



A Management Model to Operate a Commercial Tennis Club in Zhanjiang, China

Lui Da¹, Chanchai Siriphan² and Nopporn Tasnaina³

Faculty of Sports Science and Technology Bangkokthonburi University, Thailand

¹ E-mail: 330894870@qq.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-4271-2614>

² E-mail: siriphan.cs@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-9981-655X>

³ E-mail: nop5503@hotmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-6086-0657>

Received 28/07/2023

Revised 14/08/2023

Accepted 25/08/2023

Abstract

Background and Aim: After the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008, tennis was rapidly developing in China. In 2021, China's tennis population has risen to the second largest in the world but it has only 800 tennis clubs out of the total 115,584 tennis clubs in the world, and in Zhanjiang City, only 17 tennis clubs are operating for commercial purposes. The result of surveying the needs assessment among the customers showed that there was a wide gap between observed perceptions and expectations in many issues in service management operations, which means that the customers were not satisfied with the club's operations. The researchers were interested in studying these issues to find customers' needs and suggestions to improve the tennis clubs' service and management in this area by applying service quality and marketing mix strategies. The objectives: (1) to develop a management model to operate commercial tennis clubs in Zhanjiang City, China, based on service quality and marketing mix concepts (2) to confirm the model's satisfaction, appropriateness, and practicality of the developed management model.

Materials and Methods: This research was a research and development research. The data collection was 1) Interviews with the managers or representatives of the 17 clubs, 2) a survey of the 398 clubs' customers with a dual response questionnaire, and 3) The consensus with 19 experts by Delphi. 4) a focus group discussion with 11 stakeholders. The research tools were a structured form for interviews, a dual response questionnaire, a questionnaire for consensus with a Delphi, and a form for recording the focus group discussion. The data was analyzed in descriptive, content analysis, and PNI modified by the use of SPSS.

Results: The clubs should 1) set the positioning of the clubs 2) set vision, goals, and missions to be the direction of a club's management, 3) set the division of works to share and understand the scope of duty and responsibility of each section, 4) consider the staff motivation and welfare, service quality 5) create operation manuals, and job descriptions, collecting data to improve the service quality 6) applying marketing to create strategies such as; offering a variety of products, pricing at the same rate of other clubs, set the easy and convenient operation process for customers. 7) Collect the problems and needs of customers, and the readiness of management resources, to formulate the management strategies with the application of service quality and marketing mix concepts which could respond to expectations them

Conclusion: The clubs should consider management functions and marketing mixes to create the strategies to operate the clubs by the responses to the needs of customers survey.

Keywords: Commercial Tennis Club; Management Model; Service Marketing Mix; Service Quality

Introduction

China's tennis population has risen to the second largest in the world. But out of the 115,584 tennis clubs in total, China has only 800 tennis clubs, accounting for 0.69 percent, and they are ranked 18th (ITF, 2021). Zhanjiang city is a sub-central city of Guangdong Province is an important port city along the southeast coast. Zhanjiang has a strong sports atmosphere, and its athletes have won four Olympic championships. Zhanjiang has provided a large number of excellent tennis players and coaches for Guangdong province and even the whole country and has made important contributions to the development of the tennis industry. The sports clubs were the places that provide the sports activities and services were divided according to the source of club funds and the purpose of the participants. The type of club participation group is the main purpose for physical exercise and cultivation of an interesting of customers. The source of funds is mainly raised by the enterprise trade unions or the members themselves; One is the for-profit commercial tennis clubs and the funding is mainly from selling tennis-related services. One is the student tennis club formed by student groups whose participants are mainly students, funding comes from allocating schools to selling courses or self-raised by student members. Some clubs are both public welfare and commercial, they provide profit-making activities for public welfare (Ni, C-J., 2004). Ji, K. (2003) summarized four characteristics of

[353]



Citation Lui, D., Siriphan, C., & Tasnaina, N. (2023). A Management Model to Operate a Commercial Tennis Club in Zhanjiang, China. International Journal of Sociologies and Anthropologies Science Reviews (IJSASR), 3 (5), 353-366; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.60027/ijasr.2023.3260>



commercial clubs: (1) the nature of the club is a commercial enterprise, and the relationship between people and the club is a business relationship; (2) more activities that can meet the needs of consumers; (3) professionals to provide consultation and guidance services; (4) they provide are long business hours to service the customers. The sports club is a service organization that has to run through the service quality concepts to gain more customers and satisfy them. The researchers did a pre-survey concerning the problems and needs of tennis club service management in Zhanjiang City. The quality of customer service was very important to the satisfaction of customers, these could gain more quantity of members and customers. It can ensure the customers' loyalty and increase company profit. The service quality and marketing mixes (7p's) were mostly used to study and fulfill quality customer service. (Tasnaina, N. 2016, Eveleigh, J., 2017). The Club needs to maintain the high standards in various sports offered to members and consider adding new sports to serve members' demands. The clubs should provide boarding by affiliated with hotels, indoor pools, fitness Centers & Spa catering to the ever-demanding needs of today's MICE travelers. (IMPACT Tennis Academy 2023) According to the pre surveying of the researcher by interviewing the club's managers and customers' needs assessment found that there was a wide gap between the observed status and expected status of the service and management.

The researcher was a doctorate student in physical education and was interested in this issue, so created research to imply service quality and marketing mixes to develop the management operation of the tennis clubs in Zhanjiang City.

Research Questions

1. What are the problems, observed perceptions, and expected operations concerning the club management?
2. How was the management model to operate the tennis clubs?
3. Do the developed management model satisfy the stakeholders, practical, and appropriate?

