

COMPETENCY, PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY, SERVICE DESIGN, AND PUBLIC SPORTS SERVICE QUALITY: RURAL AREAS OF ZHUANG ETHNIC GROUPS IN CHINA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the improvement of the quality of public sports services in rural areas of China's Zhuang Ethnic Groups, as well as to cultivate multiple governance actors to enhance the quality and sustainability of public sports services, and to propose corresponding improvement measures. The study found that there are deficiencies in the quality of public sports services in rural areas of China, especially in the economically underdeveloped Zhuang Ethnic Groups. Therefore, this study examines how to improve the quality of public sports services and enhance their quality and sustainability by fostering multiple governance actors, using rural public sports services in the Zhuang Ethnic Groups of China as an example. The study shows that competence, public service delivery and service design have significant effects on the quality of public sport services. Competence positively affects public service delivery and public sport service quality, public service delivery positively affects public sport service quality, while service design also significantly affects public sport service quality. This study provides a theoretical framework and methodology for the improvement of public sport service quality. It enriches the theoretical system of public sport service quality improvement by revealing the effects of competence, public service delivery and service design on public sport service quality. It also provides government departments with specific strategies and measures to improve the quality of public sports services, which helps to enhance the quality and sustainability of public sports services.

Keywords: Public service quality, Service delivery, Service design, Rural Zhuang Ethnic Groups

Introduction

This paper introduces the current situation and development trend of public service quality management in China, and discusses how to improve the quality of rural public sports services in economically underdeveloped areas and how to cultivate pluralistic governance bodies to improve the quality and sustainability of public sports services, taking rural public sports services in the Zhuang region of China as an example.

Problem Statement

Public services, as "the basic social conditions needed to achieve comprehensive human development," are an important symbol of high-quality social development. Both in terms of the original intent and in terms of theory, the pursuit of high quality services and satisfaction by public organizations is determined by their public nature (Zhou, 2000). The public is already asking the government to operate like a commercial company. In practice, however, public paradoxes and quality dilemmas caused by the particular institutional arrangements of public organizations often lead to suboptimal performance of the public sector. To compensate for this huge contrast between expectations and reality, the New Public Management (NPM) movement in the West started to flourish in the 1970s, and the improvement of public service quality became a fundamental task of contemporary public management reform, as well as a trend of reform and innovation in various countries and an important indicator of governance effectiveness (Holzer et al., 2009). The concept of quality management has been gradually introduced into the public administration. The concept of quality management has been gradually introduced into the practice of public organizations, and the pursuit of quality has become an abbreviated expression of institutional reform in contemporary public organizations.

The construction of China's public sports service system is still imperfect, and there are still inequalities, with large differences in the supply of public sports services between regions, and more prominently, the quality of public sports services in rural region of less economically developed ethnic minority regions is not effectively guaranteed. The sports needs of residents are not met (Wen, 2021). Therefore, the following questions need to be further clearly answered by the academic community: How to improve the quality of public sports services in rural economically less developed region? How to cultivate multiple governance actors to improve the quality and sustainability of public sports services? The government and the community should strengthen synergy and cooperation, establish effective governance mechanisms, strengthen the regulation and evaluation of rural public sports services, ensure the quality and fairness of services, and further improve the quality and level of rural public sports services.

In this context, the key factors affecting the quality of public sports services in Zhuang ethnic groups in China are explored as a breakthrough to decipher the quality of public sports services in rural region of ethnic groups in China and to realize the shortcomings of the strategy of strengthening the country through sports.

Literature review

variable

Public sports service quality

In 2001, Funk and James introduced the concept of "quality of public sport services" as a key factor in establishing a psychological connection between individuals and sport

organizations. They defined the quality of public sport services as the sport-related products and services provided to individuals and the perceptions and evaluations of these products and services by individuals. This definition emphasizes the importance of the product and perceived nature of the service (Funk & James, 2001). In 2004, Kwon and Trail defined public sport service quality as "a concept based on a service portfolio that includes factors of material wealth, human resources, sport skills, and product marketing to evaluate whether sport-related services meet consumer expectations and needs". This definition emphasizes the importance of the service portfolio and highlights the importance of meeting consumer needs and expectations (Kwon & Trail, 2004).

The International Standards Organization (ISO) specifies quality characteristics as the inherent characteristics of a product, process or system in relation to its requirements, including physical, sensory, behavioral, temporal and functional aspects. The extension of quality management from products to services goes beyond the method of describing product quality, and needs to recognize the intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability, perishability, and customer involvement that services have, which puts forward requirements for service quality measurement.

