

EFFECTS OF SPORT EVENT QUALITY ON ATTENDEES' BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS IN VIETNAM: A MEDIATION ANALYSIS

Nguyen Hoang Minh Thuan¹

¹Faculty of Graduate and International Studies, Ho Chi Minh City University of Physical Education and Sport, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam;
thuanmhn@upes.edu.vn

Chu Chung Cang²

²Faculty of Business Administration, Sai Gon University, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam;
cccang@sgu.edu.vn

Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: cccang@sgu.edu.vn

Abstract

This study examines the impact of sports event quality on attendees' satisfaction, word-of-mouth (WOM), and return intentions through a chain mediation analysis. Adopting a multidimensional framework, we conceptualize sports event quality across four key dimensions: game quality, interaction quality, outcome quality, and physical environment quality. The study further investigates the mediating roles of satisfaction and WOM in linking event quality to attendees' return intentions, using survey data from 338 participants from running events in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The findings reveal that event quality significantly enhances satisfaction and WOM, both of which, in turn, positively influence return intentions. Notably, WOM has a more pronounced effect than satisfaction on attendees' likelihood of returning. Additionally, this study underscores the influence of cultural factors in Vietnam, where social proof and peer recommendations play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior. These insights offer valuable implications for sports event organizers seeking to improve attendee experiences and foster long-term engagement, particularly in emerging markets.

Keywords: sport management, sport marketing, sport event, sport consumer behavior, sport organization

1. Introduction

In emerging countries like Vietnam, hosting large-scale sporting events enhances national branding, attracts tourists and investors, and boosts the economy (Knott & Tinaz, 2022). Community-based tourism (CBT) linked to sports events improves local livelihoods, shifting employment toward tourism while preserving cultural heritage (Quang et al., 2023). International sports events impact sports, economy, society, and environment, as seen in Taiwan's event assessment model (Huang et al., 2023) and Thailand's tourism strategy (Dao & Darnell, 2021; Williams et al., 2021). Key drivers of sports tourism include rising incomes and infrastructure development (David & Packianathan, 2008). Major events like the Olympics enhance national branding and public diplomacy (Ludvigsen et al., 2023), foster social capital (Gang et al., 2022), and stimulate local economies through stadium construction, hospitality growth, and fitness clubs (David & Packianathan, 2008; DeSchraver et al., 2021). Such initiatives are vital for sustainable urban marketing and economic growth (Salgado Barandela et al., 2021).

Sports events enhance corporate brand image and economic value, as seen in Taiwan (Lu, 2023). They generate employment opportunities, fostering urban and rural development, especially in non-traditional tourist destinations (Pyun et al., 2022; Rai et al., 2023). In Vietnam, events like marathons and football matches attract tourists, boost local businesses, and contribute to the national economy. Audience experiences play a key role in post-event behavior, requiring tailored marketing strategies (Hallmann et al., 2021). These events bring substantial economic benefits to host cities and nations (Naehyun et al., 2013). Collaboration among stakeholders ensures long-term legacies, including increased mass sports participation (Thomson et al., 2020). Sports events also promote health and social interaction across age groups (Hagiwara et al., 2018). Vietnam's Formula 1 Grand Prix and marathons showcase its culture, hospitality, and landscapes, boosting global tourism appeal (Nguyen et al., 2022, 2023). Leveraging media and social platforms is crucial for global promotion (Tsekouropoulos et al., 2022).

Effective marketing and branding help Vietnam leave a lasting impression on visitors, promoting tourism growth (Hanh et al., 2022). In spectator sports, customer satisfaction is a key predictor of future attendance intentions (Yoshida & James, 2010). Sports tourism quality directly impacts return intentions and indirectly affects them through service satisfaction (David & Packianathan, 2008). However, research on specific event quality dimensions and their unique impacts remains limited. Match atmosphere and service factors—such as stadium staff and accessibility—significantly influence satisfaction and return intentions, but cultural differences exist, as seen in Japan (Masayuki & Jeffrey, 2010). Volunteer motivations also play a role in sporting events, yet many studies lack a theoretical framework linking these factors to return intentions (Salvador et al., 2021). David and Packianathan (2008) proposed a multidimensional sports tourism model including accessibility, accommodation, venue, and match quality, all influencing satisfaction and return intentions. However, further empirical validation is needed. Chris et al. (2021) identified seven key characteristics affecting visitor satisfaction but noted challenges in integrating them effectively. Antonio et al. (2022) found that functional quality and satisfaction directly impact recommendation intentions, while outcome quality and perceived value have indirect effects, indicating the need for further study on optimizing return strategies.

Cultural differences impact customer engagement in decision-making, highlighting the need for cross-cultural studies (Ma & Kaplanidou, 2022). In Vietnam, empirical research is crucial to examine sports event quality factors influencing behavioral intentions and the mediating role of customer satisfaction (David & Packianathan, 2008). Additionally, the impact of service quality on audience satisfaction may vary by country (Theodorakis et al., 2001). Key variables like future behavioral intentions in the service quality–satisfaction link remain underexplored (Theodorakis et al., 2001). More research is needed on customer loyalty, as positive WOM is a key component of attitudinal loyalty (Garcia et al., 2020; Chang & Gibson, 2015). Studies have examined event quality, satisfaction, WOM, and return intention (Antonio et al., 2022; Daehwan et al., 2019; Tzetzis et al., 2014), but Vietnam lacks empirical research on these relationships in running races and marathons (David & Packianathan, 2008). Although prior studies explored mediating chains like satisfaction–perceived value (Calabuig Moreno et al., 2015) and satisfaction–happiness (Theodorakis et al., 2019), no study has examined satisfaction and WOM in sports event quality research. To identify the research gaps in this study, we reviewed and synthesized numerous reputable previous studies related to the impact of sports event quality on attendees' intention to return (Appendix 1). The primary goals of this study are: (1) to apply the sports event quality model for tourism proposed by (Naehyun et al., 2013), as perceived by sports tourists in Vietnam, to investigate the relationship between sports event quality, satisfaction, WOM, and attendees' intention to return; (2) To

analyze the chain intermediary effect of satisfaction and WOM in the relationship between sports event quality and attendees' intention to return. These objectives are encapsulated in the following research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent does sports event quality influence attendees' satisfaction, WOM, and intention to return?
- RQ2: What are the chain intermediary effects of satisfaction and WOM in the relationship between sports event quality and attendees' intention to return?

2. Literature review

Sports event quality is a multidimensional concept involving various factors that shape participants' and spectators' experiences. David and Packianathan (2008) categorized event quality into four key dimensions: accessibility, accommodation, venue, and competition quality, each including elements like destination access, interaction, and value. Antonio et al. (2021) emphasized service quality, match quality, emotions, and satisfaction, noting their impact on spectators' intent to recommend the host city. Chun-Chu et al. (2016) further detailed service quality into interaction and information, facility enhancement, and program and outcome quality, linking these aspects to economic benefits and repeat attendance. Jin, Lee, and Lee (2012) highlighted match, interaction, outcome, and environmental quality as core determinants of event success. Match quality relates to the competition itself, including athlete performance, fairness, and excitement, which are crucial for audience engagement (Jin et al., 2012; Zhu et al., 2021). Interaction quality covers participant-staff interactions, customer service, and social atmosphere, enhancing the overall experience (Jin et al., 2012; Theodorakis et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2021). Outcome quality reflects event organization, fairness, and benefits such as economic impact and social legacy (Chersulich Tomino et al., 2020; Jin et al., 2012). Environmental quality concerns venue conditions, accessibility, seating comfort, and amenities, ensuring a pleasant experience for attendees (Jin et al., 2012; Theodorakis et al., 2019; Yeh et al., 2016). These dimensions collectively shape event quality, influencing perceptions and future attendance. Enhancing them is crucial for long-term event success and participant satisfaction (Yeh et al., 2016). Organizers must continuously assess and improve these factors to maximize consumer benefits and the event's overall impact.