Research Objectives

1. To develop a management model to operate commercial tennis clubs in Zhanjiang.
2. To confirm the satisfaction, practicality, and appropriateness of the developed management model to operate tennis clubs

Definition of Terms

Management function is a role or duty of management that consists of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling.

The management model is a connection of the set of activities in management functions with the support of man, money, material, and management method

Management strategy is the set of activities to operate the commercial tennis clubs under the concept of service quality and marketing mixes.

Commercial tennis clubs are entrepreneurs who operate tennis activities and services to satisfy customers to gain profit. This research scoped the tennis clubs in Zhanjiang, China.

SERVQUAL is short for the Service Quality model which is the research method to capture and analyze consumer expectations and perceptions of the service. It is used for studying service quality in five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy

Marketing mixes refer to the set of actions, or tactics, that a company uses to promote its brand or product in the market which consists of, 1) products 2) price 3) place 4) promotion 5) process 6) people 7) physical evidence



Literature Review

A commercial enterprise usually be a profit organization that operates to make money. Most businesses are for-profits that serve their customers by selling a product or service. The business owner earns an income from the profit and may also pay shareholders and investors from the profits. They aim to earn profit through their operations and are concerned with their interests (Heaslip, E. (2023). The suggestions of some ideas to run a sports business were as follows. (99businessideas.com, 2023)

1. Sports Academy to train, and teach some favorite sports.
2. Sports Products to produce equipment, dress, sport court, sports intelligence technology
3. Sports Facility Service to provide sports field, sports center, and fitness center for servicing.
4. Sport Organizers to manage sports competitions.
5. Sports Consultant to advise, solve problems, and tutor athletes.
6. Sports Club to organize an association that binds together people of similar interests.
7. Sports Coaching, Health/nutrition coach to be a coach for a specific sport which you experience
8. Personal Fitness Trainer to be freelance in fitness training both for sports elite and sports for health. The fitness training is large and includes people of all ages, body types, and goals.
9. Sports Camp is a very profitable business you can start in the sports industry. You can organize it for children and adults.
10. Sport Tourism brings a group of participants to travel to an attractive place, or city and join the sports friendship matches., and visit some sports places, sports foods, and sports shops.

Tasnaina, N. (2016) completed research on “Managerial Strategies Implemented in Commercial Badminton Courts” by applying SERVQUAL and marketing mixes as a guideline to conclude the findings. It showed that most of the commercial badminton courts did not concentrate on management principles because most of them were managed by a family system, they applied some marketing mixes to provide satisfying activities to their members. The researcher suggested 10 strategies to gain more interest which consisted of 1) applying management function, 2) Providing more attractive facilities and equipment, and physical evidence. 3) price should be different between walk-in members and regular members, 4) Provide various activities, 5) Provide more products to serve the members’ needs, 6) Improve quality service of Staff, 7) Apply digital technology in management and service, 8) Applying social media and communication for public relation, 9) Allowing members, coaches, to participate in clubs’ management activities, 10) Provide a sports tourism activity to gain more income and create networking.

Gabriel, G.C., & Alina, I.C. (2014) did a research approach to develop a strategy for developing sports organizations, they found existing case management systems and strategic directions identified are considered prerequisites to developing organizational development strategy. The problems facing sports organizations can be improved and depend on the capacity manager which refers to the role of scientific management, ensuring favorable conditions for both clubs’ survival and their development. The research results showed that the sports club does not focus on the information subsystem. Its components are considered sensitive and satisfactory samples by the value obtained. The results indicate that the club, people show sufficient interest in the use of management methods and techniques. The SWOT analysis of sports organizations led to the delineation of future strategic directions to improve the management activity of the club. The sports clubs’ management and program of measures aimed at raising awareness of decision-makers on the contribution of football clubs in the formation of children and youth footballer nucleus that can grow in high performance and the contribution could not be sustained only through scientific management thereof.

The Service Quality (SERVQUAL)

When Oliver created a model and a related instrument in which service quality could be measured and formed his model “SERVQUAL Model” (Parasuraman et al.1988. This was the most notable contribution to the measure of service quality. It had been reported to have a significant positive connection to customer satisfaction, customer retention (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990), behavioral intentions, and positive word-of-mouth. SERVQUAL model has also known a wide application in the



field of determining customer satisfaction, especially since the model construct utilizes the “perceptions” minus “expectations” approach. Luiza, M.S. (2011) stated that SERVQUAL is based on the external perspective regarding service quality. This assessment is conceptualized as a discrepancy or gap between what the customer expects by way of service quality from a class of service providers and their evaluation of the performance of a particular service provider. This evaluation is a multidimensional construct which having 10 components: created by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988). Consisted of reliability, responsiveness, and competence. access, courtesy, communication, credibility, security, understanding/knowing the customer, and tangibles. After that SERVQUAL was developed and compressed into five dimensions which were: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness or RATER which are defined as follows.

- Reliability – the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately;
- Assurance – the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence;
- Tangibles – the appearance of the physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials;

- Empathy – the provision of caring, individualized attention to customers;
- Responsiveness – the willingness to help customers and to provide prompt service;

Until now the SERVQUAL model and instrument have been employed in a variety of industrial, commercial, and not-for-profit settings. especially the hospitality and tourism industries (Fick & Ritchie, 1991) It's clear that the SERVQUAL model and its instrument are a popular choice in both the academic and the practical fields to find out service quality and customer satisfaction.

