



Key Propelling of Customer Lifetime Value in Iranian Sports Clubs

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The current research was conducted to identify the key Propelling of customer lifetime value in sports clubs of Iran.

Methodology: This research is practical in terms of purpose and mixed in nature and method. The research was conducted in two parts, qualitative and quantitative. The sample in the qualitative section consisted of 16 sports experts and 413 sports managers of sports clubs in the quantitative section. The sample selection in the qualitative part was targeted with a snowball approach, and the data was collected with semi-structured interviews. In the quantitative section, the sample size was selected from the stratified random cluster sampling method, and a questionnaire output collected the data from the qualitative part. Collecting the data was done by the Delphi method, and structural equation Modelling was used to confirm the model. Statistical analyses were performed with SPSS 25 and Amos 26.

Findings: The results show that the key Propelling of customer lifetime value includes hardware, software, financial, strategic, social, motivational, behavioral, process, and executive factors.

Originality: Few studies have been conducted on customer lifetime value in sports. This paper is the internal research that identifies critical Propelling that affects customer lifetime value in sports clubs. Also, the results of this research show that the attention of sports managers to the nine identified factors effectively increases the lifetime value of sports customers. In line with the results, it is suggested that managers, by considering the components of motivational, executive, and behavioral factors in customer satisfaction and loyalty, improve their trust and confidence, and by considering strategic and financial factors, the ability to predict. They got the future status of the customers.

Keywords

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1. Introduction

Today's motivation for participating in sports activities is not to reach high levels and win a championship but to gain health, well-being, vitality, social relations, and avoid diseases, among the important reasons for participating in sports (Ganjkhano et al., 2021). In recent years, marketers have been able to segment customers and treat them according to this classification by obtaining customer profit and lifetime value. One of these methods to get customer profit is the customer lifetime value (Monalisa, 2018). The paradigm of creating value for the customer and maintaining competitive advantage is beyond making decisions solely on service quality and customer satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2019). The value criterion is considered the value of today's organizations according to the provision of value in the organization that it gives in a way that it values (Jašek et al., 2019). For this reason, in competitive environments, paying attention to customers' values in purchasing goods and using services over a long time is imperative. Promoting relationships and unique value creation for customers leads to creating an active key value in business strategies, ultimately increasing market share. Organizations are trying to change their attitude toward profitability and introduce new organizations to their structures. They try to make their organizations change their product and services. The effort of organizations is to make customers focus on themselves, and the primary key to these changes is the emergence of unique value creation for customers (Rosenbaum & Wong, 2010). Newell (2000) currency the absolute value of the customer in any organization is defined by relying on the value created by that organization for customers and, correspondingly, the value returned to the organization. From the customer's point of view, value occurs when the use of a product or service exceeds its costs (Segarra-Moliner & Moliner-Tena, 2016). Aeron et al. (2012), believed that the requirements and the essay values are identified (Aeron et al., 2012). So, specific values are given to the individual. An organization must understand the needs of its customers and turn this information into a tool for predicting the future and evaluating customer needs (Rizvandi et al., 2018).

2. Theoretical background

Customer lifetime value (CLV) is one of the key performance indicators in customer relations. The competition in the market is becoming more intense daily and responding to customers' needs to satisfy and create loyalty in them becomes more important. Organizations should be critical in maintaining concurrent maintenance and developing long-term and profitable relationships with them (Uppal & Mittal, 2019). In today's ultra-competitive environment, customers are one of the most important assets of businesses in many dynamic and competitive market organizations (Amin & Priansah, 2019). Treating all customers the same makes customers who have little value for the organization reduce the value of the customer for the organization; therefore, a method to discover customer value in the organization is highly needed.

It is evident that in such markets where the number of customers is incalculable and the subsequent needs are very diverse and different, no organization can provide ideal services to all customers. Also, using a single marketing method for all customers is impossible. Therefore, to maintain customer relations, it is necessary to know customers'

needs and behaviors in sports clubs (Jorkesh & Nazari, 2018). CLV, also called lifetime value, forms the core issue of customer value. Understanding its concept is one of the critical parts of research related to customer value. Since not all customers are financially attractive, the organization's limited resources should be spent on valuable customers (Sandoghhdaran et al., 2020). CLV is an essential concept in categorizing, selecting, and maintaining life and plays a fundamental role in the decision-making process. The lifetime value of strategic planning and competitive advantage is considered to increase profitability and identify more profitability and is one of the essential concepts that can be used for market segmentation (Moeini et al., 2012). Customer value can be seen by knowing the value produced from the total profit created for the organisation's future (Monalisa, 2018). As a combination of the sports industry, sports clubs are our society's most crucial service tools (consumer, human, and professional services). They reach the issue of how much and why they are satisfied with the service, and continuing to refer to them should be considered (Saatchian et al., 2013).

