

GOLF DIRECTOR COMPETENCIES, HUMAN
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND
CUSTOMER RETENTION WITHIN THE MALAYSIAN GOLF
CLUBS

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KUALA LUMPUR

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RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND
CUSTOMER RETENTION WITHIN THE MALAYSIAN
GOLF CLUBS**

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**GOLF DIRECTOR COMPETENCIES, HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
PRACTICES AND CUSTOMER RETENTION WITHIN THE MALAYSIAN
GOLF CLUBS**

ABSTRACT

Golf is a popular sport worldwide. Many studies have described management competencies in several sport contexts and have revealed that human resource is the most common denominator for successful sports club practice. However, little work has been done to identify and explain contemporary Human Resource Management (HRM) practices of staff, including directors of golf clubs related to member retention. The purpose of this study was to examine the current level and the participants' quality perceptions in the relationship among competencies of directors, HRM practices of staff, and member retention within the Malaysian Golf Clubs to advance the causal relationships among them. It was also aimed to develop a conceptual framework and a measurement model. A survey was conducted in the Malaysian Golf Clubs using the Competencies of Golf Course Directors, Employee's HRM Practices and Member Retention Behavior questionnaires. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed among both staff and members who were selected randomly from 34 golf clubs. Based on the data collected and theory of Total Quality Management, a research model was developed consisting of director competencies (golf operation and client care development), member retention behavior, and HRM practices of staff. Client Care Development had a positive and significant effect ($\beta = 0.49, p < 0.05$). Golf operation competencies showed a positive effect on customer's retention behavior ($\beta = 0.37, P < 0.05$). R^2 of the current model for member retention was 0.65, which accounts for 65.4% of the reachable fitness. Higher level of both director's competencies (Golf operation and Client Care Development) resulted in a better retention behavior of customers and a better HRM practices of staff ($R^2 = 0.59$). The HRM mediation increased the effect of director's competencies on the

member retention. The R^2 for member retention behaviors was 0.68, implying that 68% of member retention behaviors can be explained by client care development, golf operation and HRM practices. The effects of both client care development ($\beta=0.35$, $p<0.05$) and Golf operation competencies ($\beta=0.474$, $P<0.05$) on HRM practices of staff were positive and significant. This means that higher level of both director's competencies (Client Care Development and Golf operation) will tend to achieve a better HRM practices of staff. The boot strapping results showed positive and significant effects of golf operation, ($\beta= 0. 0.32$, $p < 0.05$) and client care development ($\beta= 0. 31$, $p < 0.05$) on member retention behaviors. This indicates that the direct effects of golf operation and client care development on member retention behaviors were significant after mediation of HRM practices. The structural equation modeling was done to test the model. The model showed a desirable goodness of fit, meaning that impact of directors' competencies, staff HRM services and customer return to the Malaysian Golf Clubs was positive and meaningful. In conclusion, directors of Golf Club in Malaysia should evolve continually to manage changes and hold several skills in Golf, technical aspects, HR, and business operations. The findings of this thesis provide golf course directors in Malaysia with important information for adequate preparation in golf management.

Keywords: Malaysian golf clubs, Competencies of golf club directors, Member retention, Human resource management

