

## Original Article

### Predictive variables of happiness in private sports centres

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#### Abstract:

The psychological investigation of happiness has increased significantly in recent decades to the point of becoming one of the most researched behaviours in the new field of Positive Psychology. However, relatively little progress has been made in happiness research and tests to evaluate happiness, and the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI), built by Argyle, Martin and Crossland (1989), is among the best-known and most accredited. Happiness has represented a challenging and frustrating quest for humanity, as there is no consensus on its definition. Bearing in mind that there are many ambiguous factors that can affect the happiness of the individual, this study focuses on analysing the variables of general satisfaction, future intentions and emotions of the users of a private sports centre to evaluate their relationships and their influences on happiness, with the goal of being able to predict their behaviour and help sports managers to develop appropriate marketing plans to improve the supply and meet user demand. For this, a sample of 202 users of a private sports centre (104 men and 98 women) was used, and a multiple linear regression was performed where the dependent variable was happiness and the independent variables were satisfaction, future intentions and emotions. The results showed that the emotions of pleasure and satisfaction are management variables that have a significant influence on the happiness of the user. These findings demonstrate that it is beneficial to know the management variables that can predict the happiness of sports centre users to enhance the user's wellness experience.

**Key words:** sports management, subjective well-being, emotions, future intentions and satisfaction.

#### Introduction

There is accumulated evidence that psychological well-being is associated with healthy behaviours. Among the healthiest behaviours, physical activity is closely related to improving the quality or satisfaction with life of the people who practice it (McAuley et al., 2006) and to improving one's physical self-concept (Infante and Zulaika, 2008). In addition, it is claimed that physical self-perceptions are improved through participation in physical activities, and in fact, physical self-perceptions consistently correlate with physical activity from adolescence onwards.

As one of the objectives of physical activity practice is to promote attitudes that allow personal needs to be satisfied in the practice of physical activity, previous studies have analysed how social goals, motivation for achievement and basic psychological needs interact to favour the incorporation of the user into active lifestyles. However, few published works relate sets of variables of this type, at the contextual level, to the general level of satisfaction with life (Vallerand, 2001). Under this perspective, life satisfaction seems to be linked to social relationships in adolescents and presents a positive relationship with self-esteem and happiness (Moreno, Estevez, Murgui, and Musitu, 2009). Empirical research on happiness began in approximately 1960, coming from the field of sociology; happiness was treated as the main indicator for evaluating the quality of life of the population and later became a concern in psychology and medicine (Ortiz-Benavides, 2016).

From the same point of view, the practice of frequent physical activity has been shown to correlate with a greater satisfaction with life (Moraes, Corte-Real, Dias, and Fonseca, 2009). In this sense, Escarti et al. (2004) point out the increase in participation in physical activities as the cause of the feeling of competitiveness and the determinant in the improvement of intrinsic motivation, which is realized through greater autonomy in physical practice (Ryan and Deci, 2001).

Regarding the theoretical conceptualization of satisfaction, it has received great attention in recent decades in the academic literature of marketing and in the professional field of sports management (López, González and Muñoz, 2014).

There is some consensus on approaching satisfaction in the literature as a transient judgement made on the basis of a concrete experience of service (Bitner, 1990; Bolton and Drew, 1991; Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988), as well as on the conceptualization of the satisfaction construct on the basis of disconfirmation between expectations and service performance (Churchill and Suprenant, 1982; Oliver, 1980). However, some

approaches in the literature point to a perspective of satisfaction as a global judgement, admitting that as a consequence, satisfaction has a cognitive and emotional nature.

The cognitive conceptualization admits that global satisfaction is formed as a consequence of the confrontation of two concepts by the consumer: his expectations, which act as a previous reference point, and an experience or result that can be obtained as a consequence of the information derived from the purchase, consumption, service meetings, etc. The second, emotive approach argues that consumer emotions are involved in the evaluation of goods and services (Bagozzi et al., 1999). These are taken into account as the emotional response produced as a result of the evaluation of a situation (Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004), for example, an episode of use or consumption of a good or service (Bagozzi et al., 1999). In short, we could point out that satisfaction is an affective state of the consumer resulting from an overall evaluation of all the aspects that make up a relationship (Sanzo et al., 2003), where in addition, consumers who are satisfied with the product purchased will buy the same product again (Reichheld, 1996) and recommend it to others (Oliver and Swan, 1989).

