

The Effect of Club Social Responsibility on Customer Citizenship Behavior with the Mediating Role of Brand Equity

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this research was to investigate the role of the social responsibility of clubs on customer citizenship behavior through the mediation of brand value.

Method: The method of this research is a descriptive survey and the statistical population of this research is all the customers of South Khorasan fitness clubs. Due to the uncertainty of their exact number, the method of 5 to 15 times the number of questionnaire items was used to determine the sample size. After collecting the questionnaires (370 questionnaires), 340 questionnaires were analyzed. The instruments of this research included three questionnaires: the social responsibility questionnaire by Bakhshandeh et al. (2015), the citizenship behavior questionnaire by Gruth (2005) and the special brand value questionnaire by Azimzadeh and Mohammadi (2015). To analyze the data and the relationships between the variables, Spss24 and Amos24 software were used.

Results: The results showed that there is a significant relationship between the social responsibility of fitness clubs the citizenship behavior of customers ($r=0.598$) and brand value ($r=0.777$). Also, there is a significant relationship between brand equity and customer citizenship behavior ($r=0.870$). Finally, the results showed that the social responsibility of clubs has a positive and significant effect on customer citizenship behavior through the mediation of the brand equity variable ($r=0.630$).

Conclusion: In light of the research's conclusions, managers of sports clubs can make significant progress in appealing to citizens by developing and putting into practice social responsibility and branding plans that foster positive customer relations on all fronts.

Keywords: Sports marketing, brand equity, club social responsibility, Customer citizenship behavior.

Introduction

One of the most important ways to create a competitive advantage is to comply with moral principles and moral values that are raised in the market process. This is mentioned as social responsibility in discussions, and its consequence is to satisfy the wishes of the beneficiaries. It is especially the customers who have a significant impact on their buying and decision-making process in the long term (Amoako and Boateng, 2022).

In the last decade, the concept of social responsibility has been considered a process in scientific circles and management procedures (Crane et al., 2008). Research has shown that there is a positive relationship between the organization's social responsibility and consumers' reactions to the company and its products. For social responsibility, the consequences of dependence, awareness, propensity to purchase and advertising, and loyalty have been mentioned (Ellen et al., 2006; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004), which is the direct relationship between corporate social responsibility and brand value or market value. It makes the business more visible and it can be said that with the increase in the degree of social responsibility of the company or organization, or especially sports clubs, the value of the club brand and the profit from the services provided through the club will also expand (Rundle-Thiele et al., 2008; Ma and Kaplanidou, 2021). Based on the functions it has and the sociological studies it conducts, every sports club should be aware that sports are a social phenomenon that is intrinsically intertwined with society and can create huge changes in the structure of society and also influence the public mind. Therefore, sports clubs can be considered an economic enterprise in society; they can cause empathy between people and their environment, and in this way, they can assume social responsibility (Filizöz and Fişne, 2011). Therefore, social responsibility can have a positive effect on

customers' fruitful evaluations of the brand and product, the special value of the brand, as well as the citizenship behavior of customers and thus cause loyalty in customers (Filizöz and Fişne, 2011; Ahn and Park, 2019; Soliman and Saad, 2021).

On the other hand, experts believe that brand study can be done from various dimensions such as customer citizenship behavior, customer purchase experience, brand value, distribution channels, and financial markets, and these methods can complement each other instead of opposing each other. Nowadays, branding activities are not limited to goods and include service industries (Khodadad Hosseini et al., 2017). So building a strong brand is the goal of most organizations. Organizations can set a higher value for their goods and services based on a strong brand and reduce their vulnerability to competing organizations to the lowest possible level (Bahreini and Ziyai, 2011). Now, considering the clarification of the role of the brand and its value in service organizations, one of the important and key issues in marketing is the creation of special brand value. According to Farquhar (1989), brand equity is the added value that the brand gives to the product and also defines a brand name for the product. According to Kim et al. (2008), brand equity can be considered as the value added to the product that can be measured by the level of customer perception (Kim et al., 2008). If the owners of sports clubs pay attention to the factors that make their brand appear favorable in the minds of sports customers, it will make customers a favorable image and association in their minds about the club, and the components of the special value of the brand of sports clubs such as loyalty and favorable shopping experience and thus improve customer participation from the club brand (Pedeliento et al., 2016). Therefore, the brand is one of the most important assets of any organization. Sports clubs should always try to improve brand equity to achieve the benefits of high brand equity. In the first stage, this topic

attracts new customers and in the second stage, it is a means of reminding the current customers to remember the organization (Bahreini and Ziyai, 2011).