Currently, sports clubs are competing for customers' attention; each customer has different needs, expectations, and behaviors, so it is expected that the same treatment is not given to them from providing sports services. Managers not only have different expectations and needs for income and different characteristics, but these different behaviors must also be managed (Monalisa, 2018). Therefore, sports clubs are considered essential service institutions in developing sports, which are active in public, championship, and professional dimensions. The competitions of these clubs present serious challenges because sports services have features that make the work of marketers more difficult. Sports services are tangible and only an experience in the employee's mind because they have many qualities. They are factors that understand them well (Smith & Stewart, 2013). Mismanagement, failure to perform very ordinary services without consideration by the clubs, the activities of a company and providing for the benefit of the clubs have caused many challenges for the clubs and customers.

On the one hand, due to the lack of access to an integrated method to distinguish customers and value them, most sports clubs bear many costs to retain and attract customers. Also, the lack of monitoring caused the change in customer behavior during the service use periods. Furthermore, the lack of tracking is the reason for customer departure. On the other hand, it not only deprives the clubs of the benefits obtained from the customers but also destroys the benefits of new customers that will be given to the organization through them and may even cause adverse publicity. For this reason, it is essential to have a tool to value and monitor changes in customer behavior, categorize customers and predict their profitability using customer lifetime value for both service receivers and suppliers. Based on this, the researcher aims to extract the factors affecting the customer's lifetime value in sports as a predictor of the customer's value. A model that can use the results of this assessment to retain and attract customers and provide appropriate solutions to provide better services to customers in sports clubs.

The design of different models in different industries confirms the importance of customer lifetime value in the profitability of organizations. In research abroad, AboElHamd et al. (2020) argued that quality value and rainbow models perform better than traditional dynamic programming models, and significant results can be found without

them. They create overestimates or unrealistic production (AboElHamd et al., 2020). This work focuses on the Markov decision process and approximate dynamic programming (reinforcement learning and, finally, language quality value model and rainbow model). Another research by Mousavi and Amiri Aghdaie (2021) includes the identification of 20 components of the values considered by customers, which add to their longevity: among these indicators (regional facilities, quality of services, cleanliness and hygiene of the hotel, beauty of the space and interior arrangement and pricing) (Mousavi & Amiri Aghdaie, 2021). Ostadi and Abdollahi (2020), calculated this value based on the customer's mentality before purchase. They stated that this value becomes very important in calculating the lifetime value by removing the customer's mentality from the amount he paid for a product or service (Ostadi & Abdollahi, 2020). Another research (Afgababaei et al., 2020) stated that using the suggested system, recognizing the value of the offered services in the minds of the target customers compared to competitors and helping to price is based on value. Also, Nabizade and Rouhani (2020), in another research, a clustering model and prediction of customer lifetime based on data mining methods were designed. The review of various research showed that in predicting the class of customers, the performance of neural networks with an accuracy of 99.56% was better than other algorithms (Nabizade & Rouhani, 2020). Also, Amadi et al. (2019), in the study of the customer knowledge management model and brand equity on the lifetime value of customers of sports clubs in Rasht. They concluded that customer knowledge management and brand equity are two factors influencing the lifetime value of customers of sports clubs in Rasht. Also, this model can measure the margin profit of customers (Mousavi & Amiri Aghdaie, 2021). However, the most critical factors affecting the growth and development of the Iranian sports industry are different from different researchers, the most important of which are mentioned here: the presence of scientifically and practically experienced people in sports, changing the culture of society, policy-making High-ranking state officials, the growth and development of the society's economy, the globalization of sports, the influence of sports media and press, the quantitative and qualitative change of sports equipment and facilities, and the greater connection of sports with science (Aghaei Shahri & Azimzadeh, 2021).

We wanted to present a scientific model based on the opinions of experts and managers of sports clubs. From a practical point of view, most sports clubs can use the proposed model to manage customers and optimally allocate resources due to the conditions and fixed services they offer. It will lead to more profit, use it by analyzing the past information of a customer (the process of changes), commenting on his performance in the future and moving his behavior and performance in the direction of increasing the club's interest. Considering what we mentioned earlier, the factors affecting the customer lifetime value in each industry are unique according to the characteristics of that industry. The review of various research has shown that the point that should be considered in calculating customer lifetime value is that the calculation of CLV is completely variable depending on the industry and organization it is used in. Using a fixed equation to measure the lifetime value cycle is impossible. The life of all customers and influential factors benefited from this course in various industries. Therefore, it should be considered according to the requirements of the studied organization and the data in which it was

formed. An effort should be made to present the most accurate model with the existing conditions (Fader et al., 2005).

3. Methodology

The current research was practical in presenting the CLV model and its application in increasing the profitability of sports organizations. It has been done with a combined quantitative and qualitative method in the form of descriptive-survey research. The sample size in the qualitative part was done using a targeted non-random method. The number of 16 experts was identified based on expertise, experience, theoretical mastery, access and willingness, and customer lifetime value indicators were identified using the Delphi method. The overall reliability of the questionnaire was calculated as 0.85. In the quantitative part, the statistical population included 413 male and female athletes with at least six months of experience in public sports and membership in one of the sports clubs in the country's northwestern provinces, Zanjan, Kurdistan, Ardabil, West and East Azerbaijan, was distributed. Due to the dispersion and wideness of the target population, a targeted non-random method was used. The research tool was a questionnaire made by the researcher on customer lifetime value, including 33 items. The content validity of the questionnaires was confirmed by 50 members other than the original sample with the ordinal theta test. To enter the quantitative research stage, the obtained questionnaires had to be standardized, and the following steps were implemented. The validity of research tools included content validity (CVI and CVR). It was conducted by 13 academic experts and club managers outside the quantitative sample. In the content validity ratio, the Lawshe method was used, and in the content validity index, the Waltz and Bassel method was used (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the research sample.