In addition, any satisfaction survey should be based on an analysis of two basic concepts in consumer psychology: motivations and expectations. The motivations are relevant because they are the basis of the impulse that leads the user to live or develop the sports experience. Knowing the motivations of our users makes the marketing strategy possible as well as the actions to be developed that give meaning to the sports experience, which act on the subjects and incite them to action (Luna-Arocas and Mundina, 1998).

In more recent studies, the most common means of presenting user satisfaction has been by comparing expectations with the perception of the quality of service received by the user (Shonk and Chelladurai, 2008). Currently, consumer opinion is becoming more important, and dissatisfaction may increase if the services received do not meet the quality requirements expected. Somehow, it is the users who determine the services they need and search for centres that meet their expectations.

For this reason, the concept of expectation is basic to the understanding of consumers and, above all, to their satisfaction. Knowing the motivations and expectations of our users will allow us to establish specific types of action or segmentation that support our relationship of exchange. Expectations are the tangible and intangible elements of the consumers and their motivations related to the consumption of a service, product or idea. Therefore, these mental concepts take shape from consumer psychology and structure a perceptive map of market reality.

The most interesting thing is that physical activity and sport are a means of satisfying leisure needs, free time, personal relationships, etc. These have a plural value, and all these needs are widely linked to the motivation of the individual. According to Gambau (1993), these motivations underlie the impulse that leads the individual to sports activity and to an attitude with respect to certain issues that becomes a permanent disposition of mind.

Regarding the conceptualization of future intentions, they have been considered as a dependent variable in multiple studies of the service sector (Boulding, et al., 1993; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Söderlund and Öhman (2005) group the intentions into two main groups: intentions as plans and intentions in terms of other future proposals.

From the perspective of intentions as future plans (IPF), Ajzen (1991) demonstrates this perspective, which understands intentions as indicators of the intensity with which a person is willing to try something or how much effort he is willing to devote in order to do something. Davis and Warshaw (2001) share this same conceptual view and understand that intentions are the degree to which a person has formulated conscious plans to behave in a certain way. On the other hand, intentions in terms of other proposals for the future occur in a situation in which the individual is projected to carry out a future activity, acting on either expectations or desires, where expectations refer to the probability that an individual gives to the possibility of acting in a certain way (Davis and Warshaw, 2001).

Finally, we find the perspective used by Fishbein and Stasson (1990), who consider intention to be a desire for the future; this is the most unusual concept in the field of marketing research.

Performance and profit are related to customer loyalty and therefore to perceived quality. For this reason, customer loyalty is one of the main objectives that organizations set for themselves in order to survive in a market as competitive as the current one. Based on this, loyalty is understood as a deep commitment to buy, again, a preferred product/service in the future, thus provoking repeated purchases of the same brand or set of brands, even though situational influences and marketing efforts have the potential to generate behavioural change (Oliver, 1999; p.34).

Understanding the emotions that consumers experience in the service process and the different consumer segments that can be established is key to making marketing decisions. On the one hand, the analysis of the emotions that the consumer feels makes it possible to know his emotional state and therefore serves as an indirect emotional diagnosis of his satisfaction (Dubé and Menon, 2000).

Emotions, customer experiences, satisfaction and loyalty are concepts that are now gaining in importance, both among academics and from a business perspective. While clients are consuming a sports service or practising an activity in a sports centre, they experience various types of emotions, such as joy, pleasure, euphoria, worry, frustration and anger (Machleit and Eroglu, 2000), all of which can have various

causes. The causes could be internal, such as mood, or external, such as variables that may be controlled to some degree by companies (Folkes, 1988; Weiner, 1985).

Regarding their conceptualization, emotions are affective variables that, unlike mood, have greater intensity and a deeper relationship with the stimuli that provoke them (Batson, Shaw and Oleson, 1992).

In the field of services, the inclusion of emotions in the concept of satisfaction is particularly important because most services are based on the participation or experience of the consumer (Grönroos, 2000). Because consumers interact with service environmental factors and contact staff, understanding affective responses is basic to analysing satisfaction with services (Szymanski and Henard, 2001; Wirtz et al., 2000). In short, accepting the process of subjective experiences requires that both cognitive and emotional concepts be involved (Vittersø, Vorkinn, Vistad and Vaagland, 2000).

