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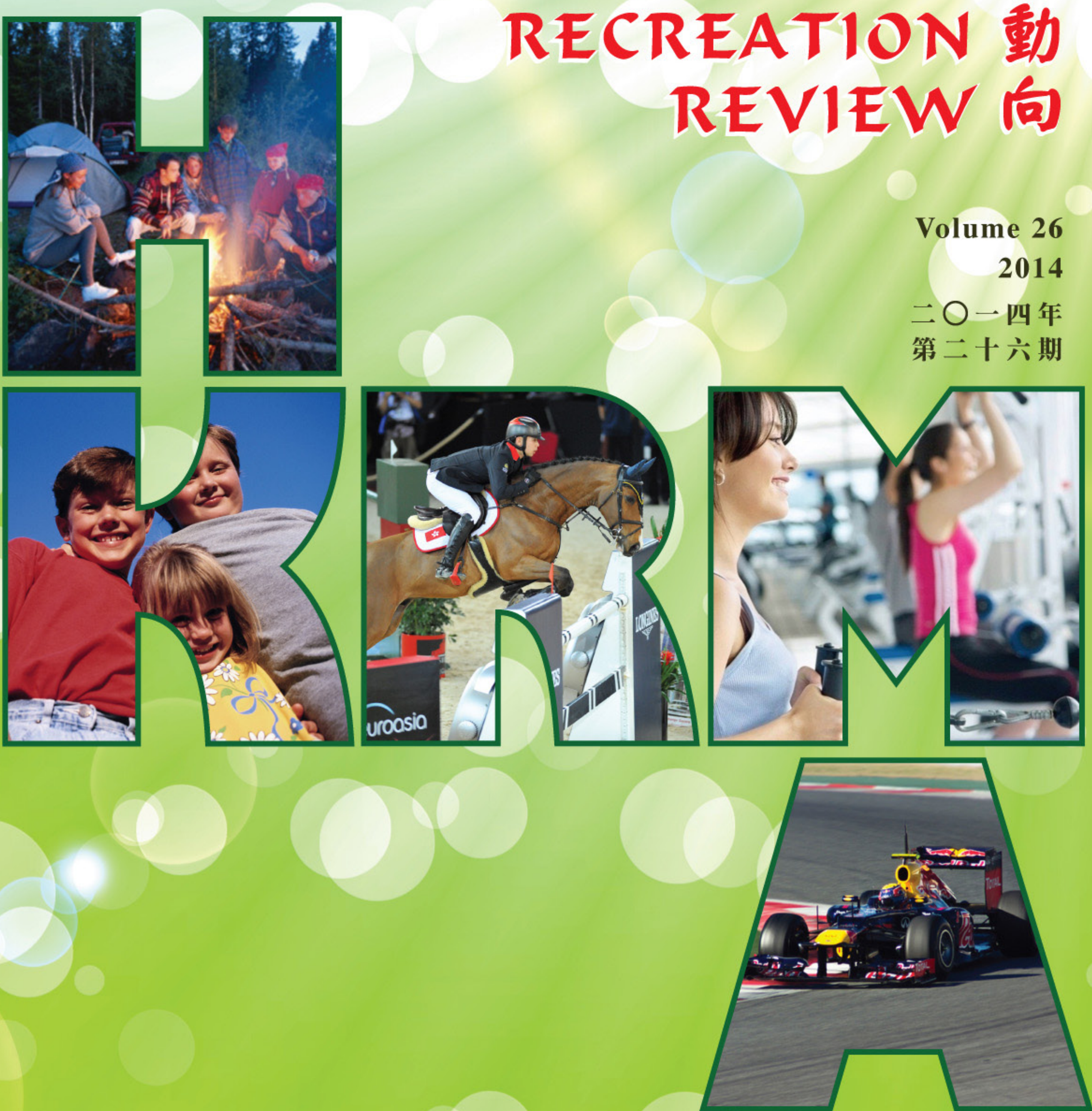

Hong Kong Recreation Management Association
香 港 康 樂 管 理 協 會

Hong Kong Recreation Management Association
香　港　康　樂　管　理　協　會

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康樂動向是香港康樂管理協會出版的刊物。本刊登載的文章，所表達的意見，並不一定代表康樂管理協會的意見。

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Leisure for Children and Youth – A Global Perspective

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Introduction

Without question, children and youth are any communities' most important and valuable asset. Such individuals represent our hopes, aspirations and dreams for the future (Edginton, Kowalski, Randall 2005, p. 1). As Former UN Under-Secretary-General, Jose Antonio Ocampo has offered, **" . . . Young people hold the key to society's future. Their ambitions, goals and aspirations for peace, security, development and human rights are often in accord with those of society as a whole."** As these individuals point out, today's children and youth not only reflect and mirror many of societies beliefs, values and ideals, they also are at the forefront of crafting new and dynamic perspectives that influence culture. The prism of innocence which provides a perspective for children and youth enables them often to see the world in a unique and fresh manner. As Delgado (2002) has noted," . . today's youth will have a significant role in bringing about changes in technology, demography, economy and politics" (p. 2). We should add that children and youth today are the major shapers of popular culture, bringing forward new ideas, perspectives, attitudes and phenomena that influence the way in which individuals live their lives especially in the areas of music, fashion, sport and play, and the use of technology.

One's childhood and adolescence are distinct stages of development in one's life. As the formative stage of one's life development, childhood and adolescence provide significant opportunities for individuals to craft their identities, gain necessary life skills, expand their horizons and lay the foundations for their adult life. We can think of childhood as the time spanning birth to adolescence. The United Nations defines youth as individuals between the ages of 15-24 years old. However, the definition of youth or young people is fluid and arbitrary (both physically and socially) and varies across cultures (Brown, Larson, & Saraswathi, 2002). For example, while the African Union define youth as anyone between the ages of 15-35 years old (African Union, 2009a), in the Philippines youth represents those who are 15-30 years old, and Thailand the youth ages is 15-25 years old (Brown, Larson, & Saraswathi, 2002).

The concepts of childhood and adolescence are very much a culturally-defined social construct. For example, when we speak of a global youth culture, we think of it as where youth wear the same apparel, hairstyles, listen to the same music and use additional slang expression (Schlegel, 2000). Although there is a commonality to the experience among youth (Brown & Larson, 2005), it would be an error to suggest that there is a worldwide youth culture. The notion of adolescence was first identified by G. Stanley Hall, an American psychologist in the early 1900's (Hall, 1904). What is thought of as adolescence may, in fact, be a Eurocentric enterprise (Nsamenang, 2005). Thus, it is important to view the development of children and youth in a cultural context.

Likewise, play, leisure and recreation must be viewed in one's cultural context, yet offer significant opportunities and venues for the expressions of children and youth. Play is considered to be a form of behavior which is carried out in the spirit of please and creative expression ~ often aimless, disorganized and casual although it can be structured and complex. Leisure can be thought of from many different perspectives including as free time, a state of mind or an activity. Recreation is an activity which is engage in during one's leisure which is pleasurable and has socially redeeming qualities. All of these factors contribute to the development of children and youth and are represented in many forms and formats.

This paper will review the play, leisure and recreation patterns of children and youth worldwide and also discuss constraints and barriers. More specifically, the demographics of children and youth will be initially explored. This will be followed by a discussion of issues affecting children and youth, including employment, health and wellbeing and others. Next,

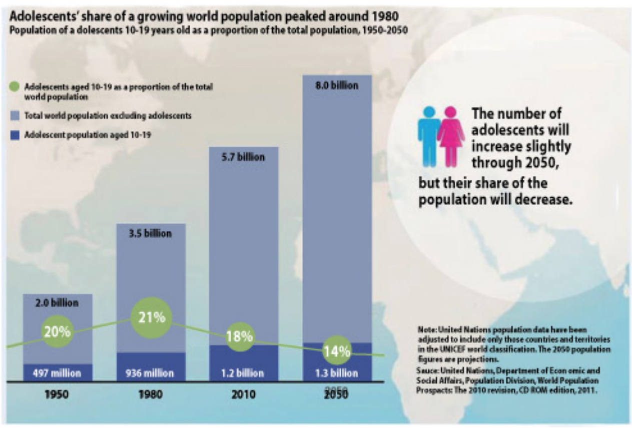
the paper will capture child and youth activities and attempt to answer the question "what are young people doing today?" Included will be a discussion of leisure, sport, travel and popular culture activities and trends. This will be followed by a short presentation on educational trends. Following will be a section dedicated to information, communication technology and social networking. In addition, the paper will explore the topics of youth participation, youth empowerment and gender disparity.

The Demographics of Children and Youth

Demographics enable one to investigate the statistical data of a human population ~ in this case, children and youth. An explanation of the demographics of children and youth is useful in making projections for the future. Understanding demographic trends enables one to map the future and determine where attention needs to be paid to emerging factors that may influence the development of children and youth. In addition, studying demographic patterns and trends enables one to understand historical changes as well as establish a profile for a given population. Often the clustering of population into a cohort group yields catch phrases like "Baby Boomer," "Generation X" and "Millennial's." The following information profiles and defines today's children and youth.

- There are 1.9 billion children in the world, making up 27% of world population. 1.2 billion Adolescent (10-19years old) makes up 18% of the world's population. More than half of them live in Asia (UNICEF, 2012). Figure 1 provides adolescence population trends from 1950 – 2050.

Figure 1



- It is estimated that youth (ages 18-24) accounts for 1.2 billion or 18% of the world's population, comprising the largest youth cohort in history (International Youth Foundation, 2012; UNDESA, 2012)
- It is estimated that young people (15-30 years old) accounts for 1.7 billion people of today's world population (leisuregrouptravel.com)
- It is projected that the population of youth (15-24 years old) will double globally by 2050 (Black et al., 2008; NIC, 2012).
- Developing countries are home to 87% of the world's youth (UNDESA, 2012).
- Geographically, the largest population of youth is concen trated in Asia and the Pacific. Approximately 60% of the world's youth live in Asia (UNDESA, 2007); 15% in Africa; 10% in Latin America and the Caribbean; and the remaining 15% in developed countries and regions (Advocate for Youth, n.d.). Table 1 represents global youth populations.

Table 1

Regional distribution of youth, 2005
Source: World Population Prospects, 2006

	Total population (millions)	Youth population (percentage)	Youth(15-24) (millions)	Global youth population (percentage)
Asia	3,905	16.4	639	62.4
Africa	905	15.9	145	14.1
Europe	728	14.3	103	10.2
Latin America & the Caribbean	561	16.9	95	9.3
Northern America	330	12.4	41	4.0
Oceania	33	3.0	1	0.1
Total	6,465	15.8	1,024	100.0%

- By 2030, the Asian region will represent around 55% of the total global population in the 15-to-34 age group — a generation that is increasingly better educated and more integrated into global, economic, and social systems — and will therefore continue to be a critical player in global migration (Hugo, 2008).
- The Asian "youth bulge" (a situation in which at least 20% of the population is ages
- (15 to 24) represents a "boom" generation: a generation larger than those immediately before and after it that gradually works its way through nations' age structures (Hugo, 2008). See Table 2.

Table 2

Asian Countries: Projected Changes in Population Ages 15 to 34, 2000 to 2050

Year	Number ages 15 to 34 years (thousands)	Percent change over previous ten years	Median age*	Percent of total population ages 15-34
2000	1,281,922	17.5	26.0	36.5
2010	1,314,411	2.5	29.2	33.4
2020	1,359,438	3.4	32.1	31.4
2030	1,324,099	-2.6	35.3	28.7
2040	1,311,281	-1.0	38.1	27.3
2050	1,248,181	-4.8	40.2	25.5

Note: * Includes Western Asia.
Source: United Nations Medium Variant Projections, United Nations 2007

- Young people everywhere share some universal traits. They are fundamentally more optimistic, more open and curious than their adult counterparts (UNICEF, 2004).

Issues Effecting Children and Youth

There are numerous issues that impact on the wellbeing of children and youth. These, in turn, affect their ability to play and engage in meaningful and relevant leisure and recreation experiences. Further, there is a crossover effect in terms of a child's or youth's health or wellbeing and other issues such as limited resources available for funding child and youth programs and activities; inequities in social, economic and political conditions; gender discrimination; armed conflict and confrontation; continuing deterioration of the global environment; increasing incidence of disease, hunger and malnutrition; changes in the role of the family; inadequate opportunity for education and training; substance abuse and juvenile delinquency. In addition, for youth, the ability to gain significant employment is another issue which must be confronted.

- Many children and youth face serious challenges and risks to their health such as smoking, early marriage and childbearing or having unprotected sex (UNDESA, 2013; Advocate for Youth, n.d.; Brown, Larson, & Saraswathi, 2002).

- Child marriage (marriage before age 18) is practiced in all regions of the world. This harmful traditional practice not only violates the human rights of girls and young women, but also threatens their health and well-being (Population Reference Bureau, 2013).

- Adolescence (ages 15 to 24) is the time when the majority of people become sexually active. However, many young people do not have the information or means to protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV (UNFPA, n.d.; Population Reference Bureau, 2013). For example, in countries with high prevalence of HIV such as Kenya and Haiti, less than half of all females ages 15 to 24 have sufficient knowledge of HIV. And in Mali, less than one-quarter of all young men and young women have comprehensive knowledge. While young women face a higher risk for becoming infected with HIV, males are more likely than females to have comprehensive knowledge of HIV (Population Reference Bureau, 2013).

- Almost 40% of the 6,800 new HIV infections each day are among young people (UNFPA, n.d.).

- Childhood obesity is gaining on a worldwide basis (Chin, Edginton, Tang, Phua & Yang, 2011).

- Alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, eating disorders, lack of exercise and suicide are all prevalent problems among youth in the developed countries (WHO, n.d.; UNDESA, 2005).

- Young people worldwide are reaching puberty earlier and marrying later. Premarital sex is becoming more widespread. Despite a trend towards later marriage in much of the world, millions of girls are still expected to marry and begin childbearing in their teens, often before they are emotionally or physically ready (UNDESA, 2005).

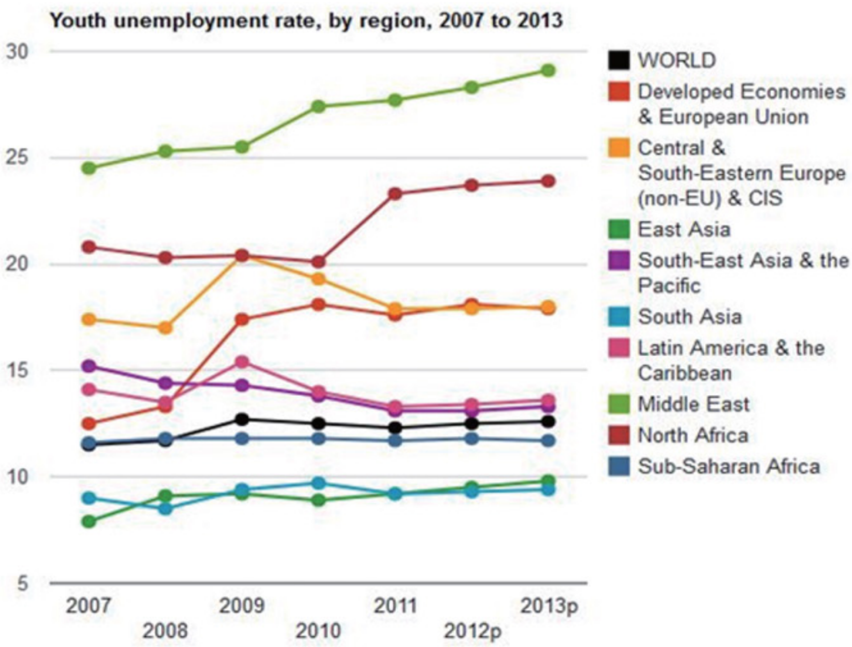
In addition, there are a number of issues regarding employment that specifically focus on youth although child labor is still a problem in developing countries. As Former U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton has suggested, **". . . Young people are at the heart of today's great strategic opportunities and challenges, from rebuilding the global economy to combating violent extremism to building sustainable democracies."** Lack of employment may lead to enforced leisure for youth. This is viewed as some by an undesirable byproduct of low employment. Some of the more pronounced employment issues affecting youth include

- Today is not a good time for a young person looking for a job/work (ILO, 2013; Population Reference Bureau, 2013; Advocate for Youth, n.d.). 75 million youth worldwide are looking for work (ILO, 2013; International Youth Foundation, 2012).

- Increasing numbers of youth are now turning to available part-time jobs or find themselves stuck in temporary employment (ILO, 2013).

- 73.4 million youth (about 12.6%) are expected to be out of work in 2013 (an increase of 3.5 million between 2007&2013)(ILO,2013; Edutopia.org). See Figure 2.

Figure 2



- Young people are 3 times more likely to be out of work/unemployed than adults (ILO, 2013).

- The world's youth, who risk losing vital professional and social skills as the length of their joblessness continues to grow (UN News Centre, 2013).