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
	Man	286		69.24	Associate Degree
Woman	127	30.76	Bachelor's degree	144	34.8
			Master's degree	68	16.4
Total	413	100	PhD	6	1.45
			Total	413	100
Age	Frequency	Percent	Province	Frequency	Percent
	Less than 30 years	96		23.24	Zanjan
Kurdistan			89		21.54
Ardabil			71		17.19
30-40 years	131	31.71	Kermanshah	62	15.01
			East Azerbaijan	48	11.62
			Western Azerbaijan	41	9.92
over 40 years old	186	45.03	Total	413	100
			Total	413	100

4. Results

We chose the Delphi circle based on their knowledge of the subject. So, the list of university professors and sports managers was determined after knowing about the research topic and its process. Then, 16 of these people were interviewed by the researcher. Then, during the first stage, a semi-structured interview was arranged. In these interviews, the researcher tried first to explore experts' approach and view on customer lifetime value and the most important and driving factors. It should identify experts from the point of view and then share the findings of the review of sources with them and ask for their opinion. In these conversations, it was also the aim of the researcher to find the extent of experts' agreement with the native and local view of the customer's lifetime value in sports clubs. A summary of the critical points of the conversation with the circle of 16 experts is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics and history of the qualitative sample.

Row	Service location	post	Education level		Management background		Sports background		Publications		
			Master	PhD	Less than ten years	More than 20 years	Less than ten years	More than ten years	Book	Article	
P1	Sports club manager	Boss		*	*			-	*		*
P2	Fitness club	Certified expert	*			*		-	*		
P3	Fitness club	Certified expert		*		*		-	*		*
P4	Public Sports Board	Chairman of the board		*	*			-	*		*
P5	University	Faculty member		*		*		-	*	*	*
P6	Public Sports Board	Chairman of the board	*		*			-	*		
P8	University	Faculty member		*	*			-	*		*
P9	Public Sports Board	Chairman of the board		*		*		-	*		*
P10	University	Faculty member		*	*			-	*		*
P11	University	Faculty member		*		*		-	*	*	*
P12	Fitness club manager	Manager		*		*		-	*		*
P13	Fitness club manager	Manager	*		*			-	*		
P14	University	Faculty member		*	*			-	*		*
P15	Public Sports Board	Chairman of the board		*		*		-	*	*	*

Row	Service location	post	Education level		Management background		Sports background		Publications	
			Master	PhD	Less than ten years	More than 20 years	Less than ten years	More than ten years	Book	Article
P16	Federation of public sports	Manager		*		*	-	*		*
P17	Sports club manager	Manager		*	*		-	*		*
P18	Public Sports Board	Chairman of the board	*			*	-	*		

We introduce the key points from interviews with experts in the first stage of the Delphi method in [Table 3](#); and Primary indicators of customer lifetime value in sports clubs and the results of the first round of Delphi reforms in [Table 4](#):

Table 3. Key points emerging from interviews with experts in the first stage of the Delphi method.

Pricing	Customer experience	Allocation of financial resources and budget	Existence of sports facilities and infrastructure
Management style	Knowing the customer	Economic stability	Financial ability
Communication with the customer	Perceived value	The presence of communication tools	Equipment and technology
Responsiveness	Customer goals	Effectiveness of products	Management and planning
Customer satisfaction	Protective rules	Creating superior value for stakeholders	Communication and coordination
Attitudinal loyalty	Access to places	Creating confidence in people	Experienced trainers

Table 4. Primary indicators of customer lifetime value in sports clubs and the results of the first round of Delphi reforms.

Codes	Indicators	Coefficient Kendall (w)	Percentage of agreement	Qualitative changes
A1	Allocation of financial resources and budget	0.82	95	-
A2	Smart management style (smart sports club software)	0.735	88	-
A3	Proper management and planning	0.687	79	-
A4	Easy access to sports facilities	0.702	75	-
A5	Willingness to repurchase and create retention rates	0.526	63	-
A6	Competitive Pricing	0.821	3/90	-
A7	Communicate properly with customers	0.683	1/86	-
A8	Accountability of managers and coaches of clubs	0.702	3/93	-
A9	Commitment and responsibility of the club manager	0.695	87	-
A10	Using expert and highly knowledgeable trainers	0.764	9/91	-
A11	Planning to allocate discounts and bonuses	0.509	57	*merge
A12	Creating confidence in customers	0.733	1/84	-
A13	The Effect of customer behavioral loyalty	0.861	4/90	-
A14	Cleaning and compliance with health principles in the club	-	-	delete