In the literature, several empirical studies highlight the relationship between the enjoyment had during the experience of consumption (or positive affect) and the satisfaction after consumption (Mano and Oliver, 1993; Oliver, 1993). While early models of satisfaction focused primarily on cognitive processes to understand and explain consumer satisfaction (Oliver, 1980), more recent models emphasize that affection plays a major role in satisfaction assessments (Erevelles, 1998; Westbrook and Oliver, 1991) and even in behavioural intentions (Bloemer and de Ruyter, 1999). Taking into account the existence of two types of emotions (positive and negative) depending on valence, their direct effects on satisfaction and loyalty are considered.

Recently, there has been a broad consensus on the two-dimensional nature of emotions (Mano and Oliver, 1993; Wirtz and Bateson, 1999), and two dimensions - aggrandizement and activation - have been proposed to reflect the extent to which different individuals incorporate subjective experiences of pleasure and activation into their emotional experiences (Feldman, 1998). Both valence (liking) and activation can be defined as subjective experiences. Valence (like) is a subjective feeling of the pleasant or unpleasant, and activation is a subjective state of feeling activated or deactivated (Russell, 1979).

From various analyses of different samples, Russell (1979; 1980) suggests that pleasure-unpleasantness and activation-tranquillity are the two basic dimensions of emotions. Furthermore, Russell's analysis empirically contrasts the various aspects of emotional configuration, concluding that a) the affective space tends to be two-dimensional due to the interrelations between the various emotions, and b) although more than two dimensions may be found (for example, the PAD model of Mehrabian and Russell, (1974)), these tend to be unstable between samples and situations.

In addition, with respect to the effects of emotions and particularly taking into account their two-dimensional character (enjoyment and activation) based on previous research (Wirtz and Bateson, 1999), the direct effects of the dimensions enjoyment and activation on consumer satisfaction are considered during and after an experience of sports practice in the facilities studied.

Happiness is and will continue to be one of the driving themes of our existence and therefore a fundamental topic of study, so it seems not to have escaped the list of topics addressed by the most prestigious business schools (Ben Shajar, 2014). The positive psychology that studies the basis of psychological well-being and happiness, as well as human strengths and virtues, defines it as a state of fullness and balance that every human being yearns for, as an ideal of fulfilment and well-being that combines a just proportion between what he is, what he has and what he aspires to. In its beginnings, the Oxford Happiness Inventory (1989) defines it as an affective state of full satisfaction that is subjectively experienced by the individual in possession of a desired good.

For Argyle (1987) and Poveda-Bermúdez (2013), happiness in its origins is an emotional state that is a product of a person's achievements, and it involves physiological reactions such as the feeling of well-being and inner peace, as well as the sociodemographic and economic characteristics of the individual, the social context in which he or she develops, and complex mental contexts that can involve emotions such as responsibility and commitment. Wilson's (1967) works analyse the variables and factors related to happiness, defining the happy person "young, healthy, well educated, well paid, extroverted, optimistic, free, religious, married, with high self-esteem, work morale, modest aspirations, of either sex and a wide range of intelligence levels".

Similarly, there are definitions of well-being that point to certain factors that contribute to people's happiness. Other concepts are also associated with happiness, such as economic well-being, physical well-being and social well-being, but these should not be interpreted as synonymous with happiness. Enjoying economic well-being does not always mean being happy, just as a healthy person is not necessarily happy. In some examples, we find that money and health are factors can promote happiness, but the definitions of the words well-being and happiness show that they are not synonymous due to their subjectivity, because both well-being and happiness correspond to a person's judgements of himself.

Although studies on happiness and variables related to sports management are scarce, there are current studies such as those by García-Pascual, Silla, Mundina and Escamilla (2016), which link happiness to the world of sports management. These studies try to contribute by making sports managers aware of the importance of the relationship between the programmes and the subjective well-being of the user within the sports services. They conclude that the emotional variable should be considered within sports management and that the programmes or activities should be oriented towards a motivational goal. This will positively reinforce the user's well-being and at the same time strengthen their loyalty to the sports facility.

