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**Service quality as perceived by public, private, and voluntary
sector managers of the leisure fitness industry**

Hartshorn, Carol Satterthwait, Re.D.

Indiana University, 1990

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Service Quality as Perceived by Public, Private,
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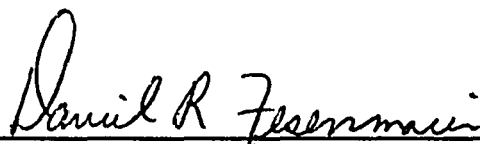
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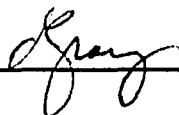
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Recreation
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Accepted by the faculty of the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, Indiana University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Recreation degree.

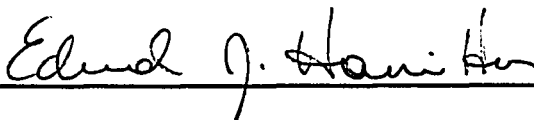
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To my Husband
Lindsey O. Hartshorn
Thank you for your love and support!

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Many wonderful people have given me guidance, support, and assistance in completing this dissertation. It is with heartfelt appreciation I say "thank you" to:

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SERVICE QUALITY AS PERCEIVED BY PUBLIC, PRIVATE,
AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR MANAGERS OF THE
LEISURE FITNESS INDUSTRY
(Dissertation Abstract)
Carol S. Hartshorn, Re. D.
Indiana University

Chairperson: Dr. Daniel R. Fesenmaier

Problem

The problem of the study was to investigate differences in the way fitness industry managers define service quality.

Procedure

This study was a mail survey of managers of municipal park and recreation departments, YMCA's, and private athletic clubs. Service quality was measured using the SERVQUAL instrument which includes twenty-two items and represents five distinct dimensions: (1) tangibility, (2) reliability, (3) responsiveness, (4) empathy, and (5) assurance. The internal reliability and criterion-related validity of the SERVQUAL instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha and Pearson Product Moment correlation. Differences in definition of service quality between the sectors were investigated using ANOVA followed by Tukey's test for multiple comparisons. ANCOVA was used to investigate differences in SERVQUAL scores between the sectors while holding gender, age, level of education, and

salary constant.

Findings

The response rate was 65.7%. Respondents strongly agreed on the importance of service quality to the success of their services. Each sector identified "assurance" as the most important dimension of service quality; "empathy" was identified as the least important dimension.

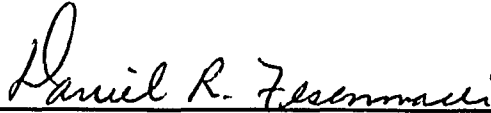
The scores for the respective dimensions showed a narrow range of variation between the sectors, clustering toward the high end of the scale. However, significant differences were found to exist between sectors for the overall SERVQUAL scores as well as for the dimensions of tangibles, responsiveness, and empathy. Post hoc analysis showed the greatest differences in SERVQUAL scores existed between public and private sectors. The significant differences identified using ANOVA were all supported even when the effects of age, gender, education, and salary level were partialled out (using ANCOVA).

Conclusions

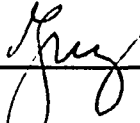
Managers in all sectors appear to be similar in their interpretation of service quality. However, subtle but significant distinctions do exist in their degree of support of service quality. The results suggest that although managers of the leisure fitness industry from all three sectors agree on the definition of service quality, the

private sector shows more concern with service quality than the public sector, with voluntary sector most similar to the private sector.

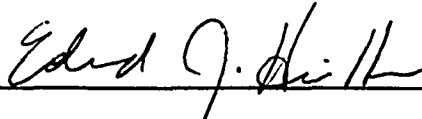
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The provision of services to the public has traditionally been assumed by several industry sectors with each claiming to stand for a different service orientation (Young, 1986). Public sector leisure services are those provided by the government (local, state, or federal) with the underlying concept of "public interest" and are committed to the ideal of equity and "enrichment of the life of the total community by providing opportunities for the worthy use of leisure" (Sessoms, 1984, p. 13). Voluntary leisure services, on the other hand, are those supported primarily by private funds for the benefit of the community. Their interests are characterized as benevolent, in line with local needs. Voluntary agencies, such as the YMCA, strive to provide a community service but are often restricted in membership and "frequently put emphasis on the group and the individual" (Sessoms, 1984, p. 13). Private for-profit leisure services are privately owned and offered with the ultimate hope of returning a profit to the owner. Their activity is often viewed primarily as a business and only secondarily as a service. Private athletic clubs are an example of such a commercial enterprise.

Only within the last decade has public recreation had competition from other sectors because of their low, heavily subsidized pricing policy that discouraged competition (Howard & Crompton, 1980). With the increase in personal income consumers are no longer willing to compromise quality for lower cost because the appealing alternatives are affordable. This has triggered an increase in recreation competition by the voluntary and private sectors (Epperson, 1986; Warnick & Howard, 1985).

Different forms of ownership imply different incentives and constraints and perhaps even different goals for managers of the "firms" (Kushman, 1979). Research by Havitz (1987), Henderson and Cooper (1983), and Lovingood and Mitchell (1978) indicated that services provided by different sectors are perceived as being "different". Labels attached to the private sector have included "less trustworthy", "deficient", "discriminatory", and "exploitative" (Hansmann, 1986; Nelson & Krashinsky, 1973; Rubenstein, Mundy, & Rubenstein, 1978; Schlesinger, 1984; Steinfels, 1973; & Weisbrod & Schlesinger, 1981). In comparison, public sector services have been described as "wasteful", "unresponsive", "poor quality", and "not to be trusted" (Balutis, 1985; Goodsell, 1983; Levine, 1984; Lipset & Schneider, 1983; Perry & Kraemer, 1983). In an experimental study in 1987, Havitz found a relationship between the subjects' attitudes toward sectors and their

recreation choice behavior. He further found that this sector bias did not affect responses toward high quality services shown to the subjects, suggesting that a facility which offers high service quality may be able to overcome sector bias previously held by its customers.

As a consequence of different ownership, differing behavior by management is often expected (Kushman, 1979). Perhaps one of the most important areas where sectors are expected to differ is in how managers operationalize service quality. Recent surveys have shown that consumers are increasingly quality conscious (Haywood, Alleyne, Duffus, & Downing, 1985). Today's consumers are educated to appraise quality of service in making decisions of whether or not to purchase. One's perception of service quality might contribute to sector bias. High quality can contribute significantly to an organization's bottom line performance (Berry, Zeithaml, & Parasuraman, 1985).

Little research has been done which examines service quality as perceived by management of the different sectors. If differences do exist, they could be critical in terms of matching the expectations of consumers. Although it is important to understand how consumers perceive service quality, an agency may not always be aware of what constitutes quality to the users. Managers, consequently, make decisions based on their own feelings and beliefs (LaPage, 1983). Peters and Waterman (1982)

stressed that the success or failure of an organization may be directly attributed to the chief executive officer.

In defining service quality five distinct dimensions have been identified: (1) tangibles; (2) reliability; (3) responsiveness; (4) assurance; and (5) empathy (Berry, Zeithaml, & Parasuraman, 1985). It is important to see how managers rate the importance of each of these components when they define service quality. As a result, differences in definition can be identified.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study was to identify differences in definition of service quality among fitness industry managers. Specifically the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do managers in the leisure fitness industry define "service quality"?
2. Does the definition of service quality differ among fitness industry managers by different industry sectors?
3. Does the definition of service quality differ among fitness industry managers when controlling for age, gender, level of education, or salary?
4. Do the findings of this study support the expectations prevalent in the sector bias literature?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to gain insight into differences that might exist among the fitness industry managers in terms of the definition of service quality. Perhaps a better understanding of existing differences could help explain perceived differences in service provision to the public. "Individuals responsible for professional preparation as well as those involved with the recruitment, selection, and retention of . . . recreation leadership personnel have much to gain from research that enhances our knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of leisure service jobs, the individuals working in these jobs, and the relationship between the two" (Summers, 1986, p. 8). Through an investigation of the human component of the person-job relationship, it was hoped a better understanding of work performances could be achieved.

Need for the Study

A review of the literature indicated that an abundance of information regarding leisure consumers existed but very limited research concerning the leisure service providers. Lovelock (1982) identified a need to conduct research that offers insights on practicing managers, focusing on specific categories of service. Absher, McAvoy, Burdge, and Gramann (1988) have expressed concern that research

focusing on more than just the public sector is needed. Spooner (1987, p. 55) quoted Berry as saying "Competing organizations may provide the same type of service but competing organizations do not provide the same service." The concept of "service" is the great differentiator. American consumers are frustrated by the lack of personal service in the United States (Koepp, 1988) in that many U.S. businesses are not giving enough attention to quality (Quinn & Gagnon, 1986). With the growth of the leisure fitness industry, it appears the competitive edge may go to those concerned with service quality. Management, however, may not always be aware of what constitutes quality to the users, so managers make decisions based on their own perceptions and preferences (LaPage, 1983).

Although service quality has become a prominent theme in the operation of leisure service agencies, "this increased interest . . . has generated a relatively meager amount of research designed to assess, identify, or evaluate the dimensions and attributes of service quality" (Crompton, McKay, & Fesenmaier, 1989, p. 12). Service quality research in the recreation literature is sparse with most of what does exist focusing on satisfaction with the experience itself and frequently in outdoor settings. There is likewise a need for research which focuses on leisure providers (Draper, 1983). Research by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) resulted in a model which

incorporated five dimensions of service quality. This model has been used to investigate the attitude of consumers but has not gone into the realm of exploring the attitudes of the providers. This study attempted to enter that domain, specifically in the leisure fitness industry.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to the following:

1. Directors of municipal park and recreation departments to represent the public sector.
2. Executive Directors of YMCA's to represent the voluntary sector.
3. Managers of private athletic clubs which are members of the International Racquet Sports Association to represent the private sector.
4. An invited sample of 609 subjects, 200 each from the public and voluntary sectors and 209 from the private sector throughout the eight state Great Lakes Region (including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin).
5. Measurement of the definition of service quality through the use of a mailed survey instrument utilizing SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).
6. Demographic variables of gender, level of education, age, and salary.

7. A data collection period of May 28, 1990 through July 20, 1990.

Limitations

The study was limited by the following factors:

1. The degree of cooperation of the respondents in completing the survey instrument.
2. The degree to which the respondents answered the survey instrument honestly.
3. The degree to which the respondents understood the questions and/or statements in the research instrument.
4. The accuracy and completeness of the lists from which the invited sample was selected.
5. The unavailability of a complete listing of the population of private athletic clubs throughout the eight-state Great Lakes Region.
6. Weaknesses of utilizing the mail questionnaire format as identified by Dillman (1978), including low response rate, the possibility of questionnaires being lost or misplaced, and the possibility of persons other than the chosen participant (e.g., the managers) answering the questionnaire.
7. The extent of the reliability and validity of the survey instruments used.

Assumptions

The study was based upon the following assumptions:

1. The sample of subjects from the three selected leisure settings was representative of the leisure fitness industry.
2. The lists used to obtain the sample were representative of the settings involved.
3. The lists used to obtain the sample were accurate and complete.
4. IRSA club members from the eight state Great Lakes Region were representative of the population of private athletic clubs throughout that same area.
5. The survey instruments were completed by the managers of the organizations.
6. The respondents answered the survey instruments honestly.
7. The respondents understood the survey instruments, with any difference in interpretation of terminology not affecting the results.
8. The modifications made to SERVQUAL did not affect the reliability and/or the validity of the instrument.
9. The survey instrument used was both reliable and valid.
10. Perceived service quality plays an important role in the consumers' decision to purchase a service or

not (Elbeck, 1987).

11. Service quality is composed of five dimensions:

(1) tangibles; (2) reliability; (3) responsiveness; (4) assurance; and (5) empathy (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

12. The way the manager defines service quality is important for it to permeate throughout the organization (Bell & Zemke, 1989; Berry, 1988; Hoffman, 1987; and Nadler, 1988).

13. The way one defines service quality is a reflection of one's attitude toward service quality.

14. One's attitude is a component in the determination of one's behavior (Cushman & McPhee, 1980).

Null Hypotheses

H₀₁ : There will be no significant difference in the overall scores on SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers.

H_{1a} : There will be no significant difference in the overall scores on SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different industry sectors.

H_{1b} : There will be no significant difference in the overall scores on SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when gender has been partialled out.

- H_{1c} : There will be no significant difference in the overall scores on SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when age has been partialled out.
- H_{1d} : There will be no significant difference in the overall scores on SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when level of education has been partialled out.
- H_{1e} : There will be no significant difference in the overall scores on SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when salary has been partialled out.
- H₀₂ : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "tangibles" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers.
- H_{2a} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "tangibles" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors.
- H_{2b} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "tangibles" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when gender has been partialled out.
- H_{2c} : There will be no significant difference in

the scores on the "tangibles" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when age has been partialled out.

H_{2d} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "tangibles" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when level of education has been partialled out.

H_{2e} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "tangibles" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different salaries.

H₀₃ : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "reliability" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers.

H_{3a} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "reliability" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors.

H_{3b} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "reliability" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when gender has been partialled out.

H_{3c} : There will be no significant difference in

the scores on the "reliability" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when age has been partialled out.

H_{3d} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "reliability" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when level of education has been partialled out.

H_{3e} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "reliability" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when salary has been partialled out.

H₀₄ : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "responsiveness" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers.

H_{4a} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "responsiveness" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors.

H_{4b} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "responsiveness" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when gender has been partialled out.

- H_{4c} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "responsiveness" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when age has been partialled out.
- H_{4d} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "responsiveness" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when level of education has been partialled out.
- H_{4e} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "responsiveness" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when salary has been partialled out.
- H₀₅ : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "empathy" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers.
- H_{5a} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "empathy" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors.
- H_{5b} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "empathy" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when gender

has been partialled out.

H_{5c} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "empathy" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when age has been partialled out.

H_{5d} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "empathy" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when level of education has been partialled out.

H_{5e} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "empathy" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when salary has been partialled out.

H_{6e} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "assurance" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers.

H_{6a} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "assurance" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors.

H_{6b} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "assurance" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry

managers of different sectors when gender has been partialled out.

H_{6c} : There will be no significance difference in the scores on the "assurance" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when age has been partialled out.

H_{6d} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "assurance" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when level of education has been partialled out.

H_{6e} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the "assurance" dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when salary has been partialled out.

Definition of Terms

Terms pertinent to this study were defined as follows:

Manager. The individual who directs the operation of the agency.

Municipal public recreation. Leisure opportunities available to the general public that are provided by the local government.

Private athletic clubs. Private, commercial recreation enterprises with a focus on fitness, operated with hopes of returning a profit to the owner.

Sector bias. The tendency of an individual to favor one sector over another, other things being equal, for the purchase of services or goods (Havitz, 1987). It is believed to be influenced by the images, beliefs, and attitude of the individual.

Service. Work performed by individuals or firms which yields benefits and satisfactions for others, where no goods or commodities are transferred (Blois, 1974; Shapiro, 1981).

Service quality. "A measure of how well . . . service . . . delivered matches customer expectations" (Lewis & Booms, 1982, p. 99).

SERVQUAL. A multiple-item scale utilized as an objective measure of service quality as perceived by consumers. It identifies five distinct dimensions of service quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988):

Assurance. Employees' knowledge and ability to convey trust.

Empathy. Caring provided to the customers.

Reliability. The ability to perform as promised, dependably and accurately.

Responsiveness. The willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.

Tangibles. Physical features, such as equipment and facilities, and appearance of personnel.

Voluntary recreation. Recreation services, such as the Y. M. C. A., which are supported primarily by private funds to render community leisure services (Butler, 1976).

Summary

Chapter 1 has served as a basis for the study which follows. It has described the problem and explained both the purpose and need for the study. It has outlined delimitations as well as limitations, followed by assumptions upon which the study was based. Hypotheses have been stated in null terms for the purpose of statistical analysis. Finally, terms pertinent to the study have been defined for clarification purposes.

Future chapters will look at the theoretical basis of the study and describe the study in detail. Chapter 2 examines relevant theory from six distinct areas: (1) the recreation and fitness industry; (2) sector differences; (3) sector bias; (4) service quality; (5) the role of management in service quality; and (6) service quality measurement. Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation of the research procedure, including the selection of the subjects, instrumentation, administration of the instrument, and statistical analysis used to analyze the data collected. Chapter 4 presents the data analysis.

This includes characteristics of the sample, testing the reliability and validity of the measurement instrument, testing for differences between sectors in definition of service quality, and testing for differences in definition of service quality while holding demographic variables constant. Chapter 4 also discusses the findings of the study. Finally, Chapter 5 presents conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The problem of the study was to investigate differences in definition of service quality among fitness industry managers. The literature review provides important background information to establish the theoretical foundation for the study. The following topical areas are covered within this chapter: (1) Recreation and Fitness Industry; (2) Sector Differences; (3) Sector Bias; (4) Service Quality; (5) Role of Management in Service Quality; and (6) Service Quality Measurement.

Recreation and Fitness Industry

People pursue leisure activities at an astounding rate, spending about \$300 billion annually (Cato & Kunstler, 1988, p. 54). Even during years when there was no growth in discretionary spending, recreation spending still rose about five percent annually (Godbey & Parker, 1976, p. 10). The fitness industry in particular has shown remarkable growth over the past twenty years (Reed, 1981; Shephard, 1981). From 1961 to 1981, the number of American adults who exercised regularly rose from 24% to 47% (Conrad, 1983; Reed, 1981). By 1987, that percentage was

believed to be 69% (Fitness Boom Swells, 1987). A survey conducted by Athletic Business in 1987 asked 323 athletic, recreation, and fitness administrators from across the U.S. and Canada if they expected participation in their programs to increase (Fitness Boom Swell, 1987). About 90% of the respondents expected an increase and almost all of them cited the fitness boom to be the primary factor behind that increase.

Recreation facilities, activities and programs are provided by numerous agencies, many of which have been created to meet demands for specific leisure-time opportunities (Butler, 1976; Cheek & Burch, 1976; Kelly, 1982; Roberts, York, & Brodie, 1988). Public services are those created and administered by the government, whether federal, state, or local. Voluntary services are those supported primarily by private funds to render community services, such as the YMCA. Private non-profit agencies frequently require membership for participation; however, nonmembers may sometimes participate as guests of members or for a specified fee. Commercial agencies include many organizations which cater to the public demand for leisure-time activities, and have the goal of making a profit. Private agencies, such as athletic clubs, also frequently have a profit orientation. For this reason they frequently are considered to fit both the private and commercial sector definitions.

Many nonprofit organizations, including both public and voluntary, face financial difficulty due to an uncertain economic climate, cutbacks in government support, the changing nature of client attitudes and needs, and increasing public and private competition (Andreasen, 1982; Kotler, 1982). Although public delivery systems for many services have a monopoly status, such is not the case in the delivery of recreation and leisure service (Gronhaug & Arndt, 1979). They are, in fact, competing with all other sectors for the recreation consumer. Recent data show, however, that municipal park and recreation agencies serve a very narrow range of clients (Howard & Crompton, 1984). With today's increasing competition for the tax dollar, park and recreation executives must prove the value of their program through its successful operation (Lutzin & Storey, 1973). Edginton and Neal (1983) and Kotler (1979) have found that municipal park and recreation directors ranked goals related to the provision of their product, management, and related activities higher than goals related to the humanistic concerns of behavioral change and the benefits of services to consumers.

Unfortunately, awareness of satisfied customers in the public sector may be more difficult to identify. Gronhaug and Arndt (1979) conducted a study in which they found lower dissatisfaction and complaining tendencies in the public than the private sector. This was believed to be

not because all was well but because dissatisfied customers refrained from complaining. However, complaints not heard by management may have been heard by friends. With the present level of competition in the leisure industry these same consumers may choose to participate elsewhere. Foxall (1984) indicated that municipal leisure services were unlikely to be consumer-oriented because of the institutional framework in which they must exist. Drawing from his personal experience in training local authority leisure administrators, Foxall argued that public sports and leisure centers have not been developed in a user-oriented way, nor have they been ultimately responsive to the market. Decisions have often been in the form of administrative commands. Howard and Crompton (1980) supported the concept that park and recreation agencies are businesses which happen to operate in the public rather than the private sector.

Hauser (1987) recently stressed the importance of customer service and understanding the YMCA member in order to effectively develop a customer service strategy. "There are other organizations that offer the same services as the YMCA" (p. 25) so the need to gain the competitive edge through providing good service is evident. Indeed, Bill Grantham, director of the Aerobics Activity Center in Dallas (cited in Don't Shut the Door on Existing Club Members, 1986), is quoted as saying, "I think we have to

realize we are in a buyer's market. In other words, it's up to the consumers to decide where they buy. You have to provide them a tool or a reason to come and join your club. They're more aware of the services they prefer than ever before, and they won't join a club that doesn't provide those services" (p. 37). John McCarthy, executive director of the International Racquet Sports Association (cited in *An Industry in Transition*, 1987) also has seen a trend toward better service quality as a result of the rapidly growing and highly competitive recreation and fitness industry.

Sector Differences

The provision of services to the public is assumed by several industry sectors, sometimes referred to as "ownership", with each sector claiming to stand for a different service orientation (Young, 1986). Public sector services are those provided by the government (local, state, or federal) with the underlying concept of "public interest". Voluntary services are those supported primarily by private funds for the benefit of the community. Their interests are characterized as benevolent, in line with local needs. Private for-profit services are privately owned and offered with the ultimate hope of returning a profit to the owner. Their activity is often viewed primarily as a business and only secondarily

as a service. Much has been written to delineate the differences separating the sectors and the effects these differences have on management and the ultimate "product" which is offered to the public.

Different forms of ownership imply different legally defined incentives and constraints and perhaps even different goals for managers of the "firms". As a consequence, differing administrative behavior is often expected (Kushman, 1979), such as how to operationalize service quality. As a result of an extensive literature review, Rainey, Backoff, and Levine (1976) classified sector differences into three major divisions: environmental factors, organization-environment transactions, and internal structures and processes.

Environmental factors include those factors which are external to organizations and are essentially out of their control (Rainey, Backoff, & Levine, 1976). One such contrast involves the degree of market exposure. The public sector relies on tax appropriations, and thus has less incentive to reduce costs and to operate efficiently and effectively (Rainey, Backoff, & Levine, 1976; Selby, 1978). The voluntary sector also has fewer market-generated constraints because of outside donations and endowments (Coelho, 1976). Appropriations in both the public and voluntary sectors may be largely based on past levels, thus encouraging the practice of using up previous

appropriations in order to get more. The private for-profit sector, however, remains very much exposed to the market it serves, as its survival depends on fees paid by the user. The private sector is also more likely to maintain awareness of market indicators and information vital in the strategic marketing process (Rainey, Backoff, & Levine, 1976). The public and voluntary sectors, however, are becoming more aware of the need for effective marketing at a time when funding is not as generous as it once was and the necessity of fees and charges increases. Public services are justifying their existence and successful programs are capable of continuing based on citizen involvement and interest even if funding should cease (Eisenhart, 1983).

Another environmental factor which distinguishes the three leisure service sectors involves the degree of legal and formal constraints (Rainey, Backoff, & Levine, 1976). Within any given field the sectors vary according to their level of dependence on a hierarchy and political interference. This in turn affects their degree of flexibility, independence, and level of authority (Young, 1986). The for-profit manager is relatively free to operate his firm subject to the market forces (and ethical guidelines), while the voluntary and public sector managers are more restricted by state-imposed regulations (Easley & O'Hara, 1986). The public sector is closely scrutinized by

the bureaucratic order, limiting its freedom to act, while the private sector is not (Allison, 1983). In general, the public sector is considered to be the most restricted in freedom of action by hierarchy and outside restraint, the private for-profit sector the least restricted and the voluntary sector somewhere between the two (Young, 1986).

Political influences are naturally most pronounced in the public sector where decisions are made by administrators who are indirectly answerable to the public voting process (Kushman, 1979). There is a greater need for constituency support which frequently encourages bargaining, public opinion influence, and interest group reactions (Rainey, Backoff, & Levine, 1976). The role of market forces in the voluntary sector is more limited (Majone, 1984) although its reliance on donations and outside support makes it subject to similar influences. The private for-profit sector, however, is largely answerable to itself.

The second major category of sector differences described by Rainey, Backoff, and Levine (1976) is organization-environment transactions. This involves the relationship of the organization to the entities in its environment. The public sector has a much wider scope of concern. The idea of service quality in the public sector frequently includes the ideals of accessibility, equity, and individual respect (Crompton, Mackay, & Fesenmaier,

1989; Mackay & Crompton, 1988). The public sector has several publics to satisfy including even the non-users, which may lead to conflicting goals. The requirement that the public sector serve everyone who seeks service limits specialization and may increase costs (Crompton, Mackay, & Fesenmaier, 1989; Mackay & Crompton, 1988; Schlesinger, 1984). Likewise, the public sector is under much closer public scrutiny (Allison, 1983; Rainey, Backoff, & Levine, 1976). Citizens demand responsiveness and accountability more today from public services on all levels (Eisenhart, 1983; Saltzstein, 1985). The private sector, on the other hand, is less exposed to public review. It is, however, driven by the needs of the public and is able to focus on more narrowly defined market segments than the public sector.