Customer satisfaction reflects how well a product or service meets consumer expectations, playing a key role in business profitability (Maricic et al., 2012). It involves the extent to which product characteristics fulfill customer needs (Dubrovski, 2001). In services, satisfaction enhances engagement and human capital outcomes through emotional and cognitive mechanisms (Malhotra et al., 2022). Studies confirm its positive link to business performance, acting as a mediator between marketing strategies and outcomes (Otto et al., 2019). In sports marketing, satisfaction depends on core and peripheral aspects like game results and service quality. Team identification and win/loss records strongly influence satisfaction (Van Leeuwen et al., 2002). Service quality perceptions drive loyalty and word-of-mouth promotion (Thamnopoulos et al., 2012). For long-distance running events, emotional, physical, and social benefits shape enjoyment and future participation intentions (Du et al., 2019). Major sporting events require quality accommodations and social activities to enhance athlete satisfaction and performance (MacIntosh et al., 2020). Satisfaction also fosters repeat participation and influences perceptions of stadiums, facilities, and overall event atmosphere (Calabuig Moreno et al., 2015; Yoshida & James, 2010; Tzetzis et al., 2014).

WOM refers to verbal or electronic communication about goods and services, significantly shaping consumer behavior (Sweeney et al., 2008). It bridges customer satisfaction and new customer acquisition, as satisfied consumers engage in positive WOM, influencing potential buyers (Wangenheim & Bayón, 2007). Emotional commitment drives positive WOM, while dissatisfaction leads to negative WOM, with marketing efforts amplifying these effects (Keiningham et al., 2018).

In sports, WOM affects brand loyalty and game attendance, with negative WOM often having a stronger impact than positive WOM (Shreffler & Ross, 2013). Its effectiveness depends on message sender credibility, expertise, and content richness, influencing sports consumer behavior (Akira & Yong Jae, 2016). Additionally, athletes engage in unpaid or low-paid community activities, like youth training camps, promoting sports through "inspirational labor," which is often undervalued (Tarlan & Christopher, 2022). WOM extends beyond communication to include social and organizational structures that shape how messages spread in the sports community (Katherine et al., 2022). In sports tourism, WOM enhances customer retention and strengthens destination image (Vegara-Ferri et al., 2020), while quality service fosters positive WOM (Tzetzis et al., 2014).

Behavioral intention (BI) reflects an individual's readiness to perform an action, distinct from behavioral expectation, which includes habits and anticipated changes (Warshaw & Davis, 1985). BI represents a stated commitment but may not always translate into actual behavior due to psychological and situational factors (Webb & Sheeran, 2006). It indicates the motivational effort individuals invest in achieving goals (Sheeran, 2005) and can be strengthened through implementation intentions, linking actions to situational cues (Gollwitzer, 1993). In sports marketing, return intention is key to consumer loyalty, influenced by emotional attachment, service satisfaction, and perceived value (Ratten, 2016). Factors such as team performance, stadium facilities, service quality, and fan engagement shape BI (Smith et al., 2008). In nonprofit sporting events, BI is driven by satisfaction, engagement, achievements, and social factors (Taylor & Shanka, 2008). Understanding BI helps optimize marketing strategies and improve participant experiences, fostering positive behaviors.

Sports event quality and satisfaction

Jin, Lee, and Lee (2012) identify four key event quality dimensions: Game quality, Interaction quality, Outcome quality, and Physical environment quality. Game quality enhances spectator enjoyment through entertainment and competitiveness, with skilled and unpredictable performances increasing emotional investment (Jin et al., 2012; Funk et al., 2002). Interaction quality involves positive engagement between staff, athletes, and spectators, where friendly and knowledgeable staff improve event perceptions (Greenwell et al., 2002; Yoshida & James, 2010; Lee et al., 2011). Outcome quality focuses on fairness and excitement, fostering trust and engagement (Theodorakis et al., 2001; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Madrigal, 1995). Physical environment quality includes cleanliness, safety, comfort, and aesthetics, all of which significantly impact satisfaction (Hightower Jr et al., 2002; Hill & Green, 2000). Together, these dimensions shape spectator satisfaction and retention (David & Packianathan, 2008; Jin et al., 2012). Therefore, the authors propose hypothesis H1:

H1: Sports event quality has a positive effect on attendees' satisfaction.

Sports event quality and WOM

Game excitement and competitiveness enhance satisfaction and WOM (Shreffler & Ross, 2013; Wakefield & Sloan, 1995). Interaction quality, including staff, athlete, and spectator interactions, significantly improves event experiences, with high-quality interactions driving positive WOM (Kelley

& Turley, 2001; Theodorakis & Alexandris, 2008). Outcome quality, focusing on fairness and excitement, influences satisfaction and WOM, as perceived fairness strengthens engagement (Theodorakis et al., 2001; Koenig-Lewis et al., 2017). Physical environment quality, including cleanliness, safety, and aesthetics, directly impacts satisfaction, with well-maintained venues enhancing WOM (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999; Kelley & Turley, 2001). Together, these dimensions shape spectator retention and event success. Together, these dimensions comprehensively demonstrate that high event quality leads to increased spectator satisfaction and enhanced WOM, affirming the hypothesis H2:

H2: Sports event quality has a positively influences attendees' WOM.

Sports event quality, satisfaction, WOM and intention to return

Satisfaction is a key factor influencing return intentions in sporting events. Improved personal performance, such as in the Transgrancanaria race, significantly boosts re-participation likelihood (Voltes-Dorta & Martín, 2021). Baker et al. (2017) found a direct correlation between event satisfaction and repeat participation across long-distance running events, regardless of demographics (Baker et al., 2017). Beyond performance, service quality and event environment enhance satisfaction and experiential happiness. High-quality event services foster greater happiness and stronger return intentions, impacting economic outcomes like repurchase rates (Theodorakis et al., 2015, 2019). Achieving athletic goals also increases re-participation, as seen in marathon studies where personal achievements fuel future event engagement (Hyun & Jordan, 2019). Satisfaction from goal achievement, combined with event quality, strengthens participant loyalty (Sato et al., 2016b; Theodorakis et al., 2015). Additionally, satisfaction drives positive WOM (Word of Mouth), promoting outdoor sports events (Keiningham et al., 2018; Tzetzis et al., 2014). Therefore, the authors propose hypothesis H3, H4 and H5:

H3: Satisfaction positively affects attendees' intention to return

H4: Satisfaction positively affects attendees' WOM

H5: Satisfaction plays a mediating role in the influence relationship of sports event quality on attendees' intention to return.

Sports event quality, WOM and intention to return

Running events foster strong social connections, enhancing participant engagement and loyalty. Emotional and social engagement, driven by perceived similarity among participants, significantly boosts brand loyalty and WOM promotion (Sobhy & Winklhofer, 2021). Perceived value, particularly when shared through WOM, plays a crucial role in re-participation intentions (Li et al., 2021). Participation also improves life satisfaction and well-being, with psychological involvement strengthening overall satisfaction and future engagement (Sato et al., 2015, 2016a).

Anticipated emotions and event quality influence positive WOM, shaping repeat participation (Krishen et al., 2020). Satisfaction from past events, shared via WOM, predicts re-participation, as positive feedback and recommendations enhance future event satisfaction (Baker et al., 2017). The social environment, including crowd encouragement and community support, significantly motivates re-engagement (Gibbs-Nicholls et al., 2021). Perceived value is multifaceted, encompassing functional, social, sentimental, experiential, and personal aspects. For instance, Li et al. (2021) found that family bonding experiences in marathons strongly influenced future participation (Duan et al., 2021).

WOM plays a pivotal role in influencing new participants' decisions. Wang et al. (2023) demonstrated that perceived value mediates the impact of price and quality on behavioral intention in marathon

participation (Wang et al., 2023). Factors affecting perceived value include event organization, social and emotional benefits, and goal achievement. Hyun and Jordan (2020) found that service quality, economic value, and athletic goals significantly influence re-participation (Hyun & Jordan, 2019).

