

Service Quality and Perceived Value of Sports Events and City Image

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate the effect of service quality of sports events on perceived value and city image. To this end, participants in the national sports event competition in Jeollabuk-do, South Korea, were selected as the population. A survey was conducted with the selected research subjects, and a total of 438 copies were used for the final analysis, excluding insincere responses. The data from the questionnaire were processed using frequency analysis, exploratory factor analysis, reliability verification, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis, and the following conclusions were obtained. First, service quality of sports events and perceived value and city image showed positive correlations in all sub-variables. Second, service quality of sports events showed a partial positive effect on perceived value. In other words, all sub-variables of service quality showed a positive effect on acquired value and emotional value, and physical quality and human quality showed a positive effect on social value. Third, the service quality of sports events showed a partial positive effect on city image. That is, all sub-variables of service quality had a positive effect on the attractiveness image and dynamic image, and system quality and physical quality had a positive effect on the modern image.

Keywords: Sports Events, Service Quality, Emotional Value, City Image, Human Quality.

INTRODUCTION

Hosting a sports event not only has various production-inducing effects but also enables the enhancement of the brand of the host region and the image of the host country and has a positive effect on promoting international exchange and friendship. Therefore, the meaning of a sports event is not only in hosting, but also in improving the service quality of the sports event with a short- and long-term perspective, and strategic thinking and a change in perception are necessary for a successful sports event. This is because service quality is a key determining factor in the success of a sports event (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1994). As hosting a sports event is widely recognized as a high value-added industry in that it has a significant impact on economic activation through the increase of the tourism industry, urban regeneration, and the enhancement of the city brand, many cities around the world are competing to host sports events (Kim 2017).

Pyeongchang, Gangwon-do succeeded in hosting the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics after three attempts. Accordingly, studies on the impact of hosting a sports event on the host region are being conducted from a wide range of perspectives. The common research trend of these studies is that for a sports event to be successful, it must provide the best quality service that can satisfy the spectators who visit the host region to watch the sports event. For a sports event to be successful, it is important to provide high-quality convenience that meets the needs of participants. Improving the quality of sports event services not only increases the desire for participation and satisfaction of participants but also influences the perception of a positive image of sports events in the future.

Kim & Lee (2018) pointed out that service is one of the most important concerns of spectators attending sporting events. They pointed out that even the most privileged spectators can be discouraged by inconvenient ticket purchasing processes, unfriendly service, inefficient entry and exit, congestion when exiting, and unclear public facilities. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (1994) explained the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, reporting that service quality perceived by customers is an attitude that means a long-term and overall

evaluation of the service provided, and that service quality is a prerequisite for customer satisfaction. Therefore, a systematic approach should be made to the various service quality factors of sporting events.

Studies on the relationship between sports events and service quality have been conducted with an emphasis on the importance of service quality perceived by spectators and satisfaction with sports events in terms of spectators' consumption behavior (Kwon, Kim & Park 2013). However, as the sports viewing environment has changed, the demands of sports spectators have also diversified. Accordingly, there is a growing need to develop new factors through thorough analysis of service quality and perceived value of spectators. In addition, branding sports events is a differentiated strategy that symbolizes the value of the event. However, branding of sports events is still minimal and academic research on the brand assets of sports events is relatively small (Lee & Lee 2021). Among various sports events that can be utilized as a means of regional development, local governments are interested in the sports industry, which is relatively easy to access even when material and human resources are not sufficiently equipped (Kim & Cho 2007).

Sports events have various ripple effects on the host region. The potential benefits that local governments gain by hosting events also include the opportunity to improve the image of the region hosting the event. The successful hosting of sports events not only increases the pride and satisfaction of residents but also serves as a source of economic activation such as tourism activation, increased employment in the local community, income generation, and increased local tax revenue, and is also an opportunity to promote the image of the region externally. However, failed sports events fail to contribute to brand equity due to insufficient management of service quality and lack of strategies for generating hosting results, and as a result, they are neglected by residents.