The third major category, internal structures and processes, concerns the internal operations and structures of organizations (Rainey, Backoff, & Levine, 1976). One of the most frequently cited areas involves the difference in the nature of the goals and performance measures of the different sectors. The goal of public and voluntary agencies is often seen as providing service and improving the quality of life while the private sector strives to make a profit (Bultena & Klessig, 1969; Coelho, 1976; Conrad, 1983; Crompton, Mackay, & Fesenmaier, 1989; Eisenhart, 1983; Majone, 1984; Mill, 1986; Selby, 1978;

Sessoms, 1984). As a result both the public and voluntary sectors lack easily measurable objective criteria of success or failure (Coelho, 1976; Weinberg, 1983). This leads to the common belief that the private sector will sacrifice quality for the sake of profit (Majone, 1984).

Authority relations and the role of the administrator is another internal area that differs between the sectors (Rainey, Backoff, & Levine, 1976). All sectors are usually associated with a board or council of some type (Young, 1986). Public agencies are usually associated with a legislature or a subcommittee, voluntary agencies with a board of directors or trustees made up of community members, and private agencies by a board of directors or shareholders. The authority of the board varies, however. As already stated, public sector decisions are often made by public administrators, with priorities determined from the bottom up, i.e., the voting process (Kushman, 1979; Perry & Kraemer, 1983). In the voluntary sector, the group to whom the manager is responsible is usually relatively small and the policy-making process may not include voting (Kushman, 1979). Administrators are frequently granted a great deal of leeway in directing the agency's activities (Coelho, 1976). The hierarchy within the agency, though, may be unclear with little opportunity for direct-line accountability (Selby, 1978). In the private sector priorities are usually privately determined from the top

down and the manager may also be the owner. Staff are usually directly accountable to top management (Kushman, 1979; Perry & Kraemer, 1983; Selby, 1978).

Nondistribution constraint prohibits the distribution of profits to the "owners" of both the public and voluntary organizations (Easley & O'Hara, 1986; Hansmann, 1986; Rose-Ackerman, 1986; Schlesinger, 1984; & Weisbrod & Schlesinger, 1981, 1986). In other words, profits must go back into the organization rather than being distributed as additional income or bonuses to management. Based on this constraint, it is believed by many that management in the public and voluntary sectors is less likely to cut quality because any resulting profits would not go in their pockets (Hansmann, 1986; Schlesinger, 1984; Selby, 1978; & Weisbrod & Schlesinger, 1986). The private sector, on the other hand, allows pecuniary rewards for increased profits. This contrast is believed by some to be exaggerated as profits can also be distributed indirectly in the form of high wages, expense accounts and plush working conditions (Rose-Ackerman, 1986). Fisher (1972) also cited profit as an overrated incentive with respect to behavior and claimed businessmen and public administrators are driven by essentially the same set of motivations.

Some sector comparisons also focus on the personal characteristics of the employees. Managers with strong preferences for monetary rewards have been identified as

most suitable for the private setting, power seekers to the public sector, and service-oriented individuals to the voluntary sector (Newmann & Wallender, 1978; Schlesinger, 1984; Weisbrod & Schlesinger, 1981, 1986; Young, 1986). However, managers are motivated by things other than money. Also, nonprofit sectors may pay high salaries to managers, overcoming the nondistribution constraint (Weisbrod & Schlesinger, 1981). Public sector administrators are sometimes described as "wielders of influence" or even "reactive captives" while private sector executives are identified as rational strategists in control of a "tightly structured hierarchical organization" (Weinberg, 1983, p. 107). Weinberg has found this distinction to be exaggerated, however, with the focus frequently on the large scale and not on the largely noncontroversial functions of such agencies as recreation departments nor the small service business. Perry and Porter (1983) argued that any difference between sectors in terms of management context is related to the environment within which the work occurs and not by the individual whom the sector attracts and employs. In a study designed to look at the service ethic of public and business managers Buchanan (1975) hypothesized that the loyalty and dedication associated with public service would result in public managers reporting greater job involvement. Findings were just the opposite, however, indicating deeper personal involvement

among private sector managers.

Based on empirical research Rainey, Backoff, and Levine (1983) suggested that the current body of knowledge does not provide clear and concise answers to support or rebut propositions about the differences between organizations of different sectors. Murray (1983), and Weisbrod and Schlesinger (1981) concurred that more study is needed before generalizations can be made. However, there do appear to be a number of important differences which cannot be ignored when doing management research.

Sector Bias

". . . [O]wnership type constitutes a fairly easily observed characteristic of an organization. It thus provides a potentially useful informational signal for consumers. If those [customers] purchasing services cannot directly observe product quality, but if they believe that this quality is related systematically to organizational form, they may use ownership as a signal of the reliability of producer claims" (Weisbrod & Schlesinger, 1981, p. 4). Sector bias was defined in Chapter 1 as the tendency of an individual to favor one sector over another, other things being equal, for the purchase of services or goods. It is believed to be influenced by the images, beliefs, and attitude of the individual (Havitz, 1987). Although the connection between image (the sum of beliefs, ideas, and

impressions a person has of an object) and behavior is not clear, a number of studies have indicated that it does exist and its effects should not be underrated (Boulding, 1956; Havitz, 1987; Kotler, 1982; Normann, 1984; & Topor, 1986).

Numerous studies have been conducted to examine the presence of sector bias. Research by Havitz (1987), Henderson and Cooper (1983), and Lovingood and Mitchell (1978) supported the hypothesis that services provided by the public and private sectors are perceived as being different. Hansmann (1986), Schlesinger (1984), Steinfeld (1973), and Weisbrod and Schlesinger (1981) found labels of "less trustworthy" attached to proprietary agencies; Rubenstein, Mundy, and Rubenstein (1978) found proprietary social services identified as "deficient, discriminatory, and dehumanizing"; and Nelson and Krashinsky (1973) found proprietary firms in day care, nursing home, and hospital industries described as "exploitation rather than responsible services" (p. 87). A general wariness of for-profit providers was also found by Belitsky (1969), Breenblatt (1969) and Steinfeld (1973). Gronhaug and Arndt (1979) found complaining behavior and reported dissatisfaction to be more prevalent among consumers of private as opposed to public sector products. However, they hypothesized this could be due to the public's perception that the public sector is less responsive to

complaints and dissatisfaction than the private sector, so individuals were more likely to verbalize their complaints in the private sector where they would be more likely to achieve a satisfactory response.

Lipset and Schneider (1983), Levine (1984), and Balutis (1985) found low levels of public confidence in the ability of public agencies and officials to provide quality services. Goodsell (1983), in a review of citizen surveys, described a belief that public services cannot perform well due to the lack of incentives to reduce costs, increase productivity, and produce a service that people actually want. The public sector has consequently been thought to be wasteful and unresponsive. Perry and Kraemer (1983) concurred that most of the American people view the public sector with an abiding distrust and disdain. In contrast, Weisbrod and Schlesinger (1981) claimed that consumers had more confidence in the nonprofit sector. Goodsell (1983) found that a majority of the clients of public services reported satisfaction with the encounter and service provided. In fact, Goodsell concluded "In most instances bureaucratic personnel are described as helpful, efficient, fair, considerate, and courteous. They are, furthermore, usually perceived as trying to assist, ready to listen, and even willing to adapt the rules and look out for the client's interests" (p. 29). Levine (1984) also agreed that, although there is a decline in trust and support for

public administrators, citizens are actually much more favorable in their evaluation of concrete experiences with public agencies and public employees. Findings by Lipset and Schneider (1983) indicated confidence levels are usually highest for local government and lowest for federal government services. Katz, Gutek, Kahn, and Barton (1975) hypothesized that the generalized attitude toward public services are based not so much on experiences as the impact of mass media and cultural beliefs. A study commissioned by the Jackson County, Missouri, Department of Parks and Recreation (cited in Havitz, 1987) showed a large majority of survey respondents preferred to deal with public agencies rather than then private agencies; Bill Bird, Director of Metropolitan Dade County, Florida, Department of Parks and Recreation felt people appear to accept private sector services more readily than public sector services; Ralph Cryder, Director of Los Angeles County, California, Department of Parks and Recreation, on the other hand, claimed people do not care who provides a service as long as it is provided and it is a quality service (Havitz, 1987).

Sector bias also occurs in the consumption of organized recreation services if the consumer's images, beliefs, and attitude regarding the sector effects his or her choice decision (Havitz, 1987). If between sector differences in recreation services are readily visible to

an informed consumer who has a sector bias, the consumer needs only to seek out an option within the appropriate sector which provides the desired services" (p. 58). Based on these assumptions, Havitz (1987) conducted a study to find out if sector bias influenced one's attitude toward various recreation options. He found that there was a correlation between the subjects' attitude toward sectors and their recreation choice behavior. "Although further research is needed before definitive inferences can be made, this [was] the first study that has explicitly examined the link between overall attitudes toward the sectors and recreation behavior, and the evidence suggests the presence of such a linkage" (p. 169). The study further found that sector bias did not affect responses toward high quality services depicted in the treatment videotapes, suggesting that a facility which offers high service quality may be able to overcome "sector bias" previously held by its consumers.

Service Quality

Recent surveys have shown that consumers are more quality conscious (Haywood, Alleyne, Duffus, & Downing, 1985). They increasingly have found themselves paying more for service, and liking it less (Berger, 1987). There is no definition of a "service" which has been generally accepted (Gronroos, 1987). The definition provided in

Chapter 1 was: Work performed by individuals or firms which yields benefits and satisfactions for others, where no goods or commodities are transferred. This definition combines those by Blois (1974) and Shapiro (1981). Service quality was defined as: A measure of how well the service level delivered matches customer expectations (taken from Lewis and Booms, 1982, p. 99). Thus service quality is dependent on the expectations of the customer and his/her perceptions of the service experience (Berry, 1988; Berry, Zeithaml, & Parasuraman, 1985; Gronroos, 1983; Lewis & Booms, 1982; Smith, 1987; Wyckoff, 1988; Zeithaml, 1988). Monitoring the perceived quality of a service can assist managers in the management of quality (Lewis & Booms, 1982).

Until recently the managerial importance of the concept of service quality has been relatively ignored. Now, because of its central importance to the success of service agencies (Sinha & Willborn, 1985), research in the area is increasing. Interestingly, however, in a study of 307 service organizations in Southern Florida, Shetty (1987) found that most employees could not define the concept of service quality. Peters and Waterman (1982) in In Search of Excellence proclaimed that the corporation with the greatest market share and profitability are the ones which are obsessed by the pursuit of quality--that it pervades every action and decision of the organization. In

a Gallup Organization poll of senior executives during the summer of 1987 (Uttal, 1987) service quality was picked overwhelmingly as the most important factor for success. The costs of poor quality greatly outweigh the costs of good quality (Wyckoff, 1988). "It takes 12 positive quality attributes to overcome the impact of one negative one" (Haywood, Alleyne, Duffus, & Downing, 1985, p. 65). Improved quality means more satisfied customers; this results in improved internal atmosphere, and externally the customers will buy more, spread the word about their satisfaction, and thus new customers will be attracted.

Service, as perceived by the consumer, is the result of interactions of three groups of resources: contact personnel, the physical environment and consumers (Chase, 1978; Gronroos, 1983; Mill, 1986). The importance of the person-to-person encounter between the buyer and seller is paramount (Berry, Zeithaml, & Parasuraman, 1985; George, 1977; Gronroos, 1983; Hostage, 1975; Martin, 1986; Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel, & Gutman, 1985). The service encounter is that point of interaction between the employees and the customers (Mill, 1986). "Customer satisfaction and repeat patronage may be determined solely by the quality of the personal encounter" (Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel, & Gutman, 1985). However, the environment should not be taken for granted (Knopp, 1972). Changes should be made in the service environment based on

knowledge of how the environment functions to provide for the needs of the consumers. Elements in the environment include both physical and social areas.

Evaluation of a service is different from evaluation of a good due to four unique characteristics of services (Berry, 1981, 1988; Gronroos, 1982, 1983, 1987; Haywood, Alleyne, Duffus, & Downing, 1985; Hollander, 1979; Shetty, 1987; Zeithaml, 1981; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1985). They are:

1. Intangibility--Services are performances; they cannot be seen, felt, tasted, or touched as goods can.
2. Inseparability of production and consumption--There is simultaneous production and consumption which characterizes most services. The customer is frequently present during the production; there is high interaction.
3. Heterogeneity--There is a potential for high variability in the performance of services; it is difficult to standardize service because it is performed, usually by humans.
4. Perishability--Services cannot be saved; it is difficult to synchronize supply and demand.

In choosing between alternatives there are a limited set of attributes which play a critical role. These are called "determinant attributes" (Myers & Alpert, 1968; Swan

& Comb, 1976). The criteria used to evaluate services is often difficult to specify. Buyers frequently rely on such criteria as surroundings, equipment, service personnel and price when selecting services (Parasuraman & Zeithaml, 1982). The evaluation process may be viewed on a continuum with three basic categories of qualities (Darby & Karni, 1973; Nelson and Krashinsky, 1973; Zeithaml, 1981). The first category, "search qualities", are those attributes which the consumer can evaluate prior to purchasing the product. This would include such things as appearance, price, and location. The second category, "experience qualities", includes those attributes which can be recognized only after purchase or during consumption of the product. Aspects such as individualized attention, enjoyment, and purchase satisfaction would fall under this category. The third and final category of qualities is "credence qualities" which are those attributes the consumer may find impossible to evaluate even after purchase and consumption because he/she lacks sufficient knowledge to appraise it. Examples would include the appropriateness of an exercise routine or the urgency involved in having the brakes on one's car relined. Services are dominated by the experience and credence qualities (Zeithaml, 1981) making them more difficult to evaluate.

Zeithaml (1981) suggested that consumers use price and

physical facilities (i.e., building, personnel, equipment) as major cues to service quality. Eiglier and Langeard (1977) likewise supported this arguing that consumers tend to use price as an indicator of quality for a service more than they do for a good. From studies conducted by his organization of service establishments, however, Krughoff (1981) has found little correlation between quality and price.

Various theoretical frameworks have been developed concerning service quality. Sasser, Olsen, and Wyckoff (1978) identified three different dimensions of service performance: (1) levels of material; (2) facilities; and (3) personnel. The model developed by Sasser, Olsen and Wyckoff indicated that service quality involves more than just the outcome, including also the manner in which it is delivered (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985).

Lehtinen (cited in Lindqvist, 1987; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985) proposed two approaches to defining service quality. His first approach utilizes a three-dimensional service quality model which shows quality as dependent on: (1) physical quality, including the physical aspects of the service; (2) interactive quality, including the interaction of personnel with consumers, and consumers with other consumers; and (3) corporate quality, or the corporate image. His second approach utilizes a two-dimensional model which looks at quality from the

customer's point of view and claims the consumer can perceive: (1) process quality (a qualitative evaluation of his participation in the service production process); and (2) output quality (an evaluation of the result of the service production process).

Gronroos (1982, 1983, 1984, 1987) has presented a service quality model based on five areas: (1) expected service; (2) perceived service; (3) technical quality; (4) functional quality; and (5) corporate image. The quality of service expected by the consumer is based on traditional marketing activities, traditions and ideology, word-of-mouth communication and prior experience with the service. Perceived service is the result of the consumer's perception of the service itself. This is dependent on the technical quality dimension, the functional quality dimension, and the corporate image. The technical quality dimension, also known as the outcome dimension, is what the consumer actually gets in the service transaction such as the facilities and equipment which are made available to him. This dimension can frequently be measured objectively. The functional quality, or process dimension refers to how the consumer receives the service, such as how crowded the facility is, individual attention given to the consumer, accessibility, and staff behavior. This dimension is perceived more subjectively. Finally, the corporate image is the result of how the consumer perceives

the firm's outward appearance. This is built up mainly by the technical and functional qualities of the service. In applying his service quality model to individual case studies, Gronroos (1983, 1984) found that the functional quality dimension is more important to perceived service than the technical quality, as long as the technical quality is on a satisfactory level. "Consumers can excuse temporary problems with the technical quality if the functional quality is good enough, according to managers surveyed" (Gronroos, 1983, p. 34).

A more recent model of service quality as perceived by consumers has been offered by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985; Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman, 1988). This model focuses on "gaps" that exist between "executive perceptions of service quality and the tasks associated with service delivery to consumers. These gaps can be major hurdles in attempting to deliver a service which consumers would perceive as being of high quality" (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985, p. 44). These gaps are:

Gap 1: The difference between consumer expectations and management perceptions of consumer expectations.

Gap 2: The difference between management perceptions of consumer expectations and service quality specifications.

- Gap 3: The difference between service quality specifications and the service actually delivered.
- Gap 4: The difference between service delivery and what is communicated about the service to consumers.
- Gap 5: The difference between consumer expectations and perceptions, or "perceived service quality", which in turn depends on the size and direction of the above four gaps associated with the delivery of service quality on the marketer's side (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1988, pp. 35-36).

Although managers increasingly acknowledge the importance of quality, many still define and measure it in terms of the company's perspective. The gap between objective quality (the company's predetermined ideal standard) and perceived quality (the consumer's judgment about the product) must be closed (Frankovich & Baldwin, 1988; Zeithaml, 1988). Several researchers have conducted studies to compare the opinions of service providers to service consumers concerning quality. In a study surveying marketing research service suppliers and clients, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1982) found suppliers may not understand the relative importance clients attribute to various factors used to evaluate and select these services.

A study which focused on the grocery industry also indicated a need for managers to bring their perceptions closer to those of their customers (Pisharodi, 1987). Research by Brown and Swartz (1989) in the area of medical services also uncovered gaps, and suggested professionals should adopt a broad perspective when defining and examining their service offerings and assessing their clients' evaluation.

Some studies have also been conducted in the outdoor recreation industry concerning the gap in the perception of quality. Some of these studies have shown some agreement between the predictions of management and recreationists' opinions, including studies by Absher (1986); Clark, Hendee, and Campbell (1971); Buhyoff, Wellman, Harvey, and Fraser (1978); and Rosenthal and Driver (1983). Lucas (1964; 1970) and Twight and Catton (1975) found managers' perceptions of resource quality varied significantly from that of visitors. Hendee and Harris (1970) found misperceptions by wilderness managers of user attitude. Peterson (1974a, 1974b) studied wilderness managers and summer canoeists in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and found they often differed on opinions of the desirability of conditions. Foster and Jackson (1979) and LaPage (1983) also proposed that managers' decisions may not reflect the desires of campers. Absher, McAvoy, Burdge, and Gramann (1988) assessed the accuracy of both commercial and public

recreation managers on the Upper Mississippi River in predicting the opinions of recreationists on selected resource management issues. Discrepancies were again found.

Howard and Crompton (1984) focused on municipal leisure service organizations and found that managers have a limited knowledge of the people who use their services. Looking at three cities of varying sizes from Florida, Oregon, and Texas, they found that the services provided by municipal leisure service organizations and the manner in which they are delivered are often largely incompatible with the needs of the majority of the adult consumers. As a result of a study looking at the work activities of management personnel, Busser and Bannon (1987) found "keeping up to date on participant/community needs and requirements" ranked among the top six items of importance.

Role of Management in Service Quality

When looking at service quality, the initial inspection should be concerned with the top management. Peters and Waterman (1982) stressed that the success or failure of an organization may be directly attributed to the chief executive officer. The role of the manager in quality service is noted again and again in the literature. "Quality service begins with senior management. If they are not openly committed, it is difficult, if not

impossible, for their underlings to be committed" (Hoffman, 1987, p. 17). "Quality service is a journey, and leadership is the driving force behind it. Leaders not only set the direction, but also provide the power that gets things started and keeps them rolling" (Berry, 1989, p. 81). "The most important factor in outstanding customer service is top management. When he eats, sleeps, and breathes service, the rest catch on quickly" (Uttal, 1987, p. 98). "Quality must be led by the C. E. O., with every individual in the organization focused on and deeply involved in providing products and services that will meet customer requirements" (Nadler, 1988, p. 19). "Service sinks in when managers talk and act service, service, service--day in and day out--in obvious and subtle ways" (Bell & Zemke, 1989, p. 29). "Without simple, concrete, and visible demonstrations of desirable behavior from the top, ideas about quality are unlikely to have any lasting effect on the staff" (Normann, 1984, p. 111). "The focus on quality and a common language that supports it must come from managers" (Frankovich & Baldwin, 1988, p. 18).

In work an employee often accepts authority by permitting his/her behavior to be guided by the decisions of his/her superior without an independent examination of that decision (Simon, 1976). Managers of park and recreation services, as well as other professional services, would like to feel their decisions are rational

and free from bias. However, research in cognitive psychology has suggested that human performance in decision-making often deviates from the ideal of rational choice (Dirkin, 1983). Managers frequently make decisions on the basis of their own perceptions and preferences, beliefs about what others prefer, and beliefs about what others should prefer (White, 1966). A manager deals with personal needs and attitudes to serve to guide his/her actions; and organizational role obligations that provide guides to ensure the organization's well-being (Aram, 1976). Sometimes these are mutually supportive, and sometimes they conflict. When uncertainty exists, decision-makers will try to alter how they perceive the situation to be, thus simplifying the decision situation. This may lead to error (Schwenk, 1985). Private interests are common aspects of organizational behavior, and often provide a basis for decisions (Aram, 1976). Rowe (1984) has contended that most executives make decisions based on personal preference rather than rational deliberation. His rule states "In any complex decision where personal or behavioural factors apply, the individual's preference will dominate the results" (p. 38). He cited Peer Solberg, a researcher in decision making, as describing the final confirmation of a decision as "an exercise in prejudices, of making sure that one's implicit favourite indeed will be the right choice" (p. 39). Clark, Hendee, and Campbell

(1971) and Merriam, Wald, and Ramsey (1972) found even though visitors and managers held similar goals about activities, there were substantial differences in their perceptions about how these goals might be reached. Managers' perceptions of recreationists' opinions were closer to the managers' own personal opinions than the actual opinions obtained directly from the recreationists. Also, an agency may not always be aware of what constitutes quality to the users, so the managers make decisions based on their own perceptions and preferences (LaPage, 1983). Peterson (1974a) cautioned that if managers base important decisions on their own feelings and beliefs, recreationists are likely to be dissatisfied in many respects.

Service Quality Measurement

Measurement techniques have been developed to measure service value from the consumer's perspective. Nyquist and Booms (1987) developed the Critical Incident Technique to allow researchers to collect customer stories using a systematic, controlled, qualitative research process. Studies have verified the technique to be simple, powerful, valid, and reliable (cited in Nyquist & Booms, 1987, p. 13). The Critical Incident Technique focuses on questions, not a hypothesis. When customers are interviewed they are asked to answer the following questions:

1. Think of a time when you received a favorable impression of the service at a [place].
2. Describe in detail the circumstances of the incident. Who did what? Who said what? (The researcher probes until the entire incident can be visualized.)
3. Think of a time when you received an unfavorable impression of the service at a [place].
4. Describe in detail the circumstances of the incident. Who did what? Who said what?

Through a sorting process, categories are assigned to responses. The emerging categories are a way for researchers to think about how customers think about service quality, and can become the basis for understanding what criteria consumers use in evaluating service experiences.

More recently, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) developed a multiple-item scale called SERVQUAL to be utilized as an objective measure of service quality as perceived by consumers (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1988). In the early stages of the development of SERVQUAL, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) conducted 12 focus group interviews with consumers of four different services (retail banking, credit card, securities brokerage, and product repair and maintenance). The results of these studies indicated that, regardless of the type of service,

customers used basically the same general criteria in evaluating service quality. They further found these criteria fit ten different dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, communication, credibility, security, competence, courtesy, understanding/knowing the customer, and access. These 10 dimensions of service quality served as the basic structure for SERVQUAL.

The original SERVQUAL instrument consisted of 97 items (fitting the ten dimensions) and used a seven-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" (7) to "Strongly Disagree" (1), and "Neutral" at the mid-point (4) (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). No verbal labels were attached to the other levels. The survey was administered to 200 adults, 40 users each of five distinct services (appliance repair and maintenance, retail banking, long-distance telephone, securities brokerage, and credit cards). All data were pooled together as the goal was to produce a scale with general applicability. Through a series of analyses they ended with a final pool of 34 items representing seven distinct dimensions: five of the original 10 (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, understanding/knowing customers and access) with the other original five collapsing into two distinct dimensions.