Codes	Indicators	Coefficient Kendall (w)	Percentage of agreement	Qualitative changes
A15	Creating emotional and behavioral commitment in the customer	0.569	6/62	-
A16	Existence of protective laws in the club (sports insurance and civil liability insurance)	0.603	2/74	-
A17	Having different goals for using the services of clubs	0.901	4/93	-
A18	Necessary facilities and organizations	0.896	1/96	-
A19	Creating diversity and innovation in sports activities	-	-	delete
A20	Beliefs and Norms in Society	0.624	3/76	-
A21	Customer satisfaction	0.923	100	-
A22	Increasing the share of sports in household budgets	0.881	8/87	-
A23	Customers' mental image/mental conflict	0.891	6/91	-
A24	The customer's feelings toward the club's brand and name	0.754	1/86	-
A25	The effect of increasing public welfare	0.864	3/93	-
A26	Existence of places, facilities, and sports infrastructure	0.963	94	-
A27	Creating superior value with stakeholders and interacting with them	0.816	7/89	-
A28	Effectiveness of services and products	0.874	9/77	-
A29	Hardware and software limitations	-	-	delete
A30	Using up-to-date and modern equipment and technologies	0.792	4/69	-
A31	The usefulness of the services provided with the amount of money paid	0.843	9/83	-
A32	Management performance in the field of customer retention	0.719	4/59	-
A33	Identify ways to generate income	-	-	*merge
A34	Use of human resources and experienced trainers	0.795	6/87	-
A35	Having families with high financial resources	0.783	5/84	-
A36	Attention to privatization in sports	0.702	6/75	-
A37	Availability of appropriate communication tools	0.665	4/69	-
A38	Create interactive and Active partnerships with customers	0.696	71	-
A39	The price set for using the service	0.825	5/96	-
A40	The effect of economic stability and current affairs of the country	0.819	2/83	-
A41	Environmental studies in the field of club sports	0.503	57	-
A42	Knowing the customer	0.791	2/63	-
A43	Pleasant or unpleasant customer experiences	0.897	6/84	-
A44	Creating attitudinal loyalty in customers	0.926	90	-
A45	Value and behavioral patterns of family members	0.852	3/76	-
A46	Implementation of various complementary, extracurricular/developmental activities	0.615	62	-
A47	Increasing the productivity and efficiency of technical and specialized trainers	-	-	delete
A48	Time management in clubs	-	-	delete
A49	The effect of the family environment Using famous figures and sports elite	-	-	delete
A50	on people's tendency toward sports	0.817	1/79	-
A51	Development and interaction with sports boards	-	-	delete
A52	The impact of club switching costs	-	-	delete
A53	The effect of customer's accounting obligation on the lifetime value	-	-	delete

After conducting the first stage and analyzing the content of the interviews, the drivers of customer lifetime value in sports were extracted from the perspective of these 16 experts. These codes were reviewed by the codes extracted from the sources, and common codes were removed, and finally, 54 codes in 9 categories were determined as effective codes on customer lifetime value. W. Kendall's rank test (W coefficient of agreement) was used to saturate the experts' opinions in both Delphi rounds. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. The results of experts' agreement in Delphi rounds & Validity indicators.

	First round Kendall's W(a)	Second round Kendall's W(a)	First round Chi- Square	Second round Chi-Square	CVI	CVR
CLV factors	0/72	0/80	16/645	16/891	0/86	0/93
Hardware	0/76	0/81			0/93	0/83
Software	0/71	0/79			0/88	0/77
Financial	0/78	0/85			0/79	0/81
Strategic	0/68	0/82			0/87	0/80
Social	0/70	0/77			0/92	0/79
Motivational	0/74	0/82			0/86	0/89
Behavioral	0/77	0/76			0/91	0/87
Process	0/66	0/83			0/84	0/91
Executive	0/71	0/80	0/87	0/84		

According to Kendall's results, the agreement between the experts is acceptable, and all agree upon the calculated factors. Also, the questionnaire has content validity based on the desired indicators.

5. Managerial implications

During the quantitative phase of research and after collecting the data in the second stage of the Delphi method, to find the level of experts' agreement with each factor, the average of the factors and the weight of the factors were calculated using Shannon's technique. Table 6 shows each index's sum, average, and category scores. As we offer in Table 6, the category of financial factors, including indicators of financial resources and economic stability budget, financial capability, price of and using services, have the highest score and average. The experts recognize the motivational categories of executive and behavioural factors as necessary. In the last row of importance is the social category.

Table 6. Findings from the second stage of Delphi and Shannon's technique.