The positive image of a region expressed through interest makes visitors to the region have a high preference and loyalty for the region. It also creates a sense of pride in residents and trust in the region in external visitors, which induces motivation to visit again (Cho 2011). Therefore, for sports events to function successfully as a marketing tool for regional differentiation and regional development, it is necessary to derive hosting results through management of service quality. In addition, brand assets must be built through sports events to enhance the city image of the region for both residents and participants.

There is a need for research on what kind of perceived value is formed and what kind of influence is exerted on the changes that occur in the local community due to the hosting of sports events. Accordingly, participants should build an image of the area where sports events are held as an area they want to visit and live in. Residents also need a strategy to maintain a continuous relationship with the area as their residence. Today, research on the various effects that sports events have on the hosting area is insufficient. Therefore, the need for research on the influence of the service quality of sports events centered on local governments on perceived value and city image is raised.

This study aims to analyze the impact of service quality of sports events on perceived value and city image, focusing on local governments. Through this, we aim to suggest improvements in the service quality of sports events and reinforcement of positive city image, which are different from previous studies. Therefore, we aim to empirically verify the impact of service quality on perceived value and city image for sports event participants, and to promote sustainable development of sports event service quality based on the research results.

METHODS

1. Research subject

The subjects of this study were selected as the population of participants in the national sports event held in Jeollabuk-do, South Korea. The sampling was conducted using the random sampling method among non-probability sampling methods. The survey was conducted using a questionnaire and self-assessment method. Among the questionnaires received, the data of a total of 489 people were used for the final analysis after excluding those that did not meet the purpose of the study. The general characteristics of the research subjects are as shown in <Table 1>.

Table 1. General characteristics of the study subjects

Variable	Classification	N %	
Sex	male	271	61.9
	female	167	38.1
Age	20s and under	117	26.7
	30s	93	21.2
	40s	126	28.8
	50s and over	102	23.3
Job	Professional/Technical	109	24.9
	Sales/Service	93	21.2
	Production	96	21.9
	Office	68	15.5
	Management	72	16.4
Participating Events	Recorded sports	105	24.0
	Speculative sports	116	26.5
	Ball sports	217	49.5
total		438	100

2. Research tools

The survey instrument used in this study is a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 4 questions about demographic characteristics, 13 questions about service quality as an independent variable, 13 questions about perceived value as a mediating variable, and 11 questions about city image as a dependent variable. The measurement method for each question is a Likert scale ranging from not at all (1 point) to very much (5 points).

1) Service quality

The scale for service quality was modified to fit this study based on the questionnaire used in previous studies by Cho (2009), Kim & Roh (2008), and Kim (2008), based on the concept of optimal service quality developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1994). The sub-variables of service quality consisted of system quality (4 items), physical quality (5 items), and human quality (4 items).

2) Perceived value

The scale for perceived value was modified to fit this study based on a questionnaire used in previous studies such as Oh & Lee (2013) and An, Lim & Jung (2008), based on Zeithaml's (1988) study on customers' overall evaluation of products and services provided in comparison to the price paid. The sub-variables of perceived value consisted of acquisition value (4 items), emotional value (4 items), and social value (4 items).

3) City Image

The scale for city image was modified to fit this study based on a questionnaire used in previous studies by Kim & Kim (2014) and Kwn, Cho, and Rhee (2011), based on Park's (2002) study on city image and city tourism. The sub-variables of city image consisted of modern image (5 items), attractive image (3 items), and dynamic image (3 items).

3. Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the suitability of a test tool according to the test purpose, which is how faithfully it measures the content that the test tool is intended to measure, and the extent to which theory or evidence supports the interpretation of test scores. In this study, for the verification of validity, a questionnaire development based on literature, expert meetings, preliminary tests, and factor analysis were conducted.

