in addition to encouraging athletes to attend these academies, the academies can also access more financial resources and income generation that, finally, leads to providing a proper condition for active presence in the field of talent education. Although the company of females in social activities has become much more prominent than in the past, the presence of females in sports activities is still limited. Memari et al. (2021) argued that the importance of the human resources index, managerial expertise, marketing, software, and legal and economic infrastructure in football schools and academies are the factors influencing the promotion of club franchise power. Thus, human resources are considered essential internal resources (Memari et al., 2021).

Sport is a means for the existence of females in society, and the more females are present at high levels of sport; the importance and role of females in culture and sports becomes apparent (Benar et al., 2013). On the one hand, more people interested in Football academies can help educate players. On the other hand, it can provide the basis for strengthening the financial strength of academics so that they can operate with more power and strength. The prosperity of the female football academy market requires the recruitment and retention of females in different age groups. Therefore, the efficient use of related marketing strategies can pave the way for attracting more females to football academies.

Given that female sports, particularly female soccer, have been considered a growing field in Iran, relationship marketing is one of the key concepts in modern marketing that helps more females become interested in football academies. Therefore, the efficient use of relationship marketing is a strategic step in enjoyable female sports and football academies. Furthermore, relationship marketing involves developing long-term and cost-effective communication between organizations and their customers to create mutual benefits for both parties (Afchangi et al., 2013). Also, relationship marketing aims to build long-term, cost-effective communications between organizations and their customers to create mutual benefit. Marketing strategies have related to the development and aim to foster strong relationships with customers (Ranjbarian & Barari, 2010), which establishes long-term relationships with customers and is one of the most essential and unavoidable issues in the new marketing industry (Afchangi et al., 2013). Therefore, applying marketing strategies should be taken in granted for developing sports industry in different field in Iran (Ganjkanloo et al., 2021).

For this reason, understanding and predicting consumer behavior is critical to success in business planning and management (Alishiri et al., 2012). Stavros et al. (2008) have

shown that the components of relationship marketing include trust, commitment, communication satisfaction, love, reciprocity, intimacy, and self-communication (Stavros et al., 2008). From the beginning of the research process, the concept of relationship marketing, several dimensions such as trust, commitment, conflict management, satisfaction, communication, financial benefits, social benefits, structural links, empathy, and other factors have been introduced and measured by various researchers. Trust refers to the extent to which an organization believes in the goodwill and credibility of the organization (Palmatier et al., 2006). when one of the parties believes in the importance of the relationship and does her best to maintain and promote the ties, commitment will be formed (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Communication is another aspect of relationship marketing that builds trust by helping to resolve disputes and meet expectations (Sin et al., 2002). The management of dealing with disputes and inconsistencies by managers and how conflicts are handled are other related elements that help to reduce disputes in the customer relationship process (Alishiri et al., 2012). Loyalty is another aspect of relationship marketing that refers to the intention or method to return. Another pillar is the quality ratio, which refers to the customer's overall service performance evaluation (Ng et al., 2011). Since competitive pressures and customer acquisition costs for organizations are increasing, personalizing customer relationships, and building deep relationships with them can provide organizations with a sustainable competitive advantage. Such a competitive advantage of sustainability is possible only in a stable relationship through establishing long-term buyer-seller relationships (Palmatier et al., 2006). Relationship marketing refers to establishing long-term and reciprocal relationships with individuals, organizations, and stakeholders, and its basis is establishing effective and desirable communication to maintain the customers (Alishiri et al., 2012). With the passage of the traditional economy and the intensification of competition in new dimensions, the customer is considered the central pillar and axis of all activities of the organization; Competitively, the survival and continuity of organizations depend on identifying and attracting new customers and retaining existing customers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). Sports organizations are no exception to this rule. It has always been one of their essential needs to retain and satisfy customers. Therefore, it is necessary to take basic and operational steps for this important matter. Due to the growing popularity of football academies, these centers need to be aware of the critical factors in successfully implementing relationship marketing, customer relationship management, value creation, satisfaction, and loyalty. So, using relevant marketing components and the subsequent presence of customers to meet such needs is becoming increasingly important and necessary for conducting this research.