The Marketing Mixes

“The marketing mix” aims to provide a complete framework for modern business models and marketing strategies across the entire customer journey. While there are many variations of the marketing mix, the most common framework consists of seven elements, collectively known as the 7Ps. The idea is that a business can adopt the 7P's principle and use it as a seven-step framework for building a successful marketing strategy that covers every stage of the buying process” (Brooks, A., 2022)

Marketing mixes originated in 1952 and were made popular in 1964 by Neil Borden, The marketing mix focused on outlining the key ingredients needed to understand what a product or service provides consumers, and how marketers can best align those ingredients to market products and services effectively The usage of the 4Ps of the marketing mix was first popularized by E. Jerome McCarthy who managed to deliver the concept in the context of consumer behaviors, market analysis, market segmentation, planning, and customer behaviors. Till the 1980s, the concept of the 4Ps of the marketing mix was well-received by the business community. Later on, in 1981, Booms and Bitner further extended the scope of the marketing mix and proposed the usage of 7 Ps instead of 4Ps in traditional marketing strategies. After that many other models like 8Ps and 10 P's have been introduced in the marketplace where the concept of 10 P's is one of the latest ones. (Helen, Denney-Stone, 2017)

The 7Ps marketing model is a framework designed to help businesses build a complete marketing strategy. In theory, a new business should be able to use the 7P's model to devise an entire marketing strategy from scratch which consisted of:

1. Product, Companies often think of their services as intangible products. Since the product is intangible, companies save time they would otherwise spend taking care of physical aspects like the packaging. Instead, companies focus on telling customers what a service includes and how it can fulfill their wants and needs. Companies may also consider how their service packages compare to competitors' packages. A service package typically consists of four parts: The building where the service happens. Additional products customers can buy during the service are implicit services that provide a psychological benefit. The products should be concerned with quality: image: branding, features, and variants.

2. Price, Pricing strategies affect how customers react to prices, recurring fees, and discounts. Customers often use price to predict the quality of service. So, if a business provides a high-quality



service, they're more likely to attract customers with higher prices. Companies also consider these factors when thinking about price: positioning, competition, justification, discounts, credit, payment methods, and free or value-added elements.

3. Place, Businesses that sell services often require customers to come to them, location is important. Customers often purchase services near where they live, which means a business is more likely to make a sale if it chooses a location closer to its target audience. The manager should consider these: discovery, browsing, learning more about your products or services, comparison, physical interaction, purchases, customer services, and retention for enticing further sales.

4. Promotion, Promotion focuses on making potential customers aware of a brand and helping them determine the quality of that brand's services. Businesses often offer services that look similar to their competitors' services, so using promotional material can help a company distinguish itself. The manager should consider the promotion content on, multi-channel marketing, personalized experiences, Integrated marketing & sales, lead nurturing, branding, automation, public relations,

5. People, refers to the people who work for a company in customer-facing roles. These people can affect a customer's level of satisfaction as much as the service they provide because customers associate services with the people who deliver them. Effective customer service can motivate customers to return to the business for additional services as repeat buyers and also refer their peers to the company. Companies apply several methods to strengthen the customer service of their staff, including training staff, creating a service script so that staff can create a unified, consistent customer experience, and establishing a protocol for upselling so customers feel comfortable when a staff member suggests purchasing additional products and services, instructing staff to remember important details about repeat customers, such as their career path and interests. The manager should consider these, everyone must be a marketer, sales team members, and customer service team, Recruitment of the best talent starts with high quality, providing training & skills, and managers is a goal for a career path.

6. Process, Businesses train their staff members to perform a service using a set process. These processes ensure that the employee delivers a service efficiently and that customers can expect a consistent standard of quality. Many companies use process mapping to teach their staff what actions to perform when providing a service. Process mapping usually consists of the following: symbols that visualize each step of the process, details, and flowcharts. The contents concerned the very least the following: customer-end delivery, business-end delivery, customer service, resolutions of the problems, incentives on board and win, returns & refunds, and feedback to product/service improvements.

7. Physical evidence, Customers often use the physical aspects of a business to help them judge the quality of the company's services. Physical evidence includes the space where the service takes place and the tangible items that customers take as proof of purchase. Though the service is intangible, giving customers a receipt or brochure allows them to associate their service experience with a physical symbol

The most common failure of a business

The most common reasons small businesses fail are Lack of passion, energy, or not enough work delivered, Ineffective leadership or wrong strategy, Inefficient business planning, Ineffective marketing strategies, Hiring the wrong people or having a negative teamwork environment, Lack of flexibility or innovation, Inadequate management, Not delivering enough value, Failure to understand the market, Lack of authenticity and transparency, Lack of personal or professional growth, Lack of cost control and accountability, Lack of concrete business systems, Not paying attention or not being able to compete with the competitors, Failure to create a sense of trust with the employees or customers (Blanco, B.H.,2022).

Research on tennis clubs and sports club management

Cakravastia, A., & Setiawan, M. (2022). Research on, "Role of a local club in developing value chain of high-performance national tennis athlete' found that the local club is a hub that connects three main actors involved in the development of kids into tennis players: coach, athlete, and parents, for the



grass root athlete development. The local Tennis clubs play a value chain, and their relation with other regional, national, and global developing of national athletes. They were playing a significant role in creating a massive pool of talent and developing grass-roots players into high-performance /elite national tennis athletes. Strong collaboration between stakeholders and completing the structure of the value chain are important to develop a country's performance sustainably.

Panjasilp, P. (2018) confirmed that service quality should have five main components: reliability, responsiveness, confidence, and access to services. The article aims to present knowledge from the literature review of the business management model of the tennis training center in Thailand, it was found that the popular variables include a corporate image, quality of service, marketing mix for service (7Ps), satisfaction, and loyalty.