**KOMPETENSI GOLF PENGARAH, AMALAN PENGURUSAN SUMBER
MANUSIA DAN PENGEKALAN PELANGGAN DI DALAM CLUB GOLF
MALAYSIA**

ABSTRAK

Golf adalah sukan yang popular di seluruh dunia. Banyak kajian telah membincangkan tentang kecekapan pengurusan dalam konteks kesukanan dan menunjukkan bahawa sumber manusia merupakan pembolehubah yang paling biasa sebagai penunjuk kepada kejayaan sesebuah kelab sukan. Walau bagaimanapun, cuma terdapat sedikit kajian dilakukan untuk mengenal pasti amalan kakitangan pengurusan sumber manusia (PSM), kompetensi pengarah kelab golf dalam aspek pengekalan pelanggan. Kajian ini dilakukan bertujuan untuk mengkaji tahap semasa dan kualiti persepsi subjek kajian dalam hubungan antara kecekapan pengarah, amalan kakitangan pengurusan sumber manusia dan pengekalan pelanggan dalam Kelab Golf Malaysia untuk memajukan hubungan kausal di antara mereka. Ia juga bertujuan untuk membangunkan rangka kerja konsep dan model pengukuran. Satu tinjauan telah dijalankan di Kelab Golf Malaysia menggunakan soal selidik mengenai Kompetensi Pengarah Pengarah Kelab, Praktis Kakitangan Pengurusan Sumber Manusia dan Perilaku Pengekalan Pelanggan. Sebanyak 200 set soal selidik telah diedarkan dalam kalangan kakitangan dan ahli Kelab Golf yang dipilih secara rawak daripada 34 kelab golf. Berdasarkan data yang dikumpulkan serta teori Pengurusan Kualiti Menyeluruh, satu model penyelidikan telah dibangunkan merangkumi aspek kecekapan pengarah (operasi golf dan pembangunan penjagaan pelanggan), tingkah laku pengekalan pelanggan, dan amalan kakitangan pengurusan sumber manusia. Pembangunan Penjagaan Pelanggan mempunyai kesan positif dan signifikan ($\beta = 0.49$, $p < 0.05$). Kecekapan operasi golf menunjukkan kesan positif terhadap tingkah laku pengekalan pelanggan ($\beta = 0.37$, $P < 0.05$). R^2 model semasa untuk pengekalan pelanggan adalah 0.65 yang menyumbang 65.4% kecergasan yang boleh

dicapai. Tahap kecekapan Operasi Golf dan Pembangunan Penjagaan Pelanggan) menghasilkan pengekal pelanggan yang lebih baik dan amalan pengurusan sumber manusia yang lebih baik ($R^2 = 0.60$). Pengantaraan pengurusan sumber manusia meningkatkan kesan kecekapan pengarah terhadap pengekal pelanggan. R^2 untuk tingkah laku pengekal pelanggan adalah 0.68 menyifatkan bahawa 68% tingkah laku pengekal pelanggan dapat dijelaskan oleh pembangunan penjagaan pelanggan, operasi golf dan amalan pengurusan sumber manusia. Kesan kedua-dua perkembangan penjagaan pelanggan ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.05$) dan kecekapan operasi Golf ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < 0.05$) ke atas amalan pengurusan sumber manusia adalah positif dan signifikan. Ini bermakna, tahap kecekapan (Operasi Penjagaan dan Operasi Penjagaan Pelanggan) akan memberikan kecenderungan untuk mencapai amalan pengurusan sumber manusia yang lebih baik. Hasil daripada “*boot strapping*” menunjukkan kesan positif dan signifikan dalam operasi golf, ($\beta = 0.32$, $p < 0.05$) dan perkembangan penjagaan pelanggan ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.05$) terhadap tingkah laku pengekal pelanggan. Ini menunjukkan kesan langsung operasi golf dan pembangunan penjagaan pelanggan terhadap tingkah laku pengekal pelanggan adalah signifikan melalui pengantaraan amalan pengurusan sumber manusia. Seterusnya struktur pemodelan persamaan dilakukan untuk menguji model ini. Struktur model ini menunjukkan terdapat hubungan yang wajar, bermakna impak kecekapan para pengarah, khidmat kakitangan pengurusan sumber manusia dan pelanggan kembali ke Kelab Golf Malaysia adalah positif dan bermakna. Kesimpulannya, semua pengarah Kelab Golf di Malaysia harus terus berevolusi untuk menguruskan perubahan dan meningkatkan beberapa kemahiran golf, aspek teknikal, sumber manusia dan operasi perniagaan. Penemuan tesis ini membekalkan informasi berguna kepada pengarah kelab golf di Malaysia dengan maklumat penting untuk persediaan yang mencukupi dalam pengurusan golf.