More studies on relational marketing and its relationship with various marketing variables have been conducted in the research literature. Saatchian et al. (2013) have found a positive and significant relationship between service quality variables with loyalty, satisfaction, and intention to attend fitness and aerobics centers. Seyed Javadin et al. (2014) showed that social and unique behavior benefits positively and significantly affect customer loyalty and satisfaction. Kalantari and Dolatyari (2018), examined the effect of advertising on the recruitment of adolescents to football schools in Zanjan and showed that advertising based on the Ida model has effectively attracted male adolescents to

football schools in Zanjan. Hosseini et al. (2020) found that only three tactics of virtual social networks, websites, and preferential behavior affect customer appreciation. Darvish (2012) examined the effect of customer relationship quality on customer loyalty, according to the relationship marketing approach, and found that trust, commitment, and perceived quality of services (components of customer relationship quality) had a positive effect on customer loyalty. Bahrami et al. (2021) found that there is an important relationship between customer satisfaction and the components of perceived factors, reliability, responsiveness, reliability and empathy in sport centers. Alishiri et al. (2012) showed that the members of relational marketing, trust, communication, commitment, and conflict management, play a role in customer loyalty. Bee and Kahie (2006) showed that relationship marketing positively affected the quality of buyers' relationships with companies. Buhler and Nufer (2012) found that marketing activities related to performance, satisfaction, new product success, and competitive advantage lead to increased profitability, reduced costs, sales, and advertising. It has led to positive word of mouth and employee retention. Van Tonder and Petzer (2018) found that customer satisfaction positively affected emotional commitment and trust, and customer-perceived value positively impacted passionate commitment and trust.

Relationship marketing seems to be a good strategy for the satisfaction and retention of sports customers. Therefore, relationship marketing and the satisfaction of sports customers and their desire to attend have attracted the attention of researchers and marketers (Seyed Javadin et al., 2014). Female sports in traditional sports and local games have existed in the past. With the start of the new Olympic Games, there were good opportunities for females to engage in modern sports. Today, the development of international sports organizations has made the necessity of creating opportunities for females and engaging in sports a condition (Najaf zadeh et al., 2012). The growth and prosperity of female sports have faced significant limitations and problems for various reasons. In recent years, football academies have expanded in different cities in Iran, but this expansion has been very limited in female soccer. However, females have performed better in recent years than in the past in football and futsal, and female football has witnessed better and more national and international competitions. Kerman province is one of the leading provinces in developing female football, which has achieved significant success in various categories of female football in recent years. But an overview of the number of female football academies in Kerman province reveals a bitter truth. Despite the high popularity of Kerman females in football, only three football academies are officially operating in different cities of the province, which can serve as a serious alarm for the future of female football in Kerman province. While in recent years, the female soccer teams of Kerman province have had a strong presence in various female soccer competitions, and Kerman province can be named as one of the poles of female soccer in the country. The existence of a small number of football academies in this province is not a pleasant event. This study can be of particular importance in two ways.

On the one hand, attracting more females to football academies could lead to support for female football, which is currently in its infancy. On the other hand, the quantitative and qualitative development of female football academies is one of the undeniable necessities to cover a more significant target community. This is important when the

tendency to these academies is greater among the audience. With more income, these academies can continue their activities by strengthening their infrastructure with higher motivation. Today, with the increase of studies in sports marketing and many of the challenges facing sports, it has become clear that relational marketing has had beneficial results and effects on increasing the commercial and sports performance of sports clubs and teams (Afchangi et al., 2013). Given the role of sports in society, identifying essential and practical factors to attract people to sports fields and examining the critical factors in the continuation of their participation in sports provides the opportunity to focus on opportunities in sports and by identifying Expect people to provide good service (Seyed Javadin et al., 2014).

Despite the importance of the subject, a review of the research literature also shows that no specific research has been observed on the presence of females in the field of sports with a focus on marketing. This is one of the few studies that has examined the components of relationship marketing concerning attracting females to football academies. Therefore, considering the importance of relationship marketing in attracting female soccer players to football academies, the current study aimed to study the partial role of relationship marketing in attracting females to Kerman (Figure 1).