Siffredi, C., & Vilches, F. (2022) Recommended the management of sports organizations in general and tennis in particular based on four pillars 1) use tailor-made strategies. Because customer satisfaction is dynamic it is reasonable to investigate and get to know our target audiences thoroughly before designing strategies to increase their loyalty to the tennis program 2) Focus on the satisfaction of the target group. The permanence of the beneficiaries in the sports program is a determining aspect of the sustainability of the organizations. So, to investigate and get to know our target audiences thoroughly before designing strategies to increase their loyalty to the tennis program.3) Providing knowledge management. The development of a knowledge management system, through processes and procedures that allow individual experiences to be transformed into an institutional asset. To this end, the clubs should create spaces for debate, exchange of ideas, and development of new documents 4) Creation, Innovation, and Technologies. The sport is changing as a result of technological innovations. Institutions that intend to evolve in sports development must include them in their daily practice, taking into account improvement criteria agreed upon at different levels of management.

Sports club teams' structures vary by institution and between clubs. Unlike intercollegiate athletics, sports club programs require significant student leadership with minimal fan or media engagement. Sports club programs are administered without formal coaches, and practices are not mandatory. The undergraduate students who participated in team sports, but were not Division I athletes, reported higher mental health component scores. Team affiliation, social interaction, and social support from teammates are also important components of team sports participation that impact mental health. Participants engaging in team sports reported a higher level of subjective happiness than those participating in individual sports. Researchers suggested that sports clubs should provide the opportunity for physical activity, social support, personal growth, and community, which are elements that support subjective well-being. (Morris, M.L., Foster, J., Sidman, L.C., & Henyecz, A. 2023)

Sports clubs with paid staff report fewer problems with recruiting and retaining members but more problems with finances than sports clubs that rely on voluntary work, and sports clubs with increased professionalization of human resources management, and strategy have fewer problems with recruiting and retaining board members and coaches than sports clubs with low professionalization of HRM and strategy. These results show that the problem structure changes qualitatively with the increased professionalization of sports clubs. (Lang, G., Piller, S., Schmid, J.S., Lamprecht, M.S., Nagel, S.S., 2022)

Thanabordeekij, P. (2018) Research on "The Influence of Perceived Service Quality on Fitness Membership Renewal of XYZ Fitness" found that the participants were satisfied with the service received from XYZ Fitness. The most important model suggests that membership renewal is most influenced by the empathy dimension, followed by assurance, reliability, responsiveness, and tangible dimension, respectively.

Sedky, D., Kortam, W., & AbouAish, E. (2022) researched "The role of sports marketing in attracting audiences towards less popular sports" and found that the elements of sports marketing that can help to attract customers towards less popular sports are sports media, sports advertising, star athlete and sports sponsorship. The performance of national teams moderates the relationship between sports advertising and attraction toward less popular sports. Sports organizations need to hire professional marketers to design creative marketing campaigns to increase attraction toward less popular sports.

Researchers suggested that sports advertisements depend on ideas that show how less popular sports refresh one's life and increase family ties. The achievements of less popular sports national teams when they design marketing campaigns. The clubs use star athletes to attract audiences towards less popular sports and should choose star athletes whose manners are highly regarded by audiences to appear in less popular sports advertisements. The high-positioning clubs in the country could direct different media outlets, especially state media, to make programs about less popular sports and to increase the amount of coverage allocated to less popular sports in the news. Light can be shed on children and young people who are participating in less popular sports. Sponsoring less popular sports. Supporting less popular sports needs to be a top-down strategy adopted by the country to guarantee the sustainability of supporting these sports.

Summary of literature review

In the management of sports clubs, the important concept was." The Engagement and the attraction of players, sponsors, and supporters". The strategies used to enhance the good image, and the service quality were keywords. The application of management principles and strategies needs to activate with the service quality and marketing mixes. The POLC, 4 M's, SERVQUAL, and 7 P's. should be the important roles in managing the clubs to drive them for stability, sustainability, and wealth. Public relations and advertising were important for marketing service management.

Research Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable

1. Service quality (SEVQUAL) Concepts
2. Service Marketing Concepts (7 P's)
3. Management function (POLC)
4. Priority Needs survey
5. Tasks of sports clubs

Dependents Variable

Management Model to Operate Tennis Commercial Clubs

- Operational Strategies based on management function (POLC) service quality (SERVQUAL) and marketing mix (7 P's)
- Acceptance of stakeholders.



Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework

Methodology

This research applied a survey and development process to develop a management model for a tennis club in Zhanjiang, China,

1. Population Specification and Size: There are 17 tennis clubs in Zhanjiang City. The members, customers, and staff were approximately 5000 persons (interviewed by researchers, 15 December 2022)

- 1.1 The samples for interviewing were 17 managers or representatives
- 1.2 The samples for the dual responses survey were 398 (Yamane.1970)
- 1.3 Experts for consensus were 19 selected by purposive according to the specification
- 1.4 Stakeholders for focus group discussion consists of 11 persons including 3 managers. 3 coaches 3 specialists, 3 members, and 2 athletes.

2 Research tools.

- 3.1. Structural interviewing form developed by the researcher to interview the experts.
- 3.2. A questionnaire developed by the researcher based on reviewing data and literature to gather the observed status and expected operation.
- 3.3. Questionnaire developed by the researcher based on stakeholders' data and experts' opinions, designed in 5 rating scales for consensus by the Delphi process.
- 3.4. Recording form to summarize and conclude the result of the focus group discussion.