The new 34-item scale was administered to 200 consumers each of four services (banking, credit card, appliance repair and maintenance, and long-distance

telephone). Results indicated a need for further refinement. The final SERVQUAL instrument contained 22 items and represented five distinct dimensions of service quality: (1) tangibles (such as equipment and facilities, and appearance of personnel); (2) reliability (the ability to perform as promised, dependably and accurately); (3) responsiveness (the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service); (4) assurance (employees' knowledge and ability to convey trust); and (5) empathy (caring provided to the customers) (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1988).

In evaluating the external validity of the SERVQUAL instrument, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) regressed the overall quality perception scores against the SERVQUAL scores for the individual dimensions. The adjusted R^2 values were found to be statistically significant for all four services. The dimension of "reliability" was found to be the most important in all four service settings. "Assurance" ranked second in all four cases. The dimension "tangibles" was third for banks and fourth for the other three. "Responsiveness" was fourth for banks and third for the other three settings. "Empathy" was found to be the least important dimension in all cases. The total scale reliability has been shown to be .92 (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988, p. 29). The scale has likewise been shown to possess both content

validity, convergent validity, and construct validity (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988, pp. 29-30).

SERVQUAL has been utilized recently in the recreation service industry. Mackay (1987) investigated the appropriateness and relative importance of the five service quality dimensions in four different types of public recreation programs of Halifax, Nova Scotia. She found them to be valid measures of recreation program quality but the relative importance of the dimensions varied across activities. She classified leisure services along a continuum according to the relative importance of people and facilities in their delivery. In all four activities, the "reliability" dimension was found to be the most important. However, participants in facility intensive activities (i.e., ice hockey) rated the dimension of "tangibles" second, while those in personal intensive service activities (i.e., recreation classes) rated the dimensions of "responsiveness", "assurance", and "empathy" higher than "tangibles".

Hamilton, Crompton, and Moore conducted a similar study in 1988 to determine which SERVQUAL dimensions were the most important in the context of parks. They found support for use of the dimensions but suggested the "empathy" and "responsiveness" dimensions could actually be merged together. The study also supported Mackay's finding (1987) relative to facilities/people level of importance.

In the case of park services, where staff did not have high direct involvement with users, the dimension of "tangibles" received the dominant ranking. "Reliability" ranked second, which was consistent with other studies showing the high degree of importance of this dimension (Mackay, 1987; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). The least important dimension in the study by Hamilton, Crompton, and Moore (1988) was found to be "empathy" which was believed to be due to a lack of desire on the consumers' part for the staff to give them caring individualized attention.

Summary

The literature review has addressed several theoretical areas related to the problem of studying differences among management of agencies providing leisure services. To date, much work has been done to describe distinct differences between the public, voluntary and private sectors. These sector differences can be classified into three major divisions: (1) environmental factors (factors external to the organization); (2) organization-environment transactions (relationship of the organization to the entities in its environment); and (3) internal structures and processes (internal operations and structures of organizations) (Rainey, Backoff, & Levine, 1976).

Based on these differences, assumptions have been made that the administrative behavior of managers within the three sectors will also differ. Indeed, these assumptions have been found to contribute to sector bias, or the tendency of an individual to favor one sector over another for the purchase of services or goods. One important area in which the behavior of management is expected to differ is in how they define service quality. This aspect directed the focus of this study.

Service quality is a concept receiving increasing attention by management in all sectors. Most research, however, has focused on the clients' perception of service quality. Little research has been done to address how management defines service quality and to determine whether or not that definition indeed differs between management of the public, voluntary and private sectors.

One of the most recent approaches to the measurement of service quality is based on the model presented by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988). This approach identifies five distinct dimensions of the concept including tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, empathy, and assurance. These dimensions formed the basis for the definitions identified in this study.

In the next chapter the procedures used for collecting the data are presented. This includes a description of the selection of the subjects, instrumentation used,

administration of the instrument, and finally the statistical analyses designed to address the research hypotheses.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

The provision of leisure fitness services is assumed by the public, voluntary, and private sectors. Based on identified differences between the sectors, management is expected to display differences in behavior. One important area in which the behavior is expected to differ is in their definition of service quality. Consumers utilize preconceived signals regarding "ownership" in their decisions regarding the purchase of services or goods.

In defining service quality five distinct dimensions have been identified: (1) tangibles; (2) reliability; (3) responsiveness; (4) assurance; and (5) empathy (Berry, Zeithaml, and Parasuraman, 1985). The problem of this study was to identify differences in definition of service quality among fitness industry managers utilizing these five components. The following procedures are discussed in this chapter: (1) selection of subjects, (2) instrumentation, (3) administration of the instrument, and (4) analysis of the data.

Selection of Subjects

The provision of leisure services is largely assumed by three sectors: the public sector (services provided by

the government for anyone who would like to participate); the voluntary or private nonprofit sector (for participating members); and the commercial or private for-profit sector (providing services for those willing and able to pay). Although each separate sector has its own unique characteristic in terms of philosophy, goals, organization, and finance, they all share the common goal of providing a similar service for the community in which they are located. Due to the differences between the sectors, however, it was hypothesized that managers in the three sectors would exhibit diversity in regard to their definition of service quality. The three leisure service sectors were represented by the following agencies: municipal recreation departments were used to represent the public sector; YMCA's were used to represent the voluntary sector; and private athletic clubs were used to represent the commercial or private for-profit sector.

From a list secured from the Great Lakes Region office of the National Recreation and Park Association 1,020 potential municipal recreation departments were identified. A list obtained from the YMCA National Office contained 464 potential subjects from YMCA's within the Great Lakes Region. Unfortunately, a complete list of private athletic clubs throughout the Great Lakes Region could not be obtained. However, the International Racquet Sports Association (IRSA) was approached and agreed to provide a

list of 209 member clubs in the region. For this study, it was assumed that IRSA club members from the eight state Great Lakes Region were reasonably representative of the entire population of private athletic clubs throughout that same area.

Although large samples are desirable in survey research, budgetary reality is frequently a constraint of the optimal sample size. A number of strategies have been developed to provide an adequate sample size while meeting this constraint. Sudman (1983, p. 157), for example, described a general sampling rule indicating that the sample needs to be large enough so there are 100 or more units in each category of the major breakdowns and a minimum of 20-50 within the minor breakdowns. Alreck and Settle (1985) agree with this procedure. In order to accommodate this rule a sample of 200 agencies per sector (for the private sector the entire 209 sports clubs) were invited to participate in this study. A response rate of at least 50% was expected.

"For those cases where simple random sampling is appropriate, simple random samples and systematic samples will be about the same except in very unusual situations of periodicities" (Sudman, 1983, p. 169). Through an inspection of the population lists no periodicities were noticed. It was decided, therefore, to utilize the systematic sampling technique for the list of municipal

park and recreation departments and the list of YMCA's. The researcher first determined the number of entries on the list and divided this total by the number of subjects to be invited from each setting. For example, on a list of 464 YMCA's throughout the Great Lakes region, when divided by 200 it was determined that one out of every two agencies on the list were to be included in the sample (with a remainder of 64). A starting point was designated by selecting a random number (from a table of random numbers [Arkin & Colton, 1962]) from one through 64. The randomized start ensured that all entries were given an equal chance of selection (Alreck & Settle, 1985). The researcher then took every second agency on the list to secure the invited sample for the YMCA sector. The same procedure was then utilized for the listing of municipal park and recreation agencies.

The focus of the study was on understanding how service quality is defined by the managers of the leisure fitness industry. The role of the manager in quality service is noted frequently in the literature (Bell & Zemke, 1989; Berry, 1989; Frankovich & Baldwin, 1988; Hoffman, 1987; Nadler, 1988; Normann, 1984; Uttal, 1987). Peters and Waterman (1982) stressed that the success or failure of an organization may be directly attributed to the chief executive officer. Unaware of what constitutes quality to the users, managers often base decisions on

their own perceptions and preferences (LaPage, 1983). In the correspondence for this study, therefore, it was clearly stated that the survey was to be completed "by the chief administrator who oversees the leisure fitness services."

Instrumentation

The questionnaire used in this study (Appendix A) included a section designed to obtain situational background information of the selected managers and agencies. A second section was designed to measure managers' definitions of service quality including a portion of an instrument which has been previously developed by researchers to measure service quality. A final section was designed to obtain demographic information about the responding managers.

The first section of the questionnaire contained questions which sought general background information about the managers and agencies. The first question asked for the administrative title of the respondent. The objective of this question was to confirm that the one completing the survey was indeed one who could be a chief administrator overseeing the leisure fitness services. Other questions in this section sought information on the change in attendance at the agency within the past year, as well as the methods the agency was currently using to evaluate

customer satisfaction.

The second section of the questionnaire focused on the managers' perceptions of the components of service quality as measured by SERVQUAL. The first part of SERVQUAL was used to measure definition of service quality. SERVQUAL was originally developed as a scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988) and consists of two parts. The first part measures the extent to which one thinks a firm/organization should possess the service features described. The second part of SERVQUAL measures the extent one thinks a firm/organization actually possesses the service features described. For the present study it was felt that the first section of SERVQUAL was appropriate for measuring managers' definitions of service quality. Some slight modifications were made to the instrument to make it appropriate for leisure services. The 22-item scale measures a respondent's attitude toward service quality based on the five dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

A Likert scale of seven divisions was used to respond to the SERVQUAL component of the survey. Responses included Very Strongly Disagree (1), Strongly Disagree (2), Disagree (3), Undecided (4), Agree (5), Strongly Agree (6), and Very Strongly Agree (7). The seven point scale was chosen to provide a wide variation in response options

while maintaining a relatively simple answering process. Following Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) some of the statements were worded positively and some were worded negatively¹. Resultant scores of each dimension could thus be equated with the respondent's definition of service quality.

To allow measurement of criterion-related validity of the SERVQUAL instrument a question was included in the second section which asked the manager to rate each of the five dimensions of service quality in terms of relative importance. A total of 100 points were to be distributed among the dimensions according to how important the respondent felt each feature was to the quality of the services offered by his/her agency. The corresponding ratings could thus be correlated with the mean dimension scores achieved in the SERVQUAL component.

The third section of the questionnaire sought

¹The wording of attitude statements may influence response. Cronbach (1960), Couch and Keniston (1966), Wells (1961), and O'Neill (1965) found that an instrument worded in favor of an issue produced more favorable responses and an instrument worded against an issue produced less favorable responses, while a balanced scale presenting a two-sided message was more reliable.

demographic information about the respondent (i.e., the manager of the facility). Included in this section were questions dealing with gender, age, level of education, educational course of study, and salary.

Administration of the Instrument

Two pre-tests were given to ensure the clarity of the survey instrument. The research instrument was first given to a group of 10 graduate students and 12 faculty at Indiana University for their feedback concerning its clarity and appearance (Appendix B). Adjustments were made based upon their suggestions. The new instrument was then mailed to 30 leisure fitness managers (ten from each of the three sectors) for preliminary testing (Appendix C). A cover letter accompanied the questionnaire (Appendix D). Of the surveys mailed, seven were returned from the voluntary sector (70%), four were returned from the public sector (40%), and none were returned from the private sector (0%). Only one mailing was utilized in the pilot study. The subjects were not included in the final study. Sudman (1983) has claimed that a pilot test of 20 to 50 cases is usually sufficient to discover major flaws in a questionnaire before they damage the main study.

Following a careful inspection of the completed surveys, the main problem in responses seemed to be a tendency for the respondents to circle the polar responses

for the statements used in question number seven. Following a discussion with other researchers it was decided to assign verbal labels to each of the seven response options with "Very Strongly [Disagree]/[Agree]" as the polar choices rather than the previous "Strongly [Disagree]/[Agree]". It was hoped this would encourage more discrimination among answers.

The lack of response from the private sector also presented a concern to the researcher. The situation was explained to John McCarthy, Executive Director of the International Racquet Sports Association (IRSA) of which all private sector subjects were members. He offered to write a cover letter supporting the study (Appendix E). It was decided this letter would be enclosed with the final mailing to each member of the private sector sample who had not returned the first copy of the survey. Although Kennedy and Pinelli (1990) found a sponsor letter had little impact on the response rate, it was felt such a letter might encourage participation.

A modification of the Total Design Method of mail surveying (Dillman, 1978) was followed in conducting this study. Mail surveys have the advantage of being able to reach widely dispersed respondents relatively inexpensively. A pre-survey letter was mailed to each manager within the sample (Appendix F). This followed the finding of Fox, Crask, and Kim (1988) that prenotification

by a letter produced the largest increases in response rates for a mailed survey. This mailing also included a post card (Appendix G) which the receiver was asked to return with any necessary changes if he/she was not the manager of the recreation agency or if the address was incorrect.

Two weeks following the pre-survey letter, a copy of the final format of the questionnaire was mailed to each manager included in the sample. A personal cover letter (Appendix H) accompanied each questionnaire, as well as a self-addressed, stamped envelope for returning the questionnaire. One week following this mailing a post card reminder (Appendix I) was sent to everyone included in the sample. This post card served as a thank-you for those who had already responded and as a friendly and courteous reminder for those who had not. Two weeks later a new cover letter (Appendix J) and a replacement questionnaire were sent to all nonrespondents. Additional mailings beyond these were not made.

Analysis of the Data

Following a descriptive analysis of the sample three main phases of data analysis were conducted to address the research hypotheses posed in this study. These were: (1) investigate the validity and reliability of the SERVQUAL measurement instrument; (2) investigate the differences in

definition of service quality between the three sectors; and (3) investigate any differences between the sectors while holding the demographic variables constant.

The first phase involved procedures to investigate the validity and reliability of the SERVQUAL instrument. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to evaluate the internal consistency/reliability of the items used to measure the dimension levels of SERVQUAL (Cronbach, 1951). Internal consistency indicates similarity in measurement across items, meaning they are working together to discriminate among the respondents (Mueller, 1986). Cronbach's alpha treats each item as an alternate test form and establishes a consistency of measurement across forms. It is based on the consistency of responses to all items in the test (Anastasi, 1988). Cronbach's alpha has been identified as a relevant procedure for tests measuring a psychological construct such as attitude (Mueller, 1986). It is important that all items are measuring the same underlying variable, or the psychological construct. All items must discriminate similarly among test takers.

To achieve overall importance ratings, each respondent was asked to distribute a total of 100 points among the five dimensions of service quality. This was to be based on the relative importance he/she felt each dimension was to the quality of services offered by his/her agency. The results of this distribution were correlated

using Pearson correlation with the mean score value of items which comprised each dimension of SERVQUAL to establish criterion-related validity.

The second phase of the study investigated the differences in definition of service quality between the sectors. One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for this phase of the study. Analysis of variance is a method of statistical inference that enables one to evaluate whether there is any systematic difference among a set of means (Hopkins & Glass, 1978). ANOVA is a very powerful statistical technique. One of the most remarkable features of it is its breadth of applicability (Anderson, 1972) and it is widely accepted for use with psychological statistics. Although a Likert measuring scale might be considered ordinal in nature, Anderson (1972) supported the appropriateness of parametric tests such as ANOVA, claiming "the choice of statistical test would be governed by purely statistical considerations and have nothing to do with scale type" (p. 59). Labovitz (1972) and Young (1981) provided further support for the treatment of ordinal variables as interval data to allow the use of more powerful and clearly interpretable statistics.

For those comparisons where significant differences were found to exist, further testing using Tukey's Multiple Comparison was conducted to identify differences between specific sectors. This procedure allowed the researcher to

identify which of the treatment means differed significantly (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1983). Although there are other procedures available, Tukey's test for multiple comparisons was used because it is one of the most conservative of the popular methods (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1983). The Bonferroni procedure was applied to control the overall comparison error rate for multiple hypotheses the Bonferroni procedure was applied. To maintain an overall significance level of .05 each of the comparisons was tested at .017 (.05 divided by the number of comparisons which was three) (Wilkinson, 1987).

The third and final phase of the study investigated differences between the sectors while holding the demographic variables (gender, age, level of education, and salary) constant. Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) is a method of statistically controlling variables (Hopkins & Glass, 1978) and was used to identify the "true effect" of the sector on the overall or dimensional score achieved on SERVQUAL.

For all statistical testing data was analyzed using SYSTAT: The System for Statistics (Wilkinson, 1988). Alpha level for the null hypotheses was set at .05.

In summary, following a descriptive analysis of the sample three main phases of statistical analyses were conducted. In the first phase the internal reliability of SERVQUAL was established using Cronbach's alpha

coefficient, and criterion-related validity was measured using Pearson correlation. In the second phase differences in definition of service quality between the sectors were investigated using ANOVA. Finally, differences in definition between the sectors were further analyzed while holding demographic variables constant using ANCOVA. The findings of the three phases of the data analysis are presented in detail and discussed in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, conclusions are drawn concerning the study.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this chapter the findings resulting from the procedures discussed in Chapter 3 are presented. The chapter is organized into the following sections: (1) Introduction; (2) Sample Characteristics; (3) Instrument Evaluation; (4) Evaluation of Sector Differences; (5) Discussion of Findings; and (6) Summary.

Introduction

As discussed earlier, the literature seems to indicate that a number of differences exist between the public, voluntary, and private sectors. One important area in which the sectors are expected to differ is in their definition of service quality (Balutis, 1985; Havitz, 1987; Levine, 1984; Lipset & Schneider, 1983). The goal of this study was to investigate possible differences in definition of service quality among fitness industry managers utilizing the five components of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy as identified by Berry, Zeithaml, and Parasuraman (1985). The first step in achieving this goal was to test the SERVQUAL scale for internal reliability and criterion-related validity. The research hypotheses stated in Chapter 1 were then tested

using ANOVA, Tukey's test for multiple comparisons and ANCOVA.

Description of the Sample

The population under study consisted of chief administrators who oversee leisure fitness services in the public, voluntary, and private for-profit sectors. A sample of 200 managers from municipal park and recreation departments throughout the eight-state Great Lakes region were used to represent the public sector; 200 from YMCA's throughout the region to represent the voluntary sector, and 209 from private athletic clubs which were members of the International Racquet Sports Association (IRSA) throughout the region to represent the private for-profit sector.

The results of the survey effort are summarized in Table 1. The initial mailing was May 28, 1990 and consisted of 609 pre-survey letters with returnable post cards. Of these, 83 post cards were returned by respondents (43 from the public sector, 22 from the voluntary sector, and 18 from the private sector) and included appropriate changes which were to be made to the mailing lists. From the initial mailing six (6) letters to the public sector were undeliverable and were replaced with new systematically sampled managers. In the private sector three (3) letters were undeliverable. However, because the entire population

of I.R.S.A. clubs throughout the eight-state region was already used, these could not be replaced. This did not present a problem because the total sample still exceeded the sample sizes of the public and voluntary sectors.

The survey was first mailed to the sample of 606 managers on June 11, 1990; the same number of reminder post cards was mailed on June 18, 1990. As of July 2, 1990, 309 of those surveyed had responded to the initial questionnaire. A second copy of the survey was mailed to those from the sample who had not yet responded. By July 20, 1990, 98 additional surveys had been returned. Of the completed questionnaires nine (9) were not included in the data because they had not been completed correctly. The overall response rate was 65.7% (398 of the effective sample population of 606). The voluntary sector had a response rate of 79.0%, the public sector a response rate of 57.5%, and the private sector a response rate of 60.7%. The private sector response rate to the first mailing of the survey was lower than that for the public or voluntary sector. However, that percentage picked up considerably after the second mailing of the survey. Perhaps this could be partially attributed to the inclusion of a letter of support from John McCarthy, Executive Director of I.R.S.A. in the second mailing to the private sector.

The major disadvantage of the mail survey method is the problem of nonresponse bias (Alreck & Settle, 1985;

Table 1
Survey Response Rate

	Voluntary Sector		Public Sector		Private Sector		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Pre-Survey Letters Mailed	200		200		209		609	
Undeliverable Pre-Surveys								
Replaced	0	0	(6)	(3.0)	0	0	(6)	1.0
Not Replaced	0	0	0	0	3	1.4	3	0.5
Effective Sample Population	200		200		206		606	
First Mailing Surveys Returned	135	67.5	103	51.5	89	43.2	327	54.0
Second Mailing Surveys Returned	25	12.5	19	9.5	36	17.5	80	13.2
Total Surveys Returned	160	80.0	122	61.0	125	60.7	407	67.2
Unusable Returned Surveys	2	1.0	7	3.5	0	0	9	1.5
Response Rate	158	79.0	115	57.5	125	60.7	398	65.7

Miller, 1970; Ognibene, 1971). Any response rate less than 100% has a chance of nonresponse bias (Babbie, 1973; Dillman, 1978). However, following up on nonrespondents is a costly venture. Also, Sosdian and Sharp (1980) found that a failure to respond to a mail survey may be due partly to an access problem (caused by post office handling) rather than resistance. Fowler (1984) also found that if reluctant respondents are prevailed upon to answer, the poor quality of their reporting may actually produce more error than their inclusion in the sample avoided. Also, contacting mail survey nonrespondents in a personal manner such as by phone introduces a treatment not received by the respondent group and may present a bias of its own (Hartman, Fuqua, & Jenkins, 1986). For these reasons coupled with the high response rate achieved, no additional attempts were made to follow up on nonrespondents beyond the follow-up mailings already reported.

Demographics

The descriptive characteristics of the respondents are summarized in Table 2. Of the total respondents, 76.2% were male and 23.8% were female. This result compares to a survey of leisure management personnel conducted in 1986 (Managed Recreation) which indicated most managers in the leisure industry were male, outnumbering female respondents six to one. Although males outnumbered females in this

Table 2
Responding Sample Characteristics*

	Voluntary Sector		Public Sector		Private Sector		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Subjects	158		115		125		398	
Gender								
Male	126	82.4	88	77.2	81	67.5	295	76.2
Female	27	17.6	26	22.8	39	32.5	92	23.8
Age (Years)								
25 or younger	3	1.9	3	2.6	7	5.8	13	3.3
26 - 35	31	20.1	27	23.7	49	40.5	107	27.5
36 - 45	72	46.8	41	36.0	43	35.5	156	40.1
46 - 55	36	23.4	30	26.3	16	13.2	82	21.1
56 or older	12	7.8	13	11.4	6	5.0	31	8.0
Education -- Highest Degree								
High School	1	0.7	5	4.4	15	12.6	21	5.4
Technical/Vocational	0	0.0	1	0.9	1	0.8	2	0.5
Associate's	1	0.7	7	6.1	5	4.2	13	3.4
Bachelor's	117	76.5	63	55.3	69	58.0	249	64.5
Master's	34	22.2	38	33.3	26	21.8	98	25.4
Doctorate	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	2.5	3	0.8

*Percentages are based on the number answering the respective question

Education -- Field of Study*	Voluntary Sector		Public Sector		Private Sector		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Recreation	30	18.5	81	63.8	6	5.5	117	29.4
Physical Education	48	29.6	15	11.8	27	24.8	90	22.6
Business	14	8.6	4	3.1	22	20.2	40	10.1
General	28	17.3	10	7.9	13	11.9	51	12.8
Other	39	24.1	15	11.8	38	34.9	92	23.1

*Numbers and percentages for "Educational Field of Study" include some multiple degrees

current study, it was not by such a large margin. Age of

Age of the respondents varied, with the largest percentage of the overall respondents (40.1%) indicating they were 36 to 45 years of age. The age bracket of 26 to 35 years of age included 27.5% of the respondents, and 21.1% were in the bracket of 46 to 55 old. The private sector differed from both the public and voluntary sectors by having the largest percentage of its respondents (40.5%) in the 26 to 35 years of age group. Results of Pearson chi-square indicated the differences in ages between the sectors were significant at $p=0.001$ (Appendix K).

In terms of highest level of education, 64.5% of the respondents had earned a bachelor's degree, 25.4% had earned a master's degree, and 0.8% had earned a doctorate. Comparing sectors, 76.5% of the respondents in the voluntary sector had bachelor's degrees and 22.2% had master's degrees. The public sector had 55.3% with bachelor's degrees and 33.3% with master's degrees. Of the private sector respondents, 58.0% had bachelor's degrees and 21.8% had master's degrees. Results of Pearson chi-square again indicated these differences were significant.

Of the educational backgrounds indicated, managers in the public sector most frequently cited higher education degrees in recreation (63.8% of the degrees earned) followed by physical education (11.8%). The voluntary sector also identified these two areas as the most frequent

fields of preparation, with physical education cited the most frequently (29.6% of the degrees earned) followed by recreation (18.5%). Physical education background was also most prevalent in the private sector (24.8% of the degrees earned), but was closely followed in frequency by degrees in business (20.2%).