- Regional differences in youth unemployment were likely to be marked, with the situation expected to improve slightly over the next five years in the developed economies while emerging economies in Eastern Europe, East and South-East Asia and the Middle East would continue to see rising joblessness among its young labor force (ILO, 2013).

- In developing regions where 90% of the global youth population lives, stable, quality employment is especially lacking (ILO, 2013).

Although there are many issues that impact on children and youth today, it is important to view young people as positive assets in society. UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon has suggested that **" . . . It is high time that we stopped viewing our young people as part of the problem and started cultivating their promise and potential...., let us all resolve to invest in and protect our most valuable resource, and give young men and women a fair and full stake in our society, and in its success."**

Child and Youth Activities: What are Young People Doing?

For children and youth, play, leisure and recreation represents a significant opportunity for development. In all cultures and societies, one can observe children and youth engaged in play. The role of play, leisure and recreation in the lives of children and youth is an important global issue, both in the political and social contexts. In some countries, play, leisure and recreation systems are well developed and embraced as an important human and social right. Article 31.1 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child indicates that " . . . *parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts*." The World Leisure Organization supports the notion that all individuals, regardless of age, have the right to leisure (World Leisure Organization, 2010). Some of the factors influencing play, leisure and recreation of children and youth include the following:

- Children and youth often react to commercialize and consumer trends in play, leisure and recreation with a resurgence of parochialism. For example, in China children and youth are active and vigorous in tourism and recreation activities (Lobo, 1998).

- It is estimated that about 40% of a young person's week is comprised of free time (National Recreation and Park Association, NRPA, 2010).

- The past decade has seen growing recognition of the vital role leisure time can play in the lives of young people in terms of promoting social inclusion, access to opportunities, and overall development. Young people are increasingly seeking and finding new ways to spend their free time, both out of necessity and out of choice (UNDESA, 2005).

- Common recreation and leisure activities include sports and exercise (about 1 hour per day for boys and 28 minutes per day for girls) and games (including video games: 44 minutes per day for boys and 11 minutes per day for girls) (NRPA, 2010).

- A recent study sponsored by the Women's Sports Foundation (2008), which investigated the participation of American youth in exercise and organized team sports, found that 72% were participating or had participated in a sport during the past 12 months (Woods, 2011). Table 3 provides a list of physical activities participated in by boys and girls on a global basis.

Table 3. **Most Frequent Physical Activities**

Physical activity	% participation
GIRLS	
Dancing	61
Swimming/diving	56
Basketball	55
Jogging/running	53
Volleyball	47
Bowling	47
Soccer	40
Baseball/softball	38
In-line skating	33
Camping/hiking	29
Ultimate Frisbee	29
BOYS	
Basketball	71
Football	65
Soccer	51
Jogging/running	49
Swimming/diving	48
Baseball/softball	48
Bowling	48
Weight training	42
Cycling/mountain biking	33
Skateboarding	29
Ultimate Frisbee	29

- Outdoor gyms are becoming popular destinations and gathering places for young people, including adults. This provides opportunities for inter-generational interaction as well as access to participate in free workout station activities (Elements, 2012).

- "Millennials" are the largest, most diverse, educated and influential shoppers on the planet (Leisure Group Travel, 2011).

- Young people today are more loyal to brand(s) because the more a brand fits into their lifestyle, the more inclined they are to gain personal identification with that brand (Leisure Group Travel, 2011).

- Young people accounts for hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars in the travel industry. For example, China and India are the main source countries for the US $17 billion overseas student industry, which employs 125,000 people and funds 25 percent of university teaching. Research shows that 645,000 Chinese students will be studying abroad by 2025, an 84% increase from 2007 (Leisure Group Travel, 2011).

- Youth travelers are continually hailed as pioneers and trend-setters, forging new tourism frontiers and opening up new markets through their adventurous spirit and desire for new experiences (Leisure Group Travel, 2011).

- Young people are spending more time with nearly every form of media than ever. They spend a great deal of time with social media and computer gaming. They spend more hours on the computer, in front of television, playing video games, texting and listening to music than an adult spends full-time at work – more screen time (NRPA, 2010; Kang, 2010; Cui et al., 2011).

- Television still dominates among youang people, followed by music, computers and video games. TV watched online and over phones has contributed to television viewing (Kang, 2010).

- Screen time use in Asia is related to the economic prosperity of the region. For example, young Chinese spend 2 or more hours per day on screen time over the last decade. In Korea, the average youth watches television for 2.6 hours per day and an additional 2.3 hours per day on a computer (Cui et al., 2011).

- Young people love to go shopping, not only to for material accumulation, but for fun as well. Euromonitor Internationals' 2011 Annual Study found that window shopping is very popular among youth (aged 15-29 years old) – 56% of this age group likes to visit shopping malls, even without planning to buy anything (Euromonitor International, 2012).

- Few decades ago, one was most likely to suggest that the most common youth sports included traditional boys' sports such as basketball, football, baseball, track, swimming, and perhaps skiing, wrestling, bowling, and gymnastics. Interestingly, now that girls are much more involved in sport, the types of sport activities have broadened to include volleyball, soccer, cycling, lacrosse, field hockey, ultimate Frisbee, cheerleading, double Dutch, and stepping. Table 6.2 below shows the most frequent physical activities by gender (Women's Sports Foundation 2008; Woods, 2011).

- The International Labor Organization (ILO) has warned of an increasing inactivity among young people. In many developed countries, cuts in government subsidies for sports activities, music and art instruction, and other leisure and recreational options have endangered many valuable extracurricular programs in and out of schools (UNDESA, 2005).

- A Norwegian study indicates that children and young people are spending less time participating in physical recreation and sporting activities, and that only 47% of young people between the ages of 20 and 24 engage in physical training of any kind every 14 days (or more often) (UNDESA, 2005).

Education and Leisure

The leisure experience offers a means for educational enhance in learning. In fact, educational value of leisure is often understated. Technology provides a vehicle for more personalized learning ecologies that will span international boundaries. As such, in the very near future, there will be a creation and exchange of learning resources environments and experiences which will form a global learning ecosystem. New agents of learning and networks which are community wide will include educators, families and citizens. These new agents of learning will help shape the future by assuming new roles that contribute to the expansion and redefinition of the educational process and roll in community life. The following observations can be made regarding education:

- The creation and exchange of learning resources, environments, and experiences will form a global learning ecosystem, with families developing personal learning ecologies that span national boundaries – Global Open Learning System – (KnowledgeWorks, 2008);

- By 2020, schools will become dynamic, community wide systems and networks that have the capacity to replenish themselves in the context of change;

- By 2025, learning is seen as a shared community asset, with many people creating, preserving, and protecting critical resources (KnowledgWorks, 2011);

- Leisure learning centers will emerge as critical sites for promoting health, well-being, academic growth, environmental vitality, and connections across their communities (KnowledgeWorks, 2011 7 2008);

- By 2025, leisure learners will act as prosumers ~ proactive consumers who co-produce what they consume and shape their learning experiences by drawing upon a rich learning geography to identify resources that meet their needs. Content will be provided by learners and learning agents in a vast, unconnected system (KnowledgeWorks, 2011);

- As the hierarchical structure of education splinters, traditional top-down movements of authority, knowledge, and power will unravel (KnowledgeWorks, 2008);

- On the other hand, boys and girls in developing countries are enrolling in secondary schools in greater numbers than before (UNDESA, 2013);

- When young people are not in contact with the education system or the labor market, they cannot develop key skills for meaningful employment;

- Only 56% of youth worldwide enroll in the equivalent of high school. That means 44% spend their lives with the equivalent of an eighth-grade or lower education (International Youth Foundation, 2012).

Information, Communication Technology and Social Networking

Access to information, improved communications and the ability to network throughout the world has empowered groups of individuals. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2005) has offered:

> Young people are at the forefront of the technology revolution, which is the driving force behind the global emergence and evolution of the information-and knowledge-based society. Youth are often the leading innovators in the development, use and spread of ICT. They adapt quickly and are generally very eager to access the great quantities of local and global information made available through technological innovation.
>
> The increasingly widespread use of information and communication technology (ICT) must be viewed within the context of a much broader trend affecting the lives of young people today. The ongoing process of globalization is expanding the reach and influence of new technologies. It is becoming increasingly apparent that through modern-day media, ICT and global interconnectedness have combined very powerfully to influence the lives of young people, creating what is referred to here as a global media-driven youth culture.

Current technology provides a means of universal connectivity and rapid technological innovation has created a smart mobile world. Technology is blurring the boundaries between work and social life, personal and public life, and work and leisure. In addition, technology is providing ways in which people can connect with one another, creating a social flow that is significantly different than one based on traditional market principles. New exchanges have given way to a rise of social currency as contrasted with monetary or material currency.

David Jones, Global CEO, HAVAS & Co-Founder, One Young World, has offered the following comments regarding technology and youth: ". . .

> Technology has made them the best informed generation of young people that the world has ever seen. Their understanding of the problems facing the world has made them the most socially responsible generation ever. And finally their knowledge and understanding of how to use the tools of the digital and social revolution has made them the most powerful generation ever.

Among youth in particular, use of technology and social networking is the coinage of the realm. Some developments are as follows:

- Around the world, young users are increasingly turning to the internet as a source of information, communication, socializing and entertainment. Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter are increasingly being used by young people.

- Young people are enthusiastic about the internet because, more than any other medium, it helps them establish contact with the outside world and freely seek information (UNICEF, 2004).

- Social interaction is increasingly taking place within an electronic environment through means such as text messaging and online meetings. "New leisurely pursuits such as downloading music, using instant messages, and playing electronic games are for the most part solitary activities. Some of these pastimes are replacing more traditional pursuits, such as sports (UNDESA, 2005, p.72).

- The development of modern technologies may be contributing to the evolution of a culture of "individualized leisure" as young people increasingly devote their free time to computer screens and mobile keypads.

- A national survey conducted in the United States indicates that 91% of youth aged 18-19 years use the Internet to e-mail friends and relatives, and 83% use it for instant messaging. Similarly, a study in the United Kingdom reveals that 94% of youth have cell phones, and that young people were responsible for half of the roughly 10 billion text messages sent in 2003 (UNDESA, 2005, p.72).

- Young people often use the Internet to access entertainment, news sites and virtual meeting spaces.

- For a youthful generation born into the social media era, young people are naturally inclined to share their opinions with their friends and family – nearly every minute of every day (Leisure Group Travel, 2011).

- However, many poor youth are unable to take advantage of new technologies because of access limitations or cost factors.

Youth Participation and Empowerment

How are children and youth involved in decisions that impact their lives? For children, the focus of decision making often rests exclusively with their parents although in certain cultural contexts, young children are given a wide discretion in terms of play behaviors which impact on their development. The same could be said for adolescents. The amount of discretion that adolescents have in their decision making must be frames in a cultural context. In some cultures, youth in particular are given wide latitude in terms of freedom to act; in other cultures, their options are more limited and driven by the dictates of their family members.

The following offer perspectives regarding youth participation and empowerment:

- Youth participation today tends to be issue-specific and service-oriented.

- Increasingly reluctant to join formal organizations or councils, many young people prefer to take advantage of open opportunities created by communities and institutions to become involved in addressing the issues that concern them (UNDESA, 2005).

- New participatory structures have evolved that tend to be based on collaborative networks and common interests.

- One popular option that seems to be playing an important role in reversing the decline in traditional participation and civic engagement among young people is Internet-based activity involving the exchange of ideas and information and the coordination of plans and programs for localized action. Through cross-boundary websites such as Facebook and Twitter, tele- and video-conferencing, chat boards and webcams, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has facilitated the development of new forms of creative, open and non-hierarchical channels of cyber-participation.

- Young people are gradually becoming more aware of resources outside their communities and of opportunities to share in and reinforce each other's work. While these new modes of participation are not substitutes for strong and effective youth councils, they can provide more young people with opportunities to become active in decision-making and in shaping their societies (UNDESA, 2005).

- The terms *cyber-participation* and *e-citizenship* are indicative of a growing trend towards ICT-based social action and community development among young people (UNDESA, 2005). ICT and new media are becoming core components of youth activism and civic engagement.

- Measures to improve Internet access and increase ICT literacy across the board will promote youth participation, and the effective use of technology should help to strengthen various forms of youth engagement.

- Young people are increasingly expressing the need for opportunities to develop a sense of independence, competence, and participation in all levels of society.

- Youth have a strong need to perceive themselves as competent, achieving academically, developing and maintaining friendships, and developing the skills necessary to participate in recreational activities. As such, they strive to figure out what they are good at and what they need to work on to become competent (NRPA, 2010).

- Some young people are initiating projects in areas in which public programs fall short, but they require assistance and support, including supervision, the provision of meeting places, and increased access to other public facilities (UNDESA, 2005)

Gender, Play, Leisure and Recreation

From a historical perspective, there has been a great deal of disparity between boys and girls in terms of opportunities to engage in various play, leisure and recreation activities. Landmark legislation such as Title IX in the United States has provided greater equity among the sexes. Such policy has provided greater opportunities and changed the landscape of participation in the area of play, leisure and recreation. However, gender stereotyping still impacts directly the participation of both boys and girls in play, leisure and recreation activities. Some observations regarding gender play, leisure and recreation are as follows:

- The experiences and opportunities of boys and girls remain markedly different (Brown, Larson, & Saraswathi, 2002).

- The "capacity to pursue particular careers, to engage in various leisure activities, even to exercise authority within family or peer relationships are often more restricted for girls than for boys" (Brown, Larson, & Saraswathi, 2002, p.15).

- Despite important gains in education among young women, their employment outcomes continue to lag behind those of young men. Globally, in 2010, 56.3% of young males participated in the labor force, against 40.8% of young females. Where young women do participate in the labor market, they generally confront greater challenges in accessing jobs (i.e. they face higher unemployment compared to their male counterparts). When employed, they are also more likely to be in traditionally female occupations and unstable, part-time and lower-paid jobs (UNDESA, 2012).

- This disparity includes the leisure and recreation sector as well, where often gender insensitive planning and development of infrastructure and facilities reinforce inequalities and further limits female participation. Specifically, the development of sport facilities [often with a focus on more popular, maledominated sports such as football/soccer and cricket] reinforces gender inequalities (Jalloh, 2013)

Concluding Comments

In J. M. Barrie's famous novel, Peter and Wendy (commonly known as Peter Pan), published in 1911, the story reveals the mischievous nature of a young boy. Reflecting on the nature of his being and asking "who and what art thou?" Pan cries out huskily "I'm youth, I'm joy… I'm a little bird that has broken out of the egg." Indeed, one's childhood and youth can be a great source of happiness and joy gained through expressions in one's play, leisure and recreation experiences. Further, Helen Keller, political activist and spokesperson for the disabled, noted that "it is not possible for civilization to flow backwards while there is youth in the world. Youth may be headstrong, but it will advance it allotted length." Thus, children and youth represent the joys and aspirations of our society and culture. They are worthy of our investment into their future and represent society's most precious asset.

The play, leisure and recreation patterns of children and youth are indeed diverse, dynamic and, in some cases, very complex. The rise of technology and the use of social media by young people has created a new dimension influencing their behaviors. Young peoples' activities have been dramatically transformed as a result of the use of technology. In some cases, they are engaged in more sedentary activities; yet, on the other hand, their ability to access and apply technology provides them with a means to connect with one another instantaneously. Young people today live in the moment, often connected across space to others beyond their physical location. On one hand, they may have an experience in one dimension, yet be present in another. RMA

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It Works There - Why Not Here? A review of camping models in Asian Countries

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Introduction

The word "camping" is rather problematic, and describes different activities and pass times which vary in different parts of the World. Camping as we refer to it in the International Camping Fellowship (ICF), means an organised group activity with a purpose, usually, but not always, for young people; usually, but not always, conducted predominantly outdoors, with a relationship to nature; usually, but not always, incorporating an overnight stay.

The important aspects of camping in this context are that it is an organised activity, with a program and a purpose, for a group, with a relationship to outdoors and to Nature. In Australia we have categorised camps according to the purpose for which they are conducted, into six broad categories. A particular camp may have several specific purposes drawn from two or more of these categories. The categories are :-

1. Recreation, fun and enjoyment
2. Education, and mental and social development
3. Skills development
4. Sport and physical development
5. Therapy, medical and psychological development
6. Nature and environmental appreciation and conservation.

When ICF commenced just over 25 years ago the models of camping in different countries were separate and quite distinct. However, over these 25 years, we have seen the clear cut distinctions between camping models blur, as we encourage mixing, exchange and networking amongst campers around the world. The number of countries in which ICF is active has grown steadily to over 50 at present. The Asian and Oceanic Camping Fellowship (AOCF) formed just ten years ago within ICF to focus on Asia. What follows is a description of the different camping models used by the Asian countries active within AOCF, based upon my travels to these countries, and upon the regional reports received annually by the ICF Board, which meets at least annually, and in different member countries.