Agents	Total score	Average	Category average	Agent information load	Factor weight based on Shannon's	Average batch weight
Hardware factors	Existence of sports facilities	81	4/50	4/38	1/431	0/4342/0
	Facilities and organizations	79	4/38		1/425	0/04339

	Agents	Total score	Average	Category average	Agent information load	Factor weight based on Shannon's	Average batch weight
	Equipment and technology	77	4/27		1/409	0/04326	
Software Factors	Use of experienced human resources	87	4/83	4/33	1/436	0/04359	0/04338
	Communication and coordination	73	4/05		1/416	0/04331	
	The presence of advertisements, publications	75	4/19		1/423	0/04334	
	Management and planning	77	4/27		1/405	0/04329	
	Financial resources and budget	83	4/61		1/454	0/04383	
Financial factors	Economic stability	86	4/89	4/65	1/437	0/04361	0/04375
	Financial ability	78	4/33		1/462	0/04387	
	The price of using the service	86	4/77		1/448	0/04372	
Strategic factors	Appropriate communication tool	63	3/66	4/44	1/451	0/04376	0/04345
	Service effectiveness	89	4/94		1/426	0/04340	
	Superior value for stakeholders	77	4/27		1/421	0/04332	
	Goal oriented managers	79	4/38		1/437	0/04361	
	Privatization	85	4/72		1/413	0/04329	
	Managing beneficial relationships	88	4/89		1/429	0/04342	
	Variety of activities	76	4/22		1/435	0/04358	
	Environmental studies	81	4/50		1/407	0/04328	
Social factors	Limitation of sports facilities	72	4/00	4/16	1/421	0/04333	0/04331
	Beliefs and social norms	77	4/27		1/409	0/04326	
	The share of sports in the household budget	81	4/50		1/411	0/04330	
	People's family environment	73	4/05		1/425	0/04339	
	Value patterns of families	72	4/00		1/417	0/04331	
Motivational factors	Customer goals	76	4/22		1/452	0/04377	
	Protective rules	84	4/66		1/460	0/04386	

	Agents	Total score	Average	Category average	Agent information load	Factor weight based on Shannon's	Average batch weight
	Access to sports facilities	85	4/72	4/60	1/439	0/04364	0/04372
	Pricing rate	83	4/61		1/448	0/04372	
	The quality of service	89	4/94		1/457	0/04379	
	Seasonal discounts	81	4/50		1/435	0/04358	
Behavioral factors	Customer satisfaction	79	4/38	4/46	1/411	0/04330	0/04348
	Customer loyalty	80	4/44		1/431	0/04342	
	Willingness to repurchase	82	4/57		1/448	0/04372	
	Creating confidence in people	76	4/22		1/437	0/04361	
	Behavioral and emotional commitment	85	4/72		1/425	0/04339	
Process factors	Customer experience	78	4/33	4/41	1/435	0/04358	0/04339
	Knowing the customer	80	4/44		1/431	0/04342	
	Perceived value	77	4/27		1/417	0/04331	
	The mental image of customers	83	4/61		1/407	0/04328	
Executive Factors	Management style	73	4/05	4/49	1/452	0/04377	0/04358
	Communication with the customer	79	4/38		1/425	0/04339	
	Responsiveness	82	4/57		1/439	0/04364	
	Expertise of trainers	87	4/83		1/460	0/04386	

A research questionnaire was calculated from the experts' opinions to model and determine the relationships between the factors presented. This questionnaire was distributed among 413 coaches of sports clubs, managers, and the website of sports boards; considering the limitedness, dispersion, and extent of the target population, the sample size selection was made by cluster sampling method. Skewness and kurtosis tests were used to check the normality of the distribution of variables.

Table 7. Normality of data based on natural distribution.

Evaluation of the normality of the distribution of the variables				
Component	The standard error	Elongation	The standard error	Crookedness
Hardware factors	0/256	-0/799	0/129	-0/266
Software factors	0/256	-0/595	0/129	-0/221
Financial factors	0/256	-0/647	0/129	-0/240
Strategic factors	0/256	-0/731	0/129	-0/115
Social factors	0/256	-0/843	0/129	-0/328

Evaluation of the normality of the distribution of the variables				
Motivational factors	0/256	-0/682	0/129	-0/461
Behavioral factors	0/256	-0/558	0/129	-0/159
Process factors	0/256	-0/753	0/129	-0/237
Executive factors	0/256	-0/761	0/129	-0/493

Based on the findings of Table 7 and regarding the experts' arguments, the data had a normal distribution regarding the reliability of the questionnaire, which is another requirement for verifying the measurement model. Two statistical methods were used: Cronbach's alpha coefficient to evaluate the internal consistency of the questionnaires and composite reliability or construct reliability of the questionnaire. The reason for using the combined reliability method in addition to Cronbach's alpha coefficient was that Cronbach's alpha coefficient considers the weight of all items related to a variable to be the same. Therefore, the combined reliability method is also suggested to estimate the reliability of the items related to the variables used with the structural equation modelling approach.

Table 8. Convergent, divergent, reliable and correlation of factors.