1) Service quality

Table 2. Results of service quality validity and reliability analysis

Items	System Quality	Physical quality	Human quality	h^2
item01	.894	.042	.128	.818
item04	.889	.052	.106	.804
item03	.803	-.002	.235	.700
item02	.780	.300	.142	.719
item05	.048	.869	.129	.743
item06	.045	.835	.092	.772
item08	.046	.818	.182	.603
item07	.111	.659	.294	.663
item10	.298	.467	.306	.400
item11	.271	.218	.807	.704
item12	-.014	.142	.802	.774
item14	.242	.213	.799	.707
item13	.185	.194	.729	.533
Eigenvalue	5.186	2.292	1.462	
Variance %	39.894	17.628	11.247	
Cumulative %	39.894	57.522	68.769	
Reliability	.855	.855	.847	

$$KMO=.838, \chi^2=3045.888, df=78, p=.001$$

The Bartlett unit matrix of service quality was 3045.888, the significance probability was .001, and the KMO index was .838, indicating that the selection of variables was appropriate. A total of 13 items of service quality were factor analyzed, and three factors were extracted as a result. The total variance explanatory power of service quality was approximately 68.8%. The loading value of system quality, a sub-factor of service quality, was .780~.894. The loading value of physical quality was .467~.869. The loading value of human quality was .729~.807. The reliability value of service quality was .855 for system quality, .855 for physical quality, and .847 for human quality.

2) Perceived value

Table 3. Results of validity and reliability analysis of perceived value

Items	Acquired value	Emotional value	Social value	h^2
item03	.893	.084	.082	.725
item04	.844	.146	.161	.744
item01	.820	.181	.143	.812
item02	.814	.239	.157	.760
item05	.666	.304	.210	.580
item12	.140	.879	.147	.714
item10	.231	.829	.058	.751
item11	.197	.822	.157	.687
item13	.177	.736	.173	.700
item07	.109	.050	.858	.745
item09	.126	.131	.816	.739
item06	.149	.158	.800	.814
item08	.215	.195	.794	.603
Eigenvalue	5.604	1.990	1.779	
Variance %	43.109	15.311	13.688	
Cumulative %	43.109	58.419	72.107	

Reliability	.850	.854	.861
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KMO=.850, $\chi^2=3445.610$, $df=78$, $p=.001$

The Bartlett unit matrix of perceived value was 3445.610, the significance probability was .001, and the KMO index was .850, indicating that the selection of variables was appropriate. A total of 13 items of perceived value were factor analyzed, and three factors were extracted as a result. The total variance explanatory power of perceived value was approximately 72.1%. The loadings of acquisition value, a sub-factor of perceived value, were .666~.893. The loadings of emotional value were .736~.879. The loadings of social value were .794~.858. The reliability values of perceived value were .850 for acquisition value, .854 for emotional value, and .861 for social value.

3) City image

The Bartlett unit matrix of the city image was 2623.635, the significance probability was .001, and the KMO index was .824, indicating that the selection of variables was appropriate. A total of 11 items of the city image were factor analyzed, and three factors were extracted as a result. The total variance explanatory power of the city image was approximately 71.9%. The loading value of the modern image, a sub-factor of the city image, was .797~.850. The loading value of the attractive image was .832~.864. The loading value of the dynamic image was .705~.813. The reliability value of the city image was .849 for the modern image, .879 for the attractive image, and .846 for the dynamic image.

Table 4. Results of validity and reliability analysis of city images

Items	Modern Image	Attractive Image	Dynamic Image	h ²
item03	.850	.033	.230	.745
item01	.837	.161	.138	.659
item04	.832	.116	.291	.776
item05	.829	.026	.260	.790
item02	.797	.122	.093	.755
item09	.091	.864	.073	.692
item10	.083	.833	.195	.743
item12	.112	.832	.082	.545
item07	.260	.116	.813	.761
item06	.204	.106	.799	.739
item08	.178	.130	.705	.711
Eigenvalue	4.757	1.946	1.214	
Variance %	43.241	17.690	11.037	
Cumulative %	43.241	60.931	71.968	
Reliability	.849	.879	.846	