Event organizers can enhance perceived value by emphasizing social/emotional benefits, improving services, and promoting personal achievements. Destination marathons benefit from perceived value as a mediator between service quality and participation intentions (Fam et al., 2020). Studies confirm that satisfaction drives WOM (Tzetzis et al., 2014) and WOM influences behavioral intention (Vegara-Ferri et al., 2020), but no research has yet explored the intermediary effect of satisfaction and WOM on sports event quality and return intention. However, no research to date has examined the chain intermediary effect of satisfaction and WOM in the relationship between sports event quality and return intention. Thus, the authors propose hypotheses H5, H6, and H7.

H6: Attendees' WOM positively affects intention to return

H7: Attendees' WOM plays a mediating role in the influence relationship of sports event quality on event attendees' intention to return.

H8: Sport event quality can indirectly predict attendees' return intention through the chain intermediary effect of satisfaction and WOM.

The relationships among the aforementioned hypotheses are illustrated in Figure 1. Sports event quality positively impacts satisfaction and WOM. Subsequently, satisfaction and WOM positively influence intention to return and serve as mediators in the relationship between sports event quality and intention to return.

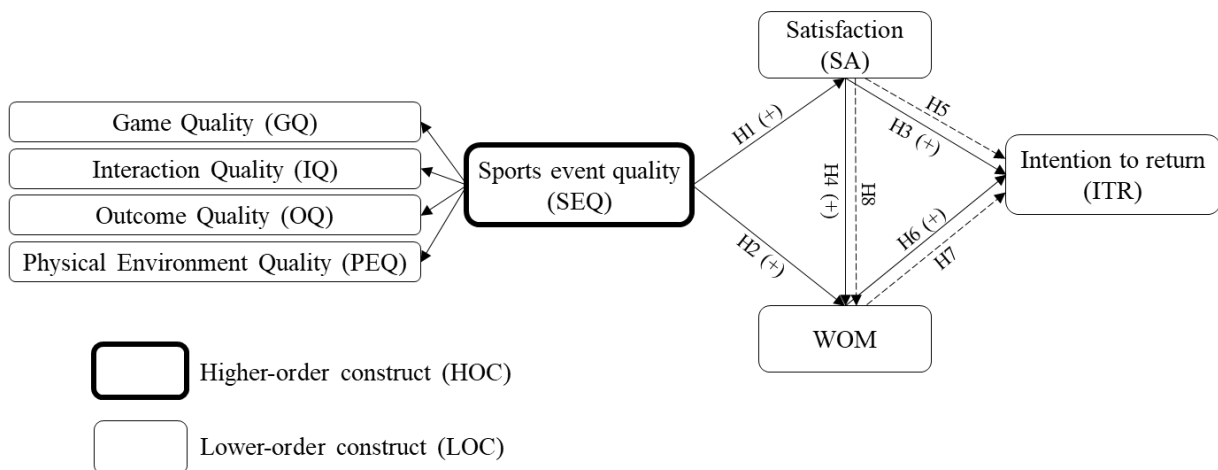


Figure 1: Conceptual model and hypothesised relationships.

3. Methodology

Cross-sectional data were used in a quantitative method to evaluate the proposed links between the variables. The measures used in this study were as follows. It considers 14 sports event quality (SEQ) items derived from (Jin et al., 2012) including 4 dimensions: 4 game quality (GQ) items, 3 interaction quality (IQ) items, 3 outcome quality (OQ) items, 4 physical environment quality (PEQ) items. A 3-item scale of satisfaction (SA) and 4-item scale of word-of-mouth (WOM) adapted from (Tzetzis et al., 2014). Intention to return were measured with three items based on research by (Tzetzis et al., 2014). Items were measured on a five-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree and they were

translated from English to Vietnamese. Using purposive sampling method, we received 338 valid responses from 386 people who participated in running events in Ho Chi Minh City within 6 months. The research paper underscores the utility of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) across multiple research fields, such as organizational behavior, information systems management, strategic management, and marketing research (Hair et al., 2016). PLS, a variance-based method, has recently seen growing interest among researchers due to its versatility in focusing on multiple objectives as opposed to conventional multivariate techniques, and its capacity to analyze alternative models to discern the best fit among latent variables (Alnuaimi et al., 2021; Hayes et al., 2017; Mueller & Hancock, 2018). It's also adept at handling large sample sizes and non-normally distributed data, making it ideal for complex research with multiple variables. This makes PLS-SEM a more feasible alternative in instances where Covariance-Based SEM (CB-SEM) faces issues with non-normally distributed data. Essential to the application of PLS-SEM is the evaluation of the measurement and structural model, as noted by (Hair et al., 2016; Hair et al., 2017). This research is divided into three stages for data analysis: (1) the first stage involves evaluating the LOC measurement model (LOC: Lower-Order Constructs), (2) the second stage focuses on evaluating the HOC measurement model (HOC: Higher-Order Constructs), (3) the final stage entails evaluating the HOC structural model. And the contents and analytical indicators in each stage are conducted following the steps outlined in the quantitative data analysis process using the PLS-SEM method (Hair et al., 2016; Hair et al., 2017).

4. Results

4.1. Participants and sampling

The demographic profile of respondents reveals that 39.9% are female (135) and 60.1% are male (203). In terms of age, 42.0% are 20–30 years old (142), 49.4% are 30–40 years old (167), 5.6% are 40–50 years old (19), and 3.0% are over 50 (10). Occupationally, the majority are office workers (73.6%, 249), followed by government officials (16.0%, 54), self-employed individuals (8.6%, 29), and students (1.8%, 6). Regarding education, 32.8% have vocational qualifications (111), 3.8% completed high school (13), 56.4% hold college/university degrees (191), and 6.8% have postgraduate qualifications (23). Income levels show that 58.8% earn 8–15 million VND monthly (199), 20.7% earn above 15 million VND (70), and 11.9% each earn less than 5 million and 5–8 million VND (41 each).

4.2. Assessing measurement model

4.2.1. First-order constructs assessment

To assess the 1st-order constructs, reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity tests are suggested (Hair et al., 2016; Hair et al., 2017). Initially, the outer loading values of 24 scale items surpass the threshold of 0.7 to be retained in this research model (Hair et al., 2016). To evaluate internal consistency, both composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha values are employed; however, assessing Cronbach's alpha is optional, while assessing CR is mandatory. All constructs achieve internal consistency when the CR value is greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2016) (Table 2). Owing to average variance extracted (AVE) values exceeding 0.5, it can be concluded that all variables possess convergent validity (Hair et al., 2016) (Table 2). For the assessment of discriminant validity, the researchers utilized the HTMT ratio criterion. According to (Henseler et al., 2015), when the HTMT ratio falls below 0.9, it signifies that discriminant validity has been satisfactorily attained across all variables. The analysis results show that the HTMT values are all below the threshold of 0.9 and when performing bootstrap $N = 5000$, the percentile range of HTMT values from 2.5% to 97.5% is below Table 3, latent variables all reach discriminant validity.