Factor	CR	AVE	MSV	Max R(H)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Hardware	0/82	0/66	0/38	0/91	0/61								
Software	0/80	0/61	0/32	0/89	0/69	0/72							
Financial	0/86	0/63	0/22	0/96	0/89	0/82	0/80						
Strategic	0/84	0/64	0/31	0/87	0/73	0/68	0/72	0/65					
Social	0/92	0/65	0/28	0/83	0/58	0/50	0/63	0/59	0/69				
Motivational	0/89	0/67	0/36	0/86	0/74	0/73	0/89	0/75	0/72	0/79			
Behavioral	0/84	0/60	0/29	0/81	0/82	0/76	0/74	0/81	0/69	0/75	0/82		
A process	0/87	0/62	0/39	0/90	0/69	0/52	0/76	0/61	0/63	0/74	0/78	0/65	
Executive	0/81	0/67	0/34	0/87	0/82	0/74	0/73	0/84	0/75	0/71	0/76	0/86	0/81

CR>AVE, MAXRH>0.80, ASV<AVE, CR>0.7, AVE>0.5, MSV<AVE

Table 6 shows the results of the external validity evaluation of the test instrument. The extracted variance indices show the convergent validity evaluation between the components. The instrument used the index of maximum shared variance for divergent validity. Composite reliability was used to estimate reliability. Based on the findings, the test tool has good validity and reliability. After analyzing the factors, the final customer lifetime value model was presented. Figure 1 shows the final customer lifetime value model. The nine factors of hardware, software, financial, strategic, social, motivational, behavioral, process, and implementation drive lifetime value in sports clubs.

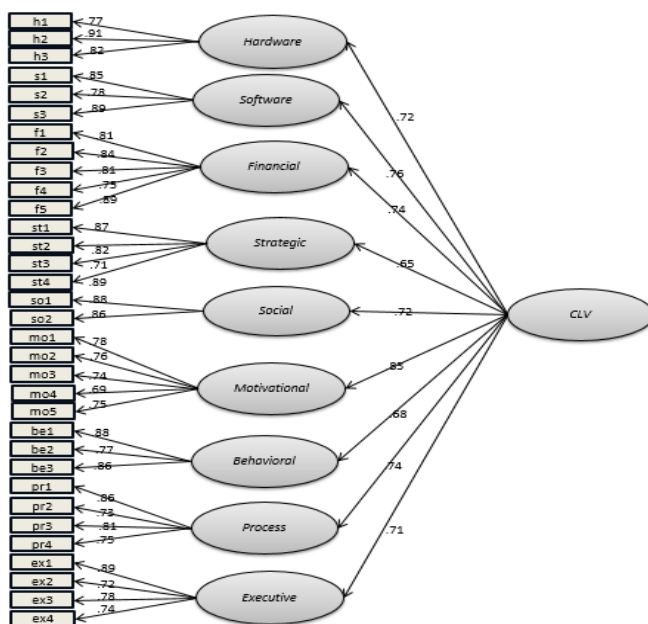


Figure 1. Confirmatory factor analysis of customer lifetime value questionnaire

Figure 1 and Table 9 show the results of evaluating the overall fit of the customer lifetime value driver model. The most crucial fit statistic is the chi-square statistic. This statistic measures the difference between the observed and estimated matrices. This statistic is very sensitive to the sample size. If the value of the statistic depends on the degree of freedom if it is divided and the result is less than 2, it is suitable for this questionnaire. This value is equal to 1.51. Other goodness of fit indices such as (0.90) CFI, (0.91) GFI, and (0.99) AGFI, all three with values above 0.90 and (0.037) RMSEA with a value less than 0.05 to standard indices. The correlations are close, indicating the model's acceptable and desirable fit.

Table 9. Fit indices of customer lifetime value model

RMSEA	AGFI	GFI	NFI	NNFI	CFI	χ^2/DF	DF	χ^2	Indicator
.037	.99	.91	.90	.93	.90	1.51	203	307.42	Amounts

6. Discussion and conclusion

This research investigated the model of customer lifetime value drivers in sports. The results indicate that the drivers of lifetime value in sports clubs are nine factors: hardware, software, financial, executive, strategic, social, motivational, behavioral, and process. Therefore, the customer's lifetime value is an essential concept in health classification, selection, and maintenance and plays a fundamental role in decision-making and recommender systems. These factors influence it. In this regard, the results of Moeini et al. (2012) research have also shown that calculating customer lifetime value is a strategic weapon and a competitive advantage in increasing profitability and identifying customers with higher profitability.

Sports venues are one of the most important hardware parts in sports and an important part of human organizations (Salimi et al., 2012). The results show significant hardware factors in this model. Exploiting the art of architecture in the construction of stadiums, which are a place of reference for different strata of people day and night, is considered one of the characteristics of progressive and civilized societies, neglecting the public needs in the construction of sports facilities. At the same time, this is a national investment, causing the club managers and investments. It will not be easy; therefore, to realize the issue, in every sports construction project, the basic factors and variables influencing the design and construction should be taken into consideration by the builders of this type of place (Vazifehdan Molla Shahi et al., 2021). Memari et al. (2021) showed that human resources, management, software infrastructure, marketing, and economic indicators were essential in enhancing clubs' franchise power and funds (Memari et al., 2021). Sports analysts must have documented information on safety issues and scientific and valid indicators to provide standardization for sports venues. So that their attention is focused on investing in the safety and standardization of sports venues and spaces. Because the feeling of security and satisfaction of customers as the most important and main source of income for sports clubs and teams is realized by creating a calm and safe environment, and because of increasing the number of customers, loyalty will follow. As many people come to a sports place for this purpose.