KMO=.824, $\chi^2=2623.635$, $df=55$, $p=.001$

4. Data processing

The collected data were analyzed using the SPSS (ver. 24.0) program. A total of 438 questionnaires were analyzed to identify the relationship between service quality, perceived value, and city image according to the hosting of sports events by local governments. The collected data were analyzed using frequency analysis to identify demographic characteristics, exploratory factor analysis to verify validity, and reliability analysis to verify reliability. In addition,

correlation analysis was performed on the relationship between variables, and multiple regression analysis was performed on the causal relationship between variables. The significance level for data processing was set at $\alpha=.05$.

RESULTS

1. Correlation between service quality and perceived value of sports events and city image

Table 5. Results of the correlation between service quality and perceived value and city image

Variables	System Quality	Physical Quality	Human Quality	Earned Value	Emotional values	Social Values	Modern images	Charm image	Dynamic images
System Quality	-								
Physical Quality	.283***	-							
Human Quality	.398***	.485***	-						
Acquisition Next	.453***	.615***	.509***	-					
Emotional Value	.582***	.408***	.466***	.451***	-				
Social Value	.262***	.497***	.598***	.375***	.344***	-			
Modern Image	.804***	.390***	.427***	.502***	.631***	.291***	-		
Attractive Image	.253***	.292***	.257***	.315***	.230***	.277***	.245***	-	
Dynamic Image	.409***	.533***	.717***	.533***	.417***	.574***	.494***	.297***	-

*** $p<.001$

As a result of examining the correlation between service quality and perceived value and city image, system quality showed a positive correlation in acquired value ($r=.453$), emotional value ($r=.582$), and social value ($r=.262$) ($p<.001$). In addition, positive correlations were shown in modern image ($r=.804$), attractive image ($r=.253$), and dynamic image ($r=.409$) ($p<.001$). Physical quality showed a positive correlation in acquired value ($r=.615$), emotional value ($r=.408$), and social value ($r=.497$) ($p<.001$). In addition, positive correlations were shown in modern image ($r=.390$), attractive image ($r=.292$), and dynamic image ($r=.533$) ($p<.001$). Human quality showed a positive correlation ($p<.001$) with acquired value ($r=.509$), emotional value ($r=.466$), and social value ($r=.598$). In addition, a positive correlation was shown with modern image ($r=.427$), attractive image ($r=.257$), and dynamic image ($r=.717$) ($p<.001$).

2. The impact of service quality on perceived value

1) The impact of service quality on acquired value

Table 6. The impact of service quality on acquired value

	B	SE	β	t	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.273	.170		1.607		
System Quality	.236	.036	.249	6.603***	.831	1.203
Physical Quality	.483	.042	.452	11.427***	.755	1.325
Human Quality	.182	.039	.191	4.615***	.691	1.447
F=137.702***, R ² =.488, Modified R ² =.484						

*** $p<.001$

Service quality had a statistically significant effect on earned value ($F=137.702$, $p<.001$), and the explanatory power was about 48.8% ($R^2=.488$) of the total variance. Looking at the Beta value, which is the relative influence of service quality on earned value, it was found to have a positive effect on system quality ($\beta=.249$, $p<.001$), physical quality ($\beta=.452$, $p<.001$), and human quality ($\beta=.191$, $p<.001$).

2) The impact of service quality on emotional value

Table 7. The impact of service quality on emotional value

	B	SE	β	t	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.716	.175		4.084***		
System Quality	.419	.037	.451	11.356***	.831	1.203
Physical Quality	.193	.044	.185	4.437***	.755	1.325
Human Quality	.183	.041	.197	4.510***	.691	1.447
F=109.139***, $R^2=.430$, , Modified $R^2=.426$						

*** $p<.001$

Service quality had a statistically significant effect on emotional value ($F=109.139$, $p<.001$), and the explanatory power was about 43.0% ($R^2=.430$) of the total variance. Looking at the Beta value, which is the relative influence of service quality on emotional value, it was found to have a positive effect on system quality ($\beta=.451$, $p<.001$), physical quality ($\beta=.185$, $p<.001$), and human quality ($\beta=.197$, $p<.001$).