Table 2 The reliability and validity assessment of the first-order construct

First-order constructs	Items	Outer loadings	CA	CR	AVE
GQ	GQ1 - GQ4	0.814 - 0.861	0.852	0.900	0.693
OQ	OQ1 - OQ3	0.850 - 0.892	0.849	0.909	0.768
IQ	IQ1 - IQ3	0.867 - 0.898	0.854	0.911	0.774
PEQ	PEQ1 - PEQ4	0.887 - 0.902	0.917	0.941	0.800
SA	SA1 - SA3	0.858 - 0.892	0.854	0.911	0.774
WOM	WOM1 - WOM4	0.771 - 0.866	0.857	0.904	0.701
ITR	ITR1 - ITR3	0.815 - 0.838	0.766	0.865	0.681

Notes: GQ=Game Quality, OQ=Outcome Quality, IQ=Interaction Quality, PEQ=Physical Environment Quality, SA=Satisfaction, WOM=Word-of-mouth, ITR=Intention to Return, CA= Cronbach's Alpha, CR=Composite Reliability

Table 3 Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) test of first-order construct

	GQ	ITR	IQ	OQ	PEQ	SA	WOM
GQ							
ITR	0.819						
IQ	0.810	0.698					
OQ	0.852	0.739	0.839				
PEQ	0.882	0.700	0.688	0.863			
SA	0.771	0.737	0.657	0.765	0.744		
WOM	0.760	0.774	0.663	0.787	0.761	0.888	

4.2.2. Second-order constructs assessment

To evaluate the second-order construct, the study employs the same standards that are used to assess first-order constructs for internal consistency (CA and CR), convergent validity (AVE), discriminant validity (HTMT). The analysis results show that latent variables all achieve internal consistency because their cronbach's alpha (CA) and deposit reliability (CR) exceed the threshold of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2016). And the AVE values of the variables are greater than 0.5 and the HTMT values are less than 0.9, so it achieves reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2016; Henseler et al., 2015) (Table 4 and Table 5)

Table 4 The reliability and validity assessment of the second-order construct

Second-order constructs	CA	CR	AVE
SEQ	0.894	0.926	0.759
SA	0.854	0.911	0.774
WOM	0.857	0.904	0.701
ITR	0.766	0.865	0.681

Notes: SEQ=Sports Event Quality, SA=Satisfaction, WOM=Word-of-mouth, ITR=Intention to Return, CA= Cronbach's Alpha, CR=Composite Reliability

Table 5 Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) test of second-order construct

	ITR	SA	SEQ	WOM
ITR				
SA	0.737			
SEQ	0.807	0.807		
WOM	0.774	0.888	0.817	

Notes: SEQ=Sports Event Quality, SA=Satisfaction, WOM=Word-of-mouth, ITR=Intention to Return

4.3. Assessment of the second-order structural model and research hypotheses

The structural or inner model represents the relationship between the variables and constructs. We use two criteria to assess the structural model: the size and significance of the path coefficients and the coefficient of determination R-square (Hair et al., 2016)

4.3.1. Path coefficients

Path coefficients indicate the strength of the relationship between the latent variables in the model and range between -1 and +1. The p-values obtained by bootstrapping N=5000 evaluate whether a coefficient is significant. The obtained path coefficients and p-values are listed in Tables 5.

The main result is that all three main factors proposed in the authors' model (sports event quality, satisfaction, WOM) significantly effect the intention to return (p-value < 0.01). The first, sports event quality has a significant influence on customer satisfaction (H1, p-value = 0.000 < 0.01) and WOM (H2, p-value = 0.000 < 0.01). Moreover, customer satisfaction and WOM also both significantly affect intention to return with p-value = 0.000 < 0.01 (H3) and p-value = 0.000 < 0.01 (H5), respectively. In particular, WOM ($\beta = 0.409$) has a stronger effect on intention to return than satisfaction ($\beta = 0.288$), however, however, SEQ has a stronger impact on SA ($\beta = 0.708$) than WOM ($\beta = 0.356$). Furthermore, satisfaction with WOM plays an important mediating role in the relationship between sports event quality and ITR with p-values = 0.000 < 0.01 (H4) and p-value = 0.001 < 0.01 (H6), respectively. Finally, the supported hypothesis H7 emphasized the significant role of satisfaction and WOM in the series of mediators between the relationship sports event quality and intention to return (p-value = 0.000 < 0.01) (Table 6).

Table 6

	Hypothesised relationships	β	p-value	Results
H1	SEQ → SA	0.708	0.000	Supported
H2	SEQ → WOM	0.356	0.000	Supported
H3	SA → ITR	0.288	0.000	Supported
H4	SA → WOM	0.509	0.000	Supported
H5	SEQ → SA → ITR	0.204	0.000	Supported
H6	WOM → ITR	0.409	0.000	Supported
H7	SEQ → WOM → ITR	0.146	0.001	Supported
H8	SEQ → SA → WOM → ITR	0.147	0.000	Supported

4.3.2. Coefficients of determination (R²)

The second key criterion for evaluating the structural model is the coefficient of determination R² for the dependent variables. It measures the proportion of the variance of a dependent variable that is

explained by independent variables or the endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2016; Ringle et al., 2012). It shows the model’s ability to explain and predict the dependent latent variables (Hair et al., 2019). R2 values of 0.75, 0.50, or 0.25 for dependent variables are viewed as substantial, moderate, or weak (Hair et al., 2016).

Table 7 presents the R² of the dependent variables in the research model. Effects could be observed for all dependent variables. Most measured effects are above the moderate threshold. The only exception is return intention, which is close to the moderate threshold (0.429). So the effects are weaker than the others, but still present.

Table 7 R-squares of dependent variables

Dependent variables	R-square
SA	0.501
WOM	0.643
ITR	0.429

Evaluate the coefficients of determination (R² values). The PLS-SEM method was developed primarily for prediction purposes. The R2 values (i.e., coefficients of determination) represent the amount of explained variance of the endogenous constructs in the structural model. A welldeveloped path model to explain certain key target constructs (e.g., customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, or technology acceptance) should deliver sufficiently high R2 values. The exact interpretation of the R2 value depends on the particular research discipline. In general, R2 values of 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 for target constructs are considered as weak, medium, and substantial, respectively

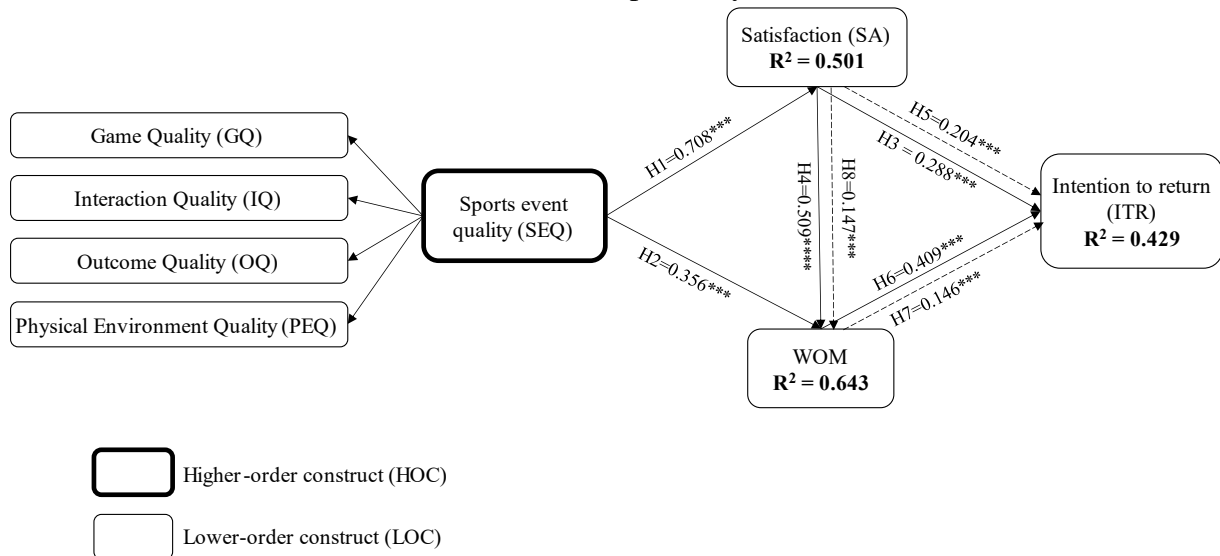


Figure 2: Result for model with PLS-SEM

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study explores the interrelations between Sports Event Quality (SEQ), satisfaction, Word-of-Mouth (WOM), and return intentions among sports event attendees in Vietnam, emphasizing the chain intermediary effects of satisfaction and WOM. The findings offer both theoretical insights and practical strategies for improving sports event management. Results indicate that SEQ significantly influences

satisfaction ($\beta = 0.708$, $p < 0.01$) and WOM ($\beta = 0.356$, $p < 0.01$), aligning with the SEQ framework by Jin et al. (2012), which highlights game quality, interaction quality, outcome quality, and physical environment quality as key factors shaping attendees' experiences. Studies by Naehyun et al. (2013) and Antonio et al. (2022) also confirm SEQ's strong impact on customer perceptions. However, this study finds interaction quality and physical environment quality more influential than outcome quality, suggesting Vietnamese consumers prioritize interpersonal interactions and venue aesthetics. This extends Antonio et al. (2022) by emphasizing SEQ's multidimensionality and cultural context in emerging markets. The findings highlight the importance of cultural preferences in evaluating SEQ dimensions and their role in shaping customer experiences.