ICF was established following initiatives taken in North America to reach out to other countries in which the North Americans were aware, organised camping was active. The 150th anniversary of organised camping has recently been celebrated in USA and Canada. The North American model is based upon a long summer holiday (two to three months) being part of the school year. Initially, almost all camping took place during the summer holiday, with children going to camp for quite long periods (two and up to eight weeks). Summer camping, like many other aspects of North American culture, has been exported to many other countries around the world. The general model is quite simple. Camp operators recruit individual campers

and aggregate them into cabin groups. Campers then undertake a range of individual and group activities aimed to be fun, and to have them learn skills. The number in camp is quite large (usually 100 to 600 depending on the camp size) and so children develop their inter-personal skills of sharing, communication, trust etc. while in camp. Camps are staffed by a small group of permanent or full time staff, supplemented by a large number of casual staff recruited from college students who were often former campers, and who work only for the summer holiday period. The industry in North America is unable to get sufficient staff locally, and so some 30,000 to 40,000 young people are recruited each summer from other countries around the world to work in camps in North America.

From this simple model the North Americans have developed to include a wide range of specialist camp programs to cater to specific groups of interest. These include elite skills development camps for sports, arts, crafts, music and performance arts, and skills in active recreation activities (windsurfing, scuba diving, abseiling etc.). There are also medical and psychological therapy camps for people suffering similar illnesses or misfortunes (eg camps for sufferers of terminal illness, grief camps for those grieving the loss of a relative or close friend, camps for campers suffering from trauma as the result of a disaster (bushfire, cyclone, tsunami etc.). There are also camps which focus on specialist career interests like marine biology, physics, archaeology, palaeontology, robotics, farming etc. Camps have spread out from the summer break to occupy the spring and autumn periods. Many camps operate year round. Many specialist camps are seen as part of the school curriculum.

I will now give a brief summary of the camping models which developed in the Asian and Oceanic countries involved with ICF and AOCF, and the trends which are now changing and adding to the camping models in each country.

Australia and New Zealand

Organised camping developed through Scouts and Guides in both countries from the early 20th century.

In the early 1970s the Education Department in Victoria established a School Camps Branch and established the curriculum subject of Outdoor Education which ranged progressively through school years three to ten. Over the following decades in Victoria some 800 camps were developed mainly to support school camps. Generally camps are short (3 days to a week), and the provision of program is shared between school teachers and camp staff. Camps generally only have one school group or customer group at any one time. Camps developed in other States of Australia and in New Zealand to cater for school groups and other group customers. Camps in Australia and New Zealand only rarely recruit individual campers to a camp program run entirely by the camp. Camps are roughly equally divided between privately owned "for profit" camps and agency owned (Church, Scouts, YMCA, government etc.) "not for profit" camps.

In New Zealand virtually all camps are Christian Church owned camps. In schools in New Zealand they have developed Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) which brings together camping and other outdoor activity as an alternative and more salient method of delivering lessons than the traditional classroom model.

There is a steady growth in the use of camps by groups other than schools. Camps operate year round, but there is more use during the school year than during the holidays

Developing trends in Australia and New Zealand

There is an increasing level of input into the planning and delivery of programs by camp staff, as opposed to the staff of the customer group. In line with this there is a growth in the number of school holiday programs run entirely by camp staff, and to which individual campers are recruited.

There is a growing sophistication in the training of camp staff in both hard and soft skills. Two year diploma courses in outdoor activity leadership are offered by many tertiary training institutions.

There is outreach from Australia to the camping fraternity in New Zealand, and greater networking and cooperation is expected.

Japan

The National Camping Association of Japan (NCAJ) celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2016. This marked the growth of organised camping through schools which commenced after the Second World War. Programs are devised and delivered by teachers and professors; the individual activities are run by staff who are trained and accredited by NCAJ; the camp grounds are usually owned and managed by the local Prefecture Governments. Programs are usually quite short (less than a week) and include many day programs.

Programs are strongly nature based and teach craft skills, and they grew to expose young people to traditional Japanese culture, as a reaction to the heavy and relentless exposure to western cultures of young post war Japanese.

Camping continues to be undertaken by organisations like Scouts, Guides, YWCA and YMCA.

Developing trends in Japan

The Japanese have explored and reached out to countries whose camping program has a strong traditional base. In this respect, camp staff from Canada have been contracted to develop programs in Japan based on the traditional Canadian model.

In the last year or two NCAJ has embarked upon a project to use the camping model to assist children traumatised by the effects of the major earthquake and tsunami which struck the main island of Japan. Many children are grieving the sudden and unexpected loss of family and close friends. The Japanese have studied a number of camp models designed to assist children who are traumatised and grieving, and have been assisted by a number of USA camps. Taking into account the considerable culture differences between US and Japanese children, NCAJ has developed a model they believe will suit Japanese children, and run pilot camps to test their model. They have now run four camps, and expect to be able to run around 6 camps per year. They expect to need to continue these camps for over a decade.

NCAJ expects that this will be the most significant contribution that can be made by the camping profession, towards the recovery and healing of Japanese society in the wake of this disaster.

Russia, Ukraine and the Central Asian Republics

Organised camping began prior to World War I with Boy Scouts. Scout programs were discontinued after the Russian Revolution and replaced with a local equivalent – the Pioneers. Many Government and social services were delivered through industry Workers' Committees, with each industry providing school, health and welfare, and recreation services. Camps were substantial, well appointed facilities, and were instrumental in providing health and medical check ups and treatment for children when they went to camp. Children were tested both physically and psychologically. Camps were also replacement school facilities, usually located in relatively clean, country locations, and were designed to allow children to escape from the polluted city/industrial environment to a healthy outdoor environment. At its height, most children in the Soviet Union spent a substantial period in camp (4 to 6 weeks) each year, and there were over 100,000 camps to cater for this.

In the post Soviet Union period, much of the delivery of community welfare services has been directed away from industries to provincial and local government, and parents and individuals are expected to take more personal responsibility. In this process, camps have either been taken over by other levels of Government (city or provincial), and most camps are expected to, at least, break even financially. Overall, the number of camps has declined by about half, with the strongest and best surviving. Many now operate year round, even under snow in the winter.

Developing trends in Russia and Ukraine

New legislation mandating children's rights is being introduced in Russia and Ukraine. These rights include the right to health, rest and recreation, and camps are being positioned to undertake government obligations in responding to these new rights of children.

Camps are more independent and responsible for their own destiny than they were in the Soviet period. They are more entrepreneurial and outward looking; and they require a higher calibre of management. They actively seek to cater for overseas groups and individuals, and benefit from receiving payments in "hard" western currencies. It is interesting to see that women represent a substantial majority of the workers and managements of camps, and this trend is increasing.

There is a rise in a class of privately owned and operated camps which service the growing middle class in Russia, along with overseas visitors. They actively seek to network and partner with camps from other countries to facilitate the international exchange of both campers and camp staff.

Turkey

The camping with which ICF and AOCF are associated in Turkey is a relatively new industry having developed over the last decade or so, to service the rapidly growing middle class in Turkey, associated with Turkey's growing economy. "Program is King" in camping in Turkey, and facilities purpose built for camping are a rarity. Camp Programs are run in tourist and holiday facilities, often in the off season, eg Ski lodges in the summer.

A range of special program camps are run to develop sport skills (basketball, swimming etc.) active recreation pass times (windsurfing, sailing, scuba diving etc.) and specialised activities with vocational potential (film and video making etc.) Camps have a very international outlook with extensive camp and camp staff exchange. Helping young Turks to become proficient in the English language is an important aspect of camp programs, and many camps in Turkey which welcome overseas campers, are conducted in English.

Developing trends in Turkey

The recent formation of the Camping Association of Turkey marks a continuing trend towards working cooperatively as an industry in Turkey. Camping is a young, dynamic and enthusiastic industry, which has leapt onto the World stage in the past decade.

Turkey will host the 10th International Camping Congress in 2014.

Mongolia and Taiwan

This may seem an unusual pairing of countries to lump

together, but there are many aspects of the camping model which Mongolia and Taiwan share.

Both countries have fairly well developed camping industries which go back over 20 years. Camp programs are family focussed. In Taiwan it is through the Camping and Caravanning Association which encourages families to join in group organised activities at caravan parks and camp grounds. In Mongolia, families are encouraged to go to camp together, where children then live in the children's camp, and parents separately in individual units and rooms. Some program is specifically for children, and some for the whole family. Parents have a "holiday with" and "holiday from" the children at the same time. In both countries most of the camps providing these programs are privately owned.

In Mongolia, there is an additional model led by Nairamdal, a Government owned and operated International Children's Centre which celebrates its 35th anniversary in 2013. Nairamdal has "spearheaded" efforts to bring Mongolia out of isolation, and more onto the World stage. Nairamdal mixes programs specifically for Mongolian children with international programs which welcome campers from overseas. Although programs are heavily based in the summer when Nairamdal caters for more than 600 campers at a time, programs operate year round, and help to integrate a long, rich and colourful Mongolian history and culture, with a growing international cosmopolitan sophistication, assisted by the rapid development of Mongolia's rich mineral resources.

Both Mongolia and Taiwan were foundation members of AOCF and both have hosted former AOCCs, Mongolia in 2004 and Taiwan in 2009. The recent formation of the Mongolian Camping Association has brought together Government, agency (Scouts) and private/corporate camp operators to grow and develop the industry as a whole.

Developing trends in Mongolia and Taiwan

Both Mongolia and Taiwan are actively seeking to build strong international links and ties. Both see camping as a great model to build an international outlook and understanding amongst their children.

Malaysia and Singapore

Some agency type camping (Scouts and Guides, YMCA etc.) commenced in British colonial times in the ex-patriot community, but probably did not have a great impact in the local community at that time. However Scouts and some other agencies have survived the transition to independence and have grown within the local population since then. Scouts own and operate one of the two main camp facilities in Singapore.

In Malaysia in the State of Perak, camping developed to provide tourist facilities for visitors to the tropical rainforest and jungle tourist attractions.

In the last decade Malaysia has sought to develop a form of National training and service which, eventually, all young people will be required to undergo. Although military service is a part of this National service, it seeks to be more civilian than military. It tries to integrate the three main racial groups of Indian, Chinese and Malay and have them identify as Malaysian primarily rather than their ethnic origin. It has components of physical and social training and has, as a key aspect, participation in a several week long camp. Private enterprise is being encouraged to build and develop the facilities for these camps.

Developing trends in Singapore and Malaysia

Malaysia has recently developed a network of outdoor and environmental providers, and is keen to establish standards and to improve staff training. Australia has assisted with training in Singapore and Malaysia in the past, and recently assisted in the running of an International Camp Directors' Course in Malaysia, which had both Singapore and Malaysian involvement. I expect Australia to continue to provide help in Singapore and Malaysia, and in other Asian countries with staff training.

Hong Kong

Seeds of organised camping were sown in the British colonial period with Scouts, Guides, YMCA, YWCA etc. established then, and surviving the transition to "One China- Two Systems". The Hong Kong economy and population have grown rapidly since then. The "One Child" policy does not operate in Hong

Kong, and there is an explosion of children. Hong Kong retains a role as a sort of international gateway to China. The Hong Kong dollar is a fully negotiable international currency which functions as a transition currency to the Chinese Yuan. British culture and institutions survive and co-exist with Chinese.

Camping and connection with nature is seen as important for children in this very city/urban culture. The rest of the World is surprised that there are so many camps in the small amount of area in Hong Kong. This 10th anniversary of CAHK marks the foresight of those who brought the industry together 10 years ago to cooperate, develop and respond to the huge number of children in Hong Kong. In a country where land is so precious, it must be well used. Most camps are used year round, providing both school and holiday programs. There are 25 or so camp members in CAHK. Most are operated by various non Government, not for profit agencies, but customer groups are often government school or welfare organisations.

Hong Kong and CAHK are strong and active supporters of ICF and AOCF, and hosted the highly successful "joint badged" 4th AOCC/9th ICC in 2011.

Developing trends in Hong Kong

The strength of this 10th anniversary celebration, attended by around 100 camping professionals and 200 to 300 camping and recreation students, attests to the conviction here that working cooperatively is the best way to develop camping. Hong Kong continues to look further afield, and take and convert good camping ideas and methods from elsewhere.

As it has with other aspects of culture and society I think Hong Kong will assist the growth, development and "opening up" of camping in China, and help forge relations with the rest of World camping.

China

Over the last decade or so, as China has grown in wealth, and a new middle class has emerged; and as China has progressively opened to the rest of the World, many thousands of Chinese children have travelled to the West (mainly North America) to participate in Summer camps. Motives are mixed – international understanding, learning English, and just establishing and forging links. Sometimes it is a preparatory trip prior to seeking to go to the West to study.

This annual migration has brought back to China some knowledge and understanding of organised camping, and there are moves towards establishing a similar model in China. There are internal Chinese youth organisations, which have not sought to link with organisations in other countries. This new initiative is being taken very much in concert with camping in other parts of the World, and is part of China's moves to open to contact with the rest of the World. Initiatives that ICF is aware of will probably involve schools and the education system. These moves are new and tentative at present, but could develop and grow very rapidly as have other aspects of Chinese business and society.

Developing trends in China

It is difficult to predict, but China is regularly present at all major camping conferences and events, looking, learning and establishing links.

Warning and Disclaimer

The ideas and view expressed in this paper are the personal views of the author, based upon visits to all the countries listed, to observe and study camping in the countries; and also based upon the regular region reports received annually by the Board of ICF, reporting progress in each country. It is based upon the camping and camping models with which the International Camping Fellowship is aware and associated. Further information about ICF and its activities can be found on its website www.campingfellowship.org RMA

An Investigation into the Service Quality Between Private and Public Horse Riding Schools in Hong Kong

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Background

Equestrian sport became the talk of the town when Hong Kong was cohosting the Beijing Olympic equestrian events in 2008 (South China Morning Post, 2007). With more than 150,000 spectators attending the events, the Beijing Olympic equestrian events were a resounding success. The Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) invested over $1.2 billion on the venues and facilities for the Beijing 2008 Olympic equestrian events and was recognized as an "Outstanding Contributor, Beijing 2008 Olympic Games Equestrian Events" by the Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (HKJC, 2008). The general public experienced the sophistication of equestrianism and the Olympic spirit (Hong Kong Digest, 2008). The staging of the games had created a fever among the general public for equestrian sport in Hong Kong (People Daily Online, 2005).

Owing to the fact that the hosting of the Beijing Equestrian Events has catalyzed the entire local development of equestrian sports, it is with high hope that equestrian sport will continue to grow in Hong Kong riding on the new boost provided by the Beijing Olympics. However, the outcome was surprising to everyone who works in the industry in equestrian sport in Hong Kong. In less than two years after the Games, equestrian sport began to decline. What are the reasons behind for this?

In Yu's study (2008), the effect of the 2008 Equestrian Olympic Games on the development of equestrian sport in Hong Kong was measured. She found that the 2008 Olympic equestrian events had greatly heightened the public's awareness of equestrian sport. A major legacy of the Olympic equestrian events in Hong Kong in 2008 was the increased understanding, interest and participation in the horse sports by the people in Hong Kong, China and the Far East South China Morning Post", 2008).

Moreover, equestrian sport is still not a mainstream sport compared to other sports in Hong Kong. There are only about 1,500 – 2,000 riders in Hong Kong and about half of those are under 18 years old (South China Morning Post, 2007). People generally see equestrian sport as noble and imbued with a long heritage and history (Fyrberg, 2008). According to the registration record of the HKEF, there were 9 riding establishments in Hong Kong before the staging of the 2008 Olympic Equestrian events (HKEF, 2013).

No doubt, the 2008 Olympic equestrian events had helped on the awareness of the general public of equestrian sport, but it did not develop mass participation in equestrian activities. In 2009, there was a drop of more than 11% in the number of registered riders at the Hong Kong Equestrian Federation (HKEF, 2013).

Riding schools in Hong Kong play an important role in carrying out the legacy of the Olympics and keeping the momentum of the local development of equestrian sport (South China Morning Post, 2008). The availability of equestrian facilities contributes to the popularity of the sport by offering a wide choice of horse related activities and horse shows (Horse riding in Virginia, 2013). However, with the traditional stereotype of equestrian sport as an expensive sport, its unique nature involving animals, and the limitation of horses, equestrian sport is considered a tough industry in Hong Kong. It is costly to run the riding schools and difficult to retain customers in their continual pursuit with the sport (Smith, 2009). In December 2012, two private riding schools, namely Hong Kong Equestrian and Carriage Services Ltd and Tai Yuen Riding School closed down (HKEF, 2013).

Under the intensifying competition in the business world today, one of the biggest challenges is customer retention. Service quality is an approach to managing business processes in order to ensure full customer satisfaction, which in turn has positive effects on the competitiveness and effectiveness of the industry. (Rahaman, Abdullah, and Rahman, 2011).