The highest salaries were identified by the private for-profit sector (Table 3). Breaking the private sector down further shows respondents who are also owners of the fitness facilities they manage earn salaries leaning more toward the upper brackets. Through Pearson chi-square, the differences in salary between the sectors was found to be significant at $p=0.001$ (Appendix K). Reported salary levels of respondents showed quite a discrepancy between males and females (Table 4). The most frequently checked range for female managers of all sectors overall was \$20,000 through \$29,999, followed by \$30,000 through \$39,999. Male managers, however, most frequently checked salaries of \$30,000 through \$39,999, followed by \$40,000 through \$49,999. All but one of the 12.6% group of respondents earning \$70,000 or higher were males. This discrepancy concurs with findings indicated in "Salaries in the Industry" (1986).

Table 3

Leisure Fitness Industry Management
Salary by Sector*

Salary	Voluntary Sector		Public Sector		Private Sector		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than \$20,000	11	7.3	12	10.6	**T: 3	2.7	26	6.9
					** (O: 0	0.0)		
					** (N: 3	2.7)		
\$20,000 - \$29,999	20	13.2	28	24.8	T:23	20.5	71	18.9
					(O: 1	0.9)		
					(N:22	19.6)		
\$30,000 - \$39,999	58	38.4	29	25.7	T:18	16.1	105	27.9
					(O: 5	4.5)		
					(N:13	11.6)		
\$40,000 - \$49,000	39	25.8	18	15.9	T:25	22.3	82	21.8
					(O:12	10.7)		
					(N:13	11.6)		
\$50,000 - \$59,000	18	11.9	8	7.1	T:13	11.6	39	10.4
					(O: 2	1.8)		
					(N:11	9.8)		
\$60,000 - \$69,000	2	1.3	11	9.7	T: 3	2.7	16	4.3
					(O: 2	1.8)		
					(N: 1	0.9)		
\$70,000 - \$79,000	3	2.0	7	6.2	T:27	24.1	37	9.8
					(O:16	14.3)		
					(N:11	9.8)		

*Percentages are based on the number answering the respective question

** T = Total Private Managers; O = Managers who are also owners of their private athletic clubs; N = Managers who are not also owners of their private athletic clubs

Table 4
Fitness Industry Management Salary
As Represented by Gender and Sector*

	Voluntary Sector	Public Sector	Private Sector	Total
Less than \$20,000				
Male	5 (4.0%)	5 (5.7%)	3 (4.0%)	13 (4.5%)
Female	6 (23.0%)	7 (26.9%)	0 (0.0%)	13 (14.9%)
\$20,000-\$29,999				
Male	9 (7.3%)	20 (23.0%)	10 (13.3%)	39 (13.6%)
Female	10 (38.5%)	8 (30.8%)	11 (31.4%)	29 (33.3%)
\$30,000-\$39,999				
Male	51 (41.1%)	21 (24.1%)	11 (14.7%)	83 (29.0%)
Female	7 (26.9%)	8 (30.8%)	7 (20.0%)	22 (25.3%)
\$40,000 - \$49,999				
Male	38 (30.6%)	16 (18.4%)	15 (20.0%)	69 (24.1%)
Female	1 (3.8%)	2 (7.7%)	10 (28.6%)	13 (14.9%)
\$50,000 - \$59,999				
Male	16 (12.9%)	8 (9.2%)	7 (9.3%)	31 (10.8%)
Female	2 (7.7%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (17.1%)	8 (9.2%)
\$60,000 - \$69,999				
Male	2 (1.6%)	10 (11.5%)	39 (4.0%)	15 (5.2%)
Female	0 (0.0%)	1 (3.8%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.1%)
\$70,000 or higher				
Male	3 (2.4%)	7 (8.0%)	26 (34.7%)	36 (12.6%)
Female	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.9%)	1 (1.1%)

* Percentages indicate percent of that gender for the specified sector, based on the total number answering the respective questions

Participation and Service Background

The first section of the survey contained questions which sought general background information about the managers and agencies (Appendix A). When asked about participation level, the respondents indicated an overwhelming tendency for participation levels at their respective leisure fitness agencies to have increased over the past year (Table 5). Increased participation ranged from 64-70%, while 24-29% of the agencies showed participation remaining the same and only 4.5-10% reported a decrease in participation.

A series of questions was then asked concerning the managers' perceptions of service quality, including its level of importance to the success of their agencies and its measurement. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed on the importance of service quality to the success of their services (Table 6). Approximately 99% felt it was very important or the most important consideration. However, two thirds of the managers of the voluntary and private sectors felt it was the most important, while two thirds of the public managers were less emphatic by indicating it was very important.

As a follow-up, respondents were asked how they felt the quality of their services could best be measured. Approximately 75% of the respondents indicated that the participants' perception of service quality was

Table 5
Participation in the Leisure Fitness Industry

	Voluntary Sector	Public Sector	Private Sector	Total
Increase:				
1 - 5%	32 (20.3%)	24 (21.4%)	12 (9.6%)	68 (17.2%)
6 - 10%	46 (29.1%)	22 (19.6%)	28 (22.4%)	96 (24.3%)
11 - 20%	18 (11.4%)	14 (12.3%)	17 (13.6%)	49 (12.4%)
21 - 30%	4 (2.5%)	7 (6.3%)	9 (7.2%)	20 (5.1%)
31 - 40%	4 (2.5%)	1 (0.9%)	5 (4.0%)	10 (2.5%)
41 - 50%	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.9%)	2 (1.6%)	3 (0.8%)
> 50%	8 (5.1%)	3 (2.7%)	7 (5.6%)	18 (4.6%)
Total	112 (70.9%)	72 (64.3%)	80 (64.0%)	264 (66.8%)
Decrease:				
1 - 5%	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.9%)	2 (1.6%)	4 (3.5%)
6 - 10%	3 (1.9%)	1 (0.9%)	8 (6.4%)	12 (3.0%)
11 - 20%	3 (1.9%)	2 (1.8%)	1 (0.8%)	6 (1.5%)
21 - 30%	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)
31 - 40%	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
41 - 50%	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
> 50%	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.9%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)
Total	8 (5.1%)	5 (4.5%)	11 (8.8%)	24 (6.1%)
Remained the Same:				
	38 (24.1%)	32 (28.6%)	31 (24.8%)	101 (25.6%)

* Percentages indicate percent of those responding to both of these questions

Table 6
 Importance of Service Quality to Success
 of Leisure Fitness Agency*

Customer Evaluation Conducted									
	Voluntary Sector		Public Sector		Private Sector		Total		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Importance of Service Quality									
Not At All Important	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 0.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 0.3%	
Not Very Important	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	
Somewhat Important	0 0.0%	1 0.6%	1 0.9%	4 3.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 0.3%	5 1.3%	
Very Important	20 12.8%	30 19.2%	18 15.8%	46 40.4%	14 11.2%	31 24.8%	52 13.2%	107 27.1%	
Most Important Consideration	61 39.1%	44 28.2%	21 18.4%	23 20.2%	37 29.6%	43 34.4%	119 30.1%	110 27.8%	
Total	81 51.9%	75 48.1%	40 35.1%	74 64.9%	51 40.8%	74 59.2%	172 43.5%	223 56.5%	

* Percentages are based on those responding to both of these questions

its best measure (Table 7). Total attendance was considered the second best measure of service quality, with the voluntary and private sectors indicating slightly higher support than the public sector.

Interestingly, however, overall more than half of the respondents indicated their agency had not conducted any form of customer evaluation within the past year. By sector just over 50% of the voluntary sector indicated conducting any form of evaluation, while just over 40% of the private sector and only 35% of the public sector did so.

Techniques of consumer evaluation varied among those agencies which utilized them (Table 8). The most frequently selected method in all sectors, however, was the written questionnaire. Responses indicated this technique is used by 89% of the voluntary sector agencies, 75% of the public sector agencies, and 75% of the private sector agencies. In the voluntary sector other popular techniques included the suggestion box (62%), telephone surveys (46%), informal face-to-face feedback (41%), and comment cards (37%). Respondents from the private sector also cited use of a suggestion box as a popular technique (70.6%), followed by informal face-to-face feedback (49%), comment cards (43%), and focus groups (35%). Public sector managers did not indicate frequent use of methods other than the questionnaire. The next most popular techniques

Table 7

Best Measure of Service Quality*

	Customer Evaluation Conducted							
	Voluntary Sector		Public Sector		Private Sector		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Best Measure of Service Quality								
Total Attendance	10 6.5%	13 8.4%	1 0.9%	13 11.5%	10 8.0%	10 8.0%	21 5.4%	36 9.2%
Total Income	1 0.6%	6 3.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4 3.2%	3 3.2%	5 1.3%	9 2.3%
Members' Perception	64 41.6%	51 33.1%	37 32.7%	57 50.4%	35 28.0%	54 43.2%	136 34.7%	162 41.3%
Staff and Managements' Perception	1 0.6%	0 0.0%	2 1.8%	2 1.8%	1 0.8%	1 0.8%	4 1.0%	3 0.8%
Number of Complaints	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 0.8%	0 0.0%	1 0.3%
Other	4 2.6%	4 2.6%	0 0.0%	1 0.9%	1 0.8%	5 4.0%	5 1.3%	10 2.6%

* Percentages are based on total number of respondents who responded to both of these questions

Table 8

Customer Evaluation Techniques Utilized*

	Voluntary Sector		Public Sector		Private Sector		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Evaluation Techniques								
Written Questionnaire	72	88.9%	30	75.0%	38	74.5%	140	81.4%
Telephone Survey	37	45.7%	6	15.0%	19	37.3%	62	36.0%
Face-to-Face Interview	18	22.2%	7	17.5%	14	2.0%	39	22.7%
Informal Face-to-Face Feedback	33	40.7%	12	30.0%	25	49.0%	70	40.7%
Focus Groups	11	13.6%	7	17.5%	18	35.3%	36	20.9%
Suggestion Box	50	61.7%	6	15.0%	36	70.6%	92	53.5%
Comment Cards	30	37.0%	11	27.5%	22	43.1%	63	36.6%
Other	4	4.9%	4	10.0%	0	0.0%	8	4.7%

* Percentages are based on those who have actually conducted any form of customer evaluation in the past year (Voluntary sector: 81 of 156 respondents; Public sector: 40 of 114 respondents; and Private sector: 51 of 125 respondents. Percentages add up to more than 100% because respondents were asked to check all forms of evaluation that they have used.

in this sector were informal face-to-face feedback (30%) and comment cards (28%).

Instrument Evaluation

SERVQUAL was developed as a multiple-item scale to be utilized as an objective measure of service quality as perceived by consumers (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1988). The instrument contains 22 items that were used to represent the five distinct dimensions of service quality: (1) tangibles; (2) reliability; (3) responsiveness; (4) assurance, and (5) empathy (Table 9). For this study a Likert scale with seven levels was used to measure agreement with the SERVQUAL statements. Responses included Very Strongly Disagree (1), Strongly Disagree (2), Disagree (3), Undecided (4), Agree (5), Strongly Agree (6), and Very Strongly Agree (7). Following the format established by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) some of the statements were worded positively and some were worded negatively. Resultant scores of each dimension as well as the overall scale could thus be equated with the respondent's definition of service quality.

Scale Reliability

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were computed to measure the internal reliability of the items used to measure the dimension levels of SERVQUAL (Cronbach, 1951). Table 9 presents the results based on SERVQUAL, and the reliability

Table 9
Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
for the Dimensional Scales

Dimension	Coefficient Alpha			
	Voluntary Sector	Public Sector	Private Sector	Overall
Tangibles	.770	.754	.454	.701

Items Included:

- Our facilities should be visually appealing
- Our employees should be well dressed and appear neat
- The appearance of the physical facilities of our organization should be in keeping with the type of services provided
- The equipment provided by our organization should be up to date

Reliability	.783	.635	.633	.714
-------------	------	------	------	------

Items Included:

- Our organization should be dependable
- When our participants have problems our organization should be sympathetic and reassuring
- When our organization promises to do something by a certain time, it should do so
- Our organization's records should be kept accurately
- Our organization should provide services at the time it promises to do so

Table 9 - continued

Dimension	Coefficient Alpha			
	Voluntary Sector	Public Sector	Private Sector	Overall

*Responsiveness	.631	.650	.606	.648
-----------------	------	------	------	------

Items Included:

- Our employees do not always have to be willing to help participants
- It is not realistic for participants to expect prompt service from employees of our organization
- Our organization should not be expected to tell participants exactly when services will be performed
- It is okay if our employees are too busy to respond to participant requests promptly

Assurance	.900 (.893)	.741 (.839)	.802 (.856)	.847 (.874)
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Items Included:

- **Our organization needs to give our employees adequate support to do their jobs well
- Our participants should be able to feel safe in their dealings with our organization's employees
- Our employees should be polite
- Our participants should be able to trust our organization's employees

Dimension	Coefficient Alpha			
	Voluntary Sector	Public Sector	Private Sector	Overall
*Empathy	.707	.783	.740	.757

Items Included:

- Our organization should not be expected to give participants individual attention
- Our organization should not be expected to have operating hours convenient to all our participants
- Our organization cannot be expected to give our participants personal attention
- It is unrealistic to expect our organization to have our participants' best interests at heart
- It is unrealistic to expect our employees to know the needs of our participants

*Please note that all items for the dimensions of Responsiveness and Empathy were negatively worded. In building the scale for statistical analysis these items were numerically switched to a positive format.

** Following the elimination of this item from SERVQUAL the alpha coefficients were higher in all but the voluntary sector, where a drop of only .007 was realized

coefficients for each of the scales. Cronbach's alpha coefficients are given for each sector individually as well as for the three sectors combined. As can be observed from the table, all the SERVQUAL dimensions showed strong internal reliability as indicated by alpha coefficients ranging from .65 to .85. A general rule of .5 has been declared acceptable for exploratory research (Nunnally, 1967). For the dimension "assurance" the elimination of one item ("Our business needs to give our employees adequate support to do their jobs well") raised the alpha level for all areas except the voluntary sector, where it resulted in a drop of only .007. It was therefore decided to eliminate this item for subsequent statistical analyses.

Instrument Validity

Criterion-related validity is determined "by comparing test or scale scores with one or more external variables, or criteria, known or believed to measure the attribute under study" (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 459). The higher the correlation between the scores and the criterion, the better the validity.

The purpose of the SERVQUAL component of this study was to measure managers' perceptions of service quality. The external criteria used for comparison was based on a question included in the survey whereby the respondents were asked to assign a total of 100 points among the five

SERVQUAL components.

Table 10 presents the Pearson Product-Moment correlations between the dimensional relative importance scores and the mean score values of items which comprised each dimension of SERVQUAL. Correlation coefficients, number of subjects, and statistical significance are indicated. The dimensions of responsiveness and empathy were the only correlations that were statistically significant. The correlations for these, however, was small (.173 and .242).

Table 10
Pearson Produce-Moment Correlations Between
Dimensional Relative Importance Scores
and SERVQUAL Dimensional Mean Scores

Dimension	n	Correlation
Tangibles	373	.082
Reliability	373	.014
Responsiveness	373	*.173
Assurance	373	.013
Empathy	373	*.242

* p < .05

Evaluation of Sector Differences

General

The first step in the analysis was to investigate differences among sectors in terms of the definition of service quality. Table 11 displays the statistics for the mean scores on SERVQUAL and each of its components. Results indicated "assurance" was considered the most important dimension of service quality by each sector as measured by mean scores on SERVQUAL, followed in each case by "reliability". "Tangibles" and "responsiveness" ranked third or fourth in each sector. "Empathy" was identified as the least important dimension for all three sectors. Overall, the private sector's SERVQUAL mean score indicated the strongest support for service quality, followed by the voluntary and public sectors.

Hypothesis Testing Using Analysis of Variance

The statistical technique which was used to test whether or not the scores on SERVQUAL and each of the dimensions differed across sectors was analysis of variance (ANOVA). ANOVA is based on variation from two sources. The first source is the difference of group means from the overall mean, which is measured by the between group sum-of-squares. The second source is the variation of the scores within the groups (sectors). The F ratio was obtained by dividing the mean square for the groups by the

Table 11
SERVQUAL Statistics by Dimension and Sector

	Voluntary Sector	Public Sector	Private Sector	Overall
SERVQUAL				
Mean Score	31.0	30.0	31.7	30.9
Standard Dev.	3.3	2.6	2.4	2.9
Tangibles				
Mean Score	6.2	6.0	6.3	6.2
Standard Dev.	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6
Rank	3	3	4	3
Reliability				
Mean Score	6.3	6.2	6.4	6.3
Standard Dev.	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.6
Rank	2	2	2	2
Responsiveness				
Mean Score	6.2	5.9	6.3	6.1
Standard Dev.	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.8
Rank	4	4	3	4
Assurance				
Mean Score	6.5	6.5	6.6	6.5
Standard Dev.	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.7
Rank	1	1	1	1
Empathy				
Mean Score	5.8	5.5	6.1	5.8
Standard Dev.	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8
Rank	5	5	5	5

mean square for the residual variable (Iversen & Norpoth, 1976). Using a significance level of .05 it could thus be determined whether or not the variation in group means was more than what would be expected by chance. If so, it could be claimed that the means in the populations from which the samples were chosen were also different.

For those comparisons where significant differences were found to exist, further testing using Tukey's test for multiple comparisons was conducted to identify which of the group means differed significantly. Tukey's test is a relatively conservative multiple comparison technique (Wilkinson, 1988). To control the overall comparison error rate for multiple hypotheses the Bonferroni procedure was applied whereby an overall significance level of .05 was maintained by testing each of the comparisons at .017 (.05 divided by three [the number of comparisons]) (Wilkinson, 1988).

H_{1a} : There will be no significant difference in the overall scores scores on SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different industry sectors.

ANOVA was performed using the mean scores on SERVQUAL as the dependent variable and the sectors (voluntary, public, and private) as the independent variables. The results revealed that there was a significant difference

($p < 0.00$) in the mean scores. H_{1a} was therefore rejected. Post hoc tests using Tukey and Bonferroni showed a significant difference between the public and private sectors. The results are displayed in Table 12.

Table 12
Summary Statistics for H_{1a}
(ANOVA, Tukey on SERVQUAL by Sector)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	160.2	2	80.1	9.9	.000
Within Groups	3088.6	381	8.1		

Tukey HSD Multiple Comparisons
Matrix of Pairwise Comparison Probabilities

	Voluntary	Public	Private
Voluntary	1.000		
Public	0.019	1.000	
Private	0.139	0.000	1.000

Each dimension of SERVQUAL was then tested individually between the sectors using mean scores obtained on the respective dimensional component. Once again ANOVA was the technique applied.

H_{2a} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the tangibles dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different

sectors.

ANOVA was performed using the mean scores on the tangibles dimension as the dependent variable and the sectors as the independent variables. A significant difference was found ($p=0.007$). H_{2a} was therefore rejected. Post hoc tests again showed a significant difference between the public and private sectors. The results are shown in Table 13.

Table 13
Summary Statistics for H_{2a}
(ANOVA, Tukey on Tangibles by Sector)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	4.2	2	2.1	5.1	.007
Within Groups	157.0	381	0.4		

Tukey HSD Multiple Comparisons
Matrix of Pairwise Comparison Probabilities

	Voluntary	Public	Private
Voluntary	1.000		
Public	0.034	1.000	
Private	0.773	0.003	1.000

H_{3a} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the reliability dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different

sectors.

ANOVA was performed using the mean scores on the reliability dimension as the dependent variable and the sectors as the independent variables. There were no significant differences among the mean reliability dimension scores. H_{3a} was therefore accepted. The results are shown in Table 14

Table 14
Summary Statistics for H_{3a}
(ANOVA, Tukey on Reliability by Sector)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	2.3	2	1.2	3.0	.051
Within Groups	145.9	381	0.4		

H_{4a} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the responsiveness dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors.

With the mean scores on the responsiveness dimension as the dependent variable and the sectors as the independent variables, the results of ANOVA showed significant differences ($p < 0.00$). H_{4a} was therefore rejected. Post hoc analysis revealed a significant difference between the voluntary and public sectors

($p=0.003$) and between the public and private sectors ($p=0.000$). Table 15 shows the results of these tests.

Table 15
Summary Statistics for H_{4a}
(ANOVA, Tukey on Responsiveness by Sector)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	10.9	2	5.4	9.8	.000
Within Groups	211.2	381	0.6		

Tukey HSD Multiple Comparisons
Matrix of Pairwise Comparison Probabilities

	Voluntary	Public	Private
Voluntary	1.000		
Public	0.003	1.000	
Private	0.454	0.000	1.000

H_{5a} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the empathy dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors.

ANOVA was performed using the mean scores on the empathy dimension of SERVQUAL as the dependent variable and the sectors as the independent variables. Significant differences were found ($p<0.00$) so H_{5a} was rejected. Post hoc comparisons found significant differences in all

cases--between the voluntary and public sectors ($p=0.008$), between the public and private sectors ($p=0.000$), and between the voluntary and private sectors ($p=0.001$). Results are displayed in Table 16.

Table 16
Summary Statistics for H_{3a}
(ANOVA, Tukey on Empathy by Sector)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	25.9	2	12.9	20.1	.000
Within Groups	245.2	381	0.6		

Tukey HSD Multiple Comparisons
Matrix of Pairwise Comparison Probabilities

	Voluntary	Public	Private
Voluntary	1.000		
Public	0.008	1.000	
Private	0.001	0.000	1.000

H_{3a} : There will be no significant difference in the scores on the assurance dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors.

ANOVA was performed using the mean scores on the assurance dimension of SERVQUAL as the dependent variable and the sectors as the independent variables. A significant difference was not found ($p=0.411$). Therefore

H_{5a} was accepted. Test results are shown in Table 17.

Table 17
Summary Statistics for H_{6a}
(ANOVA, Tukey on Assurance by Sector)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	0.8	2	0.4	0.9	.412
Within Groups	179.4	381	0.5		

Hypothesis Testing Using Analysis of Covariance

Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) is a statistical technique that allows a researcher to examine the relationship between variables while controlling for a confounding categorical variable (Wildt & Ahtola, 1978). ANCOVA was therefore used to investigate differences between the sectors in defining service quality while holding the demographic variables (gender, age, level of education, and salary) constant. The true effect of the sector on the overall or dimensional score achieved on SERVQUAL could thus be determined.

$H_{1b,1c,1d,1e}$: There will be no significant difference in the overall scores on SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when (gender) (age) (level of education) (salary) has been

partialled out.

ANCOVA was performed using the overall mean scores on SERVQUAL as the dependent variable, sectors as the independent variables, and each demographic variable (gender, age, level of education, and salary) individually as the confounding variable. The results of ANCOVA supported previous findings indicating that a significant difference exists between overall mean scores on SERVQUAL and sector in all four cases. When the variable "gender" was partialled out sector differences remained significant at $p < 0.00$. H_{1b} was therefore rejected. "Gender" itself, however, was not a significant factor in the difference among scores. When "age" was partialled out "sector" differences again remained significant at $p = 0.000$. Therefore, H_{1c} was rejected. "Age" also tested at a significance level of $p = 0.001$, indicating that "age" by itself would also be a significant variable in the difference between mean scores on SERVQUAL. When "level of education" was partialled out "sector" remained significant at $p = 0.000$. Therefore, H_{1d} was also rejected. "Educational level" itself was not significant, however. Finally, when "salary" was partialled out "sector" remained significant at $p = 0.001$, while "salary" itself was not significant. Consequently, H_{1e} was rejected. Testing results are shown in Table 18.

Table 18
 Summary Statistics for H_{1b} , H_{1c} , H_{1d} , and H_{1e}
 (ANCOVA on SERVQUAL)
 (By Sector, Gender)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	137.3	2	68.6	8.4	0.000
Gender	5.3	1	5.3	0.6	0.421
Error	3013.2	369	8.2		

(By Sector, Age)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	190.4	2	95.2	12.2	0.000
Age	158.6	4	39.6	5.1	0.001
Error	2853.6	367	7.8		

(By Sector, Level of Education)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	134.9	2	67.5	8.2	0.000
Educat	13.9	5	2.8	0.3	0.889
Error	2994.4	365	8.2		

(By Sector, Salary)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	108.6	2	54.3	6.7	0.001
Salary	90.0	6	15.0	1.9	0.087
Error	2836.9	352	8.1		

$H_{2b, 2c, 2d, 2e}$: There will be no significant difference in the scores on the tangibles dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when (gender) (age) (level of education) (salary) has been partialled out.

When testing the difference of the mean scores on the tangibles dimension between sectors, the results of the ANCOVA once again indicated a significant difference in all four cases. When "gender" was partialled out "sector" remained significant at $p=0.012$; when "age" was partialled out "sector" remained significant at $p=0.002$; when "level of education" was partialled out "sector" remained significant at $p=0.014$, and when "salary" was partialled out "sector" remained significant at $p=0.011$. Therefore, H_{2b} , H_{2c} , H_{2d} , and H_{2e} were all rejected. The only confounding variable to also show a significant relationship to the difference in mean scores on the tangibles dimension was "age" ($p=0.005$). Test results are shown in Table 19.

