

**The role of critical incidents to complement service quality information for a sports and leisure centre**

Published in

*European Sport Management Quarterly*

Howat, G., and Murray, D., 2002, The role of critical incidents to complement service quality information for a sports and leisure centre, *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 2(1) 23-46.

**Abstract**

This study of sports and leisure centre customers (N = 218) provides an exploratory examination of the role that information on critical incidents affecting customers may have in enhancing the diagnostic richness of service quality research. The critical incident data complemented quantitative service quality data by highlighting attributes of service quality that are, from the customers' viewpoint, major strengths or weaknesses. By directly linking critical incidents to service quality attributes the study indicates that certain aspects of the service, such as friendly staff, are likely to have an important effect in delighting customers. However, improving other aspects such as the quality of officials (umpires) has the potential to lessen dissatisfaction rather than delighting customers.