An extensive review of literature on equestrian sport revealed that no research on riding schools or the service quality of riding schools has been published. Before the sport can be promoted to the general public, it is necessary to find out more about the current service quality of the local riding schools, both public and private as the fundamental basis. This reflects the needs for the present study to measure the service quality of riding schools in Hong Kong.

Objective of the study

Equestrian sport in Hong Kong is in a paradoxical state at the moment. On one hand, equestrian sport is more popular than before the Games and there are more people on the riding schools' waiting lists to start learning horse riding. On the other hand, equestrian sport could also be described as failing as the number of riding schools is declining in Hong Kong. On a separate issue, there is a lack of new blood for equestrian sport in Hong Kong. In order to foster the local development of equestrian sport, this study attempted to investigate the service quality between private and public riding schools in Hong Kong, so as to work out effective ways to retain loyal customers remain on the sport.

Significance of the study

The 2008 Olympic Equestrian events in Hong Kong were a resounding success (Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, 2008). Hong Kong made history by having its first-ever equestrian team at the show jumping competitions. The hosting of the fabulous Olympic Equestrian Events has delivered a major confidence boost to Hong Kong and its people interest on equestrian sport. It was with high hope that equestrian sport will continue to strive and develop in Hong Kong with the overwhelming demands in all riding schools. However, it was surprise to see the decline of equestrian sport in Hong Kong in less than 2 years after the Beijing Olympics.

In order to sustain the sport and keep the legacy of the Olympic Games, it is worthwhile for us to further promote the sport in the territory and identify the possible reasons for the decline, determine its causes, understand the specific challenges, and devise sustaining strategies to ultimately retain and grow the riders' connection.

Nowadays, competition is keen in the sport industry, including equestrian sport. In order to retain customers, all riding schools need to compete not only with other sports, but also among other riding schools. Thus, it is important for us to investigate the service quality of riding schools in the territory. In Hong Kong, seldom we can see research on equestrian sport in this area.

Riding school is the key for continuous development of equestrian sport as they are the main channel to groom and nurture the city's next generation of equestrian stars and keeping alive Hong Kong's legacy as co-host city of the equestrian events of the Beijing 2008 Olympics. And the sustainable development of the riding school depends on the trust and loyalty of their students. In order to carry forward the Olympic spirit and legacy, it is necessary for us to ensure that equestrian sport will continue to flourish in Hong Kong. Knowing the service quality of the riding schools can help managers to make adjustments or design strategies to improve their current service, so as to attract more customers and strengthen their competitiveness. Findings of this study may also be an important instrument to pave a way for the further development of equestrian sport in Hong Kong.

Method

In this study, the service quality of riding schools in Hong-Kong was assessed. All surveys were collected via the largest public riding school, Tuen Mun Public Riding School (TMPRS) and the largest private riding school, Clearwater Bay Equestrian Centre (CEEC). A total of 185 riders participated in the study, with 52 males and 133 females. The data was collected through a self-developed questionnaire based upon the literature review in the past decades.

Questionnaire Development

The present survey instrument adopted the validated SERVQUAL instrument (Appendix A) which is developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988). It is a 22-item instrument designed to measure the service quality by comparing the difference between customers' expectations and perceptions of the services among five dimensions including assurance, empathy, tangibles, responsiveness and reliability by a Likert rating scale (Parasuraman et al., 1988, 1991 & Milne and McDonald, 2013). In addition to the original 22 SERVQUAL questions, special terms were added on the original questions to account for the multifaceted nature of service encountered within equestrian sports. In order to make sure that the modified survey is professional and correct, two top Hong Kong riders, Mr. Kenneth Cheng and Ms. Jennifer Lee were invited to proofread all the questions in December 2012 before the distribution of the survey.

The modified questionnaire (Appendix B) was divided into three parts. In the first part, general information of the respondents was asked. Demographic data of the subjects, such as gender, age, riding experience, riding frequency, education level, type of housing, monthly family income as well as horse livery etc. There were a total of 8 questions and options were provided for them to choose. It helped the researcher know more about the riding experience as well as the social economic background of the subjects.

In the second part, SERVQUAL 22-item questions were asked to determine the expectation of the subjects towards the service quality of their riding schools while in the third part, the focus would be put on the perception of the subjects towards the service quality of their riding schools. At the end of both the second and third part, one question was added to find out the overall rating on the expected and percepted service quality of their respective riding schools. A 5-point Likert-type Scale was used in the overall rating question and aimed at determining different levels of perception of the subjects, from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

Data collection

TMPRS and CEEC were approached for the request of invitation to survey to the subjects for the study. The researcher wrote to the school master of both schools for permission. With consent from both schools, the copies of questionnaires were sent to the assigned riding schools for distribution.

Questionnaires were distributed by the administrative staff at the riding schools' receptions. Instructions and purpose of filling the questionnaire would be explained to the students by the administrative staff. The students filled in the questionnaire immediately after their riding lessons. Questionnaires were collected by administrative staff afterwards. It was then collected from schools by the researcher.

Since many riders attend their riding lessons over the weekends, the survey was conducted on eight weekends from 5th January to 23rd of February 2013 at both TMPRS and CEEC respectively and convenience sampling was used. Auxiliary data such as gender, sex and participation in riding schools were collected. A total of 185 questionnaires which included 115 subjects (62.2%) from a Public riding school, TMPRS and 70 subjects (37.8%) from a Private riding school, CEEC were finally collected for the study.

Among all 185 valid questionnaires, it consisted of 52 males (28.1%) and 133 females (71.9%). 34 subjects (18.4%) aged below 16, 51 subjects (27.6%) aged between 17 - 30, and 100 subjects (54.1%) aged 31 or above. (Shown in figure 1 & 2) 32 subjects (17.8%) have less than 6 months riding experience while 152 subjects (82.2%) have more than 1 year riding experience.

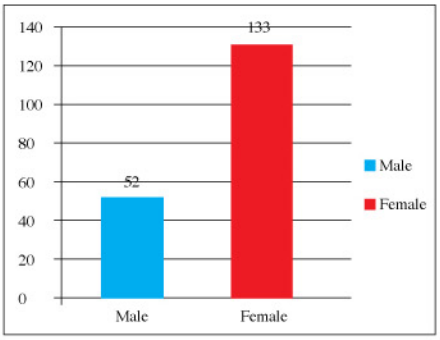

Figure 1. The gender distribution of subjects

Statistics Analysis

Collected data was input into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) for Window 16.0 version. It is used for data collection and analysis with descriptive statistics, independent t-test, one way ANOVA and Chi-square test. Level of significance of all the statistical testing performed was set at the level of 0.05.

Results & discussion

With pair t-test, significant mean differences (p= -0.30 in tangibles, p= -0.43 in reliability, p= -0.31 in responsiveness, p= -0.45 in assurance and p= -0.36 in total average scores) were found from all subjects at the level of 0.01 in all the dimensions of service quality between public and private riding schools, except for the area of "empathy". It indicates that there are service gaps in both public and private riding schools. Neither rider from public riding school nor from private riding schools satisfied with the recent service quality of their belonged riding schools.

There was no significant gender difference (t=1.37, p=0.174) found between the expectation and perception of service quality of riding schools which means the null hypothesis on different gender groups in the service quality of riding schools was accepted.

All subjects can be divided into two groups, namely one group with less than 6 months riding experience and 1 group with more than 1 year riding experience. Table 1 shows that there was significant mean difference (t=2.47, p=0.014) in the service gap between riders with less than 6 months and riders with more than 1 year riding experience. Riders with longer riding experience have higher expectation on the service quality of the riding school and they are more unsatisfied with the current service quality in the riding school.

Table 1. Total average scores of Service Quality among riders with different riding experience

Riding experience	N	Expected		Percepted		Difference between perception and expectation			
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t	P value
Less than 6 months	33	5.75	0.80	5.73	0.77	-0.01	0.44	2.47	0.014
More than 1 year	152	6.07	0.74	5.64	0.80	-0.43	0.96		

Table 2 shows that there was significant mean difference (f=7.68, p=0.001) between riders with different riding frequency regarding the total average scores of the service quality.

Table 2. Total average scores of service Quality with different riding frequency

Riding frequency	N	Expected		Percepted		Difference between perception and expectation			
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F	P value
Once a week	86	5.96	0.74	5.67	0.83	-0.29	0.79		
Twice a week	54	6.00	0.73	5.89	0.75	-0.11	0.80	7.68	0.001
More than 3 times a week	45	6.17	0.83	5.39	0.68	-0.78	1.07		

According to table 3, there were significant mean differences between the expectation and perception on the service quality among subjects with different monthly family income in the areas of tangibles (t= 2.22, p=0.028), reliability (t= 3.37, p=0.001), responsiveness (t=2.30, p=0.022), assurance (t= 3.3, p=0.001) as well as the total mean scores (t=2.95, p=0.004) respectively.

Table 3. Means for Service Quality Dimensions in different family income groups

	Family Income	N	Expected		Percepted		Difference between perception and expectation			
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t	P value
Tangibles	Less than 50,000	45	5.71	0.80	5.70	0.73	-0.01	0.96	2.22	0.028
	Above 50,000	140	5.99	0.98	5.60	0.88	-0.39	1.00		
Reliability	Less than 50,000	45	6.14	0.61	6.07	0.68	-0.07	0.71	3.37	0.001
	Above 50,000	140	6.39	0.73	5.85	0.83	-0.54	0.84		
Responsiveness	Less than 50,000	45	5.74	0.73	5.79	0.65	0.05	0.76	2.30	0.022
	Above 50,000	140	5.89	0.92	5.47	1.06	-0.43	1.31		
Assurance	Less than 50,000	45	5.99	0.72	5.96	0.71	-0.04	0.75	3.30	0.001
	Above 50,000	140	6.25	0.78	5.67	0.93	-0.58	1.01		
Total	Less than 50,000	45	5.85	0.60	5.84	0.57	-0.02	0.59	2.95	0.004
	Above 50,000	140	6.07	0.80	5.61	0.85	-0.46	0.96		

Among the two types of schools, the service gaps in the public riding school are higher than those in the private riding school. It means that riders from private riding schools were more satisfied than riders from public riding schools. Public riding schools in Hong Kong have a bigger problem on the current service quality. Based on the current findings with the collected data, an interview with several riding instructors in Hong Kong was conducted at Tuen Mun Public Riding School in February 2013. To a large extent, this finding matched with the researcher's expectation. Riders from public riding schools of HKJC were less satisfied than those from private riding schools due to a number of limitations in the following areas.

1. Horses

Horses can be considered as the most important element under "reliability" dimension. Question 2 on the survey, "The horses at the riding school should be healthy and suitable for lessons" was the best illustration.

Riding instructors are responsible for making the arrangement of horses in the riding schools (The Pony Club, 1991). Qualified instructors should have the experience of differing abilities of riders and can match a horse or a pony in their stables according to their abilities and temperament (Janson and Kemball-Williams, 2003).

School horses in the public riding schools were solely allocated to different riders at the instructors' discretion, except for livery owners who pay a monthly livery fee for a horse at his or her own choice. There is a maximum work load set for each horse with no more than two to three lessons a day. Riders who are not livery owners at the public riding schools do not have a choice on their horses. On a contrary, riders at the private riding schools can select their favorite horses for their lessons with higher fees.

2. Riding instructors

Riding instructors can be considered as an important element under "reliability" and "responsiveness" of the service quality concepts. Related questions on the survey were "All riding instructors should have official qualifications", "When riders have problems with their lessons, the instructors are able to help them to overcome their problems" and "The riding school staff solves problems quickly". Public riding schools have limitations on their riding instructors in the same way as their school horses.

Riders at the public riding schools have no choice on their riding instructors. Riding instructors of HKJC will be relocated from one to other school of HKJC at any time upon request from the management. On the contrary, riders at the private riding schools can select their favorite riding instructors for their lessons with higher fees.

3. Riding lessons

Centralized color code for different riding levels

Riding lessons also offer students sense of reliability. Question 3 under "reliability" dimension, "the riding and tack equipment at the riding school should be safe to use and well managed" was the best illustration.

At every HKJC riding school, lessons can be either in a group with maximum six people or private and all horses and staff will stop for lunch between 12:00 noon and 2: 00 p.m. (South China Morning Post, 2007). Besides, there is a color coding system implemented for all riding lessons. It involves of seven colors including red, yellow, orange, green, blue, purple and pink in ascending order to represent seven levels of riding skills. Red color represents no riding experience at all while pink represents the highest level of riding skills. This is a progressive system of achievement which offers riding school students various riding achievement certificates when they have reached different riding levels (HKJC brochure, 2011). With these riding certificates, students can transfer their riding lessons from one riding school to another one of HKJC according to their classified color code.

Since different riding schools of HKJC have different distribution of riding lessons throughout the week, instructors can only accommodate the students into suitable groups of the same level. Thus, riders from public riding schools cannot transfer their riding lessons from one school to another easily. The possibility for a rider of HKJC to transfer his or her lesson from one to another school is subject to the availability of the riding lessons at the same level that they belong to and wish to transfer.

On the contrary, riders from the private riding school enjoy a greater sense of flexibility to choose their own riding lessons. Instead of having a centralized classification system, riders can start their own riding lessons right anytime after their individual assessments conducted by their riding instructors and they can enjoy a private lesson with a higher fee.

Riding lesson format

Owing to limited working hours for each school horses, most of the riding lessons at HKJC riding schools can only be conducted in a group format up to six riders per lesson. It is hardly for riders to book a private or semi-private lesson throughout the week. A private riding school like CEEC has more flexibility in conducting one-to-one private lessons for their customers. As personalized riding lessons offer a greater sense of satisfaction, riders from private riding schools are usually more satisfied than those in the public riding schools (Micklem, 2003).

4. Riding facilities

Riding facilities which include riding equipment and tack, paddock, stables or changing rooms are all referred as "tangibles" in the concept of service quality. In comparing TMPRS with CEEC, riders from CEEC are more satisfied partly due to the covered arena at the riding school. Even though TMPRS is the largest public riding school with 35,800 square metres and can accommodate up to 78 horses and ponies, no riding activities can be carried out under heavy rains as it only contains outdoor paddock (South China Morning Post, 2007). In case of heavy rains, all riding lessons at TMPRS need to be cancelled. On the contrary, CEEC owns a big covered arena other than outdoor paddock. An indoor paddock provides safe conditions with no distractions and can be used in all weathers, at any time of day or night (Watson, 1998).

Personally, I believe there should be two more possible reasons for the higher service gaps on the service quality in the public riding schools based on my observation.

One of the highest possibilities is the popularity of HKJC. HKJC owns three public riding schools in Hong Kong with TMPRS being the biggest public riding. HKJC is one of the oldest institutions in Hong Kong which was founded in 1844 with the aim to promote horse racing (South China Morning Post, 2010).

Being as the largest non-profit making organization with largest tax contributions and private donations of charity funds in Hong Kong, HKJC is well known to the general public in Hong Kong with a long history. Consequently, people always associate HKJC with the concept of wealthy. Thus, it is likely that general public will have a higher expectation of the service quality at the riding schools belong to HKJC than other privately owned riding schools in Hong Kong. For those who have not started their riding lessons, they will prefer to start their riding lessons at the HKJC's riding schools to have a higher sense of service guarantee from such a renowned organization.

Overwhelming expectation may be one of the reasons why riders at the public riding school are less satisfied than those from the private riding school.

Furthermore, it is also possible that riders who participated in the survey from the private riding school might be more lenient than those who did in the public riding school. TMPRS is the oldest public riding school in Hong Kong with nearly 20 years of history. CEEC is quite green in the history of equestrian sport in Hong Kong as it was set up in 2008. People tend to be more critical with an established organization rather than an organization which set up for a few years only. Riders from the private riding school might be in fact allowing their school to have gradual improvement along with its development.

Service gaps between different riding frequencies

Time and money were two crucial factors affecting one's progress on horseback riding (Behling, 2007). Based on our data analysis, we found that riders with higher riding frequency have higher expectation on the service quality of the school. Riders with all three named categories, including riding once a week, twice a week or three times a week, were all dissatisfied with the current service quality of their riding schools. It is very similar to the result found on the service gaps regarding different riding experiences. The more often people ride each week, the higher their usages at the riding school and hence the higher expectation on all five dimensions of the service quality in the riding schools that they belonged to.

Service gaps between different social economic statuses

In this study, three core factors, namely education level, type of housing as well as monthly family income were used to assess the subjects' social economic background.

First of all, we found that there was no significant mean difference in the total average scores of service quality among riders with different education background. Besides, there was no significant mean difference found between subjects living in different named housing. Last but not least, family income was the third factor which was used to assess the potential service gaps among people with different social-economic status. The finding reflects that people with higher monthly family income and social-economic status have higher expectation on the service quality of the riding school. This type of riders tends to carry out their riding lessons in the private riding school as they can afford in paying higher school fees. For example, an one-hour lesson in a group format of six people at TMPRS is $375 which will cost you $900 at the CEEC; a 30 minutes private lesson will cost around $ 220 - $375 at TMPRS which will cost you from $313 – 515 over the weekdays and from 339 to $599 over the weekends at CEEC. People with longer riding experience, higher riding frequency per week and higher social-economic status tend to have higher expectation on the service quality of the riding school.