Therefore, compliance with these factors not only increases the lifetime value of customers but also the profitability of the clubs is promoted, which is in line with the research (Vazifehdan Molla Shahi et al., 2021; Zargar & Alaghmandan, 2019). Another research finding is the effect of software factors on customer lifetime value. Any sports organization can achieve its goals effectively when it uses its existing or available resources well. These resources include management, proper planning, communication and coordination, experienced and knowledgeable staff and trainers, and their value over time. They allow customers as a main source to use those facilities conveniently and appropriately and get enough benefit from them. The quantity, quality and distribution of these resources directly affect the growth or decline of the customer's lifetime value in sports (Manafi et al., 2016). Among the consistent results, we can refer to the research of (Hosseini & Farzan, 2018; Memarpour et al., 2021; Peykari et al., 2015). Among the discrepant results, we can also mention the research results by (Monazami et al., 2011), who consider management factors to be the last priority of sports participation. They consider sports participation as the last priority. Another finding of this research is the effect of financial factors on the customer's lifetime value in sports. In general, the financial resources and economic stability of the sports club, as well as the amount of budget allocation and the amount of the club's income from the services it provides, are the main pillars of the club's financial and budgetary factors and have a great effect on the customer's lifetime value. In explaining this issue, the increase in economic growth and income can be considered an influencing factor in the development index and a basis for measuring the level of development (Ahmadvand & Amiri, 2009). A rich society can allocate a greater number of resources to the development of sports infrastructure (for example, stadiums, equipment, and new technology), which will lead to the creation and development of more sports participation in the country because the economic situation improves, with an increase in the level of

well-being. People are associated with the increase in people's demand for sports and play a significant role in the development of the health of society (Luiz & Fadal, 2011). Among the consistent results, we can refer to the research of (Deldar et al., 2017; Torabi et al., 2015), Cited. Another finding of this research is the influence of strategic factors.

In every planning for sports activities, there is a need to set clear and transparent goals, and planning without goals is ineffective. In confirmation of this, (De Bosscher et al., 2009), in evaluating the effectiveness of elite sports programs, concluded that these programs have not been effective despite the increase in participants in different sports sectors. This is because of the failure to set appropriate goals and create appropriate communication. They know the beginning of the program. The present research results show that to increase the lifetime value of the sports customer, the effectiveness of the services provided, the variety of sports activities, and the strengthening of proper communication between the manager, employees, and customers of the club have a high impact. Confirmation of the (Ataei Saeedi et al., 2009) results also aligns with their findings. Because they showed that the effectiveness of sports-recreational programs among students increased their participation and vitality of other influencing factors. The effectiveness of sports programs is to pay attention to the needs assessment of different sections of society and facilities and the culture of the residents of each region. Planning without considering the needs of different sections of society affects the effectiveness of sports programs and reduces the value of the customer's lifetime. However, during planning, managers should pay attention to individual differences, and the variety of programs increases people's life expectancy ought sports programs as much as possible. In this regard, the research results of (Ataei Saeedi et al., 2009; Kashkar, 2015) are consistent with the results of the present study. Among other findings of this research, the effect social factors influence the customer's lifetime value in sports. Sports clubs are among the institutions most need to interact with customers. Athletes' interactions and social values greatly influence each other; therefore, the family environment and the share of sports in the household budget can greatly impact value. Customer relationship management is a multidimensional concept consisting of four parts: strategy, people, technology and processes (Fox & Stead, 2001). People's abilities and education during childhood and adolescence are important, and if the social conditions are suitable, a person will continue to do sports. Otherwise, he will either change his sports branch or withdraw from sports altogether (Karimi, 2017). The results of the research of (Elahi et al., 2019; Karimi, 2017; Karimpour & Mirzazadeh, 2015) are consistent with the findings of the present study. Among the inconsistent results, we can mention the research results of (Akbari Yazdi et al., 2014), who stated; Social factors in participation in Sports is influential, but it is not considered one of the determining factors. This research emphasizes that motivational and behavioral factors are another driver of customer lifetime value in sports clubs. Identifying these factors confirms the effect of psychological dimensions on customer lifetime value; therefore, it is possible to value and categorize customers and allocate optimal resources according to their value for the sports club, according to psychological aspects, including motivational and behavioral factors. Total motivational factors are the activities that revolve around the measures of the managers and encourage the actors or customers to behave and act in return.

Considering customer goals, rules and customer support, sports managers provide appropriate pricing on services and seasonal discounts regarding customer satisfaction and loyalty, trust and confidence in them, and behavioral and emotional commitment of customers, and in this case, the ability to predict the future situation. They get customers. In line with this result, we can refer to the findings of (Memarpour et al., 2021). Finally, according to the findings of this research, the drivers of customer lifetime value in sports clubs are also dependent on process and executive factors. It is less expensive to retain a customer than to attract it, and managers should try to maintain the customer's relationship with the club. Responding appropriately to customers and assigning leading trainers are the most important executive elements affecting the customer's lifetime value in sports clubs. This is achieved through customer recognition, perceived value, and management style. Also, this process includes monitoring, listening, and making changes that lead to a sustainable improvement in the customer's feelings and desire for long-term loyalty to the club. In this regard, the research results of (Afgababaei et al., 2020; Amadi et al., 2019; Memarpour et al., 2021; Ostadi & Abdollahi, 2020) are consistent with the results of the present study.