One of the factors influencing the special value of the brand is the customer's citizenship behavior. Strong brand equity indicates that consumers feel a positive connection with the brand, and this positive connection with the brand in a way causes the emergence of citizenship behaviors on the part of customers (Hamdi and Karmi, 2014). Consumer citizenship behavior is rooted in the concept of social behavior in social psychology studies, but many past studies have not paid attention to the benevolent aspect of this concept (Hosseinzadeh, 2015). Customer citizenship behavior includes dimensions such as assistance, feedback, tolerance and support. Customers are tolerant when they feel defects in goods or when services do not meet their expectations. Fandom refers to loyalty and increased interest in a service provider based on the individual interests of customers. This greatly contributes to the company's reputation and fame, product and service promotion, and better evaluation of service quality (Nyadzayo et al., 2015). In general, customer citizenship behaviors, whether in the form of helping to provide better services from the organization or in the form of positive advertising about the organization's brand, change and strengthen the attitude of other customers towards the organization's brand and provide supportive behaviors from their side and this issue improves the special value of the brand. Committed customers tend to share the positive points of the brand with others and in confirmation of their choice, they encourage other customers to choose the brand as well.

In this regard, CIA (2022) in research entitled "Does fitness club's social responsibility stimulate consumer citizenship behavior? The mediating model of satisfaction and trust" found that there is a positive relationship

between club social responsibility and consumer or customer citizenship behavior. Kim et al. (2022) in a research entitled "Creating team brand equity through perceived corporate social responsibility: The mediating role of dual identification" concluded that perceived corporate social responsibility affects dual identification (team and online community), and identification of team has a positive effect on the equity of the brand. Also, the perception of corporate social responsibility is shown to be an insignificant predictor of brand equity, which is completely influenced by team identification. This study shows that enhancing the social responsibility image of a sports team is important in terms of creating team identity and online community while developing team identification can be critical in enhancing sports brand value. Wang et al. (2021) in research entitled "The role of corporate social responsibility perception in brand equity, brand credibility, brand Reputation and purchase intention" concluded that customers' perception of a company's corporate social responsibility has an effect on creating brand value and will impact their intention to purchase its brands in the future. Zachary et al. (2020) in research entitled "The effect of corporate social responsibility practices on brand equity: A review of the top 100 brands in Malaysia" found that brands that are actively involved in corporate social responsibility practices such as environmental, social, workplace and market partnership experienced increased brand equity. According to the stated contents, the results of the above studies showed that several researchers have related the customer's citizenship behavior with the special value of the brand (Abedi Samakosh and Kalate Seyfari, 2016; Raza et al., 2020; Ferraz, 2018; Nyadzayo et al., 2016), social responsibility with special brand value (Esmaeilpour and Barjoei, 2015; Ghayor et al., 2018; Lai et al., 2010; Guzmán and DAVIS, 2017; Mensah et al., 2017; Yang and Basil, 2018; Muniz et al., 2019; Mahmood and

Bashir, 2020; Zahari et al., 2020; Ma and Kaplanidou, 2021; Wang et al., 2021; Alakkas et al., 2022; Kim and Manoli, 2022) as well as social responsibility with customer citizenship behavior (Hatami et al., 2019; Cai, 2022; Fatma, 2022; Nguyen and Parvan, 2020; Huang et al., 2019; Nejad Sajadi, 2016). However, in the field of sports, no research was found that was conducted as a combination of the three variables mentioned in this research. Customer citizenship behavior includes advice to improve the quality of service, participation in club activities, word-of-mouth advertising, and sincere dealings with other customers, which improves the performance of the club and has a positive effect on its profitability and business operations. Therefore, customer citizenship behavior can be considered a competitive advantage for fitness clubs (Liao et al., 2023). On the other hand, considering the current unfavorable conditions in the field of citizenship behavior in most clubs in the

country, especially in South Khorasan province, Therefore, focusing on citizenship behavior and the factors affecting it, such as the social responsibility of the club and the special value of the club's brand, it is felt more than ever that this can take effective steps in this direction.