Authors such as Diener (1994), agree on calling subjective well-being what people call happiness, but other concepts of subjective well-being associated with happiness admit that everyone has his or her own ideas about happiness and that the behaviour observed is an incomplete indicator for recognizing individual well-being. Accepting this vision, happiness could be captured and analysed through surveys, asking how satisfying respondents' lives are, implicitly recognizing individuals as the most accurate sources of information about the quality of their own lives (Ortiz-Benavides, 2016).

There are some examples within the literature of the relationship between physical activity and well-being, such as the study by Taylor et al. (1985), which showed that exercise and physical activity alleviated the symptoms associated with depression. Later, Molina-García, Castillo and Pablos (2007), through a study addressing university students and their relationship to physical activity and psychological well-being, showed that men who were physically active showed greater satisfaction in their lives than those who were not.

The concept of well-being has been addressed in several ways by different researchers. According to the Theory of Self-Determination (SDT), psychological well-being is considered a vital function based on positive and healthy experiences, with self-esteem, life satisfaction and subjective vitality as its indicators (Rayan and Deci, 2000, 2001). On the other hand, there are several studies (Balaguer and Merita, 1994; Blasco, 1997; Pastor and Pons, 2003) that conclude that there are many psychological benefits attributed to the regular practice of physical activity; among other factors, studies have shown high empirical support for the variables of mood, anxiety, depression, self-esteem and cognitive functioning (Pastor and Pons, 2003), as well as an improvement in the well-being of the person (Taylor et al., 1985). In Simó's studies (2003), the variables of satisfaction, motivation, attitude and emotions are related and vary according to their measurement and evaluation. In them, satisfaction is an affective experience that can be illustrated by two ideas: personal introspection (cognitive) and the fact that the subject is satisfied with his or her happiness or other positive emotions (affective). Likewise, Dubé and Morgan (1998) highlighted that the variables that could influence emotions would be age, gender, culture, personality and others, such as the need for stimulation, psychological well-being, experience with the consumer good (Martínez-Tur et al., 2001), and the involvement and pressure of time (Belk, 1975).

Following the same line of inquiry, Balaguer, Castillo, and Duda (2008) show the positive effects that the needs of competence and autonomy have on self-esteem and satisfaction with life as shaped by self-determined motivation. The athlete who believes he or she is valued and respected within the peer group exhibits high affective feelings related to performance and self-esteem (Duncan, 1993). Therefore, the positive opinion of the group promotes self-confidence and promotes the development of self-esteem. Thus, several studies analyse the influence of responsibility, autonomy, perceived competence, intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, and fun on life satisfaction and happiness through physical activity.

As an objective of this study and with the aim of increasing knowledge about the influence on the happiness variable, other variables related to it, such as satisfaction, future intentions and emotions, will be measured based on the experience with a service in a private sports centre.

Based on previous studies (Molina-García et al., 2007), it was hypothesized that the practice of sport or the experience with a service in a sports centre can be positively associated with psychological well-being, so in this paper, we will describe and evaluate the possible relationships or influences that the variables of general satisfaction, future intentions to return to the centre or recommend the service and the emotions experienced by the user after the practice may have on the perception of happiness of the users.

In particular, this paper seeks to determine whether the variables of general satisfaction, future intentions and emotions of the user can influence or be related to each other in order to predict, or significantly influence, the happiness of the users of a private sports centre.

## **Material & methods**

The sample of the present study was made up of 202 users of a privately managed sports centre in the province of Alicante. The composition of the sample was represented by 51.5% men (n=104) and 48.5% women (n=98), with an average age of 42.5 years.

The centre studied is located in one of the best areas of the city and has an exclusive image. It enjoys the prestige of being considered a club that offers quality services, innovation and excellence. Within the client profile to which it directs its services, it has different rates, packages and conditions, ranging from normal rates to exclusive laundry and wardrobe services to VIP rates with multiple beauty and body care services.

A questionnaire was used for quantitative data collection. The design of the questionnaire took into account the variables to be analysed and the review of the research literature as well as the concerns and needs of the management bodies of the sports facility studied. As a complement to the questionnaire, sociodemographic data were collected on the users that would help to define the most common profile or characteristics of the real and potential clients that private sports facilities may have. Likewise, it would also be possible to observe in the future, as complementary data, whether there are other factors that can determine or differentiate the existing relationship between the variables studied, such as gender, age or social and economic level.