3. Data Analysis

- 3.1. Content analysis to conclude the data from the experts interviewing and focus group discussion.
- 3.2. Descriptive statistics as mean, standard deviation, and percentage.
- 3.3. PNI modified (Wongwanich, S. 2015: 259)
- 3.4. Consensus data from the Delhi process, analyzed by the median, and interquartile range, and set the criteria, median > 3.5 and $IQR < 1.50$. (Ramos, D., Arezes, P., & Afonso, P., 2016,)
- 3.5. The SPSS was applied for data analysis

Results

The management model to operate a commercial tennis club based on service quality and marketing mix concepts was as follows:

A. Management functions strategies

1. Planning: The tennis clubs should set the position of the clubs and define the vision, and goal to notify the expected status of the club in the future and motivate the staff to pay to afford to meet them.
2. The missions, the administrators, and staff should study and understand overall products, and the other aspects of the clubs to formulate the missions and organization structure of the club. But according to the data from interviewed managers and representatives, dual response data from questionnaires, and consensus of experts the main mission may consist of 1) Facilitate, and maintaining the venues, courts, facilities, and equipment of the clubs 2) Utilizing and run servicing of the venues, courts, facilities, and equipment 3) Set the management system to improve, maintain, gain profit for the clubs. 4) Create products to motivate the customers to participate, gain more members, more income, and the sustainability of the club.
3. The organization of the clubs consisted of, 1) the Secretariate of the clubs which responds to the management of general tasks such as document, finance, personnel, security, and transportation of the club 2) the Facilities and equipment section responds to the management of venues, facilities, equipment, buildings and properties of the club, 4) Servicing and promoting who respond on the management of service system and practice, create an event to promote the club. 5) Training and coaching who respond to training and coaching projects, setting the specification of training and coaching staff, 6) Marketing and public relations who respond to marketing and public relations to promote the club events and operations. Operate the shops to sell some things to respond to the needs of customers and members to fulfill the mission of the clubs.
4. Controlling: making the operation manual for staff, creating the quality control systems, monitoring and follow-ups, formative evaluation, and summative evaluation.
5. Tennis club should consider the marketing mix components to create the management and service
 - 5.1 Place: Defining the position of the clubs, providing a lobby, waiting area, and another tangible, enough tennis courts.
 - 5.2 Price: Considers the expected position of the clubs, products, quality of tangible aspects, and the competitors in tennis service. The consensus stated that should be the same price as the other tennis clubs, and the price should vary by the type or status of participants.
 - 5.3 Products: Everything that clubs offered to the customers were products, and the products should respond to the needs of customers, so the clubs should consider the needs of customers, The most agreed upon were court service, various levels of training courts, competitions, sports tours, food and drinks shops, tennis equipment repairs and sell shops, and hostel.
 - 5.4 Process: The process of operation should be easy to access and condiment by the use of technology and internet things.
 - 5.5 People: The staff should have a service mind, good personality and behavior, be responsive, and outstanding in their tasks, and possess a professional license.



5.6 Promotion: The promotion on special occasions, discount rate for special persons. Organized some events for members.

5.7 Physical evidence: The surrounding environments, the venues, and facility, the climate and pollution, the plan of tennis clubs, the adequacy of courts and equipment.

Confirmation of the development of a management model to operate the commercial tennis club in Zhanjiang City based on service quality and marketing mix concepts by the focus group discussions of 11 stakeholders. The stakeholders agreed with the management model to operate commercial tennis clubs in Zhanjiang City. They satisfied and accepted the usefulness, appropriateness, and practicability of the developed model.

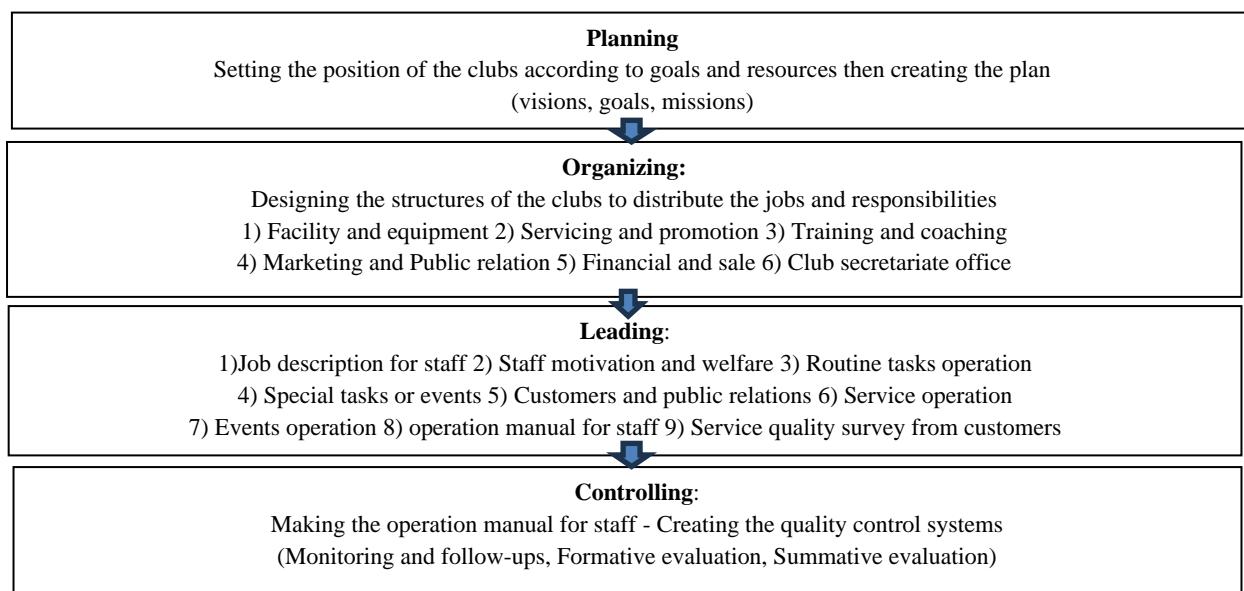


Figure 1 Diagram of management model to operate a commercial tennis club in Zhanjiang City