Now, according to the mentioned contents and the importance of the subject, in this research, the effect of the social responsibility of the club and the special value of the brand on the customer's citizenship behavior is investigated: How can brands in today's saturated market act by rethinking social responsibility to achieve customer satisfaction, and maintain, support and increase sales? Therefore, in this research, the researcher tries to present the structural equation model to investigate the effect of the club's social responsibility on the customer's citizenship behavior with the mediating role of brand value in fitness clubs of South Khorasan province (Figure 1).

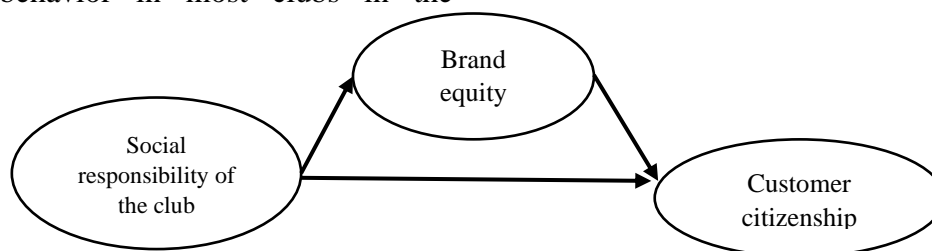


Figure 1. Research model

Materials and Methods

The current research is descriptive and correlational and its statistical population includes all clients of South Khorasan fitness clubs. Due to the uncertainty of their exact number, the method of 5 to 15 times the number of questionnaire items was used to determine the sample size.

Due to the possible loss of the research sample, the number of 400 questionnaires was randomly distributed among the surveyed people according to the density of customers in the clubs of the province, out of which 370 questionnaires were collected using a combined method (paper questionnaire and electronic

questionnaire). Among the completed questionnaires, 30 questionnaires were removed due to incomplete completion of the questionnaire (22 questionnaire) and incorrect completion of the questionnaire (8 questionnaire), and finally 340 questionnaires were analyzed. The personal profile questionnaire included characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, and level of education. Azimzadeh and Mohammadi's questionnaire (2013) was used to measure brand equity, which included 6 dimensions and 23 questions. Groth's (2005) questionnaire, which included 8 dimensions and 24 questions, was used to measure customer citizenship

behavior. And in order to measure the social responsibility of the club, the questionnaire of bakhshandeh et al. (2015) with 4 dimensions and 15 questions was used. The validity of the questionnaires was estimated by using the opinions of 5 management professors and sports experts, and after applying all the suggestions and corrections, the reliability of the tools was determined by Cronbach's alpha test (specific brand value 0.799, customer

citizenship behavior 0.882, and club social responsibility questionnaire 0.934). Statistical technique was used to determine the normality of the data distribution, and for data analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis were used in spss24 and Amos24 software.

Results

The descriptive analysis of the research findings is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Participants' Characteristics

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Man	129	37.94
	Female	211	62.06
Age category	Up to 30 years	180	52.94
	31 to 40 years	85	25
	Over 40 years old	75	22.06
Level of education	Diploma and below	198	58.24
	Associate Degree	34	10
	Bachelor's Degree	78	22.94
	Masters and above	24	7.06
	Unresponsive	6	1.76
Marital status	Married	93	27.35
	Single	234	68.82
	Unresponsive	13	3.82

Development of the structural model of research variables

In the following section, the effects of the main

research variables in the model, based on the results of the software, have been examined (Table 2).