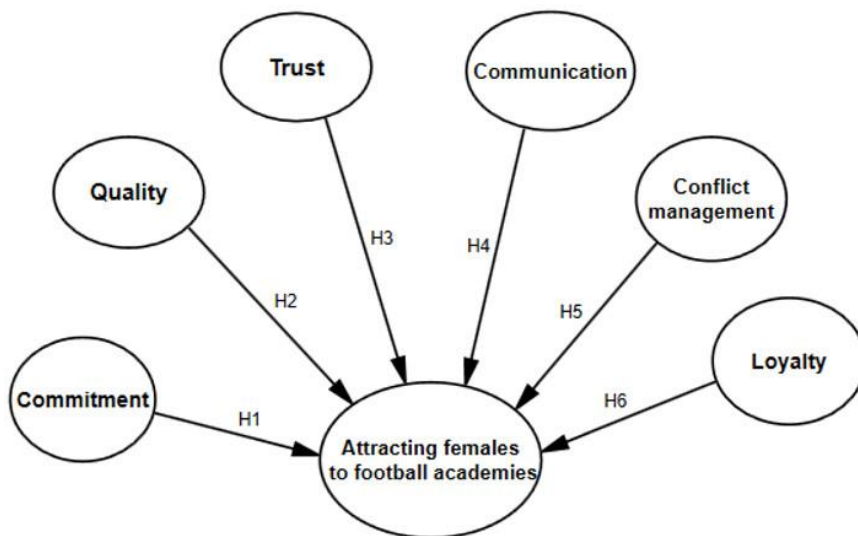


Figure1. The conceptual research models.

2. Methodology

The research is descriptive and cross-sectional research. Because of the nature of the study, its review section has been done by reviewing related sources. In the other section, data collection was done through the survey through a questionnaire. At the time of this research, Kerman province officially had three female football academies. The study's statistical population included all females participating in the province's football

academies, including Kerman, Sirjan, and Bam. The statistical population had 150 female soccer players participating in football academies, all selected as a statistical sample using the total number sampling method. The research instruments were a relational marketing questionnaire and a questionnaire for attracting females to football academies, which were designed and used based on the Likert scale, based on a researcher-developed scale (relationship marketing dimensions) and (Geib et al., 2005) questionnaire (attracting customer scale). The tool consisted of 3 sections that were appropriate to the subject and objectives of the research, including a cover letter, personal information form, related marketing components, and attracting females to football academies.

In the attached letter, the purpose of distributing the questionnaire and the need for the cooperation of the respondents, as well as instructions on how to complete the questionnaire, were stated. The components of relationship marketing included quality, commitment, trust, conflict management, communication, and loyalty, measured by 30 items. The variable of attracting females to football academies also had seven items. Five sports marketing management experts confirmed the face and content validity of the questionnaires. Also, to evaluate the questionnaire's reliability, a questionnaire prototype was distributed among 30 research community members, and its reliability was obtained using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha method and combined reliability were used to ensure the instrument's reliability. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha method in a pilot study on a sample of 30 academy clients. A higher alpha value of 0.7 and a value of hybrid reliability indices higher than 0.8 for the research variables indicate the optimal reliability of the research tool, which is shown in Table 1. Formal, content and structural validity were used to evaluate the instrument's validity. The content validity of the research tool was reviewed and confirmed based on a survey of five sports marketing experts and experts, and based on these comments, and slight changes were made in the sentences and writing the statements of the tool. Confirmatory factor analysis and convergent validity were used to evaluate the validity of the instrument structure. In confirmatory factor analysis, factor loads higher than 0.5 indicate the validity of the research tool, which confirms the results of factor analysis in the number one table of instrument validity. Convergent validity was also estimated by calculating the mean of extracted variance. The variance extracted for the research tool in Table 1 was higher than the suggested value (0.5). These indicators also indicate the convergent validity of the research tool. The results of confirmatory factor analysis values, combined reliability, Cronbach's alpha, and mean-variance extracted are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha values, reliability Combined variance and mean were extracted.

Variable	Objects	Confirmatory factor analysis	Composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha	Mean-variance extracted
Commitment	Q1	0.86	0.86	0.88	0.73
	Q2	0.83			
	Q3	0.79			
	Q4	0.80			
	Q5	0.81			
Quality	Q6	0.85	0.89	0.87	0.75
	Q7	0.86			
	Q^A	0.78			
	Q9	0.77			