Conclusion

Results of this study suggested that over half of the active riders are not satisfied with the current service quality of both private and public riding schools. There are a lot of rooms in local riding schools to improve. People with different gender, age, education level and type of housing groups have similar standard on the existing service quality. The major mean differences only occurred in different riding experience, riding frequency as well as family income groups. These are the key areas which the riding schools need to work on and improve in the future.

Riders from the private riding school are more satisfied than riders from the public riding school. This can be explained by the brand name of HKJC, the flexibility of holding different equestrian activities between public and private riding schools as well as the history of the private riding school surveyed.

Being the largest charitable organization in the community, it is logical and reasonable that the Hong Kong Jockey Club public riding schools would not provide personalized services at the same level as those in the private riding schools. Otherwise, they may face the potential challenge from the general public.

As the private riding school is having a much shorter history in Hong Kong, people tend to comment it on a lower standard. Thus, the customer satisfaction level in the private riding school is higher than public riding schools. However, with the increased riding experience and frequency, customers will definitely have a higher demand on the existing services, the expectation will then increase accordingly. After a few years, customers in the private riding school may also evaluate the existing service quality with a much higher standard. Therefore, it is recommended that both public and private riding school to keep improving their service quality in order to retain their customers.

Recommendations for Future Research

Since this study is a pilot study on the service quality of riding schools in Hong Kong, there are several limitations to be addressed. As mentioned before, riding circle is small in Hong Kong. The majority of riders tend to ride at more than one riding establishments. It means the students of each riding schools are in fact overlapping. Among the entire riding population, only 185 surveys were collected for this study. The sample size seems to be small which might affect the representativeness of the data. However, the number of riders surveyed is over half of the active riding population in Hong Kong already. Having said that, the study wishes to provide a preliminary picture on the service quality of all riding schools in Hong Kong, further research is necessary in order to provide a more scientific and comprehensive understanding of this research question.

Considering the differences found in the perception rate on service quality with different riding experience groups, riding frequency and family income groups in this study, it gives us certain implications for the recent decline or low popularity of equestrian sport in Hong Kong as well as the key areas for future improvement. Moreover, it also provides us a clear picture on existing customers' characteristics and profiles. For further development and improvement, riding schools can focus on some tailor made programs that aim at retaining the current and attracting new customers.

In a nutshell, it is vital that riding schools, both public and private, recognize the importance of conducting service quality research with their customers. It is undeniable that customers will always look for personalized and better service from the sports which they enjoy. Customers tend to be loyal to any organization that cares about their customers. Thus, it is beneficiary for all riding school to start developing this kind of research, so as to retain the customers and eventually contribute to the further development of equestrian sport in Hong Kong. RMA

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Residents' Perceptions of the Impacts of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix

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Introduction

International sport events can be categorized as hallmark events or mega-events. Roche (2000) defined mega-events as large-scale cultural, commercial or sport events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance that can lead to significant consequences for the host city, region or country in which they occur. Swart and Bob (2009) put forward that mega sport events have increasingly become highly sought after commodities for both developed and developing countries as they move towards positive impacts, such as event-driven economies.

The 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, an international motorsport event, was held over a period of 3 days from April 12-14 in Shanghai, the most popular city in China. It is the tenth year that Shanghai holds the Chinese Grand Prix since 2004. At the stunning 5.45 km Shanghai International Circuit, which was the most expensive Formula One circuit facility when completed in 2004, spectators can really experience the glamour of the Chinese Grand Prix. It is estimated that Shanghai has spent approximately 2.6 billion RMB constructing this state-of-the-art venue for holding Chinese Grand Prix. Built on a marsh in 2004 in Jiading district by German master circuit designer Hermann Tilke and his team, the track layout is inspired by the character Shang of Shanghai frame. At 5.45 km long, it has widely varying corners, offering plenty of overtaking opportunities. Shanghai Vice-mayor Zhao Wen said that F1 was a calling card for Shanghai and she was also confident about the success of the event in the years ahead.

Motorsport is fast, exciting, glamorous and hedonistic. A wide range of impacts can be perceived amongst local residents when a mega motorsport event is hosted in their own city. For some residents, it is the highlight of their life, while others may regard it as a headache because of the disturbance of their daily life. Clearly, one of the most important explanations of this variation is the fact that some people value it an entertainment opportunity and a good chance for host countries' or cities' development, while others do not.

All major sports events can result in a variety of positive impacts upon the host community. First and Foremost, mega sport events move towards event-driven economies (Swart & Bob, 2009). Besides ticket revenue and broadcasting fees, F1 has greatly boosted tourism development and growth in Shanghai. The period of F1 is undoubtedly the peak season for hotels around Shanghai International Circuit. One of the main perceived benefits of holding mega-events is the creation of short- and long-term employment opportunities (Page &Hall, 2003). Undoubtedly, because of F1, the employment opportunities are greatly increased in Jiading district, where is suburban and far away from city center. A great many people are working for Shanghai International Circuit and hotels around it. Moreover, one of the tangible and long-term social values associated with holding international sport events is the potential infrastructural benefit (Swart & Bob, 2009). It is more convenient for residents living near Shanghai International Circuit since the new metro line 11 has directly approached to the circuit for better access. Holding sports mega-events can often boost national pride and passion (The economist, 2002). F1 is like a postcard of Shanghai and a great many Shanghainese are proud of hosting that mega sport event. Additionally, Cooper et al. (2005) have identified that mega-events can take people to many new places, broaden people's understanding about other cultures, and thus cultural exchange can take place between the event attendees and the host community. Tourists from every corner of the world come to Shanghai for F1 and they create valuable opportunities for Shanghai residents to know more about foreigners and foreign culture, which can significantly promote cultural exchange. Hritz and Ross (2010) concluded that social benefits and economic benefits of sport tourism in general attributed significantly to predicting support for sport tourism development in Indianapolis.

Although a great many of residents support Shanghai government to yearly hold F1 and excitedly participate in it, some residents are really concerned about its negative impacts. For instance, the host community may evaluate the public costs as excessive and perceive the event to be inconveniencing their personal lives (Waitte, 2003). People may feel that the facilities and venue for mega events are usually a waste of money and perceived Shanghai F1 to be a similar case. There are also negative economic impacts that can be caused by elements such as increased prices due to the influx of visitors (Deery & Jago, 2010). Room rates of hotels and goods around Shanghai International Circuit usually experience a significant surge during the period of the event. Deery and Jago (2010) pointed out that there are negative environmental impacts that can be caused by elements such as problems with noise and congestion. During the period of 2013 Shanghai F1, local residents have made complaint about traffic congestion along the highway, which can directly approach to Shanghai International Circuit. What's more, constructing huge venues will have a harmful impact on environment, causing noise and air pollution. Hritz and Ross (2010) concluded that perceived negative impacts of sport tourism in general attributed significantly to predicting support for sport tourism development in Indianapolis.

While the majority of research in the field of sport tourism has been conducted on sport tourism events, especially on economic impacts, little research has been conducted on environmental and social impacts of these kinds of events (Ritchie and Adair, 2004). Specifically, there are very few studies on residents' perceptions. To date, no vigorous empirical research has been conducted regarding the residents' perceptions of the impacts of holding sports mega-events in Shanghai.

Statistics officially announced by the Shanghai Sports Bureau showed that the Chinese Grand Prix held in Shanghai attracted about 260,000 spectators in its inaugural year in 2004 with a slight 10,000 increase in 2005, but continuously declined in the following years. As successful events are underpinned by community support (Fredline, 2004), therefore it is necessary and crucial to examine Shanghai residents' perceptions and concerns about the impacts of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix.

The significance of this study is that Shanghai will continue hosting the Chinese Grand Prix until 2017, so the findings of this study can be used as valuable information for Shanghai F1 organizing or governing bodies in the future. For instances, Shanghai F1 organizing or governing bodies can take use of the data and analysis from the study in order to get to know Shanghai residents' perceptions of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix from environmental, economic and social aspects. Great efforts can be done to keep the positive impacts, but control or ameliorate the negative impacts resulting from the event. It is to ensure the improvement of the Chinese Grand Prix and to win the support from Shanghai residents, which can greatly contribute to the success of this mega sport event.

The purposes of this study were (1) to investigate Shanghai residents' perceptions of both positive and negative impacts of holding the Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai from environmental, economic, and social aspects; (2) to examine the correlations among perceived positive impacts and perceived negative impacts from environmental, economic and social aspects separately; (3) to tell the differences among participants with various demographics in their support for the event; (4) to put forward the differences among participants with various levels of involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix in their perceptions about the event; (5) to find out what impacts significantly influence residents' support for the Chinese Grand Prix to be yearly held in the future. As the Chinese Grand Prix is yearly held in Shanghai until 2017, these findings can be used as valuable information for Shanghai F1 organizing or governing bodies in the future.

Method

A self-administered questionnaire survey was used for the study, which was based on Hritz and Ross's (2010) questionnaire. Questions in the questionnaire of this study were modified in order to suit the certain context to examine both positive and negative impacts of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, which were perceived by Shanghai residents.

Target Participants

The sample for this study consisted of 320 respondents. Since the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix was a popular and mega event yearly held in Shanghai, the population of interest in this study was all the residents who dwell in Shanghai. As the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix was held in Shanghai during April 12-14, a part of the respondents were the audience on the scene. Questionnaire was in person distributed to target participants, mailed to potential participants or conducted via the Internet. Altogether 400 questionnaires were sent out and 80% valid completed questionnaires were collected back for data analysis. Since the study was focused on Shanghai residents' perceptions, the original districts of participants would be in Shanghai.

Measuring Instrument

To measure Shanghai residents' perceptions of the impacts of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, three sections of instrument were used in this study.

The first section (9 items) was concentrated on generating a demographic profile of the respondents including their gender, age, nationality, length of residency in Shanghai, occupation, the highest level of education completed, monthly income, level of interest and involvement in F1.

The second section (23 items) contained statements assessing Shanghai residences' perceptions of both positive and negative impacts of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix from environmental, economic and social aspects separately. For instances, in terms of environmental aspect, the respondents were asked their perceptions about traffic congestion, parking difficulties, infrastructure construction, environmental pollution and damage brought by the event. In terms of economic aspect, the respondents were asked their perceptions about economic development, job opportunities, local businesses, construction cost of facilities and the utilization rate of Shanghai International Circuit. In terms of social aspect, the respondents were asked their perceptions about disruption of daily life during the event, cultural exchange, vandalism, and living standard improvement because of the event. Consistent with other tourism impact studies, participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with each statement on a five-point Likert-type scale. A value of one denotes a negative response (strongly disagree) and a value of five represents a favorable response (strongly agree).

The third section (1 item) was designed to investigate the conclusive opinion of respondents that whether they would support the Chinese Grand Prix yearly held in Shanghai or not.

The individual impact statements were derived from the survey questionnaire of Hritz and Ross's (2010), which was developed by Liu, Sheldon and Var (1987) on the environmental impacts and by Akis, Peristianis and Warner (1996) on social and economic impacts. The original questionnaire included 16 questions investigating the three tourism areas of environmental, economic and social impacts and support for sport tourism development. The Cronbach's Alpha of the questionnaire of this study was .822 (showed in Table 1), which was bigger than .70, so the questionnaire was reliable and valid.

Data Analysis

Collected data was input into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) for Window 18.0 version. This significant (alpha) level was set at .050. The followings are the procedures for data analysis.

1 Descriptive statistics such as standard deviation, percentage, mean, maximum and minimum were used to describe individual measurement items of perceived impacts.

2 Correlation analysis was done to find out the correlations among perceived positive and negative impacts from environmental, economic and social aspects separately.

3 One-way ANOVA was used to test the differences of demographic variables in their support for the Chinese Grand Prix to be held Shanghai in the following years.

4 One-way ANOVA was used to examine the differences among participants with various levels of involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix in their perceptions about the event.

5 A standard multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine which factor attributed significantly to predicting support for the Chinese Grand Prix yearly held.

Results

Demographic Background of Respondents

Table 1. Demographic Background of Respondents

Demographic Variables	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	154	48.1
Female	166	51.9
Total	320	100.0
Age Group		
<20 years old	38	11.9
20-29 years old	187	58.4
30-39 years old	51	15.9
40-49 years old	25	7.8
50-59 years old	13	4.1
60-69 years old	2	.6
≤70 years old	4	1.3
Total	320	100.0
Length of residence in Shanghai		
≤5 years	144	45.0
6-10 years	46	14.4
11-15 years	33	10.3
16-20 years	14	4.4
≥21 years	83	25.9
Total	320	100.0
Occupation		
Student	139	43.4
Corporate employee	67	20.9
Service job worker	23	7.2
Business owner	18	5.6
Government worker	37	11.6
Housewife	13	4.1
Educator	12	3.8
Others	11	3.4
Total	320	100.0
Education level		
High school or below	38	11.9
College/University	208	65.0
Graduate/Postgraduate	74	23.1
Total	320	100.0
Monthly income		
≤ 4,000 RMB	160	50.0
4,001-6,000 RMB	70	21.9
6,001-8,000 RMB	45	14.1
8,001-10,000 RMB	25	7.8
≥ 10, 000 RMB	20	6.3
Total	320	100.0
Interests in F1		
Avid fan	45	14.1
Interested in F1	98	30.6
Not particularly interested in F1	84	26.3
Not interested in F1	44	13.8
Totally have no interest in F1	49	15.3
Total	320	100.0
Involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix		
An on-the-scene spectator	57	17.8
A spectator through media (eg. TV)	165	51.6
A volunteer	14	4.4
Uncertain/don't know	84	26.3
Total	320	100.0

Correlations among Different Perceived Impacts

Correlation analysis was conducted to find out correlations among perceived positive environmental, economic and social impacts, and perceived negative environmental, economic and social impacts.

For positive impacts, as demonstrated in Table 2, there was a significant positive correlation ($P < .050$) between environmental benefits and economic benefits (Pearson's $r = 0.623$), economic benefits and social benefits (Pearson's $r = 0.720$), social benefits and environmental benefits (Pearson's $r = 0.648$). It means that participants who perceived the benefits of one of the three areas may also perceive the benefits of another two areas.

For negative impacts, as demonstrated in Table 3, there was also a significant positive correlation (P<. 050) between negative environmental impacts and negative economic impacts (Pearson's r= 0.537), negative economic impacts and negative social impacts (Pearson's r= 0.480), negative social impacts and negative environmental impacts (Pearson's r= 0.507). It means that participants who perceived the negative impacts of one of the three areas may also perceive the negative impacts of another two areas.

Table 2. Correlations of perceived positive impacts

Factor		Positive Environmental	Positive Economic	Positive Economic
Positive Environmental	Pearson Correlation	1	.623**	.648**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	320	320	320
Positive Economic	Pearson Correlation	.623**	1	.720**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	320	320	320
Positive Social	Pearson Correlation	.648**	.720**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	320	320	320

**. Correlation is significant at 0.050, three-tailed.

Table 3. Correlations of perceived negative impacts

Factor		Positive Environmental	Positive Economic	Positive Social
Negative Environmental	Pearson Correlation	1	1	.507**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000
	N	320	320	320
Negative Economic	Pearson Correlation	.537**	.537**	.480**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	320	320	320
Negative Social	Pearson Correlation	.507**	.507**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	320	320	320

**. Correlation is significant at 0.050, three-tailed.

Differences among Participants' Demographics in Support for Chinese Grand Prix

A series of one-way analysis of variance (AVOVA) were performed to assess differences in the sampled population's demographic and their support for the Chinese Grand Prix. The demographic variables of gender, length of residence in Shanghai, occupation, education level, monthly income, interest in F1 and involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix were independent variables and support for the Chinese Grand Prix to be yearly held in Shanghai was the dependent variable for each ANOVA. The result can be found in Table 4.

There were noticeable significant differences (p< .050) among the participants with different interests and levels of involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix in supporting that sport event to be yearly held in the future. It was demonstrated that the participants who were on-the-scene spectators and who had a great many interests in F1 would support that the Chinese Grand Prix should be yearly held in the following years. For other variables, although not statistically significant, the participants who already lived in Shanghai over 16 years in general were more likely to support the Chinese Grand Prix. What's more, the participants with higher salaries, such as business owners, showed more interests in supporting the Chinese Grand Prix. Last but not least, the participants with higher education level would be more likely to support the Chinese Grand Prix.

Table 4. ANOVA of Support for the Chinese Grand Prix

Demographic Variables	df	F	p
Gender	1	.048	.827
Length of residence in Shanghai	4	.348	.846
Occupation	7	1.627	.127
Education level	2	1.848	.159
Monthly income	4	.145	.965
Interest in F1	4	10.340	.000*
Involvement in F1	3	8.609	.000*

*Significant at the p<.050, three-tailed.