Table 2. Output results of the final research model

Variable	Variable	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Regression weight
Social responsibility	→ Brand equity	0.576	0.075	7.674	0.001	0.937
Social responsibility	→ Customer citizenship behavior	0.325	0.134	2.424	0.015	0.380
Brand equity	→ Customer citizenship behavior	0.962	0.254	3.788	0.001	0.692
Social responsibility	→ Legal	1.000				0.801
Social responsibility	→ Moral	1.078	0.059	18.306	0.001	0.855
Social	→ Economic	0.842	0.069	12.129	0.001	0.619

responsibility							
Social responsibility	→	Human	0.972	0.054	17.944	0.001	0.839
Brand equity	→	Brand Consistency	1.000			0.001	0.417
Brand equity	→	Brand emotions	1.864	0.243	7.676	0.001	0.750
Brand equity	→	Brand judgment	1.544	0.207	7.457	0.001	0.689
Brand equity	→	Brand image	1.537	0.213	7.231	0.001	0.635
Brand equity	→	Brand performance	1.706	0.231	7.401	0.001	0.675
Brand equity	→	Brand prominence	1.692	0.231	7.326	0.001	0.657
Customer citizenship behavior	→	Positive word of mouth	1.000			0.001	0.708
Customer citizenship behavior	→	Service improvement	1.064	0.060	17.670	0.001	0.766
Customer citizenship behavior	→	Performance Monitoring	1.227	0.074	16.693	0.001	0.803
Customer citizenship behavior	→	customer's voice	1.111	0.073	15.125	0.001	0.807
Customer citizenship behavior	→	Benevolent deeds	1.194	0.088	13.642	0.001	0.727
Customer citizenship behavior	→	Expression of affiliation	0.614	0.080	7.710	0.001	0.408
Customer citizenship behavior	→	flexibility	1.144	0.100	11.452	0.001	0.618
Customer citizenship behavior	→	Participation in activities	1.059	0.092	11.565	0.001	0.575

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis showed that all the dimensions of this research, except the legal dimension of the social responsibility factor, the brand consistency dimension of the brand equity factor, the positive word of mouth advertising dimension of the customer citizenship behavior factor, have an acceptable t value and factor loading (Figure 1), and are significant at the 0.05 level;

this significance of the regression weights (factor loading) indicates the convergent validity of the variables in the model (Table 2).

According to Table 3, the fit indices of the final model of the research show that the model has a very good fit for the variables of the current research. In other words, they confirm the fit indices of the model. Also, the final model is presented in the format of Figure 2, after fitting.

Table 3. Fit indices of the structural model of the research

RMSEA	CFI	IFI	NFI	AGFI	GFI	CMIN/DF	Indicators
0.089	0.914	0.911	0.891	0.906	0.912	2.193	Values