The questionnaire was provided through two channels: the first one was in printed format and distributed by qualified personnel from the centre who had been previously informed of the objectives of the

study, and the second one was distributed on-line through the "Lime Survey" platform, through which, by clicking a link, the user could access the platform and anonymously answer the questionnaire made up of 98 items and divided into different areas, transmitting his/her opinion on the sports centre, its management and services.

Regarding the variables studied, in the present study, the scales used were first an adaptation of the Hightower, Brady and Baker (2002) scale to measure satisfaction through 3 items and second a 5-point Likert-type response alternative that ranges from "totally disagree" to "totally agree."

Next, the 4-item scale used for measuring future intentions was the Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman scale (1996), which asked for the loyalty in one item and the WOM (word of mouth) in the other three, to evaluate the user's intention to return and to recommend the service to others. These items were also completed with a 5-point Likert-type response alternative.

In view of the diversity of affective variables, this research analyses emotions. Its more intense nature in relation to mood, as well as its relationship with the stimuli that provoke it (Batson, Shaw and Oleson, 1992), justifies its selection to explain the emotions and consumer satisfaction of experience in the sports environment, whether in a public or private facility.

Within the two-dimensional approach, the model of Mehrabian and Russell (1974) stands out; its PAD structure (Pleasure, Arousal, Dominance), coming from environmental psychology, describes the emotional responses of the individual to the environment through three dimensions: pleasure, activation and control (table 1). Pleasure refers to the positive affective state. Activation is a state of feeling that varies throughout a unique dimension from sleep to a state of frenetic activity. Mastery is based on the degree to which the individual feels unlimited or free to act.

Based on this model, there is broad consensus on the two-dimensional (as opposed to three-dimensional) nature of emotions.

Table 1. PAD dimensions of Mehrabian and Russell (1974)

PLEASURE	AROUSAL	DOMINANCE
happy-unhappy	lively depressed	controller-controlled
glad-angry	exalted-calm	influential- influenced
delighted-dissatisfied	enthusiastic-quiet	reserved - affected
cheerful- sad	nervous-peaceful	important - fearful
excited-Disappointed	active - passive	dominant - obedient
entertaining- boring	surprised-indifferent	independent – lead

Source: Mehrabian and Russell (1974) in Bigné and Andreu (2004).

Thus, based on the PAD model (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974) and therefore environmental psychology, Russell (1980) proposes a version with only two dimensions: pleasure and activation. Therefore, to measure this variable in this paper, we used the adaptation of the PAD (Pleasure, Arousal, Dominance) dimensions of Mehrabian and Russell (1974), adapted by Russell (1980) and later adapted by Bigné and Andreu (2004), in the cognitive-affective model of the satisfaction of leisure and tourism services through the scale of pleasure and activation. It uses a semantic differential response alternative with five levels of response, where users could respond between -2 and +2 depending on whether their experienced emotions corresponded to an adjective or the opposite, with 0 being the neutral option on the 12-item scale.

Finally, the Subjective Happiness Scale developed by Sonja Lyubomirsky and Heidi Lepper (1999) was used to measure happiness. This scale goes beyond the sum of positive and negative emotional states and cognitions related to the phenomenon since it is a general measure of subjective happiness that evaluates a molar category of well-being as a global psychological phenomenon (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999).

The scale of subjective happiness is interpreted from the perspective of the respondent, assuming that there are various reasons for being happy and that most people have their own idea of what it is to be happy, when they are or when they are not happy, and whether or not they are able to report on their happiness (Lyubomirsky, 2008). It is a measure of happiness of 4 items and requires a response on a 1 to 7 Likert-type scale, where users can respond as unhappy (1) or very happy (7) depending on whether they identify with the affirmation or denial of the item.

A comparison of levels of happiness between groups and with other scales shows that there are cultural, age and gender differences in the assessment of happiness. Theoretical constructions about happiness and the instruments that measure it can be found with variations due to cultural factors of the countries of origin. Therefore, it is necessary to perform psychometric analysis for its validation in another cultural context (Alarcón, 2006). Initially validated in U.S. and Russian samples (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999), there have also been Chinese, Malaysian, German and Philippine versions that replicate the unidimensional structure and show good

internal consistency and good convergent validity with other subjective welfare measures (Swami, Voracek, Dressler, Eisma & Furnham, 2009).