3) The impact of service quality on social value

Table 8. The impact of service quality on social value

	B	SE	β	t	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.471	.202		2.330*		
System Quality	-.001	.043	-.001	-.019	.831	1.203
Physical Quality	.321	.050	.270	6.383***	.755	1.325
Human Quality	.494	.047	.467	10.562***	.691	1.447
F=101.906***, $R^2=.413$, , Modified $R^2=.409$						

*** $p<.001$

Service quality had a statistically significant effect on social value ($F=101.906$, $p<.001$), and the explanatory power was about 41.3% ($R^2=.413$) of the total variance. Looking at the Beta value, which is the relative influence of service quality on social value, it was found to have a positive effect on physical quality ($\beta=.270$, $p<.001$) and human quality ($\beta=.467$, $p<.001$).

3. The impact of service quality on city image

1) The impact of service quality on modern image

Table 9. 1) The impact of service quality on modern image

	B	SE	β	t	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.172	.145		1.187		
System Quality	.754	.031	.737	24.666***	.831	1.203
Physical Quality	.176	.036	.153	4.869***	.755	1.325
Human Quality	.061	.034	.060	1.818	.691	1.447
F=304.412***, R ² =.678, , Modified R ² =.676						

***p<.001

Service quality had a statistically significant effect on the modern image (F=304.412, p<.001), and the explanatory power was about 67.8% (R²=.678) of the total variance. Looking at the Beta value, which is the relative influence of service quality on the modern image, it was found to have a positive effect on system quality (β =.737, p<.001) and physical quality (β =.153, p<.001).

2) The impact of service quality on attractiveness image

Table 10. The impact of service quality on attractiveness image

	B	SE	β	t	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.549	.258		6.016***		
System Quality	.174	.054	.158	3.211***	.831	1.203
Physical Quality	.247	.064	.200	3.864***	.755	1.325
Human Quality	.107	.060	.097	1.790	.691	1.447
F=20.346***, R ² =.123, , Modified R ² =.117						

***p<.001

Service quality had a statistically significant effect on attractiveness image (F=20.346, p<.001), and the explanatory power was about 12.3% (R²=.123) of the total variance. Looking at the Beta value, which is the relative influence of service quality on attractiveness image, it was found to have a positive effect on system quality (β =.158, p<.001) and physical quality (β =.200, p<.001).

3) The impact of service quality on dynamic image

Table 11. The impact of service quality on dynamic image

	B	SE	β	t	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.255	.159		1.600		
System Quality	.119	.033	.122	3.543***	.831	1.203
Physical Quality	.249	.040	.228	6.311***	.755	1.325
Human Quality	.544	.037	.558	14.762***	.691	1.447

$$F=193.120^{***}, R^2=.572, \text{ , Modified } R^2=.569$$

$$***p<.001$$

Service quality had a statistically significant effect on dynamic image ($F=193.120, p<.001$), and the explanatory power was approximately 57.2% ($R^2=.572$) of the total variance. Looking at the Beta value, which is the relative influence of service quality on dynamic image, it was found to have a positive effect on system quality ($\beta=.122, p<.001$), physical quality ($\beta=.228, p<.001$), and human quality ($\beta=.558, p<.001$).

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to investigate the effect of service quality of local government sports events on perceived value and city image. Based on the results of this study, the following discussion will be made.

In this study, the service quality of local government sports events showed a positive correlation with perceived value. To examine this in detail, multiple regression analysis was conducted, and the results showed that all sub-variables of service quality had a positive effect on acquired value and emotional value. In addition, physical quality and human quality had a positive effect on social value.