Table 19
 Summary Statistics for H_{2b} , H_{2c} , H_{2d} , and H_{2e}
 (ANCOVA on Tangibles)

(By Sector, Gender)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	3.7	2	1.9	4.5	0.012
Gender	0.0	1	0.0	0.0	0.861
Error	154.5	369	0.4		

(By Sector, Age)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	5.0	2	2.5	6.2	0.002
Age	6.2	4	1.5	3.8	0.005
Error	148.1	367	0.4		

(By Sector, Level of Education)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	3.6	2	1.8	4.3	0.014
Educat	0.8	5	0.2	0.4	0.875
Error	153.2	365	0.4		

(By Sector, Salary)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	3.7	2	1.8	4.6	0.011
Salary	4.9	6	0.8	2.0	0.063
Error	142.4	352	0.4		

$H_{3b,3c,3d,3e}$: There will be no significant difference in the scores on the reliability dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when (gender) (age) (level of education) (salary) has been partialled out.

Previous comparisons between sectors on "reliability" indicated that no significant difference existed. This also held true when the effects of "gender", "level of education", and "salary" were individually partialled out. However, when "age" was included in the analysis the relationship between "sector" and the mean scores on the reliability dimension of SERVQUAL was significant at $p=0.025$. "Age" itself also showed a significant relationship at $p=0.017$. H_{3b} , H_{3d} , and H_{3e} , were accepted while H_{3c} was rejected. Test results are displayed in Table 20.

Table 20

Summary Statistics for H_{3b} , H_{3c} , H_{3d} , and H_{3e}
(ANCOVA on Reliability)

(By Sector, Gender)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	2.0	2	1.0	2.6	0.077
Gender	0.2	1	0.2	0.5	0.460
Error	142.5	369	0.4		

Table 20 - continued

(By Sector, Age)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	2.8	2	1.4	3.7	0.025
Age	4.6	4	1.1	3.1	0.017
Error	138.0	367	0.4		

(By Sector, Level of Education)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	1.9	2	0.9	2.4	0.092
Educat	1.1	5	0.2	0.6	0.738
Error	140.5	365	0.4		

(By Sector, Salary)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	1.5	2	0.8	2.0	0.135
Salary	4.4	6	0.7	2.0	0.068
Error	131.5	352	0.4		

$H_{4b,4c,4d,4e}$: There will be no significant difference in the scores on the responsiveness dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sector when (gender) (age) (level of education) (salary) has been partialled out.

The significant difference between mean scores on the responsiveness dimension of SERVQUAL and "sector" was supported in all four cases using ANCOVA. When "gender"

was partialled out "sector" remained significant at $p=0.000$; when "age" was partialled out "sector" remained significant at $p<0.00$; when "level of education" was partialled out "sector" remained significant at $p=0.000$; and when "salary" was partialled out "sector" remained significant at $p=0.001$. Therefore H_{4b} , H_{4c} , H_{4d} , and H_{4e} were all rejected. The only confounding variable to also show significant differences in mean scores on the responsiveness dimension was "age" ($p=0.000$). Test results are shown in Table 21.

Table 21

Summary Statistics for H_{4b} , H_{4c} , H_{4d} , and H_{4e}
(ANCOVA on Responsiveness)
(By Sector, Gender)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	10.2	2	5.1	9.2	0.000
Gender	1.6	1	1.6	2.9	0.087
Error	204.7	369	0.6		

(By Sector, Age)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	13.9	2	7.0	13.1	0.000
Age	11.5	4	2.9	5.4	0.000
Error	194.9	367	0.5		

(Table 21 - continued)
(By Sector, Level of Education)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	10.3	2	5.1	9.2	0.000
Educat	1.7	5	0.3	0.6	0.680
Error	203.8	365	0.6		

(By Sector, Salary)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	7.8	2	3.9	6.9	0.001
Salary	3.7	6	0.6	1.1	0.372
Error	198.7	352	0.6		

$H_{5b, 5c, 5d, 5e}$: There will be no significant difference in the scores on the empathy dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sector when (gender) (age) (level of education) (salary) has been partialled out.

The results once again supported the finding of a significant relationship between the mean scores on the empathy dimension of SERVQUAL and "sector" for all four controlling variables. "Sector" was significant at $p < 0.00$ when "gender" was partialled; at $p < 0.00$ when "age" was partialled out; at $p < 0.00$ when "level of education" was partialled out; and at $p < 0.00$ when "salary" was partialled out. Therefore, H_{5b} , H_{5c} , H_{5d} , and H_{5e} were rejected. The confounding variable of "age" also once again showed a

significant relationship to the difference in mean scores, $p=0.010$. Test results can be viewed in Table 22.

Table 22
Summary Statistics for H_{5b} , H_{5c} , H_{5d} , and H_{5e}
(ANCOVA on Empathy)

(By Sector, Gender)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	22.2	2	11.1	17.5	0.000
Gender	1.2	1	1.2	2.0	0.163
Error	234.8	369	0.6		

(By Sector, Age)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	27.5	2	13.7	22.1	0.000
Age	8.4	4	2.1	3.4	0.010
Error	228.2	367	0.6		

(By Sector, Level of Education)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	20.7	2	10.4	16.1	0.000
Educat	2.5	5	0.5	0.8	0.564
Error	234.9	365	0.6		

(Table 22 - continued)
(By Sector, Salary)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	17.0	2	8.5	13.4	0.000
Salary	6.9	6	1.1	1.8	0.096
Error	223.6	352	0.6		

$H_{6b, 6c, 6d, 6e}$: There will be no significant difference in the scores on the assurance dimension of SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors when (gender) (age) (level of education) (salary) has been partialled out.

No significant difference had been found between "sector" and the mean scores on the assurance dimension of SERVQUAL using ANOVA. The same held true using ANCOVA when each confounding variable ("gender", "age", "level of education", and "salary") was partialled out individually. Therefore, H_{6b} , H_{6c} , H_{6d} , and H_{6e} were accepted. Test results are shown in Table 23.

Table 23
Summary Statistics for H_{6b} , H_{6c} , H_{6d} , and H_{6e}
(ANCOVA on Assurance)

(By Sector, Gender)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	0.5	2	0.3	0.5	0.585
Gender	0.1	1	0.1	0.1	0.711
Error	175.3	369	0.5		

(By Sector, Age)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	1.2	2	0.6	1.3	0.268
Age	3.5	4	0.9	1.9	0.111
Error	171.1	367	0.5		

(By Sector, Level of Education)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	0.7	2	0.3	0.7	0.498
Educat	0.1	5	0.0	0.0	1.000
Error	173.8	365	0.5		

(By Sector, Salary)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Sector	0.4	2	0.2	0.5	0.628
Salary	2.4	6	0.4	0.8	0.543
Error	169.1	352	0.5		

Age as a Significant Confounding Variable

The variable "age" was found to show a significant

relationship to SERVQUAL mean scores as well as the mean scores of "tangibles", "reliability," "responsiveness", and "empathy". Therefore, additional tests were conducted to evaluate the age variable. Table 24 shows the mean scores for SERVQUAL and its five dimensions by age categories. The results of ANOVA and Tukey indicated a significant relationship between "age" and the mean scores of "SERVQUAL" as well as the mean scores of "tangibles", "reliability", and "responsiveness" (Table 25). The post hoc comparisons of mean scores using Tukey's with the Bonferroni Technique (.05 divided by 5 =.01) indicated that the only significant difference existed for the mean scores on SERVQUAL between the groups of 25 years old or younger and 56 years old or older; and for "responsiveness" between the groups of 26-35 years old and 55 years of age and older.

Table 24
Relationship of Age to Dimensions

Age: 25 years or younger:						
Number of cases -- 13						
	Tang	Rel	Resp	Emp	Assur	
Mean	6.2	6.1	5.9	5.8	6.4	
Stand. Dev.	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.7	
Age: 26-35 years of age:						
Number of cases -- 107						
	Tang	Rel	Resp	Emp	Assur	
Mean	6.0	6.2	6.0	5.7	6.4	
Stand. Dev.	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	0.8	
Age: 36-45 years of age:						
Number of cases -- 156						
	Tang	Rel	Resp	Emp	Assur	
Mean	6.2	6.4	6.2	5.9	6.6	
Stand. Dev.	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.6	
Age: 46-55 years of age:						
Number of cases -- 82						
	Tang	Rel	Resp	Emp	Assur	
Mean	6.1	6.2	6.1	5.7	6.5	
Stand. Dev.	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	
Age: 56 years and older:						
Number of cases -- 31						
	Tang	Rel	Resp	Emp	Assur	
Mean	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.1	6.8	
Stand. Dev.	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.4	

Table 25
ANOVA on Age and Dimension

Key: 1 = 25 years and younger
 2 = 26-35 years of age
 3 = 36-45 years of age
 4 = 46-55 years of age
 5 = 56 years and older

(ANOVA on Age and SERVQUAL)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	116.8	4	29.2	3.5	.008
Within Groups	3044.1	369	8.2		

Tukey HSD Multiple Comparisons
 Matrix of Pairwise Comparison Probabilities

	1	2	3	4	5
1	1.000				
2	1.000	1.000			
3	0.360	0.850	1.000		
4	0.865	0.984	0.819	1.000	
5	0.008	0.196	0.308	0.039	1.000

(Anova on Age and Tangibles)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	5.1	4	1.3	3.1	.017
Within Groups	153.1	369	0.4		

Table 25 - continued

Tukey HSD Multiple Comparisons
Matrix of Pairwise Comparison Probabilities

	1	2	3	4	5
1	1.000				
2	0.406	1.000			
3	1.000	0.880	1.000		
4	0.969	0.689	0.997	1.000	
5	0.243	0.012	0.736	0.081	1.000

(ANOVA on Age and Reliability)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	3.8	4	0.9	2.5	.044
Within Groups	140.8	369	0.4		

Tukey HSD Multiple Comparisons
Matrix of Pairwise Comparison Probabilities

	1	2	3	4	5
1	1.000				
2	0.981	1.000			
3	0.649	0.488	1.000		
4	0.933	0.988	0.697	1.000	
5	0.217	0.076	0.661	0.128	1.000

(Table 25 - continued)
(ANOVA on Age and Responsiveness)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	8.5	4	2.1	3.8	.005
Within Groups	208.8	369	0.6		

Tukey HSD Multiple Comparisons
Matrix of Pairwise Comparison Probabilities

	1	2	3	4	5
1	1.000				
2	1.000	1.000			
3	0.697	0.177	1.000		
4	0.843	0.317	0.967	1.000	
5	0.142	0.005	0.394	0.128	1.000

(ANOVA on Age and Empathy)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	5.1	4	1.3	1.8	.120
Within Groups	255.7	369	0.7		

(ANOVA on Age and Assurance)

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Between Groups	2.9	4	0.7	1.6	.181
Within Groups	172.3	369	0.5		

Discussion of Findings

Description of the Sample

The management level of the leisure fitness industry appears still to be dominated by males. However, when compared to the findings reported in "Managed Recreation" (1986) it appears that the gender gap might be narrowing somewhat. A comparison between sexes in terms of salary, however, indicated that there is still a large discrepancy between the salaries earned by males and females, with males frequently reporting substantially higher pay.

Managers in the private sector were frequently younger than the public and voluntary sectors, yet in higher salary ranges. The higher salaries could reflect the lack of the nondistribution constraint which is a factor in the public and voluntary sectors.

The educational field of study of managers in the private sector appears to reflect a business/fitness orientation as opposed to the more traditional fitness/recreation background of the public and voluntary sectors. Recreation curriculums have characteristically lacked a focus on the private sector, concentrating almost wholly on public and voluntary sector fields of endeavor (D'Amours, 1988; Gitelson, 1987). As the role of the private sector in the leisure industry grows perhaps it will behoove recreation curriculums, currently facing

declining enrollments, to increase their attention in preparing individuals to enter the labor force of the for-profit sector.

It also appears that a college degree is prevalent among managers in the leisure fitness industry. As consumers become increasingly health conscious they likewise become better educated concerning fitness ("Don't Shut the Door", 1986' "Fitness Boom Swells", 1987). Some of the aspects which were perhaps once credence qualities of fitness services are now experience qualities or even search qualities. The value of management being well educated would thus be more important in the offering of credible services and may be reflected in the higher percentage of college degrees.

Participation and Service Background

Growth in leisure fitness participation appears to have continued throughout the past year for all sectors. Managers in all sectors indicated overall that service quality plays a very important role in the success of their agencies. Interestingly, however, the public sector did not feel as strongly about its importance. This supports Foxall's (1984) theory that municipal leisure services are not as customer-oriented as other leisure agencies. Some public sector managers, however, felt strongly about the importance of service quality. Groonhaug and Arndt (1979)

pointed out that although public delivery systems for many services have a monopoly status, such is not the case in the delivery of recreation and leisure services. This same thought was echoed by one respondent from the public sector who wrote:

Since our service delivery system is part of a government operation (municipality) we have to adopt a different philosophy of service than other city departments. People use other city services because they have to, i.e., building permit, payment of a traffic ticket, etc. Our clients use our services because they want to. Therefore, we need to be more customer oriented. This philosophy has to be adopted by staff members at all levels of our department. Secondly, we in the parks and recreation field must constantly wage a battle of credibility. Our services are not just "icing on the cake" but rather an integral part of the quality of life of a community. This is difficult when we do not have adequate quantifiable results but rather our services are evaluated on a more emotional and feeling level.

One of the most interesting findings was the discrepancy between what was considered the best measure of the quality of their services and whether or not any form of customer evaluation of the services had been conducted over the past year. Although approximately 75% of the

respondents agreed that the participants' perception of the quality was the best measure, 40% of those same managers have not conducted any form of customer evaluation of the services within the past year. This seems to be a direct contradiction, particularly considering that 99% of the respondents felt service quality is either very important or the most important area of consideration regarding the success of the agency. Fitness industry managers in the public sector indicated few attempts beyond the written questionnaire to assess consumer evaluation of services. Once again, this supports Foxall's claim (1984) that municipal leisure services lack a customer-orientation.

In general, it appears that although managers seem to be paying lip service to service quality, their actions are not supporting their stated feelings. If they do indeed feel service quality is important to the success of their agencies and if they also believe this is best measured through participants' perceptions, attempts need to be made to ascertain what those perceptions are.

Instrument Evaluation

The values of Cronbach's alpha for the sectors overall ranged from .65 to .85 (.88 after eliminating one item). These values reflect good internal consistency within the instrument although they are slightly less than the alphas found by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) and some

of those found by MacKay (1987).

Previous testing has shown relatively strong validity for the SERVQUAL instrument. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) showed evidence of the instrument's trait validity, construct validity, content validity, and convergent validity (1988). Mackay (1987) repeated some of their tests and confirmed the findings. For this study the criterion-related validity of the instrument was measured through correlation analysis of two separate parts of the questionnaire.

To achieve overall importance ratings, each respondents had been asked to distribute a total of 100 points among the five dimensions of service quality. Using Pearson correlation the results of this distribution were correlated with the mean score values of items which comprised each dimension of SERVQUAL. The results were not convincing. Only two of the five dimensions were statistically significant ("responsiveness" and "empathy"), and the correlations for these were not high. Validity can range from .00 to about as high as the reliability coefficient for the instrument, though it is frequently below .50 for psychological measures (Mueller, 1986). An inspection of the mean scores on SERVQUAL as displayed in Table 11 shows there was not a wide variation between the dimensions, as they ranged from 5.5 to 6.6. This seems to indicate that the respondents were not discriminating

between the items but rather were responding to the general theme of "service quality".

The results of the test for criterion-related validity indicated that perhaps SERVQUAL did not distinguish clearly between the dimensions. However, the item used in this study to establish criterion-related validity has not been tested for validity itself. Also, mean scores on the criterion items could have been affected by individual scores which deviated greatly from the norm. This can be seen in Appendix L which shows the range between the minimum and maximum point assignments. Due to the presence of such outlying point assignments, it was suspected that this could have contributed to the low validity found in this study. However, based on strong evidence supporting instrument validity as presented in past studies, it was decided to accept SERVQUAL as a valid measure of service quality attitude.

Evaluation of Sector Differences

The results of the study indicated that respondents generally rated all of the dimensions of service quality very high and that the degree of difference between sectors was extremely small (with mean scores ranging from 5.5 to 6.6). As can be observed from Table 11, overall the respondents ranked "assurance" as the most important dimension, followed by "reliability", "tangibles",

"responsiveness", and finally "empathy". Managers from the different sectors did not vary very much in their definition of service quality in terms of dimensional rankings. "Assurance" was consistently the most important dimension, followed in all sectors by "reliability". "Empathy" was found to be the least important dimension for managers of all sectors.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) found consumers consistently rated "reliability" as the most important dimension, followed by "assurance". However, consumers reported "empathy" to be the least important dimension. It appears, therefore, that managers and consumers differ somewhat on what is considered the most important dimension of service quality, but generally agree on the low level of relative importance of "empathy".

Through the use of ANOVA it was shown there were significant differences between sectors in terms of the overall mean scores on SERVQUAL among leisure fitness industry managers of different industry sectors. In terms of individual dimensions a significant difference was shown to exist between the mean scores on the tangibles, responsiveness, and empathy dimensions. The mean scores do not exhibit a great deal of variation, however. This indicates that the three sectors are similar in their interpretation of service quality in the leisure fitness industry. This finding is to be expected if the three are

essentially offering the same product to the public. In addition, the distinction between the products offered narrows as sector management "borrows" from each other ("The Athletic Business State of the Industry Report", 1989; Doell & Twardzik, 1979; Eisenhart, 1983; Epperson, 1986; Hauser, 1987; Havitz, 1987; Howard & Crompton, 1980; "An Industry in Transition", 1987; Spann, 1983).

However, the results of this study suggest that subtle distinctions do exist between the sectors in terms of the definition of service quality as perceived by management in the leisure fitness industry. Although the mean scores of each sector were relatively close to one another, the significant differences found here suggest that the scores of management from each sector were clustered narrowly. The largest differences appeared to be between the public and private sectors, which was not surprising in light of the contrasts provided in the literature on sector differences. Managers from the private sector repeatedly had the highest scores on SERVQUAL overall as well as on each dimension. Managers from the voluntary sector consistently had the middle scores, followed by the scores of managers from the public sector. In terms of overall mean score on SERVQUAL the difference between the public and private sector was significant. No other comparison on SERVQUAL mean scores tested as significant through use of Tukey with the Bonferroni technique. The contrast of

public to voluntary sectors, however, was the next comparison in terms of difference ($p=0.019$).

A look at the mean scores obtained on SERVQUAL shows the public sector scoring lowest (30.1), the voluntary next with 31.0, and the private scoring highest with 31.7. This contradicts the belief that management in public and voluntary sector services are more quality conscious than the private sector (Hansmann, 1986; Schlesinger, 1984; Selby, 1978; & Weisbrod & Schlesinger, 1986). However, it lends support to the low levels of public confidence in the ability of public agencies and officials to provide quality service, as found by Lipset and Schneider (1983), Levine (1984), and Balutis (1985).

Post hoc analysis of the difference found on the mean scores on the tangibles dimension again pointed to a significant difference between the public and private sectors ($p=0.003$). It could thus be concluded that the private sector is more concerned with the physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel than the public sector. While again not significant, the difference between the voluntary and public sectors was next in magnitude ($p=0.034$). Management in the voluntary sector tended to reflect the private sector's concern with appearances.

Post hoc analysis on the dimension of responsiveness found two significant differences, namely between the

public and private sectors and between the public and voluntary sectors. The private sector and voluntary sector were similar in their support of willingness to help participants and provide prompt service, as opposed to the lower score achieved by the public sector. Goodsell (1983) found in a review of citizen surveys that the public sector is viewed by some as being unresponsive, while others perceive it to be ready and willing to look out for the clients' interests.

Mean scores on the dimension of empathy were found to differ significantly in all three cases of sector comparison. The private sector appeared to be the most concerned with giving caring, individualized attention to participants, followed by the voluntary sector and least supported by the public sector. This finding is not surprising in view of the scope of concern encompassed by each sector. While the private sector can focus on more narrowly defined market segments, the voluntary sector expands to focus on the community at large from a membership standpoint, and the public sector is required to serve everyone in the community. The broader the span of market concern the more difficult it would be to individualize attention.

By individually partialling out the variables of "gender", "age", "level of education", and "salary" no previously significant differences were found to lose their

significance. Interestingly, while no significant relationship was found between the mean scores on the dimension of reliability through ANOVA, once the age variable was partialled out that same relationship became significant. This indicated that while testing with ANOVA "age" was interacting with "sector" to disguise the differences which in fact existed. However, once the confounding variable was partialled out the true relationship was exposed.

The variable "age" itself also proved to hold a significant relationship with SERVQUAL scores as well as the dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, and empathy. Looking at the differences in mean scores repeatedly shows the largest difference between those 26 to 35 years of age and those 56 years of age and older. The concept of service quality has been relatively ignored until recently (Sinha & Willborn, 1985). Perhaps this concern has not been fully recognized by some managers who have been able to give it little heed in the past. Younger managers, on the other hand, perhaps are more aware of its role in today's competitive service market.

"Gender", "level of education", and "salary" did not appear to be confounding the tests of significance at all, nor did any of them hold any significant relationship to score values. Although they were factors which differed among sectors, they did not relate to differences in

definition of service quality.

Summary

The population under study consisted of chief administrators who oversee leisure fitness services in the voluntary, public, and private for-profit sectors. The overall response rate was 65.7% (voluntary sector--79.0%; public sector--57.5%; private sector--60.7%). Approximately three quarters of the respondents were males. The largest percentage of the overall respondents (40%) were 36 to 45 years of age, although the private sector had the largest percentage of its respondents (40%) in the 26 to 35 years of age group. In terms of higher education 65% overall had earned a bachelor's degree, 25% had earned a master's degree, and 1% had earned a doctorate. The public sector managers most frequently cited higher education degrees in recreation (followed by physical education), the voluntary sector most frequently cited physical education (followed by recreation), and private sector managers most frequently cited physical education (followed closely by business). Highest salary levels were indicated by the private sector and, overall, males were predominantly higher paid than females.

There was an overwhelming tendency for participation in the leisure fitness industry to have increased over the past year in all sectors. Respondents also strongly agreed

on the importance of service quality to the success of their services. Although they most frequently indicated service quality can best be measured by the participants' perception of the concept, more than half of the respondents claimed their agencies had not conducted any form of customer evaluation within the past year. Among those who had conducted evaluations the written questionnaire was cited the most frequently used technique, followed in the private and voluntary sectors by suggestion boxes.

In the first phase of the data analysis the reliability and criterion-related validity of the SERVQUAL instrument were measured. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to measure the internal reliability of the items. Acceptable alpha coefficients were observed (.648 to .847) which reflected inter-item reliability for all the scales. The validity correlation measurements were small with only two correlations (responsiveness and empathy) being statistically significant. However, based on past validity measures of SERVQUAL and the unproven nature of the item used as a criterion base in this study, the instrument was assumed to be valid.

The next two phases of the analysis were designed to evaluate sector differences on scores achieved on SERVQUAL. In general, the mean scores on the overall SERVQUAL as well as the mean scores on each dimension appeared to be very

close, clustering toward the high end of the scale. This indicated that the respondents were not really discriminating between the items but rather related them all to the general theme of service quality. They also could have been trying to give the "right" answer.

Overall, "assurance" was identified as the most important dimension of service quality by each sector, followed by "reliability". "Empathy" was identified as the least important dimension in each sector.

The second phase of the analysis included the use of ANOVA with a significance level of .05 to determine whether or not the sectors did indeed differ in terms of overall scores on SERVQUAL as well as whether or not their scores differed on each dimension. Of the six null hypotheses tested using ANOVA, four were rejected. These results are summarized in Table 26. For those comparisons where significant differences were found to exist further testing using Tukey's test for multiple comparisons (coupled with the Bonferroni technique) was conducted to identify which of the group means differed significantly. A significant difference was found to exist between the overall scores on SERVQUAL as well as between the scores achieved on the dimensions of tangibles, responsiveness, and empathy. Post hoc analysis showed the greatest difference between the public and private sectors, followed by the difference between the public and voluntary sectors.

In the third and final phase of the analysis, ANCOVA was used to investigate differences between the sectors on SERVQUAL scores while holding the demographic variables (gender, age, level of education, and salary) constant. All differences previously found to be significant remained significant using ANCOVA. Furthermore, once "age" was partialled out the relationship between "sector" and the mean scores on the reliability dimension of SERVQUAL also became significant. Table 26 includes a summary of the results of the ANCOVA testing. The variable "age" itself also proved to hold a significant relationship with the differences in mean scores on SERVQUAL as well as on the dimension scores of "tangibles", "reliability", "responsiveness", and "empathy". "Gender", "level of education", and "salary" did not appear to be confounding the tests of significance at all, nor did any of them hold any significant relationship to score differences.