The statistical package SPSS v.24 for Windows, with a license from the University of Alicante, was used for data processing. The statistical analysis consisted of a multiple linear regression analysis, using happiness as a dependent variable and satisfaction, future intentions and emotions of pleasure and activation as independent variables. All the scales used in the questionnaire were subjected to reliability and validity analyses to report information on their psychometric properties. The scales are validated and have been subjected to a reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha), all of them presenting satisfactory results and indices higher than 0.8, so they are considered valid and reliable.

Regarding the reliability of the general satisfaction scale composed of 3 items, it has a Cronbach's alpha of .921, which indicates that it has good reliability indices. Table 2 below shows the values of the mean, standard deviation (SD), item-total correlation (r<sub>ix</sub>) and Cronbach's alpha if the element is deleted ( $\alpha$ -x). In the table, you can see that it does not improve the reliability of the scale if you remove any elements. We also observe the averages of the items, all of them being high and positive, above 4 out of 5.

Table 2. Analysis of items on the General Satisfaction scale

Items	Mean	SD	r <sub>ix</sub>	$\alpha$ -x
I am happy with the experiences I have had in the installation	4.07	.88	.843	.884
I am satisfied with my experiences in sports practice	4.11	.85	.835	.890
I really enjoyed attending the installation	4.10	.87	.842	.884

Next, in table 3, we can see the analysis of the 4 items of the scale of future intentions, which presents a Cronbach's alpha of .927, which indicates that it has good reliability indices. Then, in table 3, the values of the mean, standard deviation (SD), item-total correlation (r<sub>ix</sub>) and Cronbach's alpha if the element is deleted ( $\alpha$ -x) can also be observed. For the average scores, it can be seen that all the items are rated positively, with averages higher than 4 out of 5.

Table 3. Analysis of items on the scale of future intentions

Items	Mean	SD	r <sub>ix</sub>	$\alpha$ -x
I am willing to continue attending the installation next year/course	4.09	.97	.737	.936
I will recommend other people to come to this facility	4.04	.98	.896	.883
I will encourage others to sign up for this facility	4.05	.96	.883	.887
I usually speak well of the services offered by this facility	4.11	.92	.810	.912

The emotions scale, composed of 12 items, is divided into two dimensions. The first one covers emotions of pleasure, is composed of 6 items, and presents a Cronbach alpha of .986. The second one concerns the activation emotions variable, which is composed of another 6 items and presents a Cronbach alpha of .956. Thus, both have elevated levels of reliability. Tables 4 and 5 show their mean, standard deviation (SD), item-total correlation (r<sub>ix</sub>) and Cronbach's alpha if the element is deleted ( $\alpha$ -x). If we observe the results obtained, we can see that the emotions of pleasure scale has higher scores (over 3.5) in all the items over 5. On the activation emotions scale, the average results were somewhat lower, between 2.81 for nervous emotion and 3.5 for animated emotion.

Table 4. Analysis of items on the Emotions of Pleasure scale

Items	Mean	SD	r <sub>ix</sub>	$\alpha$ -x
Glad	3.90	1.49	.939	.984
Happy	3.80	1.51	.957	.983
Pleased	3.71	1.55	.967	.982
Delighted	3.81	1.50	.955	.983
Excited	3.70	1.60	.955	.983
Entertaining	3.82	1.51	.937	.984

Table 5. Analysis of items on the Activation Emotions scale

Items	Mean	SD	r <sub>ix</sub>	$\alpha$ -x
Lively	3.75	1.50	.858	.949
Restless	3.12	1.74	.866	.948
Enthusiastic	3.37	1.63	.907	.943
Nervous	2.81	1.82	.833	.952
Active	3.56	1.50	.850	.950
Surprised	3.15	1.69	.882	.946

Finally, the 3-item happiness scale has a Cronbach alpha of .880, which indicates that it has good reliability indices. In addition, in table 6, it can be seen that all items have scores higher than 5 out of 7, so high and positive scores can be considered for the variable evaluated.