This study highlights the mediating roles of satisfaction and WOM in the SEQ \rightarrow Return Intentions pathway. Satisfaction directly impacts return intentions ($\beta = 0.288$, $p < 0.01$), while WOM has an even stronger effect ($\beta = 0.409$, $p < 0.01$), supporting Tzetzis et al. (2014) on the role of satisfaction and WOM in behavioral intentions. Additionally, this research empirically validates the chain intermediary effect of satisfaction and WOM ($\beta = 0.147$, $p < 0.01$), extending Theodorakis et al. (2019) by uniquely focusing on these two mediators. The study also builds on Vegara-Ferri et al. (2020), confirming WOM as a key link between event quality and behavioral intentions. In collectivist cultures like Vietnam, WOM plays a crucial role in decision-making, reinforcing Raggiotto & Scarpi (2021), who found that perceived value and community engagement enhance WOM's influence in loyalty-building. These insights emphasize cultural factors in shaping SEQ's impact on return intentions.

The results show that WOM has a stronger impact on return intentions than satisfaction, differing from Western studies like Yoshida & James (2010), which emphasized satisfaction as the main driver of loyalty. Instead, it aligns with Sobhy & Winklhofer (2021), who highlighted WOM's role in event re-engagement. This underscores WOM's cultural significance in Vietnam's collectivist society, where peer endorsements shape decisions. It extends Ma & Kaplanidou (2022), who examined cultural differences in service quality, satisfaction, and loyalty in sports tourism. Unlike Theodorakis et al. (2015), which prioritized satisfaction, this study reveals WOM's heightened influence in Vietnam. The collectivist nature of Vietnamese society amplifies social proof, reinforcing WOM's power in decision-making. These findings enhance understanding of cultural differences in sports tourism and factors influencing return intentions in non-Western markets.

The study validates the proposed conceptual model integrating SEQ, satisfaction, WOM, and return intentions, confirming the sequential nature of mediators and offering a comprehensive explanation of loyalty behaviors in sports event contexts. Unlike Naehyun et al. (2013), who emphasized perceived value and destination image as mediators, this study prioritizes satisfaction and WOM, aligning more closely with customer experience and interpersonal dynamics. This shift reflects a consumer-centric approach and expands theoretical discussions by incorporating the nuances of emotional and communicative factors. Furthermore, the research extends the loyalty models proposed by David and Packianathan (2008) by demonstrating that satisfaction and WOM are not merely independent mediators but also sequential drivers amplifying the effects of SEQ. This chain mediation effect addresses a critical gap noted by Theodorakis et al. (2001), who called for more integrated models to explain customer loyalty in sports events. By empirically validating these relationships, the study contributes to the development of more sophisticated frameworks for understanding loyalty behaviors in sports tourism.

This study addresses research gaps, particularly the lack of empirical studies in emerging markets like Vietnam. While Salvador et al. (2021) and Theodorakis et al. (2019) focused on developed countries,

this research explores SEQ dimensions and cultural influences in Vietnam. By validating SEQ's impact and the mediating roles of satisfaction and WOM, the findings complement Calabuig Moreno et al. (2015) and Fernandez-Martinez et al. (2021) on functional and outcome quality. The study highlights how cultural and contextual factors shape behavioral outcomes in sports tourism, addressing the scarcity of SEQ research in emerging markets. It contributes by: (1) emphasizing the chain intermediary effect of satisfaction and WOM, a less-explored area in sports event research; (2) contextualizing findings within Vietnam, revealing cultural influences on SEQ's impact; (3) utilizing PLS-SEM, a robust method for analyzing complex multivariate models. These insights enhance academic discourse on sports tourism while offering practical strategies to improve customer experience and loyalty in sports events.

This study focuses on sports events in Vietnam, limiting its applicability to non-collectivist societies and different cultural, economic, or social contexts. Future research should explore diverse regions to examine how cultural differences affect sports event quality (SEQ), satisfaction, WOM, and return intentions. Additionally, the moderate R^2 for return intentions suggests that incorporating emotional engagement, perceived value, or loyalty could strengthen the model. Longitudinal studies could further investigate the long-term effects of satisfaction and WOM. The impact of digital engagement, including social media and live streaming, should also be explored, especially in global or hybrid sports events. Lastly, as the study focuses solely on running events, findings may not generalize to team-based or indoor sports. Future research should examine a broader range of sports to determine how different SEQ dimensions influence behavioral intentions across various event types.

References

- Akira, A., & Yong Jae, K. (2016). Determinants of word-of-mouth influence in sport viewership. *Journal of Sport Management*, 30(2), 192-206. <https://doi.org/10.1123/JSM.2015-0332>
- Alnuaimi, B., Khan, M., & Ajmal, M. (2021). The role of big data analytics capabilities in greening e-procurement: A higher order PLS-SEM analysis. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 169. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2021.120808>
- Antonio, F.-M., David, C.-M., Antonio Francisco, R.-C., & Alberto Nuviala, N. (2022). The Influence of Small-Scale Sporting Events on Participants' Intentions to Recommend the Host City. *Sustainability*, 14(13), 7549-7549. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14137549>
- Antonio, F.-M., José Antonio, T.-F., Román Nuviala, N., David, C.-M., & Alberto Nuviala, N. (2021). The management of major sporting events as an antecedent to having the city recommended. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 19, 100528. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JDMM.2020.100528>
- Baker, B., Jordan, J., & Funk, D. (2017). Run Again Another Day: The Role of Consumer Characteristics and Satisfaction in Repeat Consumption of a Sport-Related Experience Product. *Journal of Sport Management*, 32, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2017-0042>
- Calabuig Moreno, F., Prado-Gascó, V., Crespo Hervás, J., Núñez-Pomar, J., & Añó Sanz, V. (2015). Spectator emotions: Effects on quality, satisfaction, value, and future intentions. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(7), 1445-1449. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.01.031>
- Calabuig Moreno, F., Prado-Gascó, V., Crespo Hervás, J., Núñez-Pomar, J., & Añó Sanz, V. (2016). Predicting future intentions of basketball spectators using SEM and fsQCA. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(4), 1396-1400. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.10.114>