In the following chapter a final summary of the study will be presented and the findings will be summarized. Conclusions will be drawn and implications considered. Finally, recommendations for further research will be addressed.

Table 26
Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Null Hypotheses	Variables	Tests Used	Decision
H _{1a}	Overall SERVQUAL Scores by Sector	ANOVA	Reject*
H _{1b}	Overall SERVQUAL Scores by Sector, Gender	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{1c}	Overall SERVQUAL Scores by Sector, Age	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{1d}	Overall SERVQUAL Scores by Sector, Level of Educ.	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{1e}	Overall SERVQUAL Scores by Sector, Salary	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{2a}	SERVQUAL Tangibles Scores by Sector	ANOVA	Reject
H _{2b}	SERVQUAL Tangibles Scores by Sector, Gender	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{2c}	SERVQUAL Tangibles Scores by Sector, Age	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{2d}	SERVQUAL Tangibles Scores by Sector, Level of Educ.	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{2e}	SERVQUAL Tangibles Scores by Sector, Salary	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{3a}	SERVQUAL Reliability Scores by Sector	ANOVA	Accept
H _{3b}	SERVQUAL Reliability Scores by Sector, Gender	ANCOVA	Accept
H _{3c}	SERVQUAL Reliability Scores by Sector, Age	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{3d}	SERVQUAL Reliability Scores by Sector, Level of Educat.	ANCOVA	Accept
H _{3e}	SERVQUAL Reliability Scores by Sector, Salary	ANCOVA	Accept

Table 27 - continued

Null Hypotheses	Variables	Tests Used	Decision
H _{4a}	SERVQUAL Responsiveness Scores by Sector	ANOVA	Reject*
H _{4b}	SERVQUAL Responsiveness Scores by Sector, Gender	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{4c}	SERVQUAL Responsiveness Scores by Sector, Age	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{4d}	SERVQUAL Responsiveness Scores by Sector, Level of Educ.	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{4e}	SERVQUAL Responsiveness Scores by Sector, Salary	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{5a}	SERVQUAL Empathy Scores by Sector	ANOVA	Reject
H _{5b}	SERVQUAL Empathy Scores by Sector, Gender	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{5c}	SERVQUAL Empathy Scores by Sector, Age	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{5d}	SERVQUAL Empathy Scores by Sector, Level of Educ.	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{5e}	SERVQUAL Empathy Scores by Sector, Salary	ANCOVA	Reject
H _{6a}	SERVQUAL Assurance Scores by Sector	ANOVA	Accept
H _{6b}	SERVQUAL Assurance Scores by Sector, Gender	ANCOVA	Accept
H _{6c}	SERVQUAL Assurance Scores by Sector, Age	ANCOVA	Accept
H _{6d}	SERVQUAL Assurance Scores by Sector, Level of Educ	ANCOVA	Accept
H _{6e}	SERVQUAL Assurance Scores by Sector, Salary	ANCOVA	Accept

*Alpha level set at .05

Chapter 5
SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study was to investigate differences in the way fitness industry managers define service quality. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do managers in the leisure fitness industry define "service quality"?
2. Does the definition of service quality differ among fitness industry managers by different industry sectors?
3. Does the definition of service quality differ among fitness industry managers when controlling for age, gender, level of education, or salary?
4. Do the findings of this study support the expectations prevalent in the sector bias literature?

Procedure

This study was a mail survey of systematically selected managers of the leisure fitness industry. Representing the three sectors were 200 "managers" from municipal park and recreation departments (public sector), 200 from YMCA's (voluntary sector), and 206 from private athletic clubs (private for-profit sector) throughout the eight-state Great Lakes region.

The questionnaire used in the study included a 22-item scale that was designed to measure a respondent's attitude toward service quality. This scale was based on SERVQUAL which is composed of five dimensions: (1) tangibles; (2) reliability; (3) responsiveness; (4) empathy; and (5) assurance (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

The mail survey effort followed a modified Dillman procedure (1978). It included a pre-survey letter, first mailing of the questionnaire with a cover letter, a follow-up post card reminder, and a second mailing of the questionnaire with a cover letter to those who had not already responded. The overall response rate achieved was 65.7%.

Following a descriptive analysis of the sample three main phases of data analysis were conducted. In the first phase the internal reliability and the criterion-related validity of the SERVQUAL instrument were tested using Cronbach's alpha and Pearson Product-Moment correlation.

The second phase of the study investigated the differences in definition of service quality between the sectors. One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test for overall differences among the three sectors; and Tukey's test for multiple comparisons was used to identify significant differences between the sectors. In the third and final stage of the study analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to investigate differences in SERVQUAL scores between the sectors while holding a number of demographic variables (gender, age, level of education, and salary) constant. This last series of analyses permitted true differences between the sectors on the SERVQUAL scores to be identified. Alpha level for the null hypotheses was set at .05.

Findings

The analysis of data revealed the following findings:

1. The characteristics of the respondents could be summarized as follows:
 - a. Approximately three quarters were males.
 - b. Overall 40% were 36-45 years of age (although the private sector was younger with 40% 26-35 years of age).
 - c. Overall 65% had earned a bachelor's degree, 25% had earned a master's degree, and 1% had earned a doctorate.

- d. Higher education backgrounds in the public sector were predominantly in recreation followed by physical education; in the voluntary sector were mostly in physical education followed by recreation; and in the private sector were mostly in physical education followed closely by business.
 - e. Highest salary levels were indicated by the private sector and, overall, males were predominantly higher paid than females.
2. There was an overwhelming indication that participation in the leisure fitness industry has increased over the past year in all sectors.
 3. Respondents strongly agreed on the importance of service quality to the success of their services, with 99% indicating it was either very important or the most important consideration. The voluntary and private sectors were slightly more emphatic regarding its importance than the public sector.
 4. Respondents most frequently indicated that service quality can best be measured by the participants' perception of the concept.
 5. More than 50% of the respondents claimed their agencies had not conducted any form of customer evaluation within the past year. Among those who

had conducted evaluations the written questionnaire was identified as the most frequently used technique.

6. In testing the internal reliability of SERVQUAL, acceptable alpha coefficients were observed which reflected inter-item reliability for all scales.
7. Only two correlations ("responsiveness" and "empathy") were found to be statistically significant when testing the criterion-related validity of SERVQUAL. However, based on past validity measures and the unproven nature of the item used as a criterion base in this study, the instrument was assumed to be valid.
8. The mean scores on the overall SERVQUAL as well as the mean scores on each dimension showed a narrow range of variation, clustering toward the high end of the scale.
9. Overall, through the SERVQUAL instrument, "assurance" was identified as the most important dimension of service quality by each sector, followed by "reliability". "Empathy" was identified as the least important dimension in each sector.
10. Using ANOVA a significant difference was found to exist between sectors on the overall mean scores on SERVQUAL as well as on the scores achieved on

the dimensions of tangibles, responsiveness, and empathy.

11. Post hoc analysis showed the greatest difference in SERVQUAL mean scores existed between the public and private sectors (significant in all four cases), followed by the difference between the public and voluntary sectors (significant for the responsiveness and empathy dimensions) and the least different between the voluntary and private sectors (significant only for the empathy dimension).
12. The significant differences found with ANOVA were all supported using ANCOVA. Furthermore, once "age" was partialled out the relationship between sector and the mean scores on the reliability dimension of SERVQUAL also became significant.
13. The variable "age" held a significant relationship with the differences in mean scores on SERVQUAL as well as on the dimension scores of "tangibles", "reliability", "responsiveness", and "empathy". "Gender", "level of education", and "salary" did not hold any significant relationship to score differences.

Conclusions

Based on the data presented and within the limitations of this study, the following conclusions are warranted:

1. The management level of the leisure fitness industry is still dominated by males, although it appears the gap is narrowing somewhat.
2. There is still a large discrepancy between the salaries earned by males and females in management of the leisure fitness industry, with males frequently reporting a higher pay bracket.
3. Managers in the private sector leisure fitness industry are frequently younger than those in the public and voluntary sectors, yet in higher salary ranges.
4. A large majority of managers in all sectors of the leisure fitness industry have earned bachelor's or master's degrees.
5. The educational background of directors of municipal park and recreation departments is predominantly recreation. YMCA managers most frequently have a physical education background followed by recreation, while private athletic club managers most frequently have either a physical education or business degree.
6. Participation in leisure fitness has continued to grow in all sectors over the past year.

7. Management in all sectors of the leisure fitness industry agree that service quality is important to the success of their agencies. The private and voluntary sectors, however, are slightly more emphatic than the public sector about its level of importance.
8. Although the consumer's perception of service quality is considered the best measure of quality by a large majority of managers in the leisure fitness industry, many of those agencies are not conducting any form of evaluation by the customer. Only approximately 50% of the YMCA's conducted evaluations over the past year, 40% of the private athletic clubs did so, and 35% of the municipal park and recreation departments did so in the past year. This leads one to believe that managers are only paying lip service to being concerned with the consumers' perception of the quality of their services.
9. SERVQUAL has good internal reliability.
10. Managers in all sectors of the leisure fitness industry appear to be similar in their interpretation of service quality which could account for claims of similarities between their products.
11. Subtle yet significant distinctions do exist

between the sectors in terms of definition of service quality as perceived by management in the leisure fitness industry. The private sector scored consistently higher on all dimensions and on SERVQUAL overall. The voluntary sector consistently scored in the middle, and the public sector was always lowest. This does not indicate a lack of concern for service quality on the part of the public or voluntary sectors, but perhaps a lower level of concern than expressed by the private sector.

12. Leisure fitness industry managers of different sectors differ significantly on the mean scores for "tangibles", "responsiveness", "empathy", "reliability" (once "age" has been partialled out), and "SERVQUAL" overall.
13. In terms of definition of service quality, the voluntary sector most closely resembles the private sector.
14. Management in all sectors agree that "assurance" is the most important dimension of service quality, followed by "reliability". They also concur that "empathy" is the least important. In this respect it can be concluded that, based on SERVQUAL, management tends to agree on the relative ranking of the dimensions of service

quality. This does not agree entirely, however, with the relative importance placed on the dimensions by consumers as found by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) and MacKay (1987). "Reliability" was consistently found to be the most important dimension in those studies. This confirms studies which have found a discrepancy between the attitude of service providers and service consumers (Brown & Swartz, 1989; Lucas, 1964, 1970; Parasuraman & Zeithaml, 1982; Pisharodi, 1987; and Twight and Catton, 1975).

15. The age of a manager has a significant relationship to scores achieved on SERVQUAL, including overall scores as well as the dimensional scores of "tangibles", "reliability", "responsiveness", and "empathy". In particular, individuals 56 years of age and older show less concern with service quality than their younger colleagues.

Implications and Recommendations

This study has indicated that management of the leisure fitness industry overall has a high level of awareness of the importance of service quality. It has also shown that managers of the voluntary, public, and private sectors essentially agree on the ranking of the dimensions of service quality as measured by SERVQUAL. The private sector, however, showed a significantly higher level of concern for service quality than the public sector, with the voluntary sector falling in between the two but leaning more toward the attitude of the private sector. Although the degree of difference was small, its significance confirmed its relative consistency among managers of the same sector. An awareness of the level of the threshold of sensitivity for even marginal improvements in service quality might be very important to the public sector where a small change in attitude might result in a large change in public perception. If municipal park and recreation departments wish to remain competitive in the leisure fitness industry, the results of this study appear to suggest that they should recognize the differences that exist in attitude toward service quality among sector management. Since all three sectors essentially define the concept the same way in terms of rank ordering of dimensions, the competitive edge at this point will go to that sector with the highest level of concern.

A concern which came out of this study was the perception that perhaps management in the leisure fitness industry is merely paying lip service to the concept of service quality; that is, their apparent recognition of the importance of service quality is not being translated into management actions. For example, there was a direct contradiction between the number of managers who claimed the consumer's perception of service quality was the best measurement technique and the number of managers who have conducted any form of consumer evaluation within the past year. This study was not designed to confirm the translation of one's definition of service quality into actual practices. To be effective agents of leisure services, quality must be translated into management practices or in essence it merely exists in the minds of the managers.

Studies conducted by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry grouped all consumers together to arrive at the dimensions of service quality. As a result the subsequent ranking of dimensions by degree of importance was a result of everyone being grouped together. However, perhaps consumers who utilize public sector services versus private sector services are actually seeking something different in their own personal perception of service quality. If that were the case sector management could address these markets accordingly. In light of current information regarding

consumers from studies by MacKay (1987) and Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), management in the leisure fitness industry needs to be more concerned with the reliability dimension of their service quality.

The SERVQUAL instrument itself created a great deal of agitated discussion from respondents. Use of the full SERVQUAL scale (two parts) allows a researcher to measure a consumer's perceived level of service quality. Perhaps its modification for this study was not entirely appropriate. Future studies utilizing a similar approach could perhaps design a new instrument based on the same five dimensions but capable of finer delineation without offering "obvious" answers.

SERVQUAL items in this study were worded as suggested by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988). However, the researcher later developed a concern with the negatively worded items. Mixing positively and negatively worded statements is valuable in forcing the respondent to read each statement before responding to eliminate the hurried habit of assuming agreement at level "7" for the first few answers implies they should all receive that score. However, the negatively worded items can also cause confusion and may result in a response opposite what was actually intended. SERVQUAL unfortunately uses all positive statements for the dimensions of tangibles, reliability, and assurance; and all negative statements for the dimensions of

responsiveness and empathy. Interestingly, "responsiveness" and "empathy" ranked low in level of importance in the studies conducted by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) as well as this current study. Perhaps the relatively low ranking could be due to confusion caused by negative wording. Mixing negative and positive statements for each dimension could possibly reduce that potential for error.

The finding that "age" showed a significant relationship to service quality definition suggested a new dimension that warrants future consideration. If younger managers are more sensitive to service quality, perhaps older managers need to receive some training to accept its role in today's service industry and to develop effective strategies to operationalize the concept in daily practice. More in-depth analysis needs to be taken concerning the role of age in sector management.

This study dealt entirely with leisure service management's attitude toward service quality. In response, management from all sectors indicated strong support for its importance to the success of their agencies. No attempt was made, however, to judge management's support of service quality relative to other management concerns. If decisions had to be made between service quality and higher income, for example, where would the trade-off be? Do the sectors differ regarding service quality's level of importance relative to other management concerns?

Finally, this study did not take into consideration the nature of an agency's competition nor the population of the area which it served. Perhaps a manager of a leisure fitness agency that has no competition or one serving a sparsely populated area will view service quality differently than a manager of an agency with heavy competition or one serving a densely populated area.

In summation, the following are recommendations based on the findings and implications of this study:

1. The SERVQUAL instrument should mix positive and negative statements within each dimension.
2. For research similar in nature to this study it is suggested that a new measurement instrument be developed utilizing the same five dimensions but capable of finer delineation without offering "obvious" answers.
3. Studies should be conducted to determine the degree of sensitivity of consumers regarding differences in service quality.
4. Similar studies could be conducted with consumers of the three sectors to determine if perhaps they vary in their definition of service quality.
5. Studies should be conducted to determine how managers' definition of service quality is being translated into management actions. This should be done not only from the management's viewpoint

but also from the viewpoint of the consumer.

6. Studies need to be conducted to determine sector management's support of service quality relative to other management concerns.
7. Similar studies should be conducted whereby the nature of competition and/or density of population is taken into consideration.
8. Studies should be conducted focusing on the relationship of age to the definition of service quality.

Recommendations to management in the leisure fitness industry, based on the findings of this study, would include:

1. Leisure fitness industries need to conduct more consumer evaluations of the services offered.
2. Studies should be conducted to determine whether management's perception of service quality matches that of their consumers.
3. Leisure fitness industry managers of all ages need to understand the importance of service quality and pass that attitude on to their employees.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
FINAL SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Voluntary Sector

Public Sector

Private Sector

A SURVEY OF QUALITY IN PRIVATE NON-PROFIT
LEISURE FITNESS SERVICES



SPONSORED BY
LEISURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Please read each question carefully before responding. Your responses will vary from section to section: print, check, or circle the appropriate answer in the designated space. Thank you for your participation.

To begin, we would like to ask you some questions about your administrative position and the recreation organization you represent.

Q-1. What is your administrative title? (Please check one)

- 1. DIRECTOR
- 2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- 3. MANAGER
- 4. GENERAL MANAGER
- 5. SUPERVISOR
- 6. SUPERINTENDENT
- 7. ADMINISTRATOR
- 8. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-2. Is your organization governed by a board of directors? (Please check one)

- 1. YES
- 2. NO

Q-3. Within the last 12 months, has attendance (i.e., utilization, participation) in your programs increased, decreased, or remained the same?

- 1. INCREASED
- 2. DECREASED
- 3. REMAINED THE SAME (go to Q-4)
- 4. DO NOT KNOW (go to Q-4)

Q3-A. By what percentage has it increased or decreased over the past 12 months?

- 1. 1-5%
- 2. 6-10%
- 3. 11-20%
- 4. 21-30%
- 5. 31-40%
- 6. 41-50%
- 7. MORE THAN 50%

Q-4. Within the past 12 months, has your organization conducted (or hired an agency to conduct) any form of participant evaluation of the services offered? (Please check one)

1. YES
 2. NO (go to Q-5)

→ Q-4A. If YES, please check which participant evaluation technique(s) you have used. (Check all that apply)

1. WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE
 2. TELEPHONE SURVEY
 3. FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW
 4. INFORMAL FACE-TO-FACE FEEDBACK
 5. FOCUS GROUPS
 6. SUGGESTION BOX
 7. COMMENT CARDS
 8. OTHER (please specify) _____

The following questions are designed to understand your attitude about the concept of service quality as it relates to your recreation organization. Please base your answers on your personal feelings.

Q-5. How important do you believe service quality is to the success of your organization? (Please check one)

1. NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
 2. NOT VERY IMPORTANT
 3. SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
 4. VERY IMPORTANT
 5. THE MOST IMPORTANT AREA OF CONSIDERATION

Q-6. What do you think is the best measure of the quality of your services? (Please check one)

1. THE TOTAL ATTENDANCE (I.E., AMOUNT OF UTILIZATION)
 2. THE TOTAL INCOME
 3. PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OUR SERVICES
 4. STAFF AND MANAGEMENT'S PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OUR SERVICES
 5. NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS
 6. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-7. To what extent do you think your organization should possess the features described by the following statements? Answer this by circling one of the seven numbers next to each statement. For example, if you very strongly agree that your organization should possess this feature, circle the number 7; if you very strongly disagree, circle the number 1.

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. Our physical facilities should be visually appealing....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Our employees do not always have to be willing to help participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Our organization should be dependable.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. When our participants have problems, our organization should be sympathetic and reassuring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E. Our organization should not be expected to give participants individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F. Our organization should not be expected to have operating hours convenient to all our participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G. Our employees should be well dressed and appear neat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
H. It is not realistic for participants to expect prompt service from employees of our organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I. Our organization needs to give our employees adequate support to do their jobs well.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
J. Our organization cannot be expected to give our participants personal attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
K. The appearance of the physical facilities of our organization should be in keeping with the type of services provided.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
L. It is <u>unrealistic</u> to expect our organization to have our participants' best interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
M. When our organization promises to do something by a certain time, it should do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N. Our organization <u>should not</u> be expected to tell participants exactly when services will be performed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
O. Our participants should be able to feel safe in their dealings with our organization's employees . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
P. Our employees should be polite	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q. It is <u>unrealistic</u> to expect our employees to know the needs of our participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R. Our participants should be able to trust our organization's employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
S. Our organization's records should be kept accurately	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
T. It is okay if our employees are <u>too busy</u> to respond to participant requests promptly . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
U. The equipment provided by our organization should be up to date.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
V. Our organization should provide services at the time it promises to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q-8. Please show how you would rate the overall quality of the services offered by your organization. (Do this by circling the number which best reflects what you think)

<i>Extremely Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Neither Poor Nor Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Very Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q-9. Please distribute 100 points among the following features according to how important you feel each one is to the quality of the services offered by your organization. The more important you believe each feature to be, the more points you should give to it. (Please check to see that the total points add to 100). We are interested in a number that best shows what you feel is important to your particular organization's services.

TANGIBLES: the physical facilities, equipment, appearance of personnel, and presence of other participants	_____
RELIABILITY: the ability to perform the promised services dependably and accurately	_____
RESPONSIVENESS: willingness to help participants and provide prompt service	_____
ASSURANCE: knowledge and courtesy of staff and their ability to convey trust and confidence	_____
EMPATHY: caring individualized attention to participants	_____
TOTAL:	_____ 100 points

Finally, we would like to ask some questions about yourself for classification purposes. The information you provide will remain strictly confidential and you will not be identified with your answers.

Q-10. What is your gender? (Please check one)

_____	1. MALE
_____	2. FEMALE

Q-11. What is your age? (Please check one)

1. 25 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER
 2. 26-35 YEARS OLD
 3. 36-45 YEARS OLD
 4. 46-55 YEARS OLD
 5. 56 YEARS OLD OR OLDER

Q-12. What best describes your education? (For each degree you have completed, please print your major field of study)

<u>DEGREE</u>	<u>FIELD OF STUDY</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. HIGH SCHOOL	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL DEGREE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. BACHELOR'S DEGREE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. MASTER'S DEGREE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. DOCTORATE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. OTHER (please specify)	

Q-13. How many years have you worked in the leisure service industry in the following sectors? (Please write in the number of years by each sector)

<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF YEARS</u>
1. PUBLIC (Provided by the government)	
2. PRIVATE NON-PROFIT	
3. PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT	

Q-14. How many years have you worked in your current position? (Please write in the number of years)

_____ YEARS

Q-15. What is your current gross annual salary before taxes (including any bonuses you expect to receive)? (Please check one)

1. LESS THAN \$20,000
 2. \$20,000-\$29,999
 3. \$30,000-\$39,999
 4. \$40,000-\$49,999
 5. \$50,000-\$59,999
 6. \$60,000-\$69,999
 7. \$70,000 OR MORE

If you have any further comments, please write them below.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

A SURVEY OF QUALITY IN PUBLIC SECTOR
LEISURE FITNESS SERVICES



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- 2. DECREASED
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- 4. DO NOT KNOW (go to Q-4)

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 6. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-7. To what extent do you think your organization should possess the features described by the following statements? Answer this by circling one of the seven numbers next to each statement. For example, if you very strongly agree that your organization should possess this feature, circle the number 7; if you very strongly disagree, circle the number 1.

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
A. Our physical facilities should be visually appealing....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Our employees <u>do not</u> always have to be willing to help participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Our organization should be dependable.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. When our participants have problems, our organization should be sympathetic and reassuring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E. Our organization <u>should not</u> be expected to give participants individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F. Our organization <u>should not</u> be expected to have operating hours convenient to all our participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G. Our employees should be well dressed and appear neat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
H. It <u>is not</u> realistic for participants to expect prompt service from employees of our organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I. Our organization needs to give our employees adequate support to do their jobs well.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
J. Our organization <u>cannot</u> be expected to give our participants personal attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
K. The appearance of the physical facilities of our organization should be in keeping with the type of services provided.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
L. It is unrealistic to expect our organization to have our participants' best interests at heart.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
M. When our organization promises to do something by a certain time, it should do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N. Our organization should not be expected to tell participants exactly when services will be performed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
O. Our participants should be able to feel safe in their dealings with our organization's employees. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
P. Our employees should be polite	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q. It is unrealistic to expect our employees to know the needs of our participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R. Our participants should be able to trust our organization's employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
S. Our organization's records should be kept accurately	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
T. It is okay if our employees are too busy to respond to participant requests promptly . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
U. The equipment provided by our organization should be up to date.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
V. Our organization should provide services at the time it promises to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q-8. Please show how you would rate the overall quality of the services offered by your organization. (Do this by circling the number which best reflects what you think)

<i>Extremely Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Neither Poor Nor Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Very Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q-9. Please distribute 100 points among the following features according to how important you feel each one is to the quality of the services offered by your organization. The more important you believe each feature to be, the more points you should give to it. (Please check to see that the total points add to 100). We are interested in a number that best shows what you feel is important to your particular organization's services.

TANGIBLES: the physical facilities, equipment, appearance of personnel, and presence of other participants	_____
RELIABILITY: the ability to perform the promised services dependably and accurately	_____
RESPONSIVENESS: willingness to help participants and provide prompt service	_____
ASSURANCE: knowledge and courtesy of staff and their ability to convey trust and confidence	_____
EMPATHY: caring individualized attention to participants	_____
TOTAL:	100 points

Finally, we would like to ask some questions about yourself for classification purposes. The information you provide will remain strictly confidential and you will not be identified with your answers.