Differences among Participants' Involvements in Perceptions of Chinese Grand Prix

One-way AVOVA were performed to examine the differences among participants with various levels of involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix in their perceptions about the event. The participants' different level of involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix was the independent variable for each ANOVA, while participants' perceptions of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix from environmental, economic and social aspects separately were dependent variables. Participants with different levels of involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, such as on-the-scene spectators, spectators through media or volunteers, may perceive differently about the event from each other.

In terms of environmental aspect, as illustrated in Table 5, there were significant differences (p< .050) among people with different levels of involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix in their perceptions about more parks and other recreational areas provided, and about environmental and noise pollution. To state more clearly, compared with other participants, on-the-scene spectators could perceive more that because of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, more parks and other recreational areas were provided (M=3.49). However, participants who were uncertain about the ways to involve in the event could feel more about environmental and noise pollution (M=3. 40).

Table 5. ANOVA of Environmental Perceptions on Different Levels of Involvements

Environmental statements	df	F	p
1 Provide more parks and other recreational areas	3	3.365	.019*
2 Lead to traffic congestion and parking difficulties	3	.292	.831
3 Improve urban infrastructure construction (transportation, accommodation and etc.)	3	1.924	.125
4 Accelerate environment pollution and noise pollution	3	2.651	.049*
5 Cause natural environment damage (because of the construction of sport tourist facilities)	3	1.101	.349

*Significant at the p<.050, three-tailed.

Regarding economic aspect, according to Table 6, there was a significant difference (p< .050) among people with different levels of involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix in their perceptions that the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix was a major boost for economic development in the area where Shanghai International Circuit is located. To state more clearly, compared with other participants, on-the-scene spectators (M=3.47) and media spectators (M=3.52) could perceive more about the economic boost and development around Shanghai International Circuit.

Table 6. ANOVA of Economic Perceptions on Different Levels of Involvements

Environmental statements	df	F	p
6 Be a major boost for economic development in the area where Shanghai International Circuit is located	3	3.61	.014*
7 Increase the prices of real estates around Shanghai International Circuit (e.g. house, land etc.)	3	1.11	.345
8 Attract more investment and tourists to your community	3	1.80	.147
9 Create more job opportunities for your community	3	.80	.496
10 Provide more local businesses (increase turnover)	3	1.59	.191
11 Increase the prices of goods and services	3	1.05	.372
12 Waste taxpayers' money for constructions of public facilities for visitors	3	.47	.702
13 low utilization rate of Shanghai International Circuit pre-and post-the event	3	1.68	.171

*Significant at the p<.050, three-tailed.

Concerning social aspect, revealed in Table 7, there were significant differences (p< .050) among people with different levels of involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix in their perceptions about cultural exchanges between tourists and residents resulted from the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix. To state more clearly, compared with other participants, on-the-scene spectators had more perceptions that because of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, more cultural exchanges between tourists and residents were resulted from it (M=3.70).

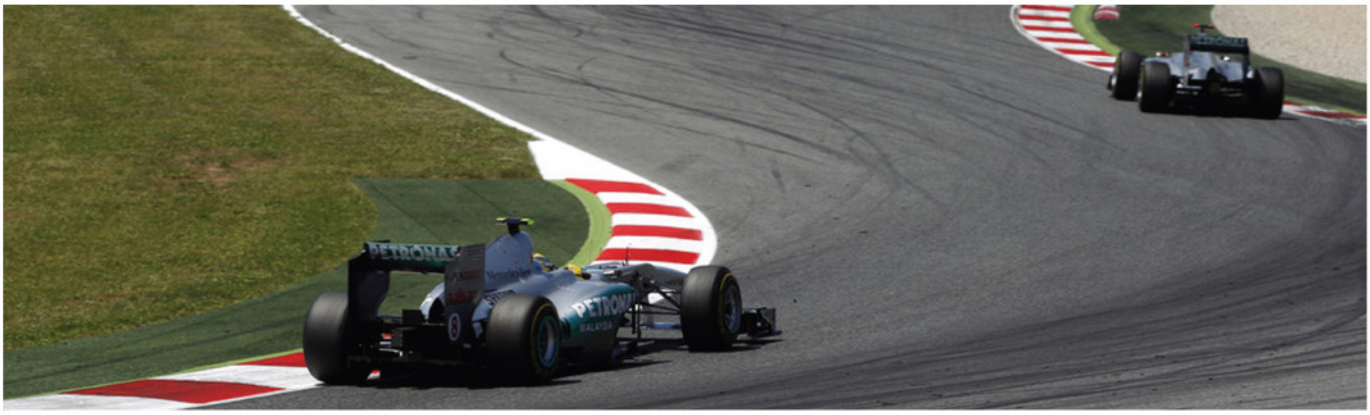
Table 7. ANOVA of Social Perceptions on Different Levels of Involvements

Social statements	df	F	p
14 Improve the living standard for communities located close to Shanghai International Circuit	3	2.00	.113
15 Disrupt life of local residents and create inconvenience	3	1.03	.380
16 Result in more cultural exchanges between tourists and residents	3	4.78	.003*
17 Lead more vandalism in your community	3	.63	.600
18 Facilitate development of other relevant industries (tourism industry, commercial industry, catering industry, social service industry and cultural industry)	3	1.00	.394
19 Enhance the brand image of Shanghai	3	.12	.947
20 Increase crime rate	3	.41	.747
21 Better understand other cultures and societies	3	.87	.457
22 Encourage development of a variety of cultural activities by the local residents	3	.69	.562

*Significant at the p<.050, three-tailed.

Predictors of support for the Chinese Grand Prix

To answer the last research question, a standard multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine relationships between the resulting factors and support for the Chinese Grand Prix. The four factors, which were consistent with the factors put forward in Hritz and Ross's study (2010), namely the perceived environmental benefits, economic benefits, social benefits and negative impacts, were the independent variables, while support for the Chinese Grand Prix to be yearly held was the dependent variable.



The result of regression analysis and the model can be found in Table 8. As showed, the perceived environmental benefits, economic benefits and negative impacts of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix generally attributed significantly to predicting support for the Chinese Grand Prix yearly held in Shanghai at p< .050 level. The perceived social benefits were not a significant predictor. Additionally, the beta value for the perceived environmental benefits (β= .242) and economic benefits (β= .197) were positive. Therefore, as the perceived environmental and economic benefits increase, so does support for the Chinese Grand Prix to be held in the future.

Furthermore, the negative beta value for the perceived negative impacts brought by the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix reflected a decreased support for the Chinese Grand Prix to be yearly held in Shanghai in the future.

Table 8. The 2013 Chinese Grand Prix Regression Model

Variable	B	SE B	ß	Sig.
Perceived environmental benefits	.144	.044	.242	.001*
Perceived economic benefits	.069	.028	.197	.013*
Perceived social benefits	.037	.021	.149	.069
Perceived negative impacts	-.057	.012	-.316	.000*

Note. R=. 406, R^2=.165
*Significant at the p<.050, three-tailed.

Discussion

The most important findings of this study were that: 1) a great many of impacts from environmental, economic and social aspects, associated with the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, could be highly perceived by the host community-Shanghai residents; 2) perceived environmental benefits, economic benefits and social benefits were correlated to each other, while perceived negative environmental impacts, economic impacts and social impacts were correlated to each other; 3) respondents who were on-the-scene spectators with a great many interests in F1 showed more support for the Chinese Grand Prix to be yearly held in the following years; 4) respondents with higher level of involvement in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix could perceive more positive impacts from event; 5) the perceived environmental benefits, economic benefits and negative impacts were great factors that influenced the respondents' support for the Chinese Grand Prix.

Regarding the environmental impacts, the respondents had a high agreement that the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix has led to traffic congestion and parking difficulties. It was consistent with Kim, Gursoy and Lee's (2004) study that traffic congestion appeared to be the headache problem during the game period. Besides, the respondents perceived that urban infrastructure construction has been improved as a result of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix. It supported Masterman's (2004) idea that mega sports events can play an important role in improving infrastructure for the host destination. In terms of economic impacts, the respondents highly agreed that the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix has provided more local businesses and increased turnover. The respondents thought that due to the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, more investment and tourists have been attracted to your community. It supported several studies that have also highlighted the economic benefits in the form of tax revenues, employments, and additional sources of income (Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Getz, 1997). Negatively, the residents perceived that there is a low utilization rate of Shanghai International

Circuit pre- and post- the event. Additionally, for the social aspect, the respondents highly agreed that because of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, the brand image of Shanghai has been enhanced. It supported Bob and Sward's study (2009) that international recognition is viewed as being important benefits resulting from hosting mega events. The respondents also perceived that the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix has contributed to the development of other relevant industries (tourism industry, commercial catering industry, social service 5industry and cultural industry). Moreover, the respondents felt that due to the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, people can better understand other cultures and societies. The respondents agreed that the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix has encouraged a variety of cultural activities by the local residents. There are also more cultural exchange between tourists and residents. It was consistent with Jeong and Faulkner's (1996) finding that mega-events are likely to improve cultural for the locals, strengthen regional values and traditions, and even lead to a better understanding about other cultures.

Secondly, from the correlations analysis, it was found that participants who perceived more benefits of one of the three areas may also perceive more benefits of another two areas, and vice versa, participants who perceived more negative impacts of one of the three areas may also perceive more negative impacts of another two areas. According to my observation, when doing interviews with respondents on the scene, usually if the respondent could put forward more positive impacts from one of the three aspects, he would also point out more positive impacts from the other two aspects, and vice versa. Recommendations are that the Shanghai F1 committee or the governing bodies should do the best to sustain all the perceived benefits and ameliorate all the negative impacts in order to win more community support for the Chinese Grand Prix and to lead to the greatest success of holding that grand motorsport event during the next few years in Shanghai.

Thirdly, from the result of ANONA analysis of differences among participant demographics in support for the Chinese Grand Prix, it showed that respondents with higher level of involvement and interest in the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix could show more support for the event. It was consistent with Harrill's (2004) study that residents would support the events when they perceive the benefits, which may be closely related to themselves, outweigh the costs of hosting the event based on the social exchange theory.

Fourthly, as mentioned in the result part of ANOVA analysis of perceptions on different levels of involvements, compared with other participants, on-the-scene spectators could perceive more about that because of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, more parks and other recreational areas were provided. It was quite reasonable. Since the on-the-scene spectators went to Shanghai International Circuit for F1, and they could see the parks and recreational areas around the Circuit, and might personally experience leisure time in the parks or in the recreational areas. Therefore they could perceive more about it. Besides, compared with other participants, on-the-scene spectators and media spectators could perceive more about the economic boost and development around Shanghai International Circuit. Spectators who were on-the-scene could personally experience the economic development in Jiading district by going to that area. They personally observed the hotels, shopping malls and living conditions of the residents around it, and might also pass by the modern Shanghai International Motown, which locates in Jiading district. At the same time, media spectators could feel the economic boost of Jiading district through TV cameras. Before the year 2004, when the Chinese Grand Prix was firstly held in Shanghai, Jiading district was full of wetlands and farms. However, because of this mega-sport event, a stunning 5.45 km Shanghai International Circuit, which spent approximately 2.6 billion RMB, was constructed inside Jiading District. Without any doubt, it was an effective catalyst for the economic development in Jiading District. Last but not least, compared with other participants, on-the-scene spectators had more perceptions that because of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, more cultural exchanges between tourists and residents were resulted. According to the researcher's observation, it was because on-the-scene spectators had more opportunity to see and communicate with foreign spectators from every corner of the world during the event. Because of F1, they had the common interest, which could greatly facilitate the communications and cultural exchanges between Chinese spectators and foreign spectators.

Fifthly, without any doubt, the standard multiple regression analysis supported the social exchange theory (Andriotis, 2005; Gursory, Jurowski, & Uysal, 2002; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Chen, 2000, 2001) and showed that the perceived environmental benefits, economic benefits and negative impacts appear to have great influence on whether the participants would support the Chinese Grand Prix to be yearly held in the future or not. However, social benefits did not significantly influence the participants' support for that motorsport event.

The perceived environmental benefits were a great factor that influenced the respondents' support for the Chinese Grand Prix. Over 50% of the respondents agreed that as a result of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, urban infrastructure construction has been improved. This was consistent with Deccio and Baloglu's (2002) study that mega-events are likely to serve as catalysts for bringing attention to infrastructure construction and physical landscape. For an instance, metro line 11 has directly approached to Shanghai International Circuit, which locates in the suburban of Shanghai, and hotels were also constructed around the circuit for servicing F1 spectators. These were the environmental benefits that were greatly perceived by the Shanghai residents. However, the participants could not strongly perceive that more parks and other recreational areas are provided because of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix. According to the researcher's experience and observation, it was mainly because that Shanghai International Circuit locates in the suburban area, although more recreational areas were actually constructed around Shanghai International Circuit, the respondents who live near the city center do not go to the circuit very often if no motorsport event is held there, which directly resulted in their low perceptions towards more parks and other recreational areas provided because of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix.

Besides environmental benefits, the economic benefits were definitely another important factor that significantly influenced the respondents' support for the Chinese Grand Prix. This viewpoint supported Hritz and Ross's (2010) position that economic benefits were closely related with residents' support. The participants could perceive that the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix has been a major boost for economic development in the area where Shanghai International Circuit is located, to be more specifically, more investments, businesses and tourists have been attracted to Shanghai due to the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix. Actually, the area where Shanghai International Circuit locates was an undeveloped area before holding the Chinese Grand Prix. That place was not popular and not many people would go there. However, since the beginning of the Chinese Grand Prix, Shanghai International Circuit was constructed, which was the most expensive Formula One circuit facility when completed in 2004 and different kinds of hotels were built around it, which created a lot of working opportunities for the Shanghai residents, especially those living near Jiading District. What's more, tourists both from home and abroad are attracted to Shanghai to enjoy that grand motorsport event every year, which also greatly facilitate the development of Shanghai tourism industry. In a word, holding the Chinese Grand Prix is a very effective and efficient way to promote the economic development around the area where Shanghai International Circuit locates. This was consistent with the studies that have highlighted the economic benefits, such as tax revenues, investments, and additional sources of income, resulted from the mega-sport event (Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Getz, 1997). Due to these economic benefits perceptions, the participants showed their agreements in supporting the Chinese Grand Prix to be held in the future. What the Shanghai F1 committee or its governing bodies should do is

to sustain the economic benefits brought by the Chinese Grand Prix in order to have more local community's support for that motorsport event.

On the other hand, unlike the perceived environmental and economic benefits, as discussed in the regression analysis, the perceived social benefits were not a necessary factor that influenced the respondents' support for the Chinese Grand Prix. Although nearly 60% of the respondents agreed that because of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix, the brand image of Shanghai has been enhanced, which was consistent with Roche' s (2000) opinion that mega-events enhance awareness of the region, but it could not influence them to support the Chinese Grand Prix in the future. The reason might lie in that people may show more concerns on the benefits that are more closely related to their own interests, such as economic benefits, rather than the improved city image, which is far from their daily life. Moreover, the respondents perceived that the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix has resulted in more cultural exchanges between tourists and residents, but compared with economic benefits, it also could not greatly influence the participants to support that grand motorsport event.

Last but not least, the participants' perceptions of the negative impacts resulting from the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix were the greatest factor in predicting support for the Chinese Grand Prix in the following years. This viewpoint supported Hritz and Ross's (2010) position that negative benefits would greatly influence residents' support. The results indicated that the Shanghai residents were unsatisfied with traffic congestion and parking difficulties, environment and noise pollution, environment damage, the rocketing prices of real estates around Shanghai International Circuit, the increasing prices of goods and services, money-consuming construction of public facilities for visitors, low utilization rate of Shanghai International Circuit, and daily life disruption of the local residents. The on-the-scene respondents complained that it took them three to four hours from city center to Shanghai International Circuit by their own cars on the event day because of traffic congestion and it was very difficult for them to park their cars because of limited park lots. This viewpoint was consistent with the finding from the study of Kim, Gursoy and Lee's (2004) that traffic congestion appeared to be the biggest problem during the game period. According to the researcher's experience and observation, although the governors encouraged people to take metro line 11 that directly approaches to the Shanghai International Circuit for more convenient and quick access, some spectators even did not know that transportation information and thus chose to drive their own cars. In order to solve that problem, promotional solutions can be adopted. For example, the one-time metro card to Shanghai International Circuit can be sold with the F1 tickets together to encourage the spectators to use public transportations. The respondents living around the Shanghai International Circuit who were interviewed said that their life was severely disrupted because of the noise pollution made by F1 and the increasing prices of goods and services during the event days. Therefore the governors should take the actions to decrease the noise made by F1 and keep the prices of goods and services during the event days. Last but not least, over 50% of the respondents showed their opinions that construction of Shanghai International Circuit took a great amount of money, but its utilization rate was very low, especially pre- and post- the event. This was the same opinion as the harshest critics' who evaluated the public costs as excessive (Waitt, 2003). As a solution, Shanghai International Circuit should be promoted by providing various kinds of entertainment activities, such as kart, for people to participate in during the periods without motorsport events.