- Chang, S., & Gibson, H. (2015). The relationships between four concepts (involvement, commitment, loyalty, and habit) and consistency in behavior across leisure and tourism. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 13, 41-50. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2014.11.003>
- Chersulich Tomino, A., Peric, M., & Wise, N. (2020). Assessing and Considering the Wider Impacts of Sport-Tourism Events: A Research Agenda Review of Sustainability and Strategic Planning Elements. *Sustainability*, 12, 4473. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12114473>
- Chris, A. V., Claudel, M., & Anestis, K. F. (2021). Identifying service product features associated with visitor satisfaction and revisit intention: A focus on sports events. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 19, 100558. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JDMM.2021.100558>
- Chun-Chu, Y., Kuo-Ting, H., & Chin-Huang, H. (2016). Service quality improving effects and recreational benefits for sports tourism—A case study. *Tourism Economics*, 22(6), 1332-1337. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354816616672357>
- Daehwan, K., Chanmin, P., Hany, K., & Jeeyoon, K. (2019). Determinants and Outcomes of Volunteer Satisfaction in Mega Sports Events. *Sustainability*, 11(7), 1859. <https://doi.org/10.3390/SU11071859>
- Dao, M., & Darnell, S. (2021). Exploring Vietnamese sport for development through the capabilities approach: a descriptive analysis. *Sport in Society*, 25, 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2021.1900828>
- David, J. S., & Packianathan, C. (2008). Service Quality, Satisfaction, and Intent to Return in Event Sport Tourism. *Journal of Sport Management*, 22(5), 587-602. <https://doi.org/10.1123/JSM.22.5.587>
- DeSchriver, T., Webb, T., Tainsky, S., & Simion, A. (2021). Sporting Events and the Derived Demand for Hotels: Evidence From Southeastern Conference Football Games. *Journal of Sport Management*, 35, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2020-0268>
- Du, J., Kennedy, H., James, J., & Funk, D. (2019). Leveraging Event Participation Benefits Beyond the Running Course: Deciphering the Motivational Basis of Event Satisfaction. *Journal of Sport Management*, 34, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2019-0080>
- Duan, Y., Mastromartino, B., Nauright, J., Zhang, J., & Liu, B. (2021). How do perceptions of non-mega sport events impact quality of life and support for the event among local residents? *Sport in Society*, 24, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2021.1916247>
- Dubrovski, D. (2001). The role of customer satisfaction in achieving business excellence. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence - TOTAL QUAL MANAG BUS EXCELL*, 12, 920-925. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09544120120096052>
- Fam, K., Ting, H., Tan, K., Hussain, K., & Cheah, J.-H. (2020). Does it matter where to run? Intention to participate in destination marathon. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics, ahead-of-print*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-12-2019-0737>
- Funk, D. C., Mahony, D. F., & Ridinger, L. L. (2002). Characterizing consumer motivation as individual difference factors: Augmenting the sports interest inventory (SII) to explain level of spectator support. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 11(1).
- Gang, A., Yoon, J., Park, J., Yoo, S. K., & Pedersen, P. (2022). Mega Sport Event Volunteers: Understanding the Role of Space in Social Capital Development at the PyeongChang Winter Olympic Games. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 40, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2021-0051>
- Garcia, J. M., Freire, O. B. D. L., Santos, E. B. A., & Andrade, J. (2020). Factors affecting satisfaction and loyalty to online group buying. *Revista de Gestão*, 27(3), 211-228. <https://doi.org/10.1108/REG-02-2018-0037>

- Gibbs-Nicholls, S., McCormick, A., & Coyle, M. (2021). "Keep the Pace! You've Got This!": The Content and Meaning of Impactful Crowd Encouragement at Mass Running Events. *The Sport Psychologist*, 36, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1123/tsp.2021-0082>
- Gollwitzer, P. (1993). Goal Achievement: The Role of Intentions. *European review of social psychology*, 4, 141-185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14792779343000059>
- Greenwell, C., Fink, J., & Pastore, D. (2002). Assessing the Influence of the Physical Sports Facility on Customer Satisfaction within the Context of the Service Experience. *Sport Management Review*, 5, 129-148. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523\(02\)70064-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523(02)70064-8)
- Hagiwara, G., Kuroda, J., Oshita, K., 博信, 下., & Matsuzaki, T. (2018). Relationships between athletic identity and the two dimensions of sport commitment of Japanese student athletes. *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, 18, 1514-1517. <https://doi.org/10.7752/jpes.2018.03223>
- Hair, J., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C., & Sarstedt, M. (2016). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*, 2nd edition.
- Hair, J., Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C., & Gudergan, S. (2017). *Advanced Issues in Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling*.
- Hair, J. F., Babin, B. J., Black, W. C., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. Cengage. <https://books.google.com.vn/books?id=0R9ZswEACAAJ>
- Hallmann, K., Zehrer, A., & Rietz, J. (2021). Sport events as experiencescapes: the spectator's perspective. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSMS-04-2020-0056>
- Hanh, N., Huong, L., & Pham, H. (2022). Conceptual metaphor sport as war in Vietnamese football news. *Cognitive Linguistic Studies*, 9, 266-296. <https://doi.org/10.1075/cogls.20010.han>
- Hayduk Iii, T., & Rewilak, J. (2021). What Are the Benefits of Hosting a Sporting Mega Event? Evidence From Industrial Firms in China. *Journal of Sport Management*, 36, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2020-0270>
- Hayes, A., Montoya, A., & Rockwood, N. (2017). The Analysis of Mechanisms and Their Contingencies: PROCESS versus Structural Equation Modeling. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 25. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2017.02.001>
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(1), 115-135. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8>
- Hightower Jr, R., Brady, M. K., & Baker, T. L. (2002). Investigating the role of the physical environment in hedonic service consumption: an exploratory study of sporting events. *Journal of Business Research*, 55(9), 697-707.
- Hill, B., & Green, C. (2000). Repeat Attendance as a Function of Involvement, Loyalty, and the Sportscape Across Three Football Contexts. *Sport Management Review*, 3. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523\(00\)70083-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523(00)70083-0)
- Huang, Y., Hsu, C.-m., & Zhang, J. (2023). Indicators for measuring effectiveness and impact of international sporting events in Taiwan. *Sport in Society*, 27, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2023.2221643>

- Hyun, M., & Jordan, J. (2019). Athletic goal achievement: A critical antecedent of event satisfaction, re-participation intention, and future exercise intention in participant sport events. *Sport Management Review*, 23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2019.01.007>
- Jin, N. P., Lee, H., & Lee, S. (2012). Event Quality, Perceived Value, Destination Image, and Behavioral Intention of Sports Events: The Case of the IAAF World Championship, Daegu, 2011. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 18, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2012.711336>
- José Miguel, V.-F., José María, L.-G., Irena, V., Arturo Díaz, S., & Salvador, A. (2020). Factors Influencing the Tourist's Future Intentions in Small-Scale Sports Events. *Sustainability*, 12(19), 8103. <https://doi.org/10.3390/SU12198103>
- Katherine, S., Elizabeth, A. T., Ajhanai Channel Inez, K., Laura, J. B., Ann, P., & Kim, T. (2022). Addressing Gender Inequity in Sport Through WOMen's Invisible Labor. *Journal of Sport Management*, 36(3), 240-250. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2021-0229>
- Keiningham, T. L., Rust, R. T., Larivière, B., Aksoy, L., & Williams, L. J. J. o. S. M. (2018). A roadmap for driving customer word-of-mouth. 29, 2-38.
- Kelley, S., & Turley, L. W. (2001). Consumer perception of service quality attributes at sporting events. *Journal of Business Research*, 54, 161-166. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0148-2963\(99\)00084-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0148-2963(99)00084-3)
- Knott, B., & Tinaz, C. (2022). The Legacy of Sport Events for Emerging Nations [Systematic Review]. 4. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2022.926334>
- Koenig-Lewis, N., Asaad, Y., & Palmer, A. (2017). Sports events and interaction among spectators: examining antecedents of spectators' value creation. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 18, 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16184742.2017.1361459>
- Krishen, A., Berezan, O., Agarwal, S., & Robison, B. (2020). Harnessing the waiting experience: anticipation, expectations and WOM. *Journal of Services Marketing, ahead-of-print*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-10-2019-0382>
- Lee, J.-H., Kim, H.-D., Ko, Y. J., & Sagas, M. (2011). The influence of service quality on satisfaction and intention: A gender segmentation strategy. *Sport Management Review*, 14(1), 54-63.
- Li, Y., Kim, A., Liu, O., Mastromartino, B., Wang, Y., & Zhang, J. (2021). Impact of perceived value on behaviour intention of parent-child runners in a marathon event. *Sport in Society*, 24, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2021.1916246>
- Lu, H.-F. (2023). Can sports-based corporate social responsibility performance reflect firms' market values and risks? Intertemporal evidence from Taiwan iSports corporate award-winning firms. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 24. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSMS-10-2022-0191>
- Ludvigsen, J., Rookwood, J., & Parnell, D. (2023). *The Sport Mega-Events of the 2020s: Governance, Impacts and Controversies*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003454458>
- Ma, S., & Kaplanidou, K. (2022). Effects of Event Service Quality on the Quality of Life and Behavioral Intentions of Recreational Runners. *Leisure Sciences*, 44, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2018.1448028>
- MacIntosh, E., Kinoshita, K., & Sotiriadou, P. (2020). The Effects of the 2018 Commonwealth Games Service Environment on Athlete Satisfaction and Performance: A Transformative Service Research Approach. *Journal of Sport Management*, 34, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2019-0186>