Q-10. What is your gender? (Please check one)

_____	1. MALE
_____	2. FEMALE

Q-11. What is your age? (Please check one)

- _____ 1. 25 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER
- _____ 2. 26-35 YEARS OLD
- _____ 3. 36-45 YEARS OLD
- _____ 4. 46-55 YEARS OLD
- _____ 5. 56 YEARS OLD OR OLDER

Q-12. What best describes your education? (For each degree you have completed, please print your major field of study)

<u>DEGREE</u>	<u>FIELD OF STUDY</u>
_____ 1. HIGH SCHOOL	
_____ 2. TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL DEGREE	_____
_____ 3. ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	_____
_____ 4. BACHELOR'S DEGREE	_____
_____ 5. MASTER'S DEGREE	_____
_____ 6. DOCTORATE	_____
_____ 7. OTHER (please specify)	_____

Q-13. How many years have you worked in the leisure service industry in the following sectors? (Please write in the number of years by each sector)

<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF YEARS</u>
1. PUBLIC (Provided by the government)	_____
2. PRIVATE NON-PROFIT	_____
3. PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT	_____

Q-14. How many years have you worked in your current position? (Please write in the number of years)

_____ YEARS

Q-15. What is your current gross annual salary before taxes (including any bonuses you expect to receive)? (Please check one)

- _____ 1. LESS THAN \$20,000
- _____ 2. \$20,000-\$29,999
- _____ 3. \$30,000-\$39,999
- _____ 4. \$40,000-\$49,999
- _____ 5. \$50,000-\$59,999
- _____ 6. \$60,000-\$69,999
- _____ 7. \$70,000 OR MORE

If you have any further comments, please write them below.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

A SURVEY OF QUALITY IN PRIVATE SECTOR
LEISURE FITNESS SERVICES



SPONSORED BY
LEISURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Please read each question carefully before responding. Your responses will vary from section to section: print, check, or circle the appropriate answer in the designated space. Thank you for your participation.

To begin, we would like to ask you some questions about your administrative position and the recreation business you represent.

Q-1. What is your administrative title? (Please check one)

- 1. DIRECTOR
- 2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- 3. MANAGER
- 4. GENERAL MANAGER
- 5. SUPERVISOR
- 6. SUPERINTENDENT
- 7. ADMINISTRATOR
- 8. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-2. Are you also the owner of the club which you manage? (Please check one)

- 1. YES
- 2. NO

Q-3. Within the last 12 months, has attendance (i.e., utilization, participation) at your facility increased, decreased, or remained the same?

- 1. INCREASED
- 2. DECREASED
- 3. REMAINED THE SAME (go to Q-4)
- 4. DO NOT KNOW (go to Q-4)

→ Q3-A. By what percentage has it increased or decreased over the past 12 months?

- 1. 1-5%
- 2. 6-10%
- 3. 11-20%
- 4. 21-30%
- 5. 31-40%
- 6. 41-50%
- 7. MORE THAN 50%

Q-4. Within the past 12 months, has your business conducted (or hired an agency to conduct) any form of customer evaluation of the services offered? (Please check one)

1. YES
 2. NO (go to Q-5)

Q-4A. If YES, please check which customer evaluation technique(s) you have used. (Check all that apply)

1. WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE
 2. TELEPHONE SURVEY
 3. FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW
 4. INFORMAL FACE-TO-FACE FEEDBACK
 5. FOCUS GROUPS
 6. SUGGESTION BOX
 7. COMMENT CARDS
 8. OTHER (please specify) _____

The following questions are designed to understand your attitude about the concept of service quality as it relates to your recreation business. Please base your answers on your personal feelings.

Q-5. How important do you believe service quality is to the success of your business? (Please check one)

1. NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
 2. NOT VERY IMPORTANT
 3. SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
 4. VERY IMPORTANT
 5. THE MOST IMPORTANT AREA OF CONSIDERATION

Q-6. What do you think is the best measure of the quality of your services? (Please check one)

1. THE TOTAL ATTENDANCE (I.E., AMOUNT OF UTILIZATION)
 2. THE TOTAL INCOME
 3. MEMBERS' PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OUR SERVICES
 4. STAFF AND MANAGEMENT'S PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OUR SERVICES
 5. NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS
 6. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-7. To what extent do you think your business should possess the features described by the following statements? Answer this by circling one of the seven numbers next to each statement. For example, if you very strongly agree that your business should possess this feature, circle the number 7; if you very strongly disagree, circle the number 1.

	<i>Very Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Very Strongly Agree</i>
A. Our physical facilities should be visually appealing....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Our employees <u>do not</u> always have to be willing to help customers.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Our business should be dependable.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. When our customers have problems, our business should be sympathetic and reassuring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E. Our business <u>should not</u> be expected to give customers individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F. Our business <u>should not</u> be expected to have operating hours convenient to all our customers.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G. Our employees should be well dressed and appear neat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
H. It <u>is not</u> realistic for customers to expect prompt service from employees of our business	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I. Our business needs to give our employees adequate support to do their jobs well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
J. Our business <u>cannot</u> be expected to give our customers personal attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	<i>Very Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Very Strongly Agree</i>
K. The appearance of the physical facilities of our business should be in keeping with the type of services provided.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
L. It is unrealistic to expect our business to have our customers' best interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
M. When our business promises to do something by a certain time, it should do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N. Our business should not be expected to tell customers exactly when services will be performed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
O. Our customers should be able to feel safe in their dealings with our business's employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
P. Our employees should be polite	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q. It is unrealistic to expect our employees to know the needs of our customers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R. Our customers should be able to trust our business's employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
S. Our business's records should be kept accurately	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
T. It is okay if our employees are too busy to respond to customer requests promptly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
U. The equipment provided by our business should be up to date	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
V. Our business should provide services at the time it promises to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q-8. Please show how you would rate the overall quality of the services offered by your business. (Do this by circling the number which best reflects what you think)

- Extremely Poor*
1
- Very Poor*
2
- Poor*
3
- Neither Poor
Nor Good*
4
- Good*
5
- Very Good*
6
- Excellent*
7

Q-9. Please distribute 100 points among the following features according to how important you feel each one is to the quality of the services offered by your business. The more important you believe each feature to be, the more points you should give to it. Please check to see that the total points add to 100. We are interested in a number that best shows what you feel is important to your particular business's services.

TANGIBLES: the physical facilities, equipment, appearance of personnel, and presence of other customers _____

RELIABILITY: the ability to perform the promised services dependably and accurately _____

RESPONSIVENESS: willingness to help customers and provide prompt service _____

ASSURANCE: knowledge and courtesy of staff and their ability to convey trust and confidence _____

EMPATHY: caring individualized attention to customers _____

TOTAL: _____ 100 points

Finally, we would like to ask some questions about yourself for classification purposes. The information you provide will remain strictly confidential and you will not be identified with your answers.

Q-10. What is your gender? (Please check one)

- 1. MALE
- 2. FEMALE

Q-11. What is your age? (Please check one)

- 1. 25 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER
- 2. 26-35 YEARS OLD
- 3. 36-45 YEARS OLD
- 4. 46-55 YEARS OLD
- 5. 56 YEARS OLD OR OLDER

Q-12. What best describes your education? (For each degree you have completed, please print your major field of study)

<u>DEGREE</u>	<u>FIELD OF STUDY</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. HIGH SCHOOL	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. BACHELOR'S DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. MASTER'S DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. DOCTORATE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. OTHER (please specify)	_____

Q-13. How many years have you worked in the leisure service industry in the following sectors? (Please write in the number of years by each sector)

<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF YEARS</u>
1. PUBLIC (Provided by the government)	_____
2. PRIVATE NON-PROFIT	_____
3. PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT	_____

Q-14. How many years have you worked in your current position? (Please write in the number of years)

_____ YEARS

Q-15. What is your current gross annual salary before taxes (including any bonuses you expect to receive)? (Please check one)

- 1. LESS THAN \$20,000
- 2. \$20,000-\$29,999
- 3. \$30,000-\$39,999
- 4. \$40,000-\$49,999
- 5. \$50,000-\$59,999
- 6. \$60,000-\$69,999
- 7. \$70,000 OR MORE

If you have any further comments, please write them below.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

APPENDIX B
ORIGINAL PRE-TEST

Please read each question carefully before responding. Your responses will vary from section to section: fill in, check, or circle the appropriate answer in the designated space. Thank you for your participation.

To begin, we would like to ask you some questions about your administrative position and the recreation agency you represent.

Q-1. What is your administrative title? (Please check one)

- 1. DIRECTOR
- 2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- 3. MANAGER
- 4. SUPERVISOR
- 5. SUPERINTENDENT
- 6. ADMINISTRATOR
- 7. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-2. Are you also the owner of the club which you manage? (Please check one)

- 1. YES
- 2. NO

Q-3. Within the last 12 months, has participation at your facility increased, decreased, or remained the same?

- 1. INCREASED
- 2. DECREASED
- 3. REMAINED THE SAME

→ Q3-A. By what percentage has it increased or decreased?

- 1. 1-10%
- 2. 11-19%
- 3. 20-29%
- 4. 30-39%
- 5. 40-49%
- 6. 50% OR MORE

Q-4. Within the past 12 months, has your agency conducted any form of consumer evaluation of your services? (Please check one)

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1. YES
 2. NO

→ **Q-4A. If YES, Please check which consumer evaluation technique(s) you have used. (Check all that apply)**

1. WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE
 2. TELEPHONE SURVEY
 3. FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW
 4. INFORMAL FACE-TO-FACE FEEDBACK
 5. SUGGESTION BOX
 6. OTHER (please specify) _____

The following questions are designed to determine your feelings about the concept of service quality as it relates you your recreation agency. Please base your answers on your own personal feelings.

Q-5. How important do you feel service quality is to the success of your agency's services? (Please check one)

1. NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
 2. NOT VERY IMPORTANT
 3. SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
 4. VERY IMPORTANT
 5. THE MOST IMPORTANT AREA OF CONSIDERATION

Q-6. How do you think the quality of your services can best be measured? (Please check one)

1. BY COUNTING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
 2. BY COUNTING THE TOTAL INCOME
 3. BY MEASURING HOW PARTICIPANTS PERCEIVE OUR SERVICE QUALITY TO BE
 4. BY MEASURING HOW OUR STAFF AND MANAGEMENT PERCEIVE OUR SERVICE QUALITY TO BE
 5. BY COUNTING THE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS MADE
 6. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-7. Please show the extent to which you think your agency should possess the features described by each statement. Do this by picking one of the seven numbers next to each statement. If you strongly agree that your agency should possess a feature, circle the number 7. On the other hand, if you strongly disagree that your agency should possess a feature, circle the number 1. If your feelings are not strong, circle one of the numbers in the middle that most closely matches your feelings. There are no right or wrong answers--all we are interested in is a number that best shows your feelings about your agency's offering of leisure fitness services. Please read each statement carefully before answering.

	STRONGLY DISAGREE			NEUTRAL			STRONGLY AGREE						
A. Our employees do not always have to be willing to help consumers.	1		2		3		4		5		6		7
B. Our physical facilities should be visually appealing . . .	1		2		3		4		5		6		7
C. Our agency should be dependable	1		2		3		4		5		6		7
D. When our consumers have problems, our agency should be sympathetic and reassuring.	1		2		3		4		5		6		7
E. Our agency should not be expected to give customers individual attention	1		2		3		4		5		6		7
F. Our agency should not be expected to have operating hours convenient to all our consumers.	1		2		3		4		5		6		7
G. Our employees should be well dressed and appear neat	1		2		3		4		5		6		7

	STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEUTRAL			STRONGLY AGREE	
H. It is not realistic for consumers to expect prompt service from employees of our agency.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I. Our agency needs to give our employees adequate support to do their jobs well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
J. Our agency cannot be expected to give our consumers personal attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
K. The appearance of the physical facilities of our agency should be in keeping with the type of services provided.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
L. It is unrealistic to expect our agency to have our consumers' best interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
M. When our agency promises to do something by a certain time, it should do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N. Our agency should not be expected to tell consumers exactly when services will be performed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
O. Our consumers should be able to feel safe in their dealings with our agency's employees. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
P. Our consumers should be able to trust our agency's employees . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEUTRAL			STRONGLY AGREE	
Q. It is unrealistic to expect our employees to know the needs of our consumers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R. Our employees should be polite	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
S. Our agency's records should be kept accurately.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
T. It is okay if our employees are too busy to respond to consumer requests promptly. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
U. The equipment provided by our agency should be up to date. . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
V. Our agency should be dependable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Finally, we would like to ask some questions about yourself for classification purposes. The information you provide will remain strictly confidential and you will not be identified with your answers.

Q-8. What is your gender? (Please check one)

- 1. MALE
- 2. FEMALE

Q-9. What is your age? (Please check one)

- 1. 25 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER
- 2. 26-35 YEARS OLD
- 3. 36-45 YEARS OLD
- 4. 46-55 YEARS OLD
- 5. 56 YEARS OLD OR OLDER

Q-10. What level(s) of education have you completed? (Please check all that apply and write in your field of study for each level of higher education)

<u>DEGREE</u>	<u>FIELD OF STUDY</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. BACHELOR'S DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. MASTER'S DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. DOCTORATE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. OTHER (please specify)	_____

Q-11. How many years have you worked in the leisure service industry in the following sectors? (Please write in the number of years by each sector)

<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF YEARS</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. PUBLIC (Provided by the government)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. PRIVATE NON-PROFIT	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT	_____

Q-12. How many years have you worked in your current position? (Please write in the number of years)

_____ YEARS

Q-13. What is your current annual salary (including any bonuses you expect to receive)? (Please check one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. LESS THAN \$20,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. \$20,000-\$29,999
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. \$30,000-\$39,999
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. \$40,000-\$49,999
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. \$50,000-\$59,999
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. \$60,000-\$69,999
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. \$70,000 OR MORE

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer these questions. Would you be interested in receiving a copy of the results of this study?

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. YES
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. NO

If you have any further comments, please write them below.

APPENDIX C

PILOT STUDY

Voluntary Sector

Public Sector

Private Sector

**A SURVEY OF QUALITY IN PRIVATE NON-PROFIT
LEISURE FITNESS SERVICES**



**SPONSORED BY
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INDIANA UNIVERSITY**

Please read each question carefully before responding. Your responses will vary from section to section: print, check, or circle the appropriate answer in the designated space. Thank you for your participation.

To begin, we would like to ask you some questions about your administrative position and the recreation organization you represent.

Q-1. What is your administrative title? (Please check one)

- 1. DIRECTOR
- 2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- 3. MANAGER
- 4. SUPERVISOR
- 5. SUPERINTENDENT
- 6. ADMINISTRATOR
- 7. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-2. Is your organization governed by a board of directors? (Please check one)

- 1. YES
- 2. NO

Q-3. Within the last 12 months, has attendance (i.e., participation) in your programs increased, decreased, or remained the same?

- 1. INCREASED
- 2. DECREASED
- 3. REMAINED THE SAME (go to Q-4)
- 4. DO NOT KNOW (go to Q-4)

→ Q3-A. By what percentage has it increased or decreased over the past 12 months?

- 1. 1-5%
- 2. 6-10%
- 3. 11-20%
- 4. 21-30%
- 5. 31-40%
- 6. 41-50%
- 7. MORE THAN 50%

Q-4. Within the past 12 months, has your organization conducted (or hired an agency to conduct) any form of participant evaluation of the services offered? (Please check one)

1. YES
 2. NO (go to Q-5)

→ Q-4A. If YES, please check which participant evaluation technique(s) you have used. (Check all that apply)

1. WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE
 2. TELEPHONE SURVEY
 3. FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW
 4. INFORMAL FACE-TO-FACE FEEDBACK
 5. SUGGESTION BOX
 6. COMMENT CARDS
 7. OTHER (please specify) _____

The following questions are designed to understand your attitude about the concept of service quality as it relates to your recreation organization. Please base your answers on your personal feelings.

Q-5. How important do you believe service quality is to the success of your organization? (Please check one)

1. NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
 2. NOT VERY IMPORTANT
 3. SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
 4. VERY IMPORTANT
 5. THE MOST IMPORTANT AREA OF CONSIDERATION

Q-6. How do you think the quality of your services can best be measured? (Please check one)

1. THE TOTAL ATTENDANCE (I.E., NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS)
 2. THE TOTAL INCOME
 3. PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OUR SERVICES
 4. STAFF AND MANAGEMENT'S PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OUR SERVICES
 5. NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS
 6. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-7. To what extent do you think your organization should possess the features described by the following statements? Answer this by circling one of the seven numbers next to each statement. For example, if you strongly agree that your organization should possess this feature, circle the number 7; if you strongly disagree, circle the number 1.

	STRONGLY DISAGREE		UNDECIDED			STRONGLY AGREE	
A. Our physical facilities should be visually appealing. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Our employees <u>do not</u> always have to be willing to help participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Our organization should be dependable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. When our participants have problems, our organization should be sympathetic and reassuring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E. Our organization <u>should not</u> be expected to give participants individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F. Our organization <u>should not</u> be expected to have operating hours convenient to all our participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G. Our employees should be well dressed and appear neat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
H. It <u>is not</u> realistic for participants to expect prompt service from employees of our organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I. Our organization needs to give our employees adequate support to do their jobs well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
J. Our organization <u>cannot</u> be expected to give our participants personal attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	STRONGLY DISAGREE		UNDECIDED			STRONGLY AGREE	
K. The appearance of the physical facilities of our organization should be in keeping with the type of services provided.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
L. It is unrealistic to expect our organization to have our participants' best interests at heart.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
M. When our organization promises to do something by a certain time, it should do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N. Our organization should not be expected to tell participants exactly when services will be performed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
O. Our participants should be able to feel safe in their dealings with our organization's employees . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
P. Our employees should be polite	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q. It is unrealistic to expect our employees to know the needs of our participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R. Our participants should be able to trust our organization's employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
S. Our organization's records should be kept accurately	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
T. It is okay if our employees are too busy to respond to participant requests promptly . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
U. The equipment provided by our organization should be up to date.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
V. Our organization should provide services at the time it promises to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q-8. Please show how you would rate the overall quality of the services offered by your organization. offered. (Do this by circling the number which best reflects what you think)

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| <i>Extremely Poor</i> | <i>Very Poor</i> | <i>Poor</i> | <i>Neither Poor
Nor Good</i> | <i>Good</i> | <i>Very Good</i> | <i>Excellent</i> |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Q-9. Please distribute 100 points among the following features according to how important you feel each one is to the quality of the services offered by your organization. The more important you believe each feature to be, the more points you should give to it. (Please check to see that the total points add to 100). We are interested in a number that best shows what you feel is important to your particular organization's services.

- TANGIBLES: the physical facilities, equipment, appearance of personnel, and presence of other participants _____
 - RELIABILITY: the ability to perform the promised services dependably and accurately _____
 - RESPONSIVENESS: willingness to help participants and provide prompt service _____
 - ASSURANCE: knowledge and courtesy of staff and their ability to convey trust and confidence _____
 - EMPATHY: caring individualized attention to participants _____
- TOTAL: _____ 100 points

Finally, we would like to ask some questions about yourself for classification purposes. The information you provide will remain strictly confidential and you will not be identified with your answers.

Q-10. What is your gender? (Please check one)

- _____ 1. MALE
- _____ 2. FEMALE

Q-11. What is your age? (Please check one)

1. 25 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER
 2. 26-35 YEARS OLD
 3. 36-45 YEARS OLD
 4. 46-55 YEARS OLD
 5. 56 YEARS OLD OR OLDER

Q-12. What best describes your education? (For each degree you have completed, please print your major field of study)

- | <u>DEGREE</u> | <u>FIELD OF STUDY</u> |
|---|-----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. HIGH SCHOOL | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. TECHNICAL OR
VOCATIONAL DEGREE | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. BACHELOR'S DEGREE | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. MASTER'S DEGREE | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. DOCTORATE | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. OTHER (please specify) | _____ |

Q-13. How many years have you worked in the leisure service industry in the following sectors? (Please write in the number of years by each sector)

- | <u>SECTOR</u> | <u>NUMBER OF YEARS</u> |
|---|------------------------|
| 1. PUBLIC (Provided by
the government) | _____ |
| 2. PRIVATE NON-PROFIT | _____ |
| 3. PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT | _____ |

Q-14. How many years have you worked in your current position? (Please write in the number of years)

_____ YEARS

Q-15. What is your current gross annual salary before taxes (including any bonuses you expect to receive)? (Please check one)

1. LESS THAN \$20,000
 2. \$20,000-\$29,999
 3. \$30,000-\$39,999
 4. \$40,000-\$49,999
 5. \$50,000-\$59,999
 6. \$60,000-\$69,999
 7. \$70,000 OR MORE

If you have any further comments, please write them below.

**A SURVEY OF QUALITY IN PUBLIC SECTOR
LEISURE FITNESS SERVICES**



**SPONSORED BY
LEISURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
INDIANA UNIVERSITY**

Please read each question carefully before responding. Your responses will vary from section to section: print, check, or circle the appropriate answer in the designated space. Thank you for your participation.

To begin, we would like to ask you some questions about your administrative position and the recreation organization you represent.

Q-1. What is your administrative title? (Please check one)

- 1. DIRECTOR
- 2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- 3. MANAGER
- 4. SUPERVISOR
- 5. SUPERINTENDENT
- 6. ADMINISTRATOR
- 7. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-2. Is your organization governed by a board of directors? (Please check one)

- 1. YES
- 2. NO

Q-3. Within the last 12 months, has attendance (i.e., participation) in your programs increased, decreased, or remained the same?

- 1. INCREASED
- 2. DECREASED
- 3. REMAINED THE SAME (go to Q-4)
- 4. DO NOT KNOW (go to Q-4)

Q3-A. By what percentage has it increased or decreased over the past 12 months?

- 1. 1-5%
- 2. 6-10%
- 3. 11-20%
- 4. 21-30%
- 5. 31-40%
- 6. 41-50%
- 7. MORE THAN 50%

Q-4. Within the past 12 months, has your organization conducted (or hired an agency to conduct) any form of participant evaluation of the services offered? (Please check one)

1. YES
 2. NO (go to Q-5)

→ Q-4A. If YES, please check which participant evaluation technique(s) you have used. (Check all that apply)

1. WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE
 2. TELEPHONE SURVEY
 3. FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW
 4. INFORMAL FACE-TO-FACE FEEDBACK
 5. SUGGESTION BOX
 6. COMMENT CARDS
 7. OTHER (please specify) _____

The following questions are designed to understand your attitude about the concept of service quality as it relates to your recreation organization. Please base your answers on your personal feelings.

Q-5. How important do you believe service quality is to the success of your organization? (Please check one)

1. NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
 2. NOT VERY IMPORTANT
 3. SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
 4. VERY IMPORTANT
 5. THE MOST IMPORTANT AREA OF CONSIDERATION

Q-6. How do you think the quality of your services can best be measured? (Please check one)

1. THE TOTAL ATTENDANCE (I.E., NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS)
 2. THE TOTAL INCOME
 3. PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OUR SERVICES
 4. STAFF AND MANAGEMENT'S PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OUR SERVICES
 5. NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS
 6. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-7. To what extent do you think your organization should possess the features described by the following statements? Answer this by circling one of the seven numbers next to each statement. For example, if you strongly agree that your organization should possess this feature, circle the number 7; if you strongly disagree, circle the number 1.

	STRONGLY DISAGREE				UNDECIDED			STRONGLY AGREE
A. Our physical facilities should be visually appealing . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
B. Our employees <u>do not</u> always have to be willing to help participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
C. Our organization should be dependable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
D. When our participants have problems, our organization should be sympathetic and reassuring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
E. Our organization <u>should not</u> be expected to give participants individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
F. Our organization <u>should not</u> be expected to have operating hours convenient to all our participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
G. Our employees should be well dressed and appear neat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
H. It <u>is not</u> realistic for participants to expect prompt service from employees of our organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
I. Our organization needs to give our employees adequate support to do their jobs well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
J. Our organization <u>cannot</u> be expected to give our participants personal attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

	STRONGLY DISAGREE		UNDECIDED			STRONGLY AGREE	
K. The appearance of the physical facilities of our organization should be in keeping with the type of services provided.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
L. It is unrealistic to expect our organization to have our participants' best interests at heart.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
M. When our organization promises to do something by a certain time, it should do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N. Our organization should not be expected to tell participants exactly when services will be performed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
O. Our participants should be able to feel safe in their dealings with our organization's employees. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
P. Our employees should be polite.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q. It is <u>unrealistic</u> to expect our employees to know the needs of our participants.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R. Our participants should be able to trust our organization's employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
S. Our organization's records should be kept accurately.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
T. It is okay if our employees are too busy to respond to participant requests promptly. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
U. The equipment provided by our organization should be up to date.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
V. Our organization should provide services at the time it promises to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q-8. Please show how you would rate the overall quality of the services offered by your organization. offered. (Do this by circling the number which best reflects what you think)

<i>Extremely Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Neither Poor Nor Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Very Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q-9. Please distribute 100 points among the following features according to how important you feel each one is to the quality of the services offered by your organization. The more important you believe each feature to be, the more points you should give to it. (Please check to see that the total points add to 100). We are interested in a number that best shows what you feel is important to your particular organization's services.