Variable	Objects	Confirmatory factor analysis	Composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha	Mean-variance extracted
Trust	Q10	0.81	0.88	0.89	0.76
	Q11	0.83			
	Q12	0.86			
	Q13	0.79			
	Q14	0.86			
Communication	Q15	0.81	0.90	0.87	0.79
	Q16	0.83			
	Q17	0.88			
	Q18	0.86			
	Q19	0.81			
Conflict management	Q20	0.80	0.86	0.85	0.77
	Q21	0.84			
	Q22	0.82			
	Q23	0.79			
	Q24	0.81			
Loyalty	Q25	0.89	0.84	0.82	0.76
	Q26	0.78			
	Q27	0.85			
	Q28	0.91			
	Q29	0.87			
Attracting females to football academies	Q30	0.88	0.88	0.89	0.78
	Q31	0.88			
	Q32	0.80			
	Q33	0.86			
	Q34	0.79			
	Q35	0.83			
	Q36	0.82			
	Q37	0.88			

The results in [Table 1](#) confirm the validity and reliability indicators of the surveys. Data collection was conducted by distributing 150 questionnaires via email and google form. A total of 130 questionnaires were returned, and among the returned questionnaires, 119 valid questionnaires were used in the data analysis process. SPSS version 23 and AMOS version 21 were used for data analysis.

3. Results

So, all measurement models were first examined to determine the acceptable level of each index for measurement models. First, seven measurement models related to the seven research variables were tested separately. [Table 2](#) presents the general fit indices for the measurement models.

Table 2. Fit indicators of measurement models.

Index name	CMIN/Df	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
Commitment	2.23	0.91	0.91	0.92	0.91	0.056
Quality	2.42	0.93	0.92	0.93	0.92	0.064
Trust	2.29	0.92	0.91	0.92	0.93	0.043
Communication	2.11	0.91	0.94	0.94	0.95	0.031
Conflict management	2.68	0.92	0.91	0.92	0.92	0.049
Loyalty	2.74	0.93	0.91	0.92	0.93	0.058

Index name	CMIN/Df	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
Attracting females to football academies	2.33	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.068
acceptable	Three>	0.90<	0.90<	0.90<	0.90<	0.10<

According to the results of Table 2, it can be concluded that the measurement patterns have a good fit and the general indicators confirm that the data support the patterns well. After reviewing and confirming the measurement patterns in the first step, structural equation modeling was used in the second step to test the relationships. Table 3 presents the general indicators of fit of the structural equation model of the research model.

Table 3. General indicators of research model fit.

Index name	CMIN/Df	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
Final model	2.40	0.93	0.92	0.91	0.93	0.068
acceptable	<3	>0.90	>0.90	>0.90	>0.90	0.10<

According to table three, it can be concluded that the general indicators show a good fit of the model by the data. In other words, the collected data supported the model well. The structural equation model of the research, along with the regression coefficient, is presented in Figure 2.