- Madrigal, R. (1995). Cognitive and Affective Determinants of Fan Satisfaction with Sporting Event Attendance. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 27, 205-207. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1995.11949745>
- Malhotra, N., Frech, B., Leeftang, P., Kim, Y.-A., & Higson, H. (2022). Understanding how satisfactory service relationships can be mutually beneficial in the higher education context. *European Journal of Marketing*, 57. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-05-2021-0345>
- Maricic, B., Veljković, S., & Djordjevic, A. (2012). Customer satisfaction measurement. *Marketing*, 43, 235-244. <https://doi.org/10.5937/markt1204235M>
- Masayuki, Y., & Jeffrey, J. (2010). Customer satisfaction with game and service experiences: antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Sport Management*, 24(3), 338-361. <https://doi.org/10.1123/JSM.24.3.338>
- Mueller, R. O., & Hancock, G. R. (2018). Structural equation modeling. In *The reviewer's guide to quantitative methods in the social sciences* (pp. 445-456). Routledge.
- Naehyun, J., Hyuckgi, L., & Sang-Mook, L. (2013). Event quality, perceived value, destination image, and behavioral intention of sports events: the case of the IAAF World Championship, Daegu, 2011. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 18(8), 849-864. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2012.711336>
- Nguyen, H., Quang, T., Vo-Thanh, T., Tran, T., Nguyen, T., & Tang, N. (2023). Publication of non-native-English-speaking tourism researchers in international journals: findings from Vietnam. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 27, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2023.2214352>
- Nguyen, M.-U., Li, Y.-M., Nguyen, N., & Ho, P.-T. (2022). Factors Affecting the Benefits for Households Participating in Tourism Activities in Phong Dien Tourist Village, Vietnam. *Sustainability*, 14, 16498. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su142416498>
- Otto, A., Szymanski, D., & Varadarajan, R. (2019). Customer satisfaction and firm performance: insights from over a quarter century of empirical research. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-019-00657-7>
- Pyun, H., Humphreys, B., & Khalil, U. (2022). Professional Sports Events and Public Spending: Evidence from Municipal Police Budgets. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 24, 73-96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15270025221107145>
- Quang, T. D., Nguyen, Q., Nguyen, H., Dang, V., & Tang, N. (2023). Toward sustainable community-based tourism development: Perspectives from local people in Nhon Ly coastal community, Binh Dinh province, Vietnam. *PloS one*, 18, e0287522. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0287522>
- Raggiotto, F., Scarpi, D., & Mason, M. C. (2019). Faster! More! Better! Drivers of upgrading among participants in extreme sports events. *Journal of Business Research*, 102, 1-11. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.04.047>
- Raggiotto, F., & Scarpi de Claricini, D. (2021). This must be the place: A destination-loyalty model for extreme sporting events. *Tourism Management*, 83, 104254. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2020.104254>
- Rai, J., Cho, H., Yousaf, A., & Itani, M. (2023). The influence of event-related factors on sport fans' purchase intention: a study of sponsored products during televised sporting events The power of televised sporting events? *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 36. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-11-2022-0959>
- Ratten, V. (2016). The dynamics of sport marketing. *Marketing Intelligence Planning*, 34, 162-168.

- Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., & Straub, D. W. (2012). Editor's comments: a critical look at the use of PLS-SEM in "MIS Quarterly". *MIS quarterly*, iii-xiv.
- Ryo, S., Wirawan Dony, D., Christoph, B., & Min-yi, Y. (2023). Cross-industrial study on satisfaction-commitment-PWOM linkage: The role of competition, consumption visibility, and service relationship. *Journal of Business Research*, 160, 113715-113715. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113715>
- Salgado Barandela, J., Barajas, A., & Sánchez-Fernández, P. (2021). Sports event portfolios: an innovative tool and a new management paradigm. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship, ahead-of-print*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSMS-02-2021-0024>
- Salvador, A., Hyejin, B., Gonzalo, B., Arturo, D.-S., & José María, L.-G. (2021). Motivations and Future Intentions in Sport Event Volunteering: A Systematic Review. *Sustainability*, 13(22), 12454. <https://doi.org/10.3390/SU132212454>
- Sato, M., Jordan, J., & Funk, D. (2015). Distance Running Events and Life Satisfaction: A Longitudinal Study. *Journal of Sport Management*, 29. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2013-0164>
- Sato, M., Jordan, J., & Funk, D. (2016a). A distance-running event and life satisfaction: The mediating roles of involvement. *Sport Management Review*, 19. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2016.04.001>
- Sato, M., Jordan, J. S., & Funk, D. C. J. S. M. R. (2016b). A distance-running event and life satisfaction: The mediating roles of involvement. 19(5), 536-549.
- Sheeran, P. (2005). Intention–Behavior Relations: A Conceptual and Empirical Review. In (Vol. 12, pp. 1-36). <https://doi.org/10.1002/0470013478.ch1>
- Shreffler, M., & Ross, S. (2013). The Word-of-Mouth Phenomenon: Its Presence and Impact in a Sport Setting. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 6, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ijsc.6.1.1>
- Shreffler, M., & Ross, S. D. J. I. J. o. S. C. (2013). The Word-of-Mouth Phenomenon: Its Presence and Impact in a Sport Setting. 6, 1-18.
- Smith, A., Graetz, B., & Westerbeek, H. (2008). Sport sponsorship, team support and purchase intentions. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527260701852557>
- Sobhy, M., & Winklhofer, H. (2021). Participant engagement in running events and why it matters who else takes part. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16184742.2021.1956990>
- Sweeney, J. C., Soutar, G. N., & Mazzarol, T. J. E. J. o. M. (2008). Factors influencing word of mouth effectiveness: receiver perspectives. 42, 344-364.
- Tarlan, C., & Christopher, M. (2022). Manufacturing Dreams and Investing in Future Generations: WOMen Athletes' Inspirational Labor in the Marketing and Promotion of Their Sport. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2022-0092>
- Taylor, R., & Shanka, T. (2008). Cause for event: Not-for-profit marketing through participant sports events. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 24. <https://doi.org/10.1362/026725708X381984>
- Thamnopoulos, Y., Tzetzis, G., & Laios, S. J. T. s. j. (2012). The Impact of Service Quality and Satisfaction on Customers' Future Intentions, in the Sport Spectators' Context. 15.
- Theodorakis, N., & Alexandris, K. (2008). Can service quality predict spectators' behavioral intentions in professional soccer? *Managing Leisure*, 13, 162-178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13606710802200852>
- Theodorakis, N., Kambitsis, C., & Laios, A. (2001). Relationship between measures of service quality and satisfaction of spectators in professional sports. *Managing Service Quality*, 11, 431-438. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09604520110410638>