Conclusion

This study assessed the perceived impacts of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix from the environmental, economic and social aspects by examining Shanghai residents' perceptions toward the Chinese Grand Prix, which is yearly held in their destination. Conclusively, 67% of the respondents agree to support the Chinese Grand Prix to be yearly held in Shanghai. However, there were differences in terms of how much support the respondents were willing to give with the relationships of their perceived environmental benefits, economic benefits and also negative impacts of the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix that affected their support for that motorsport event to be yearly held in Shanghai. Respondents with higher level of involvement and interest in the Chinese Grand Prix would show more support for the event. Most importantly, the finding of the study indicated that the perceived environmental benefits, economic benefits and negative impacts were great factors that could influence the respondents' support for the Chinese Grand Prix.

The findings of this study have both theoretical and applied implications. Generally, the theoretical implications for the social exchange theory were supported in the findings of this study. Although all the impacts regarding the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix were just factored into the environmental, economic and social aspects, the Shanghai residents' responses naturally sorted themselves out into positive and negative sides. These perceptions positively or negatively affected their subsequent support for the Chinese Grand Prix to be held in the following years. Therefore, on one hand, for Shanghai residents, the perceived negative impacts adversely affected their support for the Chinese Grand Prix. On the other hand, the perceived environmental and economic benefits led to increased support for the Chinese Grand Prix in the future. These variables contributed as significant predictors for support for that grand motorsport event.

The identification of perceived negative impacts has practically applications for the Chinese Grand Prix development and for Shanghai F1 organizing or governing bodies in the future. The results indicated that Shanghai residents may not be necessarily satisfied with traffic congestion and parking difficulties, environment and noise pollution, environment damage, the rocketing prices of real estates around Shanghai International Circuit, the increasing prices of goods and services, money-consuming construction of public facilities for visitors, low utilization rate of Shanghai International Circuit, and daily life disruption of the local residents. Therefore the governing bodies should do the best to ameliorate all these negative impacts in order to win more community support for the Chinese Grand Prix and to lead to the greatest success of holding that grand motorsport event during the next few years in Shanghai. What's more, it is very essential for the government officials to tailor their decisions based on the community's needs (Andereck & Vogt, 2000).

Last but not least, it showed that the participants might be feeling more of the negative impacts brought by the 2013 Chinese Grand Prix. This viewpoint was consistent with Hritz and Ross's (2010). Therefore, a series of positive public relations campaigns or activities are recommended to be launched by the Shanghai F1 organizing committee or the governing bodies in order to remind the Shanghai residents of the positive benefits in the various aspects from holding the Chinese Grand Prix in order to win their support. RMA

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A New Scale for Service Quality Measurement and Applications in a Low Cost Gym Context

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Abstract

The global economy has become service-dominated, customers have high consciousness on service quality and spend money wisely. Service sectors started to measure service quality and differentiate services in the 90s.It is found that Low cost gym, a rapidly growing industry has successfully tackled the issue and transferred it into business opportunity. In order to measure its performance, SERQUAL, SERPERF, and Tatraclasse model are reviewed and a new scale is developed. A questionnaire survey is conducted in a low cost gym in Sheffield, England with 300 customers (N=300). Students and full-time workers appear to be the biggest segments (89%) while 92% of the customers are aged 35 or below. Female customers have higher expectations on services than male. Students/ aged 16-20 customers are the easiest to please. Price and equipment issues are the key satisfaction determinants. Practitioners are suggested to provide realistic and precise information in promotion to avoid over-expectation. In addition, service quality has direct influences to all customer loyalty dimensions.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Domination by Service Sectors in the Global Economy

The global economy has become service-based in last two decades, most of the countries have greater spending on services than tangible goods and caused the service dominated environment (Carrillat, Jaramillo and Mulki, 2007). In the 90s, service sectors started to measure their performance for improvement and differentiation (Rodrigues et al. 2011). Majority of previous researches (Buttle, 2004; Carrillat, Jaramillo and Mulki, 2007; Cook, 2002; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988; Rodrigues et al. 2011) provided evidence to that, service quality is the most important determinant of business performance and long-term validity of a firm. It is based on providing high quality service leads to customer satisfaction and loyalty (Carrillat, Jaramillo and Mulki, 2007). Furthermore, keeping existing customers lower the marketing cost and allow a firm to differentiate the services to fulfil customer needs and expectations, and create barriers to avoid competitors (Alexandris and Palialia, 1999; Berry and Parasuraman, 1991; Buttle, 2004; Cook, 2002; Fitness Industry Association, 2000; Gabbott and Hogg, 1998). Health and Fitness Industry in England grew 17.7% value and 13.6% volume over 2006-2011 and expected to reach a value of £2.66 billion and £5.33 million members in 2011 (Mintel, 2011). Consumers have higher consciousness by spending the disposable income due to economic downturn. 80% profit of the industry came from membership/ joining fee while the rest came from secondary elements such as supplements and catering. The situation lowered the profit of traditional gym, however, it is found that the “Low cost gym” (which focuses on core services and is less influenced to the negative impacts) is raising. Low cost gym successfully tackled the economic issue and transferred it to new business opportunity. One of six respondents has been considered joining a club, low membership fees and flexible contract terms are the most attractive prerequisites for this population (Mintel, 2011). In addition, Algar (2008) stated that the industry has reached a consolidation point which its market will no longer grow significantly. Hill and Jones (2007) stated that the key to survive in the dilemma is to minimize costs and build up customer loyalty thus create barriers for competitors. Algar (2010) acknowledge the success of low cost gym to simplicity, affordability, sporadic attendance to traditional clubs, consumer sentiment towards traditional clubs, and inconspicuous consumption. Majority of low cost gyms eliminate periphery facilities such as food and beverage, and retailing. For management, low cost gyms adopt high technology approach, set up online registration and booking, 24 hours operating (flexible and avoid overcrowded). The elimination of periphery facilities and service staff allows low cost gyms to reduce cost and charge in a low price range. Algar (2010) claimed that the reduction is attractive to customers who join the gym for basic elements (cardio machines and resistance training equipments). Furthermore, the web based management system provides customers with great flexibility to manage membership at favorable time. Low cost gyms provide low price memberships and contract-free policies to attract customers. Most of the customers found their money spent in value and are willing to recommend others to join the club (Algar, 2010).

1.2 Significance and Aims of the Research

Due to the rapid grow of Low cost gym and lack of studies on this area, a new scale is developed in present study beyond SERVQUAL, SERVPERF, and the Tatraclasse Model. The scale can help gym managers to address important service attributes to improve services in future.

Present study aims to:

- Compare different approaches of service quality measurement and select an appropriate instrument
- Apply the instrument on a low cost gym and evaluate its performance
- Categorize service attributes by importance
- Investigate if all service attributes have equal contribution to customer satisfaction and loyalty level
- Investigate the causal relationships and correlations between main variables

2. Literature Review

2.1 Customer Service

Cook (2002) stated that consumers are increasingly sophisticated and educated. They spend more money on services with higher expectations, and are likely to stick to firms with higher quality of service.

2.1.1 Service Quality

Service is intangible, and is kind of deed, process, and performance (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000). Due to the intangibility of services, it is defined as experiences (Schneider and White, 2004). Leisure service is "an enigma- diverse, changing, intangible, perishable, fragile and fleeting- and, in many instances, dependent on the person who delivers the service" (Torkildsen, 2005, p.459). It is appropriate for service sectors to measure performance by investigating customer perception of quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988).

2.2 The Service Gaps

"Discrepancies or gaps exist regarding executive perceptions of service quality and the service delivery to consumers. The gaps can be major hurdles attempting to deliver a service which consumers would perceive as high quality" (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1985, p.44). Service gaps exist when a firm has misconception of customer perceptions and expectations. A large gap exists when service quality is low, contrary, the gaps will be eliminated when service quality increases (Naumann, 1995).

2.3 Customer Satisfaction

"Customer satisfaction is the customer's fulfilment response to a consumption experience" (Buttle, 2004, p.21). Schneider and White (2004, p.51) suggested that "customer satisfaction is a judgment of a product or service feature…provided a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment, including levels of under or over-fulfillment". Buttle (2004) suggested that customer satisfaction as an index to indicate the differences between customer expectations and perceptions. When the quality of service meets or exceed customer expectations customers will be satisfied; where customers will be dissatisfied (negative attitude to the firm and drop out) when service quality is underperformed (Alexandris and Palialia, 1999). Customer satisfaction is a loyalty creator and major driver of repurchase intentions (Yu, Chao and Wang, 2011). A satisfied consumer is likely to recommend and share his/her experience to others which is known as positive word of mouth. Vice versa, dissatisfied consumer is likely to spread the bad experience to others and advice them not to visit the firm, which is known as negative word of mouth (Laura, 1996; Wangenheim and Bayon, 2004).

Positive word of mouth is a powerful tool for customer acquisition but service sectors might lose potential customers with negative word spread (Bansal and Voyer, 2000; Patti and Chen, 2009).

Alexandris and Palialia (1999) argued that assess of customer satisfaction is not equivalent to perceived service quality as satisfaction is the result of psychological changes after a service experience, a firm can improve the quality of service but cannot control satisfaction entirely as demographic status also contribute. Cronin and Taylor (1992) stated customer satisfaction is a form of transaction-specific measure and has a stronger correlation to future purchase intentions than service quality.

2.4 Customer Loyalty

Lim (2006) and Buttle (2004) stated that customer loyalty can divide into (1) attitudinal loyalty and (2) behavioral loyalty (or behavioral future intention). Consumer preferences, beliefs, and emotionally attachment of a firm are forms of attitudinal loyalty; repurchasing behaviors and positive word of mouth reference to behavioral loyalty (Buttle, 2004; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Lim, 2006). Furthermore, loyal customers are less susceptible to negative information and marketing activities of competitors (Ahluwalia et al., 1999).

2.5 Measure Instrument

2.5.1 SERVQUAL

SERVQUAL was developed to measure the customer perceptions of service quality in service and retailing sectors. Researchers discovered that customers evaluate services with certain common criteria despite the industry. Service quality is the overall evaluation of a product or service which is similar to an attitude while customer satisfaction is a reflection which summarizes the feeling or psychological status changes with service encounter. Customer satisfaction indicates the contrast between expectation (what the customer think service should be offered) and perception (how the service actually being delivered) (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988).

2.5.2 SERVPERF

Cronin and Taylor (1992) stated that club managers should identify which aspects of service value and influence purchase decision the most. They suggested that there is a positive correlation between the quality of service, customer satisfaction and loyalty. Carrillat, Jaramillo and Mulki, (2007) claimed that SERVPERF is a better instrument as ambiguous customer expectations (which is measured in SERVQUAL) is absent. In attrition, the findings suggested that customer satisfaction influences the most on future repurchasing intentions (Cronin and Taylor, 1992).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Method/ Strategy

Present study adopted quantitative method with questionnaire survey. Furthermore, co-relational research strategy is used to examine the relationships between main variables and predict future behaviours. It involves accessing consumer behaviours, attitude and physiological response toward sport issues (Smith, 2010).

3.1.1 The Questionnaire Survey

Questionnaires are sent to respondents/ customers on arrival to the site. User surveys help club managers to access data on catchment areas, user profiles, user perceptions, and so on, which provide useful insights for business planning (Veal, 2006).

3.1.2 Sampling

The survey conducted in Pure Gym (a low cost gym located in Sheffield, England) to investigate its service quality. The primary source of data is the customers. The target sample size is 300 (N=300), 340 questionnaires were distributed to the club in case of sample errors. Random sampling is adopted to guarantee equal probability for target population. In order to capture most of the segmentations and boost validity, the data collection took place during both peak and off-peak hours on weekdays and weekends (Veal, 2006).

3.2 The Instrument Comparison and Selection

3.2.1 Comparison of SERVQUAL and SERVPERF

SERVQUAL is an instrument that distinguishes the differences between customer expectations and perceptions (or perceived service quality) while SERVPERF focuses purely on performance to measure quality of service (Cronin and Taylor, 1992). Based on the difference, when measuring satisfaction level with SERVUQAL (perception minus expectation/ P- E), the result might either be satisfaction or dissatisfaction while SERVPERF only takes perception as service quality measurement, thus the result is pure performance level (Rodrigues et al. 2011).

A service might contain both tangible and intangible elements (Schneider and White, 2004). Metha et al. (2000) suggested that, in terms of application, SERVQUAL is more suitable for service sectors with an emphasis on retailing where SERVPERF is more adequate for service sectors which offer pure service. Metha et al. (2000) adopted SERQUAL and SERVPERF in one service sector with 84 samples for respectively. The results measure by SERVQUAL and SERVPERF were significantly different. This indicated that two instruments do not concur. Metha et al. (2000) suggested to adopt both instruments in a combined manner in future.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) stated that the elements within SERVQUAL dimensions can be modified. Carrillat, Jaramillo and Mulki (2007) doubted that the modification would lower the validity of the scale due to bias, accuracy, and cultural differences. More precisely, the language translation might be biased and translated in researchers' preferences or favours thus destroy the natures of the scales. Two major findings were concluded by: (1) According to the meta-analysis, both instruments are adequate and equally valid predictors of service quality. (2) The modified SERVQUAL has greater service quality predictive validity than the original version while modified SERVPERF results same level of service quality predictive validity (Carrillat, Jaramillo and Mulki, 2007, p.485).

3.3 Categorization of Service Attributes

It is impossible for service sectors to improve all service attributes, there is a need to find out which attributes have significant contributions on satisfaction level for further reinforcement (Dobet, 2007). Previous researches tried to link up the service attributes to satisfaction. Both SERVQUAL and SERVPERF agreed that service quality has antecedent contribution on satisfaction level. Alexandris and Palialia (1999, p.219) argued that satisfaction is the result of psychological changes after a service experience thus service quality is not the only determinant of satisfaction level. Social dimensions and demographic differences of customers might affect satisfaction level (Alexandris and Palialia, 1999; Fitness Industry Association, 2000).

3.3.1 The Tatraclasse Model

Bodet (2006) explained the distinct of service attributes with the Tatraclasse by the influences on customer satisfaction levels. The model categorized service attributes into four categories:

Table 3. 1 Service Quality Model

The basic elements	When they are evaluated negatively by the customer, they strongly contribute to the level of overall satisfaction, i.e. dissatisfaction. On the other hand, when they are evaluated in a favorable way, they contribute only slightly to satisfaction.
The plus elements	When they are evaluated positively, they contribute strongly to the level of overall satisfaction, but they contribute slightly to dissatisfaction when they are evaluated in an unfavorable way.

Key elements	Strongly influence the overall degree of satisfaction, whatever their evaluation is.
Secondary elements	Do not have significant roles in overall satisfaction, whatever their evaluation is.

Source: Bodet (2006, p.151)

3.3.2 The Research Scale

Previous literature demonstrated that SERVQUAL is more adequate for service sectors with retailing content while SERVPERF is more appropriate for pure service sectors (Metha et al. 2000). However, SERVPERF measures service quality purely by performance while SERVQUAL indicates the differences/ gaps between perceived service quality (or performance) and customer expectations. This proves that SERVQUAL provides insights for club managers to improve services (Carrillat, Jaramillo and Mulki, 2007).

"Key to any research is the ability to clearly communicate its findings to the intended audiences" (Lynch, 2010, p.79). Present study has developed and adopted a combined model of SERVQUAL and Bodet's (2006) as instrument for the service quality measurement, which is presented in a questionnaire. Bodet (2006) adopted the Tatraclasse model in a fitness club to categorize the importance of service attributes and investigate if all attributes have equal contribution to customer satisfaction level. The scale of Bodet (2006) contains 44 statements which cover most of the service areas. Present scale has refined to 24 items based on (1) duplication of attributes in original scale and (2) the United States style terminology used in previous scale. The modified scale adopted the SERVQUAL approach (Gap analysis) which, measures customer satisfaction levels by calculating the differences between perceived service quality and customer expectations. No service performance scales can measure profit directly, however, the intention of repurchasing behaviours and word of mouth demonstrate the likelihood of customers to reuse or recommending the services and provide insights for market segmentation (Buttle, 2004; David, 2007; Hill and Jones, 2007). This stresses the need of measuring customer loyalty and future behavioural intention. SERVQUAL contains no loyalty measurement while SERVPERF contains one measurement of future repurchasing behaviour (Cornin and Taylor, 1992; Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988). Lim (2006) found that customer satisfaction and customer loyalty have direct bearing on future behavioural intention. Lim's (2006) scale contains 18 questions covered different dimensions of customer loyalty. Present scale contains 4 questions about loyalty to cover: (1) customer preferences/ sense of loyalty to the club, (2) repurchasing behaviours, (3) word of mouth, and (4) price sensitivity. The four questions have better interpretations than Lim's (2006) (as duplicated questions were eliminated).