B. Marketing Mixes Service Strategies

Strategies	Activity	Activity	Activity
Place	Preparing the tangible environments	Provide a good lobby, waiting area,	Notifying the Board of regulations and announcements
	Quantity and quality of tennis courts for services		
Prices	Setting a court fee, and training fee the same as another course at the same level	Setting different prices of court fees for walk-ins, groups, coaches, or long-term reservations	Setting different course fees for different training levels.
Promotions	-Free gift on special days for members - Reduce memberships for family	-Organizing competitions for club members and open	Organizing events on special occasions for free
Products	Providing various levels of training courses	Organizing tennis academy	Organizing tennis tours to other clubs



Strategies	Activity	Activity	Activity
	Sending Athletes to join the outside competition	Setting a staff on duty during service hours	Establish a tennis academy and training
Process	Setting a staff on duty during service hours	Providing bank transfers to pay fees	Set the customers to be club advisors
People	Hiring qualifying coaches and trainers	Develop a service mind and set service quality as the first priority in working	Motivate the self of belonging to the staff
	Utilizing management methods to manage staff	Manage by good governance	Motivation and welfare
Physical evidence	Create a Good attractive image of the club area	Safety and easy access to the clubs	Green surrounding areas

Discussion

The operation of the tennis clubs is based on the analysis of the readiness in many aspects of the clubs, needs of customers, and goals to create the activities in management and services. The results of this research may be information for the tennis clubs to consider and apply to create the management operation of each club. The findings in this research confirmed the importance of the management system, application of service quality, and marketing mixes for the success of organizations, especially in commercial service enterprises. (Ni, C-J., 2004. Ji, K. 2003, Tasnaina, N.,2016)

The dual response questionnaire data concerned the observed status and expectations of the customers showed that the gap was wide, which means the customers were not satisfied with the quality and products that are offered at present and needed more quality and variety of products. this method of service quality survey was used widely to get data to improve the service operation. The survey data of the customers was similar to the data from interviewing the managers which showed that the clubs did not pay much to the quality of service and the application of marketing mixes to drive the operation of the clubs so they had to adjust themselves on these.

The customers of commercial sports clubs need better privacy and a homogenous social group of members and participants, so the positioning of the club as experts suggested in this research findings should be considered at each tennis club, and these will be useful in creating complete a management operation (Olson, A.,2020)

Customers often use the physical aspects of a business to help them judge the quality of the company's services. Physical evidence includes the space where the service takes place and the tangible items that customers take as proof of purchase. Though the service is intangible, giving customers a receipt or brochure allows them to associate their service experience with a physical symbol. The Image of the front gate, building architecture design, green area, and so on of tennis clubs were the first impressions to decide to be a member of the clubs, so it is important to be the factor in creating the club image. (edupepper.com 2021)

“Employees are important because they carry out your mission and have influence over your customers, among other reasons. They carry out your mission. One of the top reasons employees are important to an organization's success is that they are the ones who are directly responsible for carrying out your mission”. “Employees are foundational to the success and growth of a business. They are often both the first and last point of contact in every transaction and, thus, quite literally the face of an organization. They perform their duties, create a positive customer experience and ultimately generate sustained revenue” (Sean Peek 2023), People, staff, or employees were every person who works in the company or organization are very important to strengthen customer service. People can affect a customer's level of satisfaction as much as the service they provide because customers associate services with the people who deliver them, Effective customer service can motivate customers to return to the business for additional services as repeat buyers and also refer their peers to the company. Hobson, K.(2019) posted the “Five Reasons Employees Are Your Company's No. 1 Asset” that 1) Your people are your biggest resource and can affect public perception of your brand 2) Your employees are your



brand ambassadors, the face of your company, 3) Retraining, recruiting, and rehiring are expensive, 4) Employee turnover is costly in terms of valuable resources, but it can also affect morale in both current employees and clients 5) Value your employees and staff, and you can increase your company's profitability. So, the tennis clubs should train staff, create a service script so that staff can create a unified, consistent customer experience, establish a protocol for upselling so customers feel comfortable when a staff member suggests purchasing additional products and services, and instruct staff to remember important details about repeat customers. The slogan "customer first and service mind" should be awareness of the people or staff of the tennis clubs.

Eveleigh, J. (2017) stated that the product is the most important aspect of the four P's of marketing – Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. Product is the center of all marketing activities, without a product, marketing cannot even be imagined. Good products are the key to market success. Product decisions are taken first by the marketers and these decisions are the center of all other marketing decisions, such as price, promotion, and distribution. IMPACT Tennis Academy (2023) offered the products, Full-Time Academy Program, ATP / WTA Professional Program, ITF Junior Program, 14/u / ATF Junior Development Program, NCAA College Tennis, Social / Beginner Program, Group / Team Training Program, Travelling Team Program, Private Lesson to respond the needs of customers. These were a variety of products to motivate the customers to participate according to their level of experience and goals. The 99businessideas.com (2023) suggested ideas to create products for sports clubs some products were similar to the findings in this research as follows:

1. Sports Academy to train, and teach some favorite sports.
2. Sports Products to produce equipment, dress, sport court, sports intelligence technology
3. Sports facility service to provide sports field, sports center, and fitness center for servicing.
4. Sport Organizers to manage sports competitions.
5. Sports Consultant to advise, solve problems, and tutor athletes.