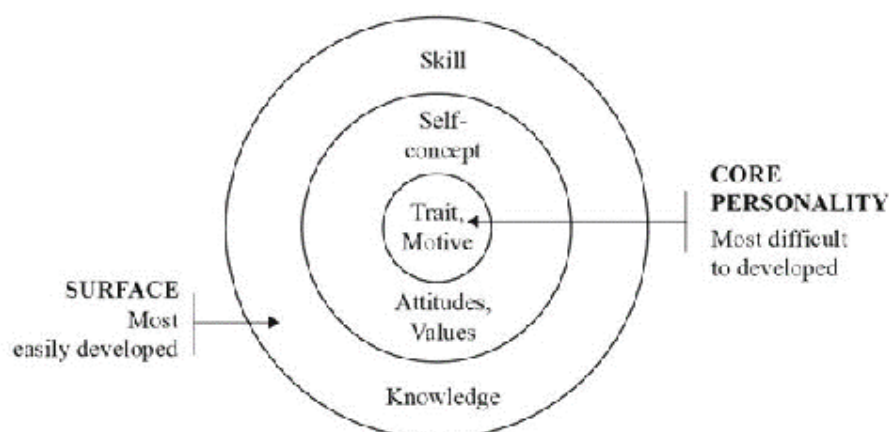
Competency

A large number of scholars have defined Competency through their research work. McClelland considers Competency as knowledge, skills, abilities, traits or motivations that are directly related to the job or job performance and are better predictors of actual job performance (McClelland, 1973). Parry states that Competency is a collection of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and other relevant factors that are closely related to job performance and are the most important factors influencing an individual's work. and can be measured by an acceptable standard (Parry, 1998).

Competency research has been extensively involved in various subject areas and various occupations, and in the field of sports, relevant research has focused on several areas such as physical education teachers, sports coaches, sports agents, and fitness instructors. 1987 Lambrecht analyzed the competency qualities of sports club managers and classified them into five dimensions, including interpersonal skills, leadership skills, management skills, professional knowledge and skills, and understanding of sports clubs and organizations (Lambrecht, 1987).

The Onion Model is another competency model proposed by Richard Boyatzis in the United States. The main idea is to compare the combination of competencies to an onion wrapped in layers. The structure of the onion model is somewhat similar to the structure of the iceberg model, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 : Onion-type Competency Model



Source: (Boyatzis, 2008)

Public sport service delivery

Public sport service delivery refers to the provision of sport services by the government to promote health, social integration, and cultural development" (Misener & Mason., 2006) According to Misener & Mason, Public sport service delivery can help people to maintain a healthy lifestyle by providing a variety of sport and physical activity opportunities. In addition, it can provide people with socialization opportunities that promote social interaction and community cohesion. (Misener & Mason., 2006) Public sport service delivery can provide equal sporting opportunities for all people, regardless of their social and economic background. By providing equal opportunities, public sport service delivery can help to break down disparities between social and economic classes and promote social justice and equality, which is particularly important in less developed rural areas. (Spaaij et al., 2018)

Service design

The design community is still exploring the boundaries of service design, and there has been no uniform definition of service design. The Dictionary of Design, published in 2008 under the auspices of the International Association for Design Research, defines service design as "Service design is the setting of the function and form of a service from the user's point of view. Its goal is to ensure that the service interface is something that customers find useful, usable, and desirable, while service providers find it effective, efficient, and recognizable." Although this definition is considered more official and authoritative, there are still many expressions that until now also show the understanding of service design. Louise Downe, head of design for the UK government, argues that "service design is not just a focus on models of thinking, methods, and tools, but on working with users to deliver services." Kimbell suggests that service design is a form of design that differs from traditional industrial design in that it emphasizes the design and improvement of service experiences and processes rather than simply designing and manufacturing products. The author argues that the rise of service design is closely linked to the rise of today's service economy and calls for designers to turn their attention to this field. (Clatworthy et al., 2009)

Research hypotheses

H1: Competency produces significant positive effect on Public sport service delivery.