Table 6. Happiness Scale Items Analysis

Items	Mean	SD	r <sub>jx</sub>	α-x
In general, I consider myself happy	5.73	1.075	.773	.824
Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself happy	5.73	1.014	.812	.794
In general, some people are very happy. How much do you identify with this characterization?	5.44	1.148	.724	.873

## Results

The results of this study show the relationship between the variables studied: satisfaction, future intentions and emotions of pleasure, with happiness as a constant.

To analyse the general assessment of the variables mentioned in the sports centre studied here, the results of each of the areas of the questionnaire are described in a general manner. That is, descriptions of the scales studied and of all the items that compose them are presented. The averages resulting from these assessments are also described, both globally and by differentiating the dimensions of some of the variables. First, there is the general satisfaction variable, and then, there are the future intentions and emotions variables, subdivided into emotions of pleasure and activation; finally, there are the descriptive variables of the happiness scale.

Table 7 shows the general user assessments of the main variables analysed in the study. In terms of the overall satisfaction scale, their average score was 4.11 (SD .78).

Future intentions are then rated very positively, with an average score of 4.10 (SD .83). Emotion variables have averages of 4.35 (SD .72) for emotions of pleasure and 3.77 (SD .78) for emotions of activation. Taking into account that happiness is scored above 7, it has an average value of 5.66 (SD .95). It is worth noting that the variables with the best scores were first the emotions of pleasure, with values of 4.35 out of 5, and then general satisfaction, with values of 4.11 out of 5; the activation emotion variable obtained the lowest average score of 3.77 (S .78).

Table 7. Assessment of the variables studied

Variables	N	Mean	SD
General Satisfaction	202	4.11	.78
Future Intentions	202	4.10	.83
Emotions of Pleasure	202	4.35	.72
Emotions of Arousal	202	3.77	.78
Happiness	202	5.66	.95

After the analysis of multiple linear regression, the results show that the variables of general satisfaction, future intentions, and emotions of pleasure and activation show a meaningful relationship with happiness. If we look at the data in table 8 and interpret the determination coefficient of  $R^2 \text{ adj} = .086$ , we can report that with the variables selected as independent to explain the prediction or influence of the dependent variable, only 8.6% of the happiness variance is explained. Therefore, the results inform us that relationships can be more significant with an alternative combination or with the presence of other variables that affect happiness.

Table 8. Predictive model of user happiness based on management variables

Variables	Beta	t	Sig.	VIF
General Satisfaction	.184	1.972	.049*	1.985
Future Intentions	-.009	-.104	.917	1.799
Emotions of Pleasure	.220	2.575	.011*	1.616
Emotions of Arousal	-.022	-.276	.782	1.427
Constant		8.181	.000	

Note:  $R = .323$ ;  $R^2 = .104$ ;  $R^2 \text{ adj} = .086$ ;  $F(4,198) = 7.771$ ; \*  $p < .05$

According to the data obtained, the coefficients of table 8 show how emotions of pleasure constitute the variable that most influences happiness ( $\beta = .220$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), followed by the general satisfaction variable ( $\beta = .184$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and both of these variables have a statistically meaningful relationship with the dependent variable.

In the same way but with a statistically non-significant relationship, the emotions of activation ( $\beta = -.022$ ,  $p = .782$ ) and future intentions ( $\beta = -.009$ ,  $p = .917$ ) each show negative coefficients.

## Discussion

Consumer satisfaction is not a single element that can be separated from the management and marketing of the company. Moreover, satisfaction should not and cannot be separated from the business philosophy and objectives that underpin an organization's future (Luna-Arocas and Mundina, 1998). In this sense, and in confirmation of the results obtained in this study, Oliver (1980) reports that it is significant that satisfaction with the use of a facility and the physical sports programmes it offers can influence its practice and not the other way around, since a positive attitude towards the practice of physical activity does not presuppose satisfaction in the use of the same, with the result that satisfaction influences its future intentions and attitudes (Oliver, 1980). These works corroborate the results obtained in the present study regarding the existence of a relationship between satisfaction and emotions of pleasure, with happiness and with a non-relationship to future intentions, considering this to be a consequence of satisfaction. In general terms, it has been possible to appreciate in all user segments a greater emphasis in the quality than in the quantity of sports facilities (Martinez-Tur et al., 1995), and it is noted that satisfaction or dissatisfaction will be produced by the combination of the level of expectation and the result of the non-conformity. This leads us to conclude that the user of sports facilities is difficult to satisfy for several other reasons, among which the type of practitioners, the physical and sports programmes, the physical effort required for their practice and the economic costs involved are highlighted (Moreno and Gutiérrez, 1997). These are aspects that have not been included in this study, and therefore could not be taken into consideration, but cannot be corroborated at this time.