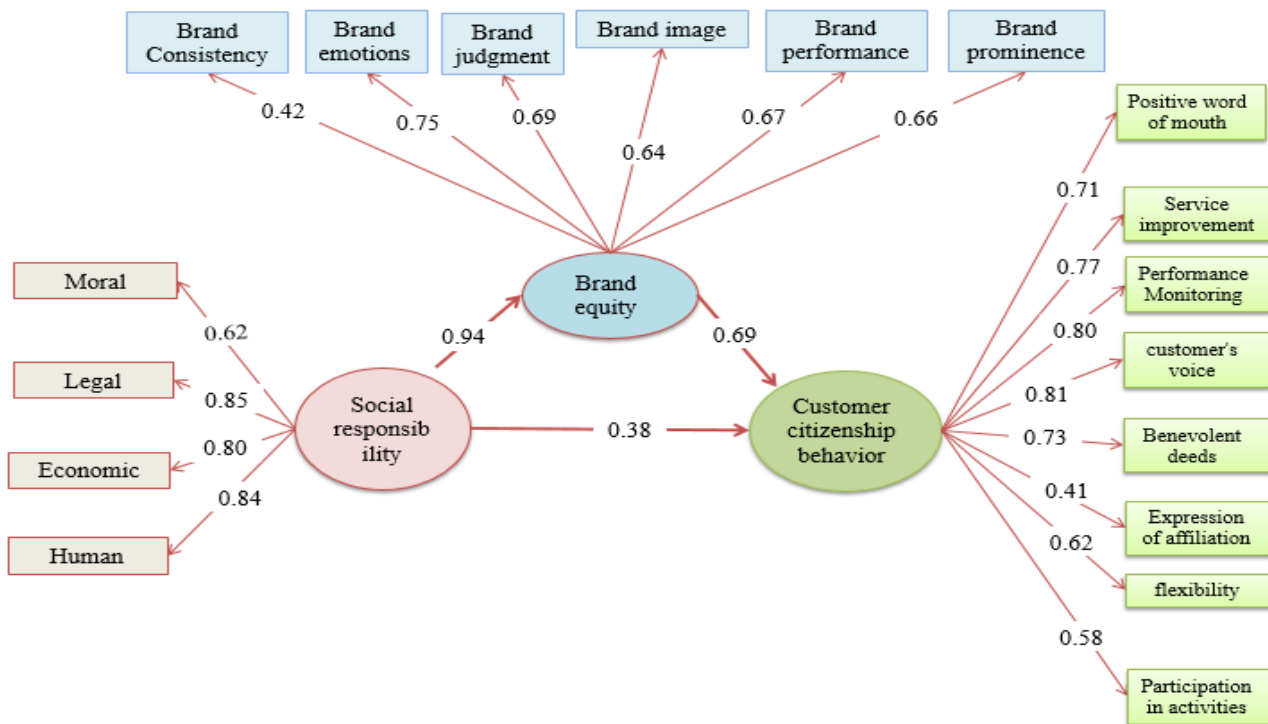


Figure 2. Structural equation model of research

Based on the structural model in Figure 2, the social responsibility component with a coefficient of 0.38 and the brand equity component with a coefficient of 0.69 has an effect on the citizenship behavior component of fitness clubs in South Khorasan province from the point of view of the respondent group. Also, the results showed that the component of social responsibility has a coefficient of 0.94 on the component of the specific value of the club brand. In addition, the results of the Sobel test showed that the social responsibility component with a coefficient of 0.63 has an indirect effect on the brand equity component of fitness clubs in South Khorasan province.

In general, the observed coefficients indicate the convergent validity of the variables in the model. Examining the factor loading of the items shows the high level of the factor loading of each of the items in the brand value component of fitness clubs in South Khorasan province.

Sobel Test

The mediating role of brand equity can also be tested using the Sobel test. The Sobel test

statistic is calculated as follows: where *a* is the coefficient of the path of the social responsibility of the club on the equity value of the club brand and *b* is the coefficient of the equity value of the club brand on the citizenship behavior of the customer, and *S_a* is the error of estimating the coefficient of path *a* and *S_b* is the error of estimating the coefficient of path *b*:

$$Z - value = \frac{a * b}{\sqrt{(b^2 * s_a^2) + (a^2 * s_b^2) + (s_a^2 * s_b^2)}} = 2.646$$

Now, because the value of the Sobel test statistic (2.646) has exceeded the critical value of 1.96, it can be said that brand equity has a significant mediating role.

Determining the intensity of the mediation effect

In addition to the Sobel test, the intensity of mediation is also calculated with the help of the following equation: where *c* is the coefficient of the direct path and *a × b* is the coefficient of the indirect path, and the result of *a × b + c* is called the total effect.

$$VAF = \frac{a \times b}{a \times b + c}$$

$$\frac{0.94 * 0.69}{0.94 * 0.69 + 0.38} = 0.63$$

The mediating intensity of brand equity is equal to 0.63, which means that about 63% of the total effect of the club's social responsibility variable on customer citizenship behavior is explained indirectly through brand equity.

Discussion

The current research has been conducted to investigate the role of the social responsibility of the club on the customer's citizenship behavior with the mediation of brand equity in fitness clubs of South Khorasan province. The results of the research showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the club's social responsibility and the customer's citizenship behavior. Therefore, it can be concluded that the implementation of social responsibilities of fitness clubs in South Khorasan will lead to positive citizenship behavior in the minds of customers, and the customer's citizenship behavior will lead to suggestions for improving the club's services, as well as public advertising and positive word of mouth for the club in the public mind, which will cause more people to participate in sports in the club and visit the club and create more dependence from the people. Furthermore, it can be said that the relationship between social responsibility and customer citizenship behavior in clubs goes back to Forgas' emotion injection model, which states that a person's emotions influence his cognitive judgments (Forgas, 1995). The findings of this research were consistent with the findings of, Hatami et al. (2019), Cai (2022), Fatma (2022), Nguyen and Pervan (2020), Hwang et al. (2019), Nejad Sajjadi (2016). In summary, it can be said that the performance of the managers and officials of the club, or in other words, the club itself, the commitment and responsibility towards society, causes the customers to show higher