5.1 Sports Coaching, Health/nutrition coach to be a coach for a specific sport which you experience

5.2 Personal Fitness Trainer to be freelance in fitness training both for sports elite and sports for health. The fitness training is large and includes people of all ages, body types, and goals.

5.3 Sports Camp is a very profitable business you can start in the sports industry. You can organize it for children and adults.

5.4 Sport Tourism brings a group of participants to travel to an attractive place, or city and join the sports friendship matches., and visit some sports places, sports foods, and sports shops.

The price setting in this research found that the clubs should study the competitors around their site and the positioning of their clubs. The main principles of price setting were as follows: (Gillen, C. 2023)

1. Value-based pricing: The price setting consists of finding what the customer is willing to pay
2. Cost-plus pricing: set prices by determining the cost of production and their ideal profit margin.
3. Competitive pricing: sets prices based on what competitors charge for comparable products, consider the price that you need to be able to beat the competition.
4. Economy pricing: Economy pricing involves setting the lowest prices among your competitors to attract bargain buyers. this method the owners must find ways to reduce their funds but not the quality of products to lower the price while continuing to keep the profit
5. Penetration pricing: Penetration pricing is to set the price of a product or service low at the beginning, then raise the price once the company is more established. This could apply to offers that entice new clients or customers.
6. Dynamic pricing: dynamic pricing, or pricing that changes fluidly according to the availability and demand of the market
7. Price skimming: Price skimming is setting the maximum price at the start and gradually lowering it over time.



8. Hourly pricing: The hourly pricing establishes prices based on the time spent on a particular task or service. The price was connected directly with the effort or resources dedicated to the project, in this method the client should understand and agree upon the service's value.

9. Project-based pricing: This method determines prices based on the scope, complexity, and resources required for each project. The accounting for factors like resources, expertise, and time commitment required to complete the project successfully.

10. High-low pricing: This method was to offer products or services at a higher price initially and periodically discount by coupon, cumulative purchase, registration fees, etc.

11. Bundle pricing: Bundle pricing combines multiple products or services and offers them at a lower overall price than what each item would individually cost.

12. Freemium pricing: Starting with the free version, by offering a basic version of a product or service for free and charging for additional premium features or advanced functionality is called freemium pricing.

13. Premium pricing: This strategy positions the company as exclusive and superior in value in comparison to lower-priced competitors. It appeals to a target market willing to pay a premium for the perceived benefits. The price setting should consider the concerned aspects such as competitors, funding, quality of products, demand, and supply, positioning and purpose of the clubs.

Promotion is a marketing tool, used as a strategy to communicate between the sellers and buyers. It is a way to motivate the customers, and the promotion influence and convince the buyers to buy their products or services. This technique of marketing creates an interest in the mindset of the customers and can also retain them as loyal customers. The promotion could increase the speed of product and service acceptance, aid the sales of goods and services, provide effective sales support, and fill the gap between the manufacturers and the end consumers (byjus.com, 2023). The research results suggested that tennis clubs should consider promotion to motivate the customers to participate in the clubs' activities, to satisfy and gain more customers' loyalty to the clubs.

Public relations: Public Relations is a method of developing the image of an individual or an organization to society in such a way that a favorable opinion is developed for the concerned entity. public relations are focused on earned media and can take advantage of unpaid communication channels. Its roles were to increase awareness, improve business reputation, attract customers, and strengthen relationships (Queensland government,2023) In sports club management, public relations are most used to attract customers, strengthen customers' relationships, and notify service activities. The research results showed that the suggestion of experts focuses on unpaid communication channels as "word of mouth", and "social communication applications" (Facebook, WeChat, Line) as the channels of public relations.

The strategies to use in commercial tennis club management should consider the various factors on the status of the clubs, size of business, purpose, and goals, quality and adequate of management resources, social level, and needs of the customer. The strategies found in this research might be alternatives for the clubs to choose and apply to the operation strategies to run their clubs.

Recommendations

Application of research results

1. The clubs should find out the need assessment of customers and staff by the use of a dual response questionnaire which applied the SERVQUAL and Marketing Mixes as a tool. Then apply the alternative strategies in this research which appropriate to the needs of stakeholders.

2. The result of this research could apply to other kinds of sports clubs, especially the process of research.

For the next research.

1. Grouping the size of the clubs or their positionings and analyzing the data of each group to formulate the management operations, these could find the depth of and suitable operation for each group of the clubs



2. Concentrate on interviews of managers or representatives to find the real operation they run the clubs so the researcher could conclude the problems, and find the ways to solve the problems directly.

References

99businessideas. (2022). *Best 45 Profitable Sports Business Ideas in*. Retrieved from: <https://www.99businessideas.com/sports-business-ideas/>.

Blanco, B.H. (2022). The importance of correct management in a tennis organization. How to create, expand, and stay in the business. *ITF Coaching & Sport Science Review*, 30(87), 48–54. <https://doi.org/10.52383/itfcoaching.v30i87.339>

Brooks, A. (2022). *The Marketing Mix: Building a Strategy With the 7Ps*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ventureharbour.com/marketing-mix/>.