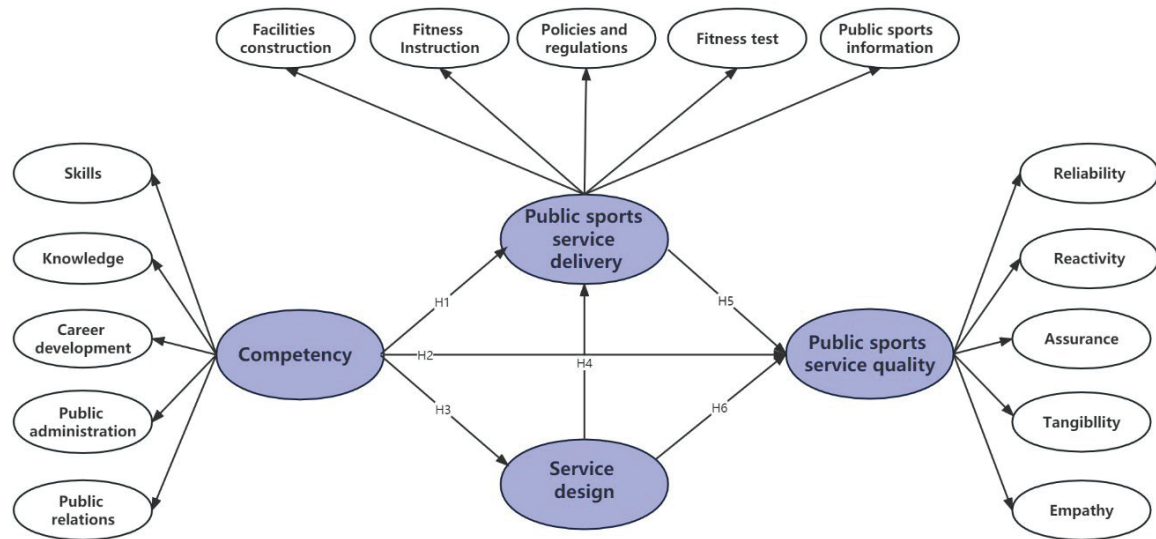
H2: Competency produces significant positive effect on Public sports service quality. H3: Competency has a significant positive effect on Service design.

H4: There is a significant positive effect between Service design and Public service delivery.

H5: Public service delivery produces significant positive effect on Public sports service quality.

H6: Service design has significant positive effect on Public sports service quality.

Conceptual frameworks



Public sports service quality continuous improvement strategy

Quality management itself is a highly practical discipline, and the improvement of public sports service quality should follow the basic path of "problem-factor-strategy"(Lillrank & Kano,. 1991). The basic theories, the analysis of real problems and the results of model validation should all be focused on how to improve public sports service quality. In the previousstatus quo survey, it was shown that China's public sports service quality currently exists lagging behind in top-level design, poor synergistic mechanism among supplying main bodies,insufficient number of sports facilities and backward management, low participation in people'sfitness, poor satisfaction, low efficiency, and imbalance of parity, etc. Public sports service quality is subject to the problems of Competency, Public sport service delivery. and Service design and other factors. Through the study of the conceptual model, it is found that the influence of factors on public sports service quality has a structural division, hierarchical differences and operational mechanisms, and the improvement strategy of public sports servicequality should be oriented to the problem, exploring how to rationally allocate resources, makeup for shortcomings, and also ensure that the influence mechanism of the factors is implemented in the practice of public sports service quality improvement. Public sports service quality improvement strategy should be problem-oriented, exploring how to rationally allocate

resources and make up for the shortcomings, and also ensure that the influence mechanism between factors is implemented into the practice of public sports service quality improvement, while taking into account the nature of the public service.

Improving the competency of public sports service personnel

Competency indeed lies at the core of improving the quality of public sports services (Perry & Wise, 2010). From the perspective of service delivery, staff competence plays a crucial role in various aspects of public sports services, including event organization, physical fitness monitoring, and community activities. Recognizing the significance of competent staff, it becomes essential to ensure that the human resources of public sports services encompass a diverse range of professionals, including governmental civil servants, institutional staff, sports social organization employees, and enterprise personnel.

Public sports organizations should prioritize the development of their employees' competencies, understanding that customer satisfaction is intricately linked to employee satisfaction. By investing in training and skill development, these organizations can enhance their workforce's capabilities, enabling them to make more informed and scientifically-backed decisions. The improvement of personnel competence is especially crucial in addressing real issues at all levels of public sports service delivery. It allows for better strategic planning, resource allocation, and effective problem-solving. Moreover, competent staff can foster a positive and professional atmosphere within the organization, ultimately leading to improved service quality and customer experiences.