efforts to achieve the goals of the club and consider themselves committed to the goals and values of the club. Consequently, customers who have a high commitment to the club will show more citizenship behaviors, because the attitude of club managers affects their behavior. Therefore, a positive attitude is expected to lead to positive behavior and these positive behaviors in turn improve the performance of the club and bring positive results for it. In addition, since customers are the most important beneficiaries of sports clubs, the higher the club's reputation among customers, the more successful it will be. The results of several studies have shown that investing in the organization's social responsibility can affect the customer's understanding, attitude and behavior towards the organization. Social responsibility helps the club to create a positive reputation and image in the minds of the club's customers. As a result, the social responsibility of the club or any organization can affect the perception and behavior of customers (Nguyen and Pervan, 2020). Also, the results showed that there is a significant relationship between the club's social responsibility and the brand value of South Khorasan fitness clubs. This result is consistent with the research results of Esmailpour and Barjoei (2015), Ghayor et al. (2018), Lai et al. (2010), Guzman and Davis (2017), Mensah et al. (2017), Yang and Basile (2018), Muniz et al. (2019), Mahmood and Bashir (2020), Zahari et al. (2020), Ma and Kaplanidou (2021), Wang et al. (2021), Alakkas et al. (2022) and Kim and Manoli (2022). Corporate social responsibility is a new topic in today's business that has entered the field of sports management in recent years (Walker and Kent, 2009). In this regard, Fetscherin and Usunier (2012) clearly stated that the process and fields of organizational branding are being formed with special attention to social responsibility. Because this construct can encourage clubs to actively participate in social activities, considering the benefits that it brings to the club, creating

satisfaction and loyalty in customers is significant. Therefore, the club's social responsibility activities, since they strengthen interactions between customers and audiences and the club, will create special brand value. So, it can be concluded that the social responsibility of the club or organization affects brand interactions, including the special value of the brand, and strengthens it. Therefore, the reputation of a sports club, especially fitness clubs, in the field of social responsibility, is considered an important and necessary brand capital that causes the creation of special brand value (Górska-Warsewicz et al., 2021). Another finding of this research is the relationship between the special value of the brand and the citizenship behavior of the customers of fitness clubs. This result was consistent with the results of the studies of Abedi Samakosh and Kalate Seyfari (2016), Raza et al. (2020), Ferraz (2018), and Nyadzayo et al. (2015). According to the findings of Raza et al. (2020), who stated that customer citizenship behavior has a positive effect on service investment, Zhang et al. (2014) also stated that brand equity directly and indirectly raises marketing capability and network capacity through the creation of cooperation value or customer citizenship behavior, which shows the cycle of improved relationship between the club and the customer (Ponnusamy, 2015). Also, according to the findings of Ahn et al. (2016) and Ferraz (2018), stated that brand exploitation can affect the customer's citizenship behavior through a commitment to the brand, and brand citizenship behavior increases brand pride and honor, it can be concluded that highlighting the special value of the brand and introducing the brand of the sports club leads to awareness and loyalty, which itself is effective in the emergence of citizenship behavior of customers. A customer who is loyal to his club's brand, not only does not go to another club but also suggests the club he wants to his friends and gives feedback on the design of the club's programs. Creating loyalty in customers reduces the risk of

customers when choosing services. Building and valuing the brand in service organizations, especially clubs and sports venues, is very important and creates added value for the organization. Therefore, considering the great importance of the special value of the brand and its role in the productivity of the organization, it is possible to promote and strengthen the brand value of the club to cause such behaviors in customers. The social responsibility of clubs has a positive and meaningful effect through the mediation of the brand equity variable on the customer's citizenship behavior. This result indicates that club brand equity can act as a link between club social responsibility and customer citizenship behavior in fitness clubs and can indirectly convey the impact of the club's social activities on the customer's citizenship behavior. In other words, according to the findings of the research, it can be said that club managers, to be able to dominate their customers and their behavior and have more customers in the current competitive world, should first take into account the social responsibility of their club like its legal responsibility, which was one of the most important factors in the final research model. Furthermore, especially regarding the indicators of this dimension, it is important for managers to pay special attention to the safety of their customers and to comply with the rules and standards of fitness clubs. In addition, they should clearly announce the fees and subsidies that they have, as well as other areas that managers should pay attention to in the social responsibility section, which were emphasized by the respondents in this research; in fact, the club should properly fulfill its human responsibility after complying with the legal social responsibility. This will make the club welcome humanitarian activities and health programs in the smaller module and conduct charity competitions for creating more motivation among its customers. In the next step, the results of the research model showed that there is a direct relationship between social