Kata kunci: Kelab golf Malaysia, Kecekapan pengarah kelab golf, Pengekalan pelanggan, Pengurusan sumber manusia

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AI	:	Artificial Intelligence
ANN	:	Artificial Neural Networking
ANOVA	:	Analysis of Variance
AVE	:	Average Variance Extracted
BP	:	Business Procedures
BMI	:	Body Mass Index
CB-SEM	:	Covariance Based-SEM
CFA	:	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CR	:	Composite Reliability
CGCD	:	Competencies of Golf Course Directors
CPR	:	Communications/Public Relations
COMP	:	Computer Skills
DV	:	Dependent Variable
EFA	:	Exploratory Factor Analysis
ECT	:	Expectation Confirmation Theory
FAC.EQ	:	Facilities/ Equipment Management
GOV	:	Governance
GF	:	Golf Club
HTMT	:	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of the Correlations
HRM	:	Practices of Staff Instrument
INT	:	Intention Renew Membership
IV	:	Independent Variable
KMO	:	Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin
LV	:	Latent Variable

LR	:	Logistic Regression
LRM	:	Legality Risk Management
MGA	:	Malaysian Golf Association
MV	:	Mediator Variable
MI	:	Member Involvement
MT	:	Management Techniques
MS	:	Member Satisfaction
MSE	:	Mean Square Error
MVR	:	Multi-Variate Regression
PA	:	Performance Appraisal
PGA	:	Professional Golfers' Association of America
PV	:	Perceived Value
PCR	:	Principal Component Regression
PCA	:	Principal Component Analysis
PLS	:	Partial Least Square
PT	:	Programming Techniques
QM	:	Quality Management
RMSE	:	Root Mean Square Error
RE	:	Research Evaluation
RS	:	Reward System
SE	:	Standard Error
SD	:	Standard Deviation
SEM	:	Structural Equation Modeling
SS	:	Sport Science
SW	:	Support Work
SPSS	:	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

SQ	:	Service Quality
SIC	:	Squared Inter-construct Correlation
SPA	:	Supervisory Assistance
TQM	:	Total Quality Management
USG	:	United State Government
VIF	:	Variance Inflation Factor

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Leisure has essential role in human life as it synchronizes various parts of life. Many studies have revealed that preferences for leisure activity differ extensively, yet a major outcome of leisure is to improve self-worth and offer social occasions for pleasure, excitement and immediate enjoyment (Kleiber, 1999). Irrespective of participating in sports for leisure or competitive purposes, the experience obtained from taking part in sport leads to community-building, health benefits, challenges, satisfaction and excitement (Edginton *et al.*, 1995). To be precise, physical activities build a unique sense of haven set for fun and enhancing the satisfaction of life, learned skills, physical fitness, and social interaction (Kelly, 1996; Kelly & Freysinger, 2000; Kleiber, 1999). Therefore, it is not too farfetched to reflect that persons who are fit and physically active relish a better life (Edginton *et al.*, 1995).

Nowadays, golf is one of the most popular leisure sports, which have grown into an enormous business in Asia. Golf has evolved into a major industry since the game was first played in the early 1400s. Since 1994, golf practice has grown 75% as stated by (Kelly & Freysinger, 2000). As reported by the National Sporting Goods Association, golf-related expenditures ranked third in the recreational pursuits in 2012. Nevertheless, regardless of facilities, golf directors manage well, and golf operations comprise of different aspects of golf management.

Currently, Malaysia is considered as the golfing haven of South-East Asia. At the moment, about 200 golf courses are accessible around the country. Malaysia is deemed as the ideal destination for combining a thrilling game of golf and holiday. Indeed, the golf course spree started in the late 80's. In the early 90's, developers bandied about golf tourism to defend some of their costly golf projects. That is why Malaysia claims to have

the most outstanding standard golf courses worldwide, alluring global golfers to visit Malaysia and enjoy a fine game of golf in the most luxurious, friendly environment golf courses.

Golf in Malaysia provides an entirely different experience ("GOLF IN MALAYSIA," 2015). One can head to the highlands, several thousand feet above sea level, or play golf in the forest, enjoying the course with the natural landscape of Asia. With more than 200 golf courses, there is no need to travel far to experience playing golf. In 1962, the 1st contest, "Malayan Open", was held, which was also the first sports event with monetary reward in Malaysia. In 1999, it turned to the 1st contest that co-authorized by the Asian and European tours.

The majority of golf clubs are private, i.e., groups of individuals who have a common bond or interest and usually have a central location for meeting (Bird *et al.*, 1999). Clubs are typically selective, because there is a prerequisite for admission and a commencement fee to become a member and charges to preserve the membership of the club where the golf course resides. In Malaysia, there are numerous prestigious clubhouses that have breathtakingly beautiful gold courses at their disposal. Golfer would need to pay annual fees to become club members and then they may use the golf course and other facilities at the clubhouse at a fair rate.

The atmosphere of private clubs is based on familiarity and they provide a high level of quality and discreetly well accustomed services to their respective members (Gustafson *et al.*, 2002). Various types of private clubs are yacht clubs, golf clubs, country clubs, and athletic/city-dining clubs among others. According to the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA), about 80% of its members manage country and golf clubs (Koenigsfeld, 2007). The country and golf clubs typically have a golf course, a clubhouse,

and several sports facilities such as a football pitch, a tennis court, a swimming pool and most often a well-facilitated restaurant.

According to ("Maybank C'ship Malaysia set for 2016," 2015) through a large involvement of Malaysian golfers, MAYBANK Malaysian Open (MMO) and CIMB had helped raise the standard of amateurs and professional golfers in the country. The MINES Resort & golf club hosted the 1st CIMB Asia Pacific Classic contest in Malaysia, including 40 international players competing for a dazzling \$6 million prize. It was also the 1st competition certified by the PGA TOUR in Southeast Asia in partnership with the Professional Golf Association of Malaysia (PGAM) and the Asian Tour.

From 2010 to 2015, Kuala Lumpur Golf & country club has hosted gold tournaments. Former venues were the Mines Resort & golf club, the Kota Permai Golf Club, the Saujuana Golf & Country Club, the Royal Selangor Golf Club, and Templer Park. In 2016, the event was again held in Royal Selangor. From 1962 to 1982, Royal Selangor has proudly hosted most of the events on a yearly basis. Over the past decade, Golf Clubs in Malaysia have generated a lot of interest in human resource and organizational development. Golf Clubs with high leadership competencies perform each of the principles of Total Quality Management to improve quality of services.

In the context of high leadership competencies, the predictors of product quality are namely supplier quality management, continuous improvement, employee involvement, and customer focus. In corporations with low leadership competencies, the predictors of product quality are product innovation, customer focus, and top management commitment (Das *et al.*, 2011). To benefit from the current and forthcoming globalization advancements, most firms need competent managers (Harvey *et al.*, 2002). Specifically, the ability to efficiently compete in the worldwide marketplace is reliant on recognizing

and upholding an acceptable number of qualified managers (Harvey & Richey, 2001; McKenna, 1998; Sinkovics *et al.*, 2004).

In order to do so, companies need to successfully select global management with numerous intelligences as specific competencies (Harvey *et al.*, 2002; Harvey & Richey, 2001), and help them know and nurture their competencies. Since (Boyatzis, 1982) reported competencies associated with managerial effectiveness in early 1980s, awareness and study on managerial competencies has increased significantly. The term 'competency' is defined in many ways (Boyatzis, 1982). As pointed by (Siu, 1998), being competent means being capable, having the ability, holding certain knowledge and skills to do a certain task (Siu, 1998).

In all organizations, the most important principle for reaching effective purposes is management. If efficient, competent, skilled, experienced, and completely aware managers exercise their expertise in organizations; the success of that establishment will be paramount and inevitable in reaching their purposes. In addition, it has been well known that we should not accept managers without having competencies and necessary competences to perform extraordinary work and creativity (Jamieson, 1981).

The research on management competencies and its application in sport management has a well-known practice. However, more recently, the concern was developed in the typical management literature to deliberate on the culturally specific context of competency assessment. Sport management is a growing field, both in terms of proliferation of educational preparation programs and employment potentials (Ko *et al.*, 2011).

Moreover, the other researchers have echoed the principle role of human resources in sport activities as "a field concerned with the coordination of limited human and material

resources, relevant technologies, and situational contingencies for the efficient production and exchange of sport service”. For instance, in professional sport, the players’ performances are correlated with a club’s financial success. Thus, decline in fan participation will negatively influence the profitability of the team. Success is not only reliant on the workforce, but also on the managerial environment. Indeed, the management of human resource is, on its own, the basis for productive human resources (Chelladurai, 2006; Hums & Chelladurai, 1994).

Therefore, this study ventured on to explore the current level of director competency service-based (HRM) practices and member retention behavior among the Malaysian Golf Clubs in order to define its contribution as an important component for successful management practices.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Every organization has different features and its own management style, based on its product type. However, human resources is the most common denominator in all institutions. To run businesses and attain organizational goals, all establishments, including sport firms, depend on human resources. Without effective and well-trained human resources, no matter how sophisticated or expensive the facilities or the premise, other resources have little value to the organizations. Sport organizations are therefore closely dependent on human resources to succeed, because most of them are service-oriented (Doherty & Chelladurai, 1999a).

Director competencies are the abilities, skills, knowledge, and qualities that directors require to perform their jobs and roles proficiently. Directors have three roles, including aligning people, setting a direction and inspiring individuals (Das *et al.*, 2011). Director competencies and statements of managerial competencies (e.g. personnel management, budget management and planning) were the bases for early development of a statement

of director competencies (Mahmoodi & King, 1991). Competent directors have an international mindset; they search for knowledge and proficiency outside boundaries and get information from several sources in various ways (Brake, 1997; Das *et al.*, 2011).

Golf is a popular sport worldwide (Kelly & Freysinger, 2000), and many studies have described management competencies in several sport contexts. Nevertheless, little work has been done to identify and explain contemporary management competencies related to golf managers. Hence, this research aims to investigate what management competency would enhance the golf industry. Therefore, recognizing competencies in golf management for public, private, semi-private golf clubs provides a basis for management research and aid in adapting present education in golf and efficient training of forthcoming golf managers.

1.3 Research Objectives

The purpose of this study was:

1. To examine the level of competencies of directors, the level of staff service-based (HRM) practices and the level of member retention behavior among the Malaysian golf clubs.
2. To study the relationship between director competencies, staff serviced-based (HRM) practices and member retention behavior in the Malaysian's golf clubs.
3. To check the mediation effect of HRM practices on the relationship between director competencies and member retention behavior of golf clubs in Malaysia.

1.4 Research Questions

The aim of the thesis is to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the current level of the competencies of directors, level of staff service-based (HRM) practices and level of member retention behavior among the Malaysian's golf clubs?
2. Is there any relationship between the director competencies (Client Care Development and member retention behaviors) and the staff service-based (HRM) practices in the Malaysian Golf Clubs?
3. Is there any relationship between staff service-based (HRM) practices and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian's golf clubs?
4. Is there any relationship between director competencies (Client Care Development and member retention behaviors) and the customer relation behaviors in the Malaysian's golf clubs significant?
5. Dose staff service-based (HRM) practices mediate the relationship between the Golf Operation Competencies and member retention behaviors in the Malaysian Golf Clubs?

1.5 Significance of Study

Nowadays, golf club managers need to include new technologies, tools, techniques and a range of business tactics into management. Because operating a golf club is complex and multi-aspect, expertise is required in several areas, such as food and beverage management, turf grass management, personnel management, accounting, merchandising and retail operations, marketing, risk management, customer services and golf teaching skills (Choi, 2005). Therefore, golf club managers should evolve continually to manage changes as well as hold several skills in golf, technical aspects, human resources, and business operations, including budgeting, marketing, and financial management.

No club manager is needed if there is no golfer and so in order to improve the golfing industry and please prospective customers, golf professionals need to encounter many features of golf operations. Golf club managers, for instance, must justify the need for a significant change to golf club staff, to support them comprehend new techniques, and to implement the ideas via communication, assessment, and reward systems of golf club.

Furthermore, it is vital to comprehend and foresee essential qualities in a prospective golf club manager. Golf operations managers must consider that each golf club differs from others in terms of size, quantity, and level of full-time staff assigned to provision of golf services and programs. Therefore, city superintendents or company owners search for skilled golf professionals who can plan and provide golf programs in a growingly complex and miscellaneous environment. They must to be capable in the areas of event programming, golf skills, business, communications, governance, budgeting, risk management as well as technology (Barcelona, 2002; Toh & Jamieson, 1997).

This information is important to golf club managers and operators when looking to employ or give promotion to golf club staff, manager, or head professional. When the role of competencies is well understood, the club can include them in the Total Quality Management (TQM) in order to increase the client satisfaction and evidently, the performance and efficiency of the golf club. We need to know the level of competencies among all the directors in order to provide them with plans for enhancing the golf club productivity and profitability.

Malaysia is one of the top golf destinations among the sports enthusiast. Tourism Malaysia has promoted this as one of the income revenues for Malaysia's economy. Therefore, it is vital for every golf club to equip these membership programs and climb their operations to a very high standard. Through this quality management, Malaysia will maintain the highest management standard in the golfing world.

1.6 Limitation of Study

Choi (2005) denotes limitations as restrictive weaknesses or confining situations (Choi, 2005). When an investigator is not able to control all possible variables in the study design or make the best quantity of observations because of “feasibility or ethics” issues, limitations occur, and they are in many ways inevitable. Several limitations of this study are acknowledged below that could have relative effect on understanding the results as mentioned below:

1. This study was restricted to keen respondents and could be biased by non-respondents accordingly.
2. This research used a self-reported instrument, because those who agreed to contribute to the study responded the survey on their own terms. Therefore, the quality of answers was dependent on participants’ honesty, motivation and capability to respond with little interference from the researcher. Even though it was attempted to decrease response error, the subjects may have misinterpreted questions and thus provided partial and/or unsuitable responses.
3. Moreover, the way respondents completed questionnaires and the response environment was not controlled. Although the questionnaire is the cheapest survey method, outside interference may have adverse effect on it.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Director of Golf: A person who directs the golf operation of a recognized golf facility by the Professional Golfers’ Association of America (PGA), including the golf range, and car operations and shop (if pertinent), and staff supervision (Choi, 2005)

General Management: Director of Club Operation and/or General Manager manages the golf facility, including golf operations, food and beverage operation, maintenance,

club house administration, staff supervision, and other entertaining activities (Choi, 2005).

Competency: it is the skill that a person holds. This can be a particular aptitude, capability or knowledge, which is applicable to satisfying the necessities of positive performance in a certain situation (Boyatzis, 1982). It can be related to an individual's more generalized intellect that is important in many situations, or to his/her understanding of the way of readjusting the entire culture of organization (Tichy, 1983).

Core Competencies: These Competencies may support development of new product and service ranges to satisfy customer needs in changing markets (Hope *et al.*, 1998) and facilitate entering new markets (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994).

Golf Course Maintenance Staff: Those who mainly work for all activities with regards to management, operation and maintenance of a golf course. They should meet the criteria of either Assistant Golf Course Superintendent or a Golf Course superintendent (Choi, 2005).

Human Resources Management: Formerly known as personnel management, human resources management (HRM) is mainly related to the management of individuals inside organizations, concentrating on systems and policies (Husin *et al.*, 2012).

Member retention: The willingness to repurchase is defined as a person's decision to buy a service once more, to participate in upcoming activity with a service provider, and the activity procedure (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996).

Golf Courses and Country Clubs: The definition of "golf courses and country clubs" is firms, which their primary activity is operating golf courses and can cover country clubs that have recreational and dining facilities (IBISworld, 2017).

1.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the role of competencies of golf course directors on service-based HRM practices and member retention behaviors and the relationship between service-based HRM practices and customer retention behaviors (Figure 1.1).