The value of hosting sports events in local communities is recognized even more because it plays a mediating role in economic effects, fostering local consciousness, strengthening attachment among residents, and inducing unity of local communities (Park 2002). Therefore, if sports events hosted by local governments are hastily managed or are sloppy, the value perceived by participants is bound to decrease. Considering that sports events are the most utilized urban marketing tools for urban competitiveness and economic revitalization, much policy consideration is needed on ways to increase the perceived value of participants. In this regard, Berry, Parausuraman, & Zeithaml (1994) claim that customers perceive service quality through product consumption and evaluate value accordingly, which is in line with the claim that service quality in this study has a close influence on perceived value.

The study (Kim 2005) that the service quality of ski resorts affects the perceived value of customers and partially moderates the relationship between the service value of customers and customer satisfaction also shows that service quality and perceived value are related. In particular, the study targeting hotel customers showed that the customer service quality, that is, system, material and human quality, had a positive effect on all perceived values (Park 2002) supports the results of this study. In a study analyzing the relationship between service quality and perceived value targeting cruise travelers, Baek [21] found that services such as food, crew, and programs provided on cruise ships, as well as various shipboard facilities and port-of-call tour services, affected perceived value. Food, crew, and programs correspond to the system quality, material quality, and human quality of this study, and all service qualities affect the perceived value of participants. As a result, the system quality, material quality, and human quality of sports events hosted by local governments are major factors affecting the value perceived by participants. As a result, the higher the service quality of sports event participants, the higher the value they place on the sports event and the more likely they are to visit again due to this increased value.

In this study, the service quality of local government sports events was found to have a positive correlation with the city image. To examine this in detail, multiple regression analysis was conducted, and the results showed that all sub-variables of service quality had a positive effect on the attractiveness image and dynamic image, and that system quality and physical quality had a positive effect on the modern image. This result shows that the establishment of a system for the systematic operation of sports events held by local governments, stadiums and auxiliary facilities, well-educated operation staff, and volunteers ultimately play an important role in forming the city image of the participants. This means that hosting a successful local sports event can provide participants with enjoyment and specialized service quality, which can lead to positive feelings and perceptions about the hosting region (Kwon, Seo & Lee 2010).

Participants in the World Martial Arts Mastership held in the Chungcheong region said that the city image is affected by the system and the material and human quality. Furthermore, it also affects the city's reputation (Kim & Koo 2017). This claim suggests that hosting local government sports events affects the city image and city reputation and induces the intention to revisit. Therefore, as shown in this study, if the participants in sports events can be instilled with a modern image, a dynamic image, and an attractive image through service quality, it is argued that a high revisit effect will be achieved.

Since hosting local government sports events is a major variable that can affect the image of the region for participants, it is necessary to improve the quality of service to leave a positive impression of the city image to participants to induce repeat visits. Since the openness, modernization, identity, and stability of a city are factors that affect the image of a city (Kim & Goo 2014), sports event participants should come up with a plan to modernize and dynamically enhance the attractive image of the region to build a positive city image. To this end, they should create unique programs, stable and high-quality facilities, high-quality culture, and unique tourism culture of the region.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to investigate the effect of service quality of sports events on perceived value and city image. To this end, participants in the national sports event competition in Jeollabuk-do, South Korea, were selected as the population. A survey was conducted with the selected research subjects, and a total of 438 copies were used for the final analysis, excluding insincere responses. The data from the questionnaire were processed using frequency analysis, exploratory factor analysis, reliability verification, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis, and the following conclusions were obtained.

First, service quality of sports events and perceived value and city image showed positive correlations in all sub-variables.

Second, service quality of sports events showed a partial positive effect on perceived value. In other words, all sub-variables of service quality showed a positive effect on acquired value and emotional value, and physical quality and human quality showed a positive effect on social value.

Third, the service quality of sports events showed a partial positive effect on city image. That is, all sub-variables of service quality had a positive effect on the attractiveness image and dynamic image, and system quality and physical quality had a positive effect on the modern image.

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