To achieve these goals, ongoing professional development, workshops, and mentorship programs can be implemented. Additionally, creating a supportive and empowering work environment encourages staff to take ownership of their roles, leading to a more motivated and engaged workforce. By recognizing the significance of staff competency and investing in the development of human resources, public sports organizations can elevate the overall quality and effectiveness of their services, ultimately benefiting the public and promoting a healthier and more active society.

Coordinating the supply of stadium facilities

Public sports facilities play a crucial role in promoting people's fitness and are essential for establishing a comprehensive public sports service system (Mataruna & Rich, 2018). Currently, the focus lies in striking a balance between developing basic and non-basic facilities, and understanding the responsibilities of various stakeholders involved. By addressing these issues, it becomes possible to resolve the challenges of insufficient basic facilities and uneven distribution of public sports resources. Consequently, this approach aims to elevate the overall satisfaction with public sports services.

To achieve this, governments and relevant authorities need to prioritize the construction and maintenance of fundamental sports facilities, such as community playgrounds and local sports centers, ensuring widespread access for all citizens. Simultaneously, they should also encourage the development of more specialized facilities like sports complexes and arenas to cater to diverse sporting interests. Furthermore, public-private partnerships can be fostered to leverage additional resources for facility enhancement. Community engagement and feedback mechanisms can be established to gauge public preferences and ensure the equitable distribution of resources across various regions and social strata. By striking this balance and addressing the specific needs of different

communities, the public sports service system can evolve into a more inclusive and accessible platform, empowering individuals of all backgrounds to lead healthier and more active lifestyles.

Optimize the design of public sports services

The design of public sports services must be responsive to the diverse and hierarchical fitness needs of the general public (Ochoa & Juárez, 2022). To achieve this, it is essential to collect and analyze data on the demand for public sports services thoroughly. Understanding the expectations and preferences of the public will help in tailoring the services to meet their specific requirements. By implementing evidence-based design strategies, the gap between the "expected quality" and "perceived quality" of the services can be minimized, leading to greater satisfaction among users.

To ensure high-quality public sports services, a multidimensional approach is necessary. Technical aspects such as facility planning, layout, and safety standards are important considerations. Simultaneously, the design process should encompass broader philosophical and value-based perspectives. For instance, inclusivity and accessibility should be at the core of the design, ensuring that sports services are available to people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

Moreover, promoting community engagement and participation in the design process can foster a sense of ownership and pride among users. Local input can help tailor services to the unique needs and preferences of each community, leading to a stronger sense of connection and involvement. Ultimately, by combining data-driven insights, technical expertise, and a value-based approach, the design of public sports services can evolve into a dynamic and comprehensive system that not only meets physical fitness needs but also enhances overall well-being and social cohesion.

Conclusion

Theoretical research and practice combining proves that it is feasible and necessary to introduce quality management into the field of public sports service in China. Public sports service quality theoretical research and practice promotion should take into full consideration the essential attributes of public sports service such as publicity, equality and public welfare, as well as the special attributes of experiential, diversity and hierarchical, and the design of the strategy should emphasize the professionalism. The strategy design should emphasize professionalism, operability and feasibility. This study constructs a theoretical model of the factors influencing public sports service quality, and adopts the structural equation method to derive the structure and mechanism of the factors influencing public sports service quality, so as to provide a theoretical basis for the improvement of public sports service quality.

The association analysis between demographic variables and public sports service quality shows that there are significant differences in the evaluation results of public sports service quality by gender, age, education level, income level, and the nature of work units. The results of the model validation of the direct relationship indicate that there is a structural distinction between the factors influencing Public sports service quality.

Competency is the executive core of Public sports service quality management; Public service delivery is the basic guarantee of Public sports service quality; Public service delivery is the basic guarantee of Public sports service quality; and Public service delivery is the basic guarantee of Public sports service quality. Competency is the executive core of Public sports service quality management; Public service delivery is the basic guarantee of Public sports

service quality; Service design has a significant value in enhancing Public sports service quality;and Service regulation has a significant value in promoting Public sports service quality.

Therefore, public sports organizations should improve the incentive mechanism, training system and organizational culture to enhance the competency; the quality improvement of public sports venues and facilities needs to start from the system planning, institutional breakthroughs, and performance evaluation; through the enrichment of events and activities around the public and the convenient Service design to enhance the public's participation in fitness and science; and also play the role of service supervision in the public sports service quality. The initiative and innovation of service supervision in the process of public sports service quality improvement should also be utilized.

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