3.3.2.1 Dimensions of Scale for Present Research

Present scale dimensions are referenced to Lim's (2006) due to two reasons: (1) the source of service attributes (Bodet, 2006) scale has no categorization; (2) Lim (2006) specified the study in traditional gym. Present scale is divided into five dimensions: (1) facilities, (2) staff, (3) settings, (4) operating, and (5) health-fitness.

Table 3. 2 Comparison of scale dimensions

SERVQUAL	Lim (2006)	Bodet (2006)	Present Scale
Tangibles	Facilities	No specified scale dimensions	Facilities
Reliability	Staff Attitude		Staff
Responsiveness	Relaxation		Settings
Assurance	Health-fitness		Operating
Empathy	Social & intellectual		Health-fitness

Source: Bodet (2006); Lim (2006); Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988)

25 service attributes were divided into five dimensions as shown in table3.3.

Table 3. 3 Categorization of service attributes

Dimension	Items
Facilities	3,4,5,7
Staff	1,2,13,14
Settings	8,9,10,15,16, 18
Operating	6,11,12,17,19,20,21,23,25
Health-fitness	22,24

3.3.2.2 The Likert-type Scale Range

The questionnaire designed for this research project is divided into four parts: (1) expectations measures; (2) perceived service quality measures; (3) customer loyalty measures; and a (4) demographic survey. As the service attributes used are created by Bodet (2006), which adopted a 5-point likert-type scales, present instrument will follow. For part 1 (the expectations measures), five boxes are provided for each question which 1= "unimportant" while 5= "the most important". In part two (the perceived service quality measures), five boxes are provided for each question which are 1= "very bad" and 5= "excellent". For the customer loyalty measures, four statements were included where a five point scale is used (1= "strongly disagree" and 5= "strongly agree"). To complete the demographic survey, respondents need to circle answers that describe their situations the best (age, gender, and so on).

Table 3. 4 Contents within questionnaire

Part	Content	Contained questions/ items	Likert-type Scale Range
1	Expectations measures	25	5
2	Perceived service quality measures	25	5
3	Customer loyalty measures	4	5
4	Demographic survey	3	N/ A

3.4 Supplementary Survey

A small supplementary focus group interview has done with five customers to find out the causes behind high expectation levels. One simple question "what contribute to your high expectations to the club?" was asked. Four options (1) past experiences, (2) promotions of the club, (3) recommendations of friends, and (4) the image of low cost gym are provided. Customers can select the options or state own opinions.

This approach combines qualitative and quantitative methods. Research validity enhances as one type of data complement another. "Quantitative data may describe a phenomenon well, and qualitative data provides an understanding of the phenomenon. The questions bring up by quantitative data might need further qualitative analysis, and vice versa" (Gratton and Jones, 2010, p.121).

4. Results & Discussions

The analysis is divided into three stages:

Stage 1	Identify the instrument and segmentation, gap analysis
Stage 2	Expectations/ Satisfaction VS Demographic
Stage 3	Causal relationships among main variables

4.1 Stage One Analysis

4.1.1 Reliability of Instrument

It is found that both" expectation measures" and "perceived service quality measures" have high internal consistency (Alpha level=0.868 and 0.904) which represents that the present instrument has high reliability.

4.1.2 The Demographic Information

There were 168 male (56%) and 132 female (44%) respondents. The majority (92%) of respondents are aged 35 or below, age group of 21-25 contains the largest (46.7%) population. The majority (89%) of respondents are full-time workers (57%) and students (32%). The following analysis will focus on these populations.

4.1.3 The Gap Analysis (Customer Satisfaction Indicator)

Table 4. 1 The Gap analysis

Item No.	Service Attribute	A-Means of Customer Expectations	B-Means of Perceived Service Quality	Customer Satisfaction (B minus A)	Are Customers Satisfied? (√/×)
1	Staff attitude (helpfulness, knowledge)	4.367	4.113	-0.253	×
2	Number of instructors	3.543	3.903	0.360	√
3	Range of equipment	4.383	4.080	-0.303	×
4	Quality of equipment	4.480	4.020	-0.460	×
5	Changing Room and Shower facilities	4.030	3.747	-0.283	×
6	Waiting time (for equipment)	3.973	3.533	-0.440	×
7	The exterior of the club (entrance, sign, exterior setting)	3.223	3.880	0.657	√
8	Equipment setting and arrangement	3.527	3.740	0.213	√
9	Temperature in the club	3.790	3.503	-0.287	×
10	Food and catering	2.587	2.747	0.160	√
11	Lighting and Music	3.387	3.427	0.040	√
12	Reminder of membership renewal	3.220	3.363	0.143	√
13	Dealing with complaints	3.943	3.673	-0.270	×
14	Price	4.447	4.220	-0.227	×
15	Value for money (of membership)	4.453	4.193	-0.260	×
16	Loyalty scheme	3.617	3.507	-0.110	×
17	Image of the club	3.623	3.863	0.240	√
18	Opening hours	4.420	4.717	0.297	√
19	Hygiene of facilities	4.327	3.850	-0.477	×
20	Sport events organized by the club	3.237	3.273	0.037	√
21	Range of classes (types, schedules)	3.583	3.677	0.093	√
22	Helping me improve my fitness and health	4.027	3.780	-0.247	×
23	Consistency of service	3.793	3.813	0.020	√
24	Socialization with other members	2.947	3.163	0.217	√
25	Quality of class	3.570	3.617	0.047	√

The results of Gap analysis has shown in table 4.1, customer satisfaction is indicated by calculating the differences between preserved service quality and customer expectations (B minus A). Customers have fairly high expectations (M>3.5) on the majority (76%) of the service attributes. 13 (52%) out of 25 service attributes were found satisfying.

4.2 Stage Two Analysis

4.2.1 The Rank of Customer Expectations and Applications

Table 4. 2 The ranking of customer expectations

Item No.	Service Attribute	Means of Customer Expectations	Are Customers Satisfied? (√/×)
10	Food and catering	2.587	√
24	Socialization with other members	2.947	√
12	Reminder of membership renewal	3.22	√
7	The exterior of the club (entrance, sign, exterior setting)	3.223	√
20	Sport events organized by the club	3.237	√
11	Lighting and Music	3.387	√
8	Equipment setting and arrangement	3.527	√
2	Number of instructors	3.543	√
25	Quality of class	3.57	√
21	Range of classes (types, schedules)	3.583	√
16	Loyalty scheme	3.617	×
17	Image of the club	3.623	√
9	Temperature in the club	3.79	×
23	Consistency of service	3.793	√
13	Dealing with complaints	3.943	×
6	Waiting time (for equipment)	3.973	×
22	Helping me improve my fitness and health	4.027	×
5	Changing Room and Shower facilities	4.03	×
19	Hygiene of facilities	4.327	×
1	Staff attitude (helpfulness, knowledge)	4.367	×
3	Range of equipment	4.383	×
18	Opening hours	4.42	√
14	Price	4.447	×
15	Value for money (of membership)	4.453	×
4	Quality of equipment	4.48	×

Table 4.2 presents the rank and means of customer expectations on 25 service attributes, positive/ negative customer satisfaction. As service attributes have unequal contribution to customer satisfaction, it is important to address the important ones for improvement (Budet, 2006). For 15 items which means of expectations above 3.6 only 3 are found satisfied. In other words, the Pure Gym did not satisfy its customers on services which customers think are important.

Refers to Alexandris and Palialia (1999), the respondents rated socialization an important determinant of customer satisfaction in a traditional gym. Present results showed that customers rated "socialization with other members" (means=2.947) the second last among expectations. It reflects the different characteristics between traditional gym and low cost gym customers.

Customers have the highest expectations (means=4.48) on "quality of equipment". "Price" and "value for money" (means=4.447 and 4.453) are ranked third and second respectively. In addition, all five customers in the supplement survey stated that the four factors: (1) past experiences, (2) promotions of the club, (3) recommendations of friends, and (4)the image of low cost gym have contribution to expectation levels. Furthermore, 80% respondents (N=4) further stressed that low cost gyms should have superior performances on price, opening hours and quality of equipments. They claimed that the promotions of the gym contributed to the high expectations. These evidences proved that core elements (equipments and Price) are the focus in Low cost gym (Mintel, 2011).

4.2.2 The Ten Most Important Service Attributes

The ten most important service attributes (listed in table 4.3) are selected for analysis as (1) customer have high expectations and (2) these are the areas that Pure Gym failed to satisfy customers. In addition, as "opening hours" was found satisfying, it will be replace with "dealing with complaints" (ranked 11 important).

Table 4. 3 The ten most important service attributes

Item No.	Service Attribute	A-Means of Customer Expectations	Are Customers Satisfied? (√/×)
13	Dealing with complaints	3.943	×
6	Waiting time (for equipment)	3.973	×
22	Helping me improve my fitness and health	4.027	×
5	Changing Room and Shower facilities	4.03	×
19	Hygiene of facilities	4.327	×
1	Staff attitude (helpfulness, knowledge)	4.367	×
3	Range of equipment	4.383	×
14	Price	4.447	×
15	Value for money (of membership)	4.453	×
4	Quality of equipment	4.48	×

4.2.3 Demographic Versus Ten Most Important Service Attributes

Results indicate that female has greater expectations on the majority (90%) of top ten attributes than male. Full-time workers expected the most on facilities related attributes ("quality of equipment", "waiting time (for equipment)", and "hygiene of facilities"). Furthermore, students have the lowest overall expectations. This gives a positive stand for the result that aged 16-20 customers have the lowest expectations and are easy to be pleased (assuming most students are aged 16-20).

4.2.4 Gender Versus Customer Satisfaction

Despite all ten service attributes found dissatisfactory, there are differences between genders. Male are less dissatisfied on six service attributes while female have four. All service attributes that male found more dissatisfied are facility related while female's are staff and price related.

4.2.5 Occupation Group Versus Customer Satisfaction

The average customer satisfaction level of "student"= -0.31 and the average on "full-time worker"= -0.39. "Student" customers are dissatisfied with "quality of equipment" (satisfaction level= -0.54) the most; "full-time worker" customers are dissatisfied with "hygiene of facilities" (satisfaction level= -0.56) the most.

4.3 Stage Three Analysis

4.3.1 Causal Relationships among Main Variables

Lim (2006) results showed that service quality has direct influence on customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction level has significant influence on attitudinal loyalty and future repurchasing behaviour. In addition, attitudinal loyalty and future repurchasing behaviour has significantly high correlation. Present results prove that (1) quality of service has high correlation with customer satisfaction (0.503). (2) Service quality has more significant influence on all customer loyalty dimensions than customer satisfaction does. Customer satisfaction has no significant influence on all loyalty attributes (all correlation <0.5). The phenomenon gives a positive view to that customer satisfaction is an index to indicate the differences between perceived service quality and customer expectations (Buttle, 2004). (3) Attitudinal loyalty has high correlations with behavioural loyalty elements ("repeat purchase", "word of mouth" and "price sensitivity", all correlation>0.5). It proves that a loyal customer is more likely to (1) repurchase from the firm, (2) recommend the services to the others, and (3) willing to stay with the firm even price increases (Oliver; 1997; Uncles, Dowling and Hammond, 2003). As present results showed "quality of service" has significant influence on all customer loyalty dimensions, club managers should investigate customer expectations and preferences, deliver differentiated and customized services, and enhance customer loyalty (Ahluwalia et al., 1999; Buttle, 2004; Finnegan and Willcocks, 2007; Haberberg, 2008; Hill and Jones, 2007).

According to the results, "sense of loyalty" (represents attitudinal loyalty) has the highest correlation with "repeat purchase" (correlation=0.658) among behavioural loyalty attributes. Furthermore, it is found that behavioural loyalty attributes have strong correlations with each other. It means that a loyal customer is very likely to commit all behavioural dimensions.

Table 4. 5 Correlations of main variables

	Quality of service	Customer satisfaction	Sense of Loyalty	Repeat Purchase	Word of Mouth	Price Sensitivity
Quality of service	1	0.503	0.584	0.608	0.539	0.497
Customer satisfaction		1	0.368	0.332	0.384	0.256
Sense of Loyalty			1	0.658	0.601	0.529
Repeat Purchase				1	0.806	0.585
Word of Mouth					1	0.589
Price Sensitivity						1

5. Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations for Low cost gym practitioners

Low cost gym, is a relative new industry and successfully gained certain market share with its unique characteristics (Algar, 2010). The present results distinguished the differences between low cost gym and traditional gym that (1) customers have higher expectations on core elements and; (2) other than customer satisfaction, service quality has greater influence on customer loyalty. It is suggested to conduct customer survey periodically to get latest trends and information and establish business strategy (Algar, 2006). Significant findings are extracted below for practitioner reference:

Checklist for practitioners

- Focus on students and full-time workers who aged 35 and below
- Full-time workers have the high expectations on facilities related attributes (quality and waiting time of equipment, and hygiene of facilities)
- Students have high expectations on quality of equipment
- Teenagers (aged 16-20) are the easiest to be pleased
- Female customers have higher expectations on service than male
- Assess the importance of service attributes alongside with performance
- Focus on improving attributes with high expectations
- Price and equipment are the key satisfaction determinants***
- Promotion information should be realistic and precise
- Service quality has direct influences to all customer loyalty dimensions

5.2 Recommendations for Future Studies

Present study scale is modified from Boget (2006). Gym managers can modify the terminology in the scale to measure service quality on particular area(s). A small supplementary survey was conducted to further explain the causes of high customer expectations level. Future research can adopt the same approach with expanded sample size.

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Appendices

Research Scale

Master student dissertation, to find out if all service quality elements contribute the same to customer satisfaction and loyalty level. This questionnaire is concerned with finding out how important different aspects of the club are to you, and how satisfied you are with the club. It should take about ten minutes to complete. The results of the survey will be shared with the management of the club, but your responses will be anonymous and will be kept confidential and not shown to other parties. Thanks you for your participation.

Expectation measures (How well do you think the club should perform in the following elements) Please rate the expectations of the following aspects (circle box, 1=unimportant, 5=most important)

Staff attitude (helpfulness, knowledge)	1	2	3	4	5
Number of instructors	1	2	3	4	5
Range of equipment	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of equipment	1	2	3	4	5
Changing Room and Shower facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Waiting time (for equipment)	1	2	3	4	5
The exterior of the club (entrance, sign,exterior setting)	1	2	3	4	5
Equipment setting and arrangement	1	2	3	4	5
Temperature in the club	1	2	3	4	5
Food and catering	1	2	3	4	5
Lighting and Music	1	2	3	4	5
Reminder of membership renewal	1	2	3	4	5
Dealing with complains	1	2	3	4	5
Price	1	2	3	4	5
Value for money (of membership)	1	2	3	4	5
Loyalty scheme	1	2	3	4	5
Image of the club	1	2	3	4	5
Opening hours	1	2	3	4	5
Hygiene of facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Sport events organized by the club	1	2	3	4	5
Range of classes (types, schedules)	1	2	3	4	5
Helping me improve my fitness and	1	2	3	4	5
health	1	2	3	4	5
Consistency of service	1	2	3	4	5
Socialization with other members	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of class	1	2	3	4	5

Perceived Service Quality measures (How the club perform in the following elements) Please rate the following statement (Please circle box, 1=very bad, 5=excellent)

Staff attitude (helpfulness, knowledge)	1	2	3	4	5
Number of instructors	1	2	3	4	5
Range of equipment	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of equipment	1	2	3	4	5
Changing Room and Shower facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Waiting time (for equipment)	1	2	3	4	5
The exterior of the club (entrance, sign,exterior setting)	1	2	3	4	5
Equipment setting and arrangement	1	2	3	4	5
Temperature in the club	1	2	3	4	5
Food and catering	1	2	3	4	5
Lighting and Music	1	2	3	4	5
Reminder of membership renewal	1	2	3	4	5

Dealing with complains	1	2	3	4	5
Price	1	2	3	4	5
Value for money (of membership)	1	2	3	4	5
Loyalty scheme	1	2	3	4	5
Image of the club	1	2	3	4	5
Opening hours	1	2	3	4	5
Hygiene of facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Sport events organized by the club	1	2	3	4	5
Range of classes (types, schedules)	1	2	3	4	5
Helping me improve my fitness and	1	2	3	4	5
health	1	2	3	4	5
Consistency of service	1	2	3	4	5
Socialization with other members	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of class	1	2	3	4	5

Customer loyalty measures

Please rate the following statement (Please circle box, 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree)

I have a sense of loyalty to the club	1	2	3	4	5
I will repeat purchase (renew membership) in the future	1	2	3	4	5
I will recommend the club to my friends and relatives	1	2	3	4	5
I would come back to the club even the price increases	1	2	3	4	5

Demographic Survey (Please circle)

Age	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	40 or above
Gender	Male			Female		
Occupation	Student	Full-time worker	Part-time worker	Unemployed	Retired	Others

- End of questionnaire, thank you for your time -