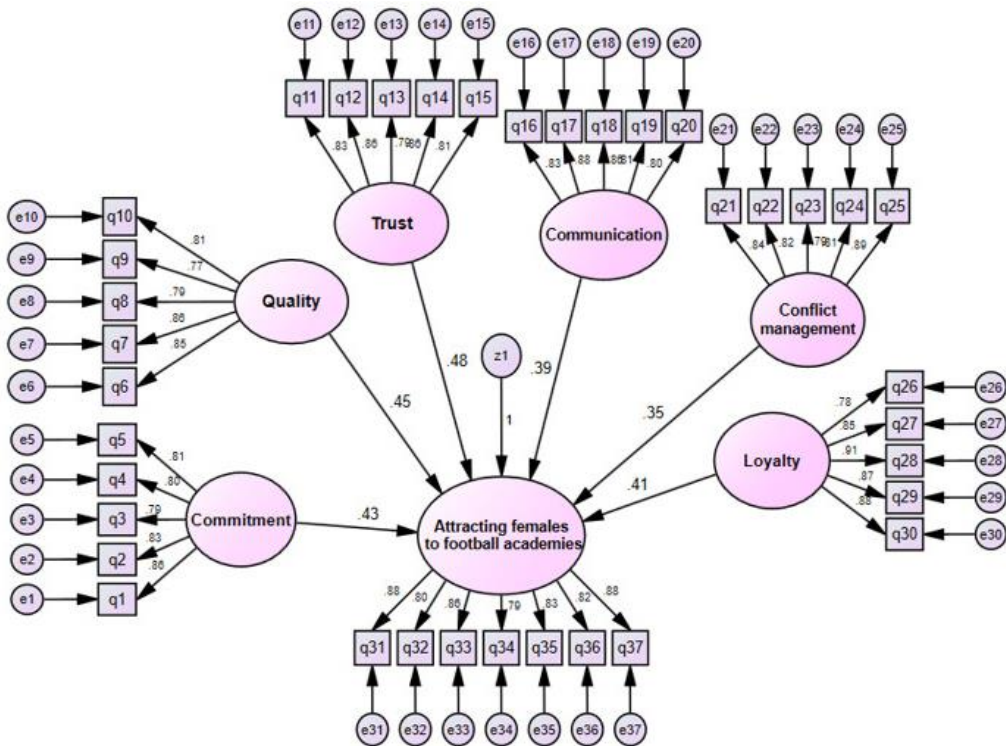


Figure 2. Structural equation model of research.

After reviewing and confirming the model, two partial indicators of critical value and p have been used to test the significance of the relationship. The critical value is obtained by dividing the "regression weight estimate" by the "standard error." Based on the significance level of 0.05, the critical value should be greater than 1.96. Less than this value, the relevant parameter in the template is not considered necessary. Also, values less than 0.05 for p value indicate a significant difference between the calculated value for regression weights with a value of zero at the confidence level of 0.95. [Table 4](#) shows the relationships related to the research model, regression coefficients, and the values of partial indicators related to each connection.

Table 4. Regression coefficients and test results of relationships.

Number	Exogenous variable	Direction	Endogenous variable	Beta coefficient	Critical value	Meaningful	Result
1	Commitment	→	Attracting females to football academies	0.43	13.96	***	Confirmed
2	Quality	→	Attracting females to football academies	0.45	17.63	***	Confirmed
3	Trust	→	Attracting females to football academies	0.48	16.87	***	Confirmed
4	Communication	→	Attracting females to football academies	0.39	13.11	***	Confirmed
5	Conflict management	→	Attracting females to football academies	0.35	11.89	***	Confirmed
6	Loyalty	→	Attracting females to football academies	0.41	14.23	***	Confirmed

According to the results and indicators obtained in [Table 4](#), the relationships drawn in the research model have been confirmed.

4. Discussion and conclusion

The prosperity of female football academies and the attraction of more fans to the sport can be significant in two ways. On the one hand, from a marketing perspective, the development of enthusiasts as the main customers of football academies can provide the necessary grounds for strengthening the financial strength of academies and training centers in this field. This increase in revenue can lead to the development and strengthening of infrastructure in female football education. On the other hand, the prosperity of female soccer centers and academies can be a promising window for developing talent that will somehow affect the future performance of female soccer in the field. This aspect becomes more important than the development of football academies when females face significant cultural, social, and hardware constraints on participating in various aspects of the sport and no doubt address related concepts. The presence of females in multiple sports fields can facilitate the conditions for the presence of females. In this regard, the general purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of relational marketing components on attracting females to football academies in Kerman province.

Some of the findings of this study showed that trust as one of the dimensions of relationship marketing has a positive and significant effect on attracting females to football academies in Kerman province. In other words, with the increase in the level of trust, it can be expected that the recruitment of females to football academies will also increase. Trust is one of the most critical requirements between customer retention and academia because customers pay close attention to the other party's promises and the values received. In a study by [Darvish \(2012\)](#), trust as one of the components of customer relationship quality positively affected customer loyalty. [Sin et al. \(2002\)](#), also argued that higher levels of trust between users and service providers will increase the likelihood of continuing the relationship. The findings of [Alishiri et al. \(2012\)](#) also showed that the components of relational marketing, including trust, affect customer loyalty, which is consistent with the present study. The findings of [Jamshidian \(2015\)](#) also indicated the positive effect of trust on customer loyalty. According to the results, it is possible to increase trust by eliminating mistrust and thus increase the attraction of females to football academies. Also, careful training, keeping the players' secrets, paying full attention to the activities, and implementing the services promised by the managers and officials of football academies will provide the necessary conditions to attract more females to football academies. Therefore, the managers and owners of football academies must insist on fulfilling the obligations and promises they give to the players. Also, providing quality services because this action has gained the trust and confidence of people; as a result, customer loyalty to football academies will increase. Attracting customers, attracting customers' attention and trust should be considered significant. So, managers and officials of football academies should pay close attention to the benefits of confidence in the process of attracting more females, and on the other hand, by creating a reasonable and appropriate atmosphere, trust to develop players to help attract new players and retain old ones. Given the social and cultural conditions that govern females' activities, the importance of providing the requirements to gain their trust to participate in sports programs is much more colorful.

The finding of this study showed that commitment as another component of relationship marketing has a positive and significant effect on attracting females to football academies in Kerman. In other words, mutual commitment increases the attraction of females to football academies. Commitment is an important factor in building a long-term relationship with the customer that encourages people to attract and continue to work in their favorite sport. Football academies' commitment to their various social, cultural, and sporting missions, and their committed response to females' expectations and demands, create a commitment-based relationship between them as service providers and females as the clients of these academies will be established. This mutual commitment will provide the conditions for attracting and continuing the activities of females in football academies. [Morgan and Hunt \(1994\)](#), considered relationship commitment as an important factor in the success of relationship marketing and introduced it as an important variable to predict customer attraction. [Van Tonder and Petzer \(2018\)](#) also showed that emotional commitment positively affects customer engagement. In line to the results of this study, [Shajarian et al. \(2018\)](#), also found a significant relationship between commitment and service quality. Also, [Alishiri et al. \(2012\)](#) showed that commitment had

a significant relationship with customer loyalty. In research by [Darvish \(2012\)](#), committing to the customer causes customer retention and, as a result, mutual commitment. Applying and designing new services based on the player's needs and paying attention to them, correct behaviors when providing services, and responding to problems are the main elements in showing the commitment of football academies to attract females to them. Mutual commitment between players and football academies ultimately leads to academy profitability and player satisfaction.

Academies achieve the direct effect of commitment on customer acquisition by valuing the needs and wants of customers. It seems that football academies should strive to provide the best service to customers; Because today, customers pay attention to special and superior services and consider it a criterion for their choice. Therefore, if the managers and staff of football academies can show more flexibility and perform better in serving and fulfilling their obligations, they can see more loyalty from their players. This study also showed that communication has an effective role in attracting females to football academies in Kerman province. In other words, with the increase in the communication index, the attraction of females to football academies increases. [Sin et al. \(2002\)](#) also believes that when there is an effective relationship between the organization and its customers, a better relationship will be established, and customers will be more easily attracted to the organization. [Buhler and Nufer \(2012\)](#), in a study, concluded that there is a significant relationship between communication and employee satisfaction that is consistent with the present study. However, it is inconsistent with the results of [\(Ranjbarian & Barari, 2010\)](#). This mismatch can be due to different fields and statistical populations in these two studies. Effective communication networks can help females gain more confidence in football academies by creating more transparency. Communication can strengthen trust by helping to resolve disputes and meet expectations [\(Sin et al., 2002\)](#). Relationship benefits are an important and effective variable on how the customer perceives the services provided and his interactions with the organization. Indeed, the benefits of the relationship create a lot of value for customers in the service experience [\(Ng et al., 2011\)](#). Concerning gender, the concept of effective communication becomes more important for females. Due to their gender nature, females prioritize communication in their relationships and interactions. From this perspective, paying attention to the issue of communication can affect females' decisions and tendencies to participate in various sports. The more confident relationships are formed, the more confident females will be in different sports. According to the research results, communication and complete information are provided to the relevant managers and officials at the right time to be informed and to be able to help the players at the right time to help and provide them. Managers and staff of football academies while paying more attention to the requests and suggestions of customers and by providing useful and reliable information through the public relations department of football academies and, in general, establishing a strong relationship and respectful behavior with the client. Customers can retain their customers and attract new customers. Therefore, the managers and officials of football academies should pay more attention to the mentioned component to retain more customers and make them loyal to the club, consequently bringing more profitability to the club. Also, in case of dissatisfaction and complaint from the player, the problem can

be solved intelligently through communication to regain the customer's satisfaction, which is important for this component.

The findings of the fourth hypothesis showed that conflict management plays an influential role in attracting females to football academies in Kerman province. In other words, by strengthening the control and management of conflict in the relations of football academies with their customers, the attraction of females to football academies increases. This section aligns with [Ranjbarian and Barari \(2010\)](#) research results. [Jamshidian \(2015\)](#) results also showed that handling complaints positively affects customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. According to Oly [Ndubisi and Kok Wah \(2005\)](#), the service provider's ability to manage conflict directly affects customer attraction and loyalty. According to the results of this research, the managers and officials of the academies should try to allocate time commensurate with the player's requests to listen to their questions and problems. Also, when announcing the rules or responding to the players, there should be no conflict or congestion to cause dissatisfaction. Therefore, the managers and staff of football academies should manage potential conflicts by controlling them and preventing any possible problems, as well as resolving them by discussing the issues and conflicts that have arisen. Today, customers are looking for a calm and peaceful atmosphere. They are far from challenging to satisfy their sport's needs. The managers and staff of football academies must pay attention to these points in the discussion of services and use them to achieve their goals of attracting females. The ability to solve problems and manage conflict can hugely impact pact on player recruitment, and managers and staff of football academies need to pay attention to this point when discussing service delivery.

We indicated that loyalty has a positive and significant role in attracting females to football academies in Kerman province. With the development of the loyalty component, females' recruitment in football academies increases. Loyalty refers to having a sense of belonging and a desire to be maintained in a group. [Hosseini et al. \(2020\)](#), in their research, measured marketing tactics related to customer appreciation loyalty. The loyalty variable has a significant relationship with customer retention and is consistent with the present study. [Stavros et al. \(2008\)](#) believe that relationship marketing focuses on the customer. Its primary benefits in the sports sector include customer attraction, customer retention, increasing loyalty, reducing the organization's marketing costs, and profitability. Academies' loyalty to their players and expressing this loyalty in practice can attract the attention of females and provide a basis for attracting and retaining them. Undoubtedly, the academies' loyalty to their players has led to a two-way interaction between them, which can lead to stronger and closer relationships in the long run. According to the research results, managers and officials of football academies should provide players with appropriate information about new sports methods and techniques, as well as changes made in this field and the fields of counseling and following the conditions of individuals. Act more actively so that participants feel special attention has been paid to them. Since relational marketing tries to attract, maintain, and strengthen relationships with customers, the managers, and officials of football academies in Kerman province can use this approach to reach loyal customers. Also, this indicator of maintaining the customer is directly affected by the high levels of customer loyalty. Football academies can provide services to cardholders by anticipating discounts on payments, giving loyalty cards, giving

discounts and special services, or by forming associations and holding special celebrations. Attract, retain and increase customer loyalty.

We showed that the quality component also has an influential role in attracting females to football academies in Kerman province. This finding means that by increasing the quality of football academy services, the recruitment of females to these centers will improve. Quality of service refers to the main expectations of a customer that meets their expectations and maintains their satisfaction. This part of the findings is consistent with [Ranjbarian and Barari \(2010\)](#). [Hunt et al. \(2006\)](#) have introduced the quality of service delivery as one of the factors influencing the success of relational marketing strategy. [Saatchian et al. \(2013\)](#) also found a positive and significant relationship between service quality variables with loyalty, satisfaction, and the future presence of sports customers. Perceived service quality as one of the components of customer relationship quality in [Darvish \(2012\)](#) research has positively affected customer loyalty. According to the research results, quality is one of the essential elements in relational marketing that attracts and retains females to football academies. Therefore, managers and officials of football academies must plan the quality of their services at the highest level with careful and appropriate planning to facilitate customer attraction. It can be said that the quality of services of football academies today is a vital tool to gain a competitive advantage among these centers. Due to the constant changes in the market and the addition of other competitors, the managers of football academies should try to improve the knowledge of their staff in dealing with customers in different parts of the academies, such as admission, sports counseling, nutrition, management, and other items. Satisfy people. When the football academies improve the quality, there will be positive and effective results in attracting and retaining customers, which will result in the prosperity of the football academies and the increase in the tendency of females to play football. Given that quality is directly related to customer tastes, football academies should strive to monitor individuals' expectations. And desires and provide their services following these demands to improve the perceived quality of services offered. Today, competition in various industries, including sports, is increasing. Because sports service organizations, like football academies, provide similar services to customers, competition for customer acquisition and, most importantly, customer loyalty among them also intensifies. Therefore, relationship marketing in the dimensions of trust, commitment, communication, conflict management, loyalty, quality, customer relationship development, infrastructure, and customer orientation can increase the number of customers. Considering the findings of the present study, they indicate that by applying the relationship marketing approach in football academies of Kerman province, the number of users can be increased.

Relationship marketing seeks to establish long-term relationships with customers that lead to positive behaviors from customers ([Bee & Kahie, 2006](#)). On the other hand, due to the competitiveness of all markets, this competition and understanding the importance of attracting and retaining customers has led organizations to gradually move towards establishing and maintaining long-term relationships with customers, which according to researchers, is appropriate relationship marketing. The best option is to achieve this ([Seyed Javadin et al., 2014](#)). Accordingly, managers and owners of football academies in Kerman province can use the relationship marketing approach and by using components such as trust, commitment, communication, conflict management, loyalty, quality to

attract more customers. Take a step. Performing actions such as fulfilling obligations on time, respecting the tastes of players, fulfilling promises, promises and contracts, providing quality services, observing environmental health, creating a happy and fun atmosphere in the complex, planning the use of football academies services, Effective and valuable advertising, providing accurate information about customer preferences and football academies, responding to customer needs and wants, using new and up-to-date services, service innovation, flexibility in changing services, preventing potential conflicts and resolving And the conflict season can help attract more customers and build long-term relationships.

Conducting various research with quantitative and qualitative approaches to study different aspects of attracting females in other sports can provide the necessary grounds for a more active presence of females in different levels of sports. Due to the additional restrictions, females face in participating in various sports, addressing concepts that simultaneously contribute to the economic prosperity of females' sports venues and contribute to a greater tendency of females to enter the sports field can be a priority in executive and research strategies. Due to the cultural, social, economic, and geographical diversity and the presence of females in terms of quality and quantity in sports in different provinces, it is recommended to study the concepts related to attracting female athletes in other regions and sports.

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نقش نسبی مؤلفه‌های بازاریابی رابطه‌مند در جذب بانوان به آکادمی‌های فوتبال (مطالعه موردی: آکادمی‌های فوتبال بانوان استان کرمان)

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کلیدواژه

ارتباطات
بازاریابی رابطه‌مند
زنان
کیفیت
وفاداری

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی اصیل

چکیده

هدف: با توجه به اهمیت جذب بانوان به آکادمی‌های فوتبال و همچنین رونق آکادمی‌ها در راستای توسعه پایدار ورزش بانوان، هدف کلی این پژوهش مطالعه نقش نسبی مؤلفه‌های بازاریابی رابطه‌مند در جذب بانوان به آکادمی‌های فوتبال استان کرمان بود.

روش: تحقیق حاضر از نظر هدف کاربردی و از نظر ماهیت از نوع تحقیقات توصیفی-پیمایشی بود که به صورت میدانی انجام گرفت. جامعه آماری این پژوهش شامل تمامی بانوان در آکادمی‌های فوتبال استان کرمان بودند که با استفاده از روش نمونه‌گیری تمام شمار تعداد ۱۵۰ نفر به عنوان نمونه آماری مورد مطالعه قرار گرفتند. اندازه‌گیری مؤلفه‌های بازاریابی رابطه‌مند با پرسشنامه محقق ساخته و اندازه‌گیری جذب بانوان به آکادمی‌های فوتبال با اقتباس از پرسشنامه **گیب و همکاران (۲۰۰۵)** انجام گرفت. پایایی ابزار بر اساس آلفای کرونباخ و روایی ابزار با استفاده از روایی صوری، محتوا و روایی سازه تأیید گردید.

یافته‌ها: یافته‌های پژوهش نشان داد که مؤلفه‌های بازاریابی رابطه‌مند (اعتماد، تعهد، ارتباطات، مدیریت تعارض، وفاداری، و کیفیت) بر جذب بانوان به آکادمی‌های فوتبال تأثیر مثبت و معناداری داشته‌اند. با توجه به یافته‌ها، تمرکز بر بازاریابی رابطه‌مند و مؤلفه‌های آن می‌تواند زمینه لازم را در جهت جذب بیشتر بانوان به آکادمی‌های فوتبال و در نتیجه رونق این مراکز فراهم نماید.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: این پژوهش از محدود پژوهش‌هایی محسوب می‌شود که در حوزه جذب بانوان به آکادمی‌های فوتبال با تأکید بر نقش بازاریابی رابطه‌مند انجام گرفته است و می‌تواند در توسعه فوتبال زنان و رونق آکادمی‌های فوتبال تأثیرگذار باشد.

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