- Theodorakis, N., Kaplanidou, K., Alexandris, K., & Papadimitriou, D. (2019). From sport event quality to quality of life: The role of satisfaction and purchase happiness. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, 20, 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15470148.2019.1637805>
- Theodorakis, N. D., Kaplanidou, K., & Karabaxoglou, I. (2015). Effect of event service quality and satisfaction on happiness among runners of a recurring sport event. *Leisure Sciences*, 37(1), 87-107.
- Thomson, A., Toohey, K., & Darcy, S. (2020). The Political Economy of Mass Sport Participation Legacies From Large-Scale Sport Events: A Conceptual Paper. *Journal of Sport Management*, 35, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2019-0166>
- Tsekouropoulos, G., Gkouna, O., Theocharis, D., & Gounas, A. (2022). Innovative Sustainable Tourism Development and Entrepreneurship through Sports Events. *Sustainability*, 14, 4379. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14084379>
- Tzetzis, G., Alexandris, K., & Kapsampeli, S. (2014). Predicting visitors' satisfaction and behavioral intentions from service quality in the context of a small-scale outdoor sport event. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEFM-04-2013-0006>
- Van Leeuwen, L., Quick, S., & Daniel, K. (2002). The Sport Spectator Satisfaction Model: A Conceptual Framework for Understanding the Satisfaction of Spectators. *Sport Management Review*, 5(2), 99-128. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523\(02\)70063-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3523(02)70063-6)
- Vegara-Ferri, J. M., López-Gullón, J. M., Valantine, I., Díaz Suárez, A., & Angosto, S. (2020). Factors Influencing the Tourist's Future Intentions in Small-Scale Sports Events. *Sustainability*, 12(19).
- Voltes-Dorta, A., & Martín, J. C. (2021). The influence of race performance on re-participation behaviour of trail runners in the Transgrancanaria event. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 21(1), 58-77.
- Wakefield, K., & Blodgett, J. (1996). The effect of servicescapes on customers' behavioral intentions in leisure service settings. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 10, 45-61. <https://doi.org/10.1108/08876049610148594>
- Wakefield, K., & Blodgett, J. (1999). Customer Response to Intangible and Tangible Service Factors. *Psychology and Marketing*, 16, 51-68. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1520-6793\(199901\)16:1<51::AID-MAR4>3.0.CO;2-0](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1520-6793(199901)16:1<51::AID-MAR4>3.0.CO;2-0)
- Wakefield, K., & Sloan, H. (1995). The Effects of Team Loyalty and Selected Stadium Factors on Spectator Attendance. *Journal of Sport Management*, 9, 153-172. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.9.2.153>
- Wang, F.-J., Hsiao, C.-H., Shih, W.-H., & Chiu, W. (2023). Impacts of Price and Quality Perceptions on Individuals' Intention to Participate in Marathon Events: Mediating Role of Perceived Value. *SAGE Open*, 13, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231181431>
- Wangenheim, F., & Bayón, T. (2007). The Chain From Customer Satisfaction via Word-of-Mouth Referrals to New Customer Acquisition. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 35, 233-249. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-007-0037-1>
- Warshaw, P., & Davis, F. (1985). Disentangling behavioral intention and behavioral expectation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 21, 213-228. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031\(85\)90017-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031(85)90017-4)
- Webb, T., & Sheeran, P. (2006). Does Changing Behavioral Intentions Engender Behavior Change? A Meta-Analysis of the Experimental Evidence. *Psychological bulletin*, 132, 249-268. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.132.2.249>
- Williams, G., Kim, Y. H., & Nauright, J. (2021). Destination development by sport event tourism (SET): a case study of Thailand. *Sport in Society*, 24, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2021.1916234>

- Yeh, C.-C., Hua, K. T., & Huang, C.-H. (2016). Service quality improving effects and recreational benefits for sports tourism—A case study. *Tourism Economics*, 22, 1332-1337. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354816616672357>
- Yoshida, M., & James, J. (2010). Customer Satisfaction With Game and Service Experiences: Antecedents and Consequences. *Journal of Sport Management*, 24, 338-361. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.24.3.338>
- Zhu, L., Pyun, D. Y., & Manoli, E. (2021). Developing a Conceptual Model of Service Quality for eSports. *Quest*, 73, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2021.1976654>

Appendix 1: A review of previous studies on the influence of sports event quality on attendees' return intentions

Authors (year)	Findings	Method & sample size	Nation of research
Theodorakis et al. (2001)	- SVQ → SA (+) - REP → SA (-)	Quantitative research Sample size = 173	Greek
David & Packianathan (2008)	- STQ → SA (+) - SA → ITR (+) - STQ → SA → ITR (+)	Qualitative research	United States
Yoshida & James (2010)	- GAM → GSA (+) - SEE & FAC → SSA (+) - GSA & SSA → BI (+)	Quantitative research Sample size = 626	Japan and United States
Naehyun et al. (2013)	- EVQ & DEI → PEV (+) - EVQ → DEI (+) - EVQ & PEV → BI (+)	Quantitative research Sample size = 264	Korea
Tzetzis et al. (2014)	- ACQ & VEQ & COQ → SA → BI (+) - ACQ & VEQ & COQ → SA → WOM (+) - SA → WOM (+) - ACQ & VEQ & COQ → SA (+) - ACQ & VEQ & COQ → BI (+)	Quantitative research Sample size = 212	Greek
Theodorakis et al. (2015)	- PEQ & OQ → SA (+) - OQ & SA → HA (+)	Quantitative research Sample size = 300	Greek
Calabuig Moreno et al. (2015)	- SVQ → PEV (+) - SVQ & PEV → SA (+) - PEV & SA → FI (+) - EMO x PEV → FI (+)	Quantitative research Sample size = 493	Spain
Calabuig Moreno et al. (2016)	- SVQ & PEV & SA → FI (+)	Quantitative research Sample size = 429	Spain
Theodorakis et al. (2019)	- IQ & OQ → SA (+) - OQ & SA → HA (+) - HA → QOL (+)	Quantitative research Sample size = 344	Greek
Raggiotto et al. (2019)	- SEC; LOY → UPG (+) - PEC; RTA; ICG → SEC (+) - SA; TR; EVI → LOY (+)	Quantitative research Sample size = 580	Italia

Vegara-Ferri et al. (2020)	PQS → PQC PQS & E-WOM → DEI PQS & PQC & DEI → SA E-WOM & SA → FI	Quantitative research Sample size = 236	Spain
Duan et al. (2021)	- PCI; SOI; ENI → QOL (+) - PCI & SOI & QOL → EVS (+)	Quantitative research Sample size = 1.136	China
Ma & Kaplanidou (2022)	- PEQ → QOB → RPI (+) - OQ → REI → RPI (+) - PEQ & OQ & IQ → QOB (+) - OQ → REI (+) - QOB; REI → RPI (+)	Quantitative research Sample size = 573	Taiwan and Greek

Notes: Service quality-SVQ; Satisfaction=SA; Responsiveness=REP; Sport Tourism Quality = STQ; intention to return = ITR; Game atmosphere = GAM; Game satisfaction = GSA; Stadium employees = SEE; Facility access = FAC; service satisfaction = SSA; behavioral intentions = BI; Event quality = EVQ; Destination image = DEI; perceived value = PEV; Access quality = ACQ; Venue quality = VEQ; Contest quality = COQ; Physical environment quality = PEQ; Outcome quality = OQ; Happiness = HA; Future intentions = FI; Emotions = EMO; Iteration quality = IQ; quality of life = QOL; Self-enhancement = SEC; Loyalty = LOY; Upgrading = UPG; Perceived control = PEC; Risk-taking attitude = RTA; Image congruence = ICG; Perceived Quality-Staff = PQS; Perceived Quality-Communication = PQC; Psychological impact = PCI; Social impacts = SOI; Environmental impact = ENI; Event support = EVS; regular exercise intention = REI; repeat participation intention = RPI; quality of benefits = QOB; Trust = TR; Event image = EVI;

Source: created by authors