responsibility and customer citizenship behavior (i.e., 0.38) and an indirect relationship through brand equity with the Sobel test (i.e., 0.63), which indicates that if the managers of sports clubs want to be successful in their clubs, instead of worrying about the behavior of their customers, they should pay attention to the principle that they should first create value for their club by creating a good mental image of the club and its performance to make the club stand out. This requires that the officials and the reception department of the club have a friendly relationship with the customers so that they consider the club as their own and put the customer's satisfaction in the first part of their work, which in turn creates pleasure and happiness while spending time there. It provides leisure for the customer and creates a sense of belonging for them. The result of these endeavors will be the customer's citizenship behavior which is useful and productive for the club and the service complex, and the customer can help and sympathize with the club. According to the results of this research, the customer's voice along with the supervision and performance of other customers are highly important and in case a problem or an abnormal behavior occurred in the club, the customers themselves notify the person that this club is different from other clubs and must mind their behaviors. In addition, the value creation that results from the special value of the brand causes a high citizenship behavior for the customer and dependence and regular participation in the sports activities and giving suggestions to improve the performance of the club. Finally, it is suggested to the officials of the gyms to pay special attention to these cases, considering the interpretation of the relationships between the variables of the research.

In interpreting the relationship between brand equity and customer citizenship behavior

The importance of club branding is determined by the fact that it is directly related to the

quality of its services. Improving the quality of service will help customers establish an emotional connection with the club and its brand and show more citizenship behavior. Therefore, the managers and owners of fitness clubs, by using the branding strategy and creating a favorable social reputation as well as formulating the brand communication strategy, can increase the citizenship behavior of the customers.

In interpreting the relationship between social responsibility and customer citizenship behavior

When the customer sees positive behavior from his club, such as social responsibility, and understands that the club is concerned about society's issues and sees its interests in the community's interest group, this changes the customer's attitude towards the club and its services. To be the actions taken by the club in line with social responsibilities positively affect the customer's perception of the quality of service, and as a reference for the customer's perception of the quality of service, it creates a sense of loyalty, commitment, and ultimately desirable citizenship behavior in the customer.

In interpreting the relationship between social responsibility and brand equity

As mentioned, the social responsibility of fitness clubs is a set of activities that the managers of these clubs do voluntarily as an effective element of society. Various dimensions of social responsibility, especially the humanitarian aspect, increase the welfare of society. In this way, the club's responsibility creates a positive image of the club in the customer's mind and creates a sense of commitment and loyalty towards the club in the customer. On the other hand, customer loyalty makes him agree with the club brand. Increasing brand congruence, which is one of the main components of brand equity, will lead to the development of brand equity. Therefore, managers and personnel of fitness clubs should

pay special attention to these categories for the development of their fitness clubs.

Conclusion

According to the results of the research, it can be acknowledged that the social responsibility of fitness clubs in South Khorasan is associated with cultivating and aligning with the brand of the club and increasing the loyalty of their customers, and observing the principles of social responsibility by the managers and owners of fitness clubs in all its functional dimensions can lead to the creation and strengthening of positive tendencies such as loyalty and also increasing the special value of the clubs' brand. Therefore, it can be said that the commitment and implementation of the social responsibility of the club itself can be considered a competitive advantage for fitness clubs. Therefore, strategies based on the implementation of the social responsibility of the club can pave the way to achieving the biggest capitals of fitness clubs, which are satisfied and loyal customers. If the managers of fitness clubs have a proper understanding of the factors affecting the customer's citizenship behavior, such as social responsibility and the special value of the brand, they can better benefit from the results of having customers who play the role of citizens for their club, because citizenship behavior itself can be considered a competitive advantage for fitness clubs. Therefore, the implementation of social responsibility and branding strategies is one of the measures that, according to the results of the current research, should be a priority for the managers and owners of fitness clubs in South Khorasan province.

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