Therefore, organizations must not only take into account the development of a quality image among their potential customers but also take care of each specific transaction and satisfaction, since a customer's opinion of the service or consumer good may be altered by a satisfactory or unsatisfactory experience at a given time, and as a consequence, their loyalty may be modified if unsatisfactory situations occur at specific moments of the consumer act (Morales and Hernández, 2004).

For this reason, in the present study, emotions have been evaluated, and it is interesting to note that emotions of pleasure present a significant relationship with the happiness variable, influencing the perception of this variable as subjective; the same does not occur with regard to the emotions of activation that emit negative and non-significant results, as occurs in studies by Calabuig, Crespo, Núñez, Valantine, and Staskeviciute (2016), but in sports events in which the emotions of the spectator do not predict satisfaction. Similarly, the change in loyalty may have been altered, but the significant future intentions of this study may not have resulted.

On the other hand, studies by Moreno and Gutiérrez (1997), report that although the main motivation is not the opinion of the users on the planning and maintenance policy of the facilities, this is conditioned by the fact that the more positive the evaluation made by the managers of their work, the greater the satisfaction experienced by the users (Ramos, 1991).

On another note, taking into account the existence of two types of emotions depending on valence (positive and negative emotions) and knowing that satisfaction has a positive and direct impact on consumer loyalty, one could propose the hypothesis that an indirect effect of emotions is implicitly proposed through satisfaction in the sports centre where the service is experienced.

Contradicting this, (Mano and Oliver, 1993), emotions caused by the product and consumption directly influence satisfaction. That is why, together with the cognitive component, satisfaction contains an emotional response in the absence of which the intentions of behaviour in a consumption situation cannot be fully explained (Liljander and Strandvik, 1997).

## Conclusions

It is interesting to know the management variables that can predict the happiness of users of sports services. In this work, it has been confirmed that satisfaction and the emotion of pleasure are management variables that are related to one another and significantly influence the happiness of the user. Conversely, it is concluded that the variables of emotions of activation and future intentions do not present a statistically meaningful relationship, instead showing negative values. With this information, the manager can work on customer satisfaction internally, confirming customers' expectations or reducing the level of disconfirmation by adapting the offer of their services. The satisfaction of the user of sports centres has an important influence on the physical and sports practice itself. The satisfaction of the consumer, in this case the sports user, is an index of the quality of the products and services offered in a specific place (Domenech, 1993; García, 1992). The literature review also confirms that satisfied customers with a brand or supplier are more likely to recommend and repeat their use (Szymanski and Henard, 2001). That is why, knowing the predictor variables of happiness, the manager can promote sports and social experiences in its centre that provoke in the user feelings of pleasure such as glad, happy, pleased, delighted, enchanted, excited and entertained through practice. With this, the manager can develop strategies to maximize the variables that influence happiness and generate positive responses from the client to his or her experiences at the centre. The manager can also identify with what is called happiness by creating an image of satisfactory service so that the user can experience well-being and have



a positive impact on consumer loyalty, thus repeating their experience with the service, and recommending it, since emotions have a direct effect on loyalty.

After considering the research carried out, the literature studied, and the results obtained, the present study considers that as a future line of research or new proposals for future work, comparisons and contrasts of the same variables studied are necessary, presenting other alternatives. To develop the reasons for the explained model and with the intention of broadening its percentage of explained variance, the independent variables should be studied as dependent variables and vice versa to see if the coefficients can be positive and significant as a whole and to see if the variance can be better explained with an adjusted model.

Likewise, it would also be interesting to know other emotional, cognitive or social variables that may affect happiness and to include them in the model to clarify the variance explained at a higher setting. As a complement, the same factors can be studied and evaluated with larger samples and even between several centres. It would be interesting to know and to evaluate the profiles of other centres and to see if there are differences in the perception of happiness among them, either according to age, gender, type of centre (public or private) or social level.

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