TANGIBLES: the physical facilities, equipment, appearance of personnel, and presence of other participants	_____
RELIABILITY: the ability to perform the promised services dependably and accurately	_____
RESPONSIVENESS: willingness to help participants and provide prompt service	_____
ASSURANCE: knowledge and courtesy of staff and their ability to convey trust and confidence	_____
EMPATHY: caring individualized attention to participants	_____
TOTAL:	_____ 100 points

Finally, we would like to ask some questions about yourself for classification purposes. The information you provide will remain strictly confidential and you will not be identified with your answers.

Q-10. What is your gender? (Please check one)

_____	1. MALE
_____	2. FEMALE

Q-11. What is your age? (Please check one)

- 1. 25 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER
- 2. 26-35 YEARS OLD
- 3. 36-45 YEARS OLD
- 4. 46-55 YEARS OLD
- 5. 56 YEARS OLD OR OLDER

Q-12. What best describes your education? (For each degree you have completed, please print your major field of study)

<u>DEGREE</u>	<u>FIELD OF STUDY</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. HIGH SCHOOL	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL DEGREE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. BACHELOR'S DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. MASTER'S DEGREE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 6. DOCTORATE	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. OTHER (please specify)	_____

Q-13. How many years have you worked in the leisure service industry in the following sectors? (Please write in the number of years by each sector)

<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF YEARS</u>
1. PUBLIC (Provided by the government)	_____
2. PRIVATE NON-PROFIT	_____
3. PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT	_____

Q-14. How many years have you worked in your current position? (Please write in the number of years)

_____ YEARS

Q-15. What is your current gross annual salary before taxes (including any bonuses you expect to receive)? (Please check one)

- 1. LESS THAN \$20,000
- 2. \$20,000-\$29,999
- 3. \$30,000-\$39,999
- 4. \$40,000-\$49,999
- 5. \$50,000-\$59,999
- 6. \$60,000-\$69,999
- 7. \$70,000 OR MORE

If you have any further comments, please write them below.

**A SURVEY OF QUALITY IN PRIVATE SECTOR
LEISURE FITNESS SERVICES**



**SPONSORED BY
LEISURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
INDIANA UNIVERSITY**

Please read each question carefully before responding. Your responses will vary from section to section: print, check, or circle the appropriate answer in the designated space. Thank you for your participation.

To begin, we would like to ask you some questions about your administrative position and the recreation business you represent.

Q-1. What is your administrative title? (Please check one)

- 1. DIRECTOR
- 2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- 3. MANAGER
- 4. SUPERVISOR
- 5. SUPERINTENDENT
- 6. ADMINISTRATOR
- 7. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-2. Are you also the owner of the club which you manage? (Please check one)

- 1. YES
- 2. NO

Q-3. Within the last 12 months, has attendance (i.e., participation) at your facility increased, decreased, or remained the same?

- 1. INCREASED
- 2. DECREASED
- 3. REMAINED THE SAME (go to Q-4)
- 4. DO NOT KNOW (go to Q-4)

Q3-A. By what percentage has it increased or decreased over the past 12 months?

- 1. 1-5%
- 2. 6-10%
- 3. 11-20%
- 4. 21-30%
- 5. 31-40%
- 6. 41-50%
- 7. MORE THAN 50%

Q-4. Within the past 12 months, has your business conducted (or hired an agency to conduct) any form of customer evaluation of the services offered? (Please check one)

1. YES
 2. NO (go to Q-5)

→ Q-4A. If YES, please check which customer evaluation technique(s) you have used. (Check all that apply)

1. WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE
 2. TELEPHONE SURVEY
 3. FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW
 4. INFORMAL FACE-TO-FACE FEEDBACK
 5. SUGGESTION BOX
 6. COMMENT CARDS
 7. OTHER (please specify) _____

The following questions are designed to understand your attitude about the concept of service quality as it relates to your recreation business. Please base your answers on your personal feelings.

Q-5. How important do you believe service quality is to the success of your business? (Please check one)

1. NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
 2. NOT VERY IMPORTANT
 3. SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
 4. VERY IMPORTANT
 5. THE MOST IMPORTANT AREA OF CONSIDERATION

Q-6. How do you think the quality of your services can best be measured? (Please check one)

1. THE TOTAL ATTENDANCE (I.E., NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS)
 2. THE TOTAL INCOME
 3. PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OUR SERVICES
 4. STAFF AND MANAGEMENT'S PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF OUR SERVICES
 5. NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS
 6. OTHER (please specify) _____

Q-7. To what extent do you think your business should possess the features described by the following statements? Answer this by circling one of the seven numbers next to each statement. For example, if you strongly agree that your business should possess this feature, circle the number 7; if you strongly disagree, circle the number 1.

	STRONGLY DISAGREE		UNDECIDED			STRONGLY AGREE	
A. Our physical facilities should be visually appealing . . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Our employees <u>do not</u> always have to be willing to help customers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Our business should be dependable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. When our customers have problems, our business should be sympathetic and reassuring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E. Our business <u>should not</u> be expected to give customers individual attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
F. Our business <u>should not</u> be expected to have operating hours convenient to all our customers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G. Our employees should be well dressed and appear neat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
H. It <u>is not</u> realistic for customers to expect prompt service from employees of our business.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I. Our business needs to give our employees adequate support to do their jobs well	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
J. Our business <u>cannot</u> be expected to give our customers personal attention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	STRONGLY DISAGREE		UNDECIDED			STRONGLY AGREE	
K. The appearance of the physical facilities of our business should be in keeping with the type of services provided.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
L. It is unrealistic to expect our business to have our customers' best interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
M. When our business promises to do something by a certain time, it should do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N. Our business should not be expected to tell customers exactly when services will be performed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
O. Our customers should be able to feel safe in their dealings with our business's employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
P. Our employees should be polite	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Q. It is unrealistic to expect our employees to know the needs of our customers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R. Our customers should be able to trust our business's employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
S. Our business's records should be kept accurately	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
T. It is okay if our employees are too busy to respond to customer requests promptly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
U. The equipment provided by our business should be up to date	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
V. Our business should provide services at the time it promises to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q-8. Please show how you would rate the overall quality of the services offered by your business. (Do this by circling the number which best reflects what you think)

<i>Extremely Poor</i>	<i>Very Poor</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Neither Poor Nor Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Very Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q-9. Please distribute 100 points among the following features according to how important you feel each one is to the quality of the services offered by your business. The more important you believe each feature to be, the more points you should give to it. (Please check to see that the total points add to 100). We are interested in a number that best shows what you feel is important to your particular business's services.

TANGIBLES: the physical facilities, equipment, appearance of personnel, and presence of other customers	_____
RELIABILITY: the ability to perform the promised services dependably and accurately	_____
RESPONSIVENESS: willingness to help customers and provide prompt service	_____
ASSURANCE: knowledge and courtesy of staff and their ability to convey trust and confidence	_____
EMPATHY: caring individualized attention to customers	_____
TOTAL:	100 points

Finally, we would like to ask some questions about yourself for classification purposes. The information you provide will remain strictly confidential and you will not be identified with your answers.

Q-10. What is your gender? (Please check one)

_____ 1. MALE
 _____ 2. FEMALE

Q-11. What is your age? (Please check one)

- _____ 1. 25 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER
- _____ 2. 26-35 YEARS OLD
- _____ 3. 36-45 YEARS OLD
- _____ 4. 46-55 YEARS OLD
- _____ 5. 56 YEARS OLD OR OLDER

Q-12. What best describes your education? (For each degree you have completed, please print your major field of study)

<u>DEGREE</u>	<u>FIELD OF STUDY</u>
_____ 1. HIGH SCHOOL	
_____ 2. TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL DEGREE	_____
_____ 3. ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	_____
_____ 4. BACHELOR'S DEGREE	_____
_____ 5. MASTER'S DEGREE	_____
_____ 6. DOCTORATE	_____
_____ 7. OTHER (please specify)	_____

Q-13. How many years have you worked in the leisure service industry in the following sectors? (Please write in the number of years by each sector)

<u>SECTOR</u>	<u>NUMBER OF YEARS</u>
1. PUBLIC (Provided by the government)	_____
2. PRIVATE NON-PROFIT	_____
3. PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT	_____

Q-14. How many years have you worked in your current position? (Please write in the number of years)

_____ YEARS

Q-15. What is your current gross annual salary before taxes (including any bonuses you expect to receive)? (Please check one)

- _____ 1. LESS THAN \$20,000
- _____ 2. \$20,000-\$29,999
- _____ 3. \$30,000-\$39,999
- _____ 4. \$40,000-\$49,999
- _____ 5. \$50,000-\$59,999
- _____ 6. \$60,000-\$69,999
- _____ 7. \$70,000 OR MORE

If you have any further comments, please write them below.

APPENDIX D
PILOT STUDY COVER LETTERS

Voluntary Sector

Public Sector

Private Sector



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL
EDUCATION AND RECREATION

LEISURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Tourism Resource Center
HPER Building
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-5990

228

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Service quality has become a prominent theme in the operation of leisure service agencies. We are conducting a study to determine how managers such as yourself define this concept. Your assistance with this effort will help us better understand the nature of service quality in the leisure fitness industry.

Your agency was randomly selected from a list of YMCA's throughout Indiana. As the administrator who oversees leisure fitness services, we would appreciate it if you would please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us using the prepaid envelope as soon as possible. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only, so we can check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to contact either of us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

Enclosures



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL
EDUCATION AND RECREATION

LEISURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Tourism Resource Center
HPER Building
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-5990

229

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Service quality has become a prominent theme in the operation of leisure service agencies. We are conducting a study to determine how managers such as yourself define this concept. Your assistance with this effort will help us better understand the nature of service quality in the leisure fitness industry.

Your agency was randomly selected from a list of municipal park and recreation departments throughout Indiana. As the administrator who oversees leisure fitness services, we would appreciate it if you would please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us using the prepaid envelope as soon as possible. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only, so we can check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to contact either of us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

Enclosures



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL
EDUCATION AND RECREATION

LEISURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Tourism Resource Center
HPER Building
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-5990

230

[Date]

[Name]
[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Service quality has become a prominent theme in the operation of leisure service agencies. We are conducting a study to determine how managers such as yourself define this concept. Your assistance with this effort will help us better understand the nature of service quality in the leisure fitness industry.

Your agency was selected from a list of I.R.S.A. athletic club members throughout Kentucky and Tennessee. As the administrator who oversees leisure fitness services, we would appreciate it if you would please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us using the prepaid envelope as soon as possible. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only, so we can check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to contact either of us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

Enclosures

APPENDIX E
IRSA SPONSOR LETTER

Dear IRSA Member:

We are cooperating with the Department of Leisure Studies at the University of Indiana on a survey that is being sent to IRSA Members in the 10 Great Lakes states.

The study has two purposes. Its first purpose is to analyze and evaluate how we in the club industry perceive quality service compared to how it is perceived in other industries that have used the same survey instrument. Its second purpose is to analyze whether quality service is perceived differently in the private sector (for-profit clubs) than it is in the YMCA's and Jcc's (in the so-called "voluntary sector") and in the public sector (municipal park and recreation) facilities.

The survey is relatively easy to complete. I hope that you find it a valuable exercise to fill it out.

We will be reporting the outcome of the survey in CBI.

Appreciatively,



John McCarthy

APPENDIX F
PRE-SURVEY LETTERS

Voluntary Sector

Public Sector

Private Sector



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL
EDUCATION AND RECREATION

LEISURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Tourism Resource Center
HPER Building
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-5990

234

[Date]

[Name]
[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Service quality has become a prominent theme in the operation of leisure service agencies. We are conducting a study to determine how managers such as yourself define this concept. Your assistance with this effort will help us better understand the nature of service quality in the leisure fitness industry.

Your agency was among 200 randomly selected from a list of YMCA's throughout the eight state Great Lakes region. We will be mailing you a short survey questionnaire in two weeks. As mentioned above, we are focusing on the way the quality of an agency's services is defined by the chief administrator who oversees the leisure fitness services offered to the public. If you are not the appropriate person within your agency, or if the name we have addressed this to is in error, we apologize and ask you to return the enclosed post card to us as soon as possible, informing us of any necessary corrections.

If you are in fact the appropriate individual, you should receive our short questionnaire in about two weeks. We would appreciate your assistance by completing the survey and returning it to us. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete. Results of the study will be provided upon request.

We will be in touch with you soon.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

Enclosure



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL
EDUCATION AND RECREATION

LEISURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Tourism Resource Center
HPER Building
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-5990

235

[Date]

[Name]
[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Service quality has become a prominent theme in the operation of leisure service agencies. We are conducting a study to determine how managers such as yourself define this concept. Your assistance with this effort will help us better understand the nature of service quality in the leisure fitness industry.

Your agency was among 200 randomly selected from a list of municipal park and recreation departments throughout the eight state Great Lakes region. We will be mailing you a short survey questionnaire in two weeks. As mentioned above, we are focusing on the way the quality of an agency's services is defined by the chief administrator who oversees the leisure fitness services offered to the public. If you are not the appropriate person within your agency, or if the name we have addressed this to is in error, we apologize and ask you to return the enclosed post card to us as soon as possible, informing us of any necessary corrections.

If you are in fact the appropriate individual, you should receive our short questionnaire in about two weeks. We would appreciate your assistance by completing the survey and returning it to us. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete. Results of the study will be provided upon request.

We will be in touch with you soon.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

Enclosure



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LEISURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Tourism Resource Center
HPER Building
Bloomington, Indiana 47405
(812) 855-5990

236

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Service quality has become a prominent theme in the operation of leisure service agencies. We are conducting a study to determine how managers such as yourself define this concept. Your assistance with this effort will help us better understand the nature of service quality in the leisure fitness industry.

Your agency was among 200 selected from a list of private athletic clubs throughout the eight state Great Lakes region. We will be mailing you a short survey questionnaire in two weeks. As mentioned above, we are focusing on the way the quality of an agency's services is defined by the chief administrator who oversees the leisure fitness services offered to the public. If you are not the appropriate person within your agency, or if the name we have addressed this to is in error, we apologize and ask you to return the enclosed post card to us as soon as possible, informing us of any necessary corrections.

If you are in fact the appropriate individual, you should receive our short questionnaire in about two weeks. We would appreciate your assistance by completing the survey and returning it to us. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete. Results of the study will be provided upon request.

We will be in touch with you soon.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

Enclosure

APPENDIX G
PRE-SURVEY POST CARDS

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN IF ADDRESS IS INAPPROPRIATE

The printed label above is inappropriate for the survey dealing with how managers of the leisure industry define service quality. The person you need to contact is:

Name _____

Agency _____

Street _____

City and State _____

Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

APPENDIX H

COVER LETTERS -- FIRST SURVEY MAILING

Voluntary Sector (no name/address changes made)

Voluntary Sector (name/address changes made)

Public Sector (no name/address changes made)

Public Sector (name/address changes made)

Private Sector (no name/address changes made)

Private Sector (name/address changes made)



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240

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Two weeks ago we sent you a letter describing a study we are conducting to better understand how service quality is defined by managers in the leisure industry. We also indicated we would be sending you a short questionnaire in hopes that you will help us with this endeavor.

Enclosed please find a copy of the survey we promised, as well as a prepaid envelope. As the administrator who oversees leisure fitness services, we would appreciate it if you would please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us using the prepaid envelope as soon as possible. The survey should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete. Because the survey was mailed to a small but representative group of 200 YMCA directors, your response is very important.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only, so we can check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to contact either of us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

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(812) 855-5990

241

[Date]

[Name]
[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Service quality has become a prominent theme in the operation of leisure service agencies. We are conducting a study to determine how managers such as yourself define this concept. Your assistance with this effort will help us better understand the nature of service quality in the leisure fitness industry.

Your agency was among 200 randomly selected from a list of YMCA's throughout the eight state Great Lakes region. As the administrator who oversees leisure fitness services, we would appreciate it if you would please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us using the prepaid envelope as soon as possible. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only, so we can check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to contact either of us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
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242

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Two weeks ago we sent you a letter describing a study we are conducting to better understand how service quality is defined by managers in the leisure industry. We also indicated we would be sending you a short questionnaire in hopes that you will help us with this endeavor.

Enclosed please find a copy of the survey we promised, as well as a prepaid envelope. As the administrator who oversees leisure fitness services, we would appreciate it if you would please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us using the prepaid envelope as soon as possible. The survey should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete. Because the survey was mailed to a small but representative group of 200 municipal park and recreation department directors, your response is very important.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only, so we can check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to contact either of us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

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Director
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243

[Date]

[Name]
[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Service quality has become a prominent theme in the operation of leisure service agencies. We are conducting a study to determine how managers such as yourself define this concept. Your assistance with this effort will help us better understand the nature of service quality in the leisure fitness industry.

Your agency was among 200 randomly selected from a list of municipal park and recreation departments throughout the eight state Great Lakes region. As the administrator who oversees leisure fitness services, we would appreciate it if you would please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us using the prepaid envelope as soon as possible. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only, so we can check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to contact either of us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
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244

[Date]

[Name]
[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Two weeks ago we sent you a letter describing a study we are conducting to better understand how service quality is defined by managers in the leisure industry. We also indicated we would be sending you a short questionnaire in hopes that you will help us with this endeavor.

Enclosed please find a copy of the survey we promised, as well as a prepaid envelope. As the administrator who oversees leisure fitness services, we would appreciate it if you would please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us using the prepaid envelope as soon as possible. The survey should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete. Because the survey was mailed to a small but representative group of 200 private athletic club managers, your response is very important.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only, so we can check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to contact either of us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

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245

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Service quality has become a prominent theme in the operation of leisure service agencies. We are conducting a study to determine how managers such as yourself define this concept. Your assistance with this effort will help us better understand the nature of service quality in the leisure fitness industry.

Your agency was among 200 selected from a list of I.R.S.A. athletic club members throughout the eight state Great Lakes region. As the administrator who oversees leisure fitness services, we would appreciate it if you would please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us using the prepaid envelope as soon as possible. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only, so we can check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

If you have any questions or need clarification, feel free to contact either of us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

Enclosures

APPENDIX I
POST CARD REMINDERS

Voluntary Sector

Public Sector

Private Sector

Dear Director:

Recently you should have received a survey requesting your participation in a study designed to better understand how service quality is defined by managers in the leisure industry.

If you have already returned the survey, thank you for your prompt response. If not, please take time as soon as possible to complete this short but important questionnaire. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete. Because the survey has been mailed to a small but representative group of 200 YMCA directors, your response is very important.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director, Leisure Research Institute

Dear Manager:

Recently you should have received a survey requesting your participation in a study designed to better understand how service quality is defined by managers in the leisure industry.

If you have already returned the survey, thank you for your prompt response. If not, please take time as soon as possible to complete this short but important questionnaire. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete. Because the survey has been mailed to a small but representative group of 200 public sector directors/managers, your response is very important.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

**Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator**

**Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director, Leisure Research Institute**

Dear Manager:

Recently you should have received a survey requesting your participation in a study designed to better understand how service quality is defined by managers in the leisure industry.

If you have already returned the survey, thank you for your prompt response. If not, please take time as soon as possible to complete this short but important questionnaire. It should take only 10 minutes of your time to complete. Because the survey has been mailed to a small but representative group of 200 private athletic club managers, your response is very important.

Sincerely,

**Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator**

**Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director, Leisure Research Institute**

APPENDIX J
COVER LETTER -- SECOND SURVEY MAILING

Voluntary Sector

Public Sector

Private Sector



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251

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Recently you were mailed a questionnaire requesting your participation in a study designed to better understand how service quality is defined by managers in the leisure industry. As of today's mail we have not received your completed questionnaire. Your participation is very important to us, so we again ask you to please help us by taking some time today to answer the survey. We are providing you with another copy of the questionnaire in case you did not receive or have misplaced the original one.

A relatively small, representative sample of 200 YMCA directors has been included in this study. Each survey, therefore, is very important to accurately represent the attitude of managers in the leisure fitness industry.

Please complete only one of the questionnaires and return it in the prepaid envelope. It should take only about 10 minutes of your time. All responses will be summarized and handled in strict confidentiality. If you have already completed the questionnaire, we thank you for your prompt reply.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

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252

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Recently you were mailed a questionnaire requesting your participation in a study designed to better understand how service quality is defined by managers in the leisure industry. As of today's mail we have not received your completed questionnaire. Your participation is very important to us, so we again ask you to please help us by taking some time today to answer the survey. We are providing you with another copy of the questionnaire in case you did not receive or have misplaced the original one.

A relatively small, representative sample of 200 municipal park and recreation department directors has been included in this study. Each survey, therefore, is very important to accurately represent the attitude of managers in the leisure fitness industry.

Please complete only one of the questionnaires and return it in the prepaid envelope. It should take only about 10 minutes of your time. All responses will be summarized and handled in strict confidentiality. If you have already completed the questionnaire, we thank you for your prompt reply.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

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253

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name]:

Recently you were mailed a questionnaire requesting your participation in a study designed to better understand how service quality is defined by managers in the leisure industry. As of today's mail we have not received your completed questionnaire. Your participation is very important to us, so we again ask you to please help us by taking some time today to answer the survey. We are providing you with another copy of the questionnaire in case you did not receive or have misplaced the original one.

A relatively small, representative sample of 200 private athletic club managers has been included in this study. Each survey, therefore, is very important to accurately represent the attitude of managers in the leisure fitness industry.

Please complete only one of the questionnaires and return it in the prepaid envelope. It should take no more than 10 minutes of your time. All responses will be summarized and handled in strict confidentiality. If you have already completed the questionnaire, we thank you for your prompt reply.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol S. Hartshorn
Project Co-Coordinator

Daniel R. Fesenmaier
Director
Leisure Research Institute

Enclosures

APPENDIX K
DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS BY SECTOR

Demographic Statistics by Sector

Gender

Frequencies:

	Voluntary	Public	Private	Total
Male	126	88	81	295
Female	27	26	39	92

Pearson Chi-Square:

Value	DF	Probability
8.271	2	0.016

Age

Frequencies:

	Voluntary	Public	Private	Total
25 & younger	3	3	7	13
26 - 35	31	27	49	107
36 - 45	72	41	43	156
46 - 55	36	30	16	82
56 & older	12	13	6	31

Pearson Chi Square:

Value	DF	Probability
25.598	8	0.001

Level of Education

Frequencies:

	Voluntary	Public	Private	Total
High School	1	5	17	23
Tech./Vocat.	0	1	1	2
Associate's	1	7	5	13
Bachelor's	117	63	67	247
Master's	35	38	27	100
Doctorate	0	0	1	1

Pearson Chi Square:

Value	DF	Probability
47.530	12	0.000

Salary

Frequencies:

	Voluntary	Public	Private	Total
Less than \$20,000	11	12	3	26
\$20,000 - \$29,999	20	28	23	71
\$30,000 - \$39,999	58	29	18	105
\$40,000 - \$49,999	39	18	25	82
\$50,000 - \$59,999	18	8	13	39
\$60,000 - \$69,999	2	11	3	16
\$70,000 or more	3	7	27	37

Pearson Chi Square:

Value	DF	Probability
72.200	12	0.000

APPENDIX L
SERVICE QUALITY -- DIMENSION IMPORTANCE

Service Quality -- Dimension Importance

The following results were obtained from Question #9 on which respondents were asked to distribute 100 points among the five dimensions of service quality according to importance

	Voluntary Sector	Public Sector	Private Sector	
Overall	n=153	n=113	n=122	n=388
Tangibles				
Mean	25.3	21.5	22.3	23.2
Minimum	7.0	5.0	2.0	2.0
Maximum	80.0	60.0	70.0	80.0
Standard Dev.	12.1	9.2	12.6	11.6
Reliability				
Mean	20.0	24.7	18.5	20.9
Minimum	2.5	10.0	4.0	2.5
Maximum	50.0	70.0	50.0	70.0
Standard Dev.	7.2	9.5	6.9	8.2
Responsiveness				
Mean	19.5	19.2	22.2	20.2
Minimum	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Maximum	50.0	30.0	90.0	90.0
Standard Dev.	7.2	5.0	10.8	8.1
Assurance				
Mean	19.8	20.2	19.5	19.8
Minimum	2.5	5.0	2.0	2.0
Maximum	50.0	40.0	35.0	50.0
Standard Dev.	6.6	6.0	6.0	6.2
Empathy				
Mean	15.6	14.6	17.8	16.0
Minimum	2.0	0.0	2.0	0.0
Maximum	50.0	30.0	50.0	50.0
Standard Dev.	7.6	5.7	7.8	7.3