Byjus.com. (2023). *Concept of Public Relations*. Retrieved from: <https://byjus.com/commerce/concept-of-public-relations/>

Cakravastia, A., & Setiawan, M. (2022). Role of a local club in developing a value chain of high-performance national tennis athletes. *ITF Coaching & Sport Science Review*, 30(87), 63–71. <https://doi.org/10.52383/itfcoaching.v30i87.336>

Eveleigh, J. (2017). *Why the Product is the Most Important Part of the Marketing Mix*. Retrieved from: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-product-most-important-part-marketing-mix-jessica-eveleigh/>

Fick, G.R., & Ritchie, J.R.B. (1991). Measuring Service Quality in the Travel and Tourism Industry. *Journal of Travel Research*, 30, 2-9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004728759103000201>

Gabriel, C.G., & Alina, C.I. (2014). Research on the Management of Sports Organizations. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 140, 667-670. DOI: DOI:10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.04.490

Gillen, C. (2023). *15 pricing strategies and how to set yours*. Retrieved from: <https://zapier.com/blog/pricing-strategy/>

Heaslip, E. (2023). *Nonprofit vs. Not-for-Profit vs. For-Profit: What's the Difference?* Retrieved from: <https://www.uschamber.com/co/start/strategy/nonprofit-vs-not-for-profit-vs-for-profit>

Helen, D-S. (2017). *Why Behavioral Marketing is a Must in 2017*. Retrieved from: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-behavioural-marketing-must-2017-denney-stone-marketing-training/>

IMPACT Tennis Academy. (2023). *About IMPACT Tennis Academy*. Retrieved from: <https://th.top10place.com/impact-tennis-academy-2122464848.html>

ITF Global Tennis Report. (2021). *ITF Global Tennis Report*. Retrieved July 15, 2021, from: <http://itf.uberflip.com/i/1401406-itf-global-tennis-report-2021.5>

Ji, K. (2003). *The market-oriented operation and modern management practice manual of sports clubs*. Jilin Electronic Press: Three Steps Toward a Successful Marketing Plan For 2020

Karolina Hobson. (2019). *Five Reasons Employees Are Your Company's No. 1 Asset*. Retrieved from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinessdevelopmentcouncil/2019/12/12/five-reasons-employees-are-your-companys-no-1-asset/?s>

Lang, G., Piller, S., Schmid, J., Lamprecht, M., & Nagel, S. (2022). Professionalization and organizational problems of sports clubs: Is there a relationship? *Current Issues in Sport Science (CISS)*, 7, 004. <https://doi.org/10.36950/2022ciiss004>

Luiza, M.S. (2011). SERVQUAL-Thirty years of research on service quality with Implications for customer satisfaction. In I. Plăiaș (Ed.), R. Ciornea (Ed.). *International Conference "Marketing from Information to Decision" 4th Edition*, 420–429.

Morris, M.L., Foster, J., Sidman, L.C., & Henyecz, A. (2023). *Campus Recreation sport club participants: Exploring subjective well-being, Research, Sports Health & Fitness*. Retrieved 19 November 2021 from: <https://thesportjournal.org/article/category/research/>



Ni, C-J. (2004). Classification of sports clubs. *Journal of Nanjing Institute of Physical Education: Social Science Edition*, 18(6), 2.

Olson, A. (2020). *Body and Earth: An Experiential Guide*. Wesleyan University Press; Illustrated edition (January 7, 2020).

Panjasilp, P. (2018). A Business Management Model of Tennis Training Center: An Analysis Issue. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*. 6 (2), 717-729.

Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A., & Berry, L.L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12–40.

Queensland government. (2023). *Queensland Trade and Investment Strategy 2022–2032*. Retrieved from: <https://www.tiq.qld.gov.au/getmedia/74831d7d-505d-41d3-82a4-479129c1810f/Queensland-Trade-and-Investment-Strategy-2022-2032.pdf>

Ramos, D., Arezes, P., & Afonso, P. (2016). Application of the Delphi Method for the inclusion of externalities in occupational safety and health analysis. *Dyna (Medellin, Colombia)*, 83(196), 14-20. DOI: [10.15446/dyna.v83n196.56603](https://doi.org/10.15446/dyna.v83n196.56603)

Reichheld, F., & Sasser, W.E. (1990). Zero Defections: Quality Comes to Services. *Harvard Business Review*. 68 (5), 105–111.

Sean Peek. (2023). *What Your Business Can Learn from Southwest Airlines*. Retrieved 2 August 2023, from: <https://www.business.com/articles/southwest-airlines-great-customer-service/>.

Sedky, D., Kortam, W., & AbouAish, E. (2022). The role of sports marketing in attracting audiences towards less popular sports. *Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Sciences*, 4 (2), 113-131. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHASS-04-2020-0059>

Siffredi, C., & Vilches, F. (2022). Pillars for the Management of Sport Organisations. *ITF Coaching & Sport Science Review*.30 (87), 25–27. <https://www.itfcoachingreview.com/index.php/journal/article/view/352>.

Tasnaina, N. (2016). Development of Management Strategies applied in Commercial Badminton Courts. *The full research report, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Burapha University, and Proceeding on Insee Esarn Conference. IV, 27 November 2016, Kasetsart University, Sakornnakorn Campus*

Tasnaina, N., & Tasnaina, O., (2022). Guidelines for Promoting Sports from Basic Sports to Professional Sports for Thailand. *Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation*. 48 (1), 154-165

Thanabordeekij, P. (2018). The Influence of Perceived Service Quality on Fitness Membership Renewal of XYZ Fitness. *Journal of Management Sciences*, 5 (2), 67-84.

Wongwanich, S. (2015). *Needs assessment research*. 3rd ed. Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press