Practical suggestions Based on the findings of the research on the effectiveness of 9 factors (hardware, software, financial, strategic, structural/social, process, behavioral, motivational and executive), the following suggestions are presented to improve the lifetime value of sports customers:

- Hardware factors: sports managers should pay attention to factors such as the environment, shape, space, light and safety of the sports structure and have a profound reflection on the development of the necessary standards in the professional club management system to increase the life span of the sports customer.
- Software factors: Establishing effective communication with customers and maintaining this relationship in the long term, organizing, and developing information and communication management through customer interest, identifying needs, creating a sense of trust in the club by acting on the promises made and by using their social networks, they create new sports programs and club work.
- Financial factors: the consultation of sports managers to increase the amount of budget dedicated to sports, attract sponsors, and help donors can also help to improve the economic problems of public and private sports clubs.
- Strategic factors: managers and sports coaches should realize their goal-oriented ness with beneficial management, creating appropriate communication, diversifying club services, and creating multiple options for customers to choose from, the effectiveness of sports activities.
- -Structural/social factors: by providing conditions, sports managers and coaches invite families to attend sports halls and inform families about the advantages of sports activities in cultural/sports programs.
- Process factors: It is suggested that to increase the customer's lifetime value through a quality experience, managers in providing their services, clubs must use the necessary charms to create a pure experience. The combined methods of adding

value and creating a positive experience by club managers should be considered to increase the customer's lifetime.

- Behavioral factors: It is suggested that through creating value, club managers should try to increase satisfaction with the quality of service by building trust and making an emotional commitment in customers, creating a positive attitude toward the club and branding. For this purpose, creating a friendly and intimate atmosphere and confrontation and direct conversation in the club strengthen openness, honesty, and mutual trust in customers.
- Motivational factors: classifying customers into different categories in terms of different characteristics and providing services according to these characteristics, providing percentage discounts favorable to long-standing customers and to other customers by introducing new customers, providing additional and accessible services to loyal customers, providing services to particular groups and The segmentation and rating of customers' value can also be suggested to managers to increase the lifetime of customers.
- Executive agents: It is recommended to be managers of knowledge-enhancing courses. Organize coaches annually and use well-known coaches with high sports experience as much as possible to create a positive attitude toward the club and branding. It is also suggested to play a unique role in increasing the customer's lifetime value by following the customer-oriented style, emphasizing accountability, fulfilling promises, and following up on complaints.

In this regard, it is suggested that researchers in future research investigate factors affecting customer lifetime value by combining different models. Meanwhile, the fronts Different methods of segmenting and classifying sports customers can be examined in the future study according to the nine identified factors.

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پیشران‌های کلیدی ارزش طول عمر مشتریان باشگاه‌های ورزشی ایران

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نوع مقاله

پژوهشی اصیل

چکیده

هدف: پژوهش حاضر با هدف شناسایی پیشران‌های کلیدی ارزش طول عمر مشتری در باشگاه‌های ورزشی ایران تدوین شده است.

روش: روش پژوهش به لحاظ هدف، کاربردی و از منظر ماهیت و روش، آمیخته است. تعداد ۱۶ نفر برای انجام مصاحبه‌های عمیق نیمه ساختار یافته و با رویکرد گلوله برفی انتخاب شدند. در مرحله کمی، از روش نمونه‌گیری خوشه‌ای استفاده و تعداد ۴۱۳ نفر مشارکت داشتند. جمع‌آوری داده‌ها به روش دلفی و به‌منظور تایید مدل از مدلسازی معادلات ساختاری استفاده شد. تحلیل‌های آماری با دو نرم افزار ۲۵ SPSS و ۲۶ AMOS انجام گرفت.

یافته‌ها: نتایج نشان داد پیشران‌های کلیدی ارزش طول عمر مشتری شامل عوامل سخت افزاری، نرم افزاری، مالی، راهبردی، اجتماعی، انگیزشی، رفتاری، فرآیندی و اجرایی هستند.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: تا به امروز مطالعات کمی در مورد ارزش طول عمر مشتری در ورزش انجام شده است. به نظر می‌رسد که این اولین تحقیق داخلی است که به شناسایی پیشران‌های کلیدی بر ارزش طول عمر مشتری در باشگاه‌های ورزشی پرداخته است. همچنین نتایج نشان داد که توجه مدیران ورزشی به عوامل نه‌گانه شناسایی شده در این تحقیق، در افزایش ارزش طول عمر مشتری ورزشی موثر است. در راستای نتایج به‌دست آمده پیشنهاد می‌شود مدیران، با در نظر گرفتن مؤلفه‌های عوامل انگیزشی، اجرایی و رفتاری زمینه رضایت و وفاداری مشتریان، اعتماد و اطمینان در آنان را بهبود بخشیده و همچنین با مورد توجه قرار دادن عوامل راهبردی و مالی توانایی پیش‌بینی وضعیت آتی مشتریان را به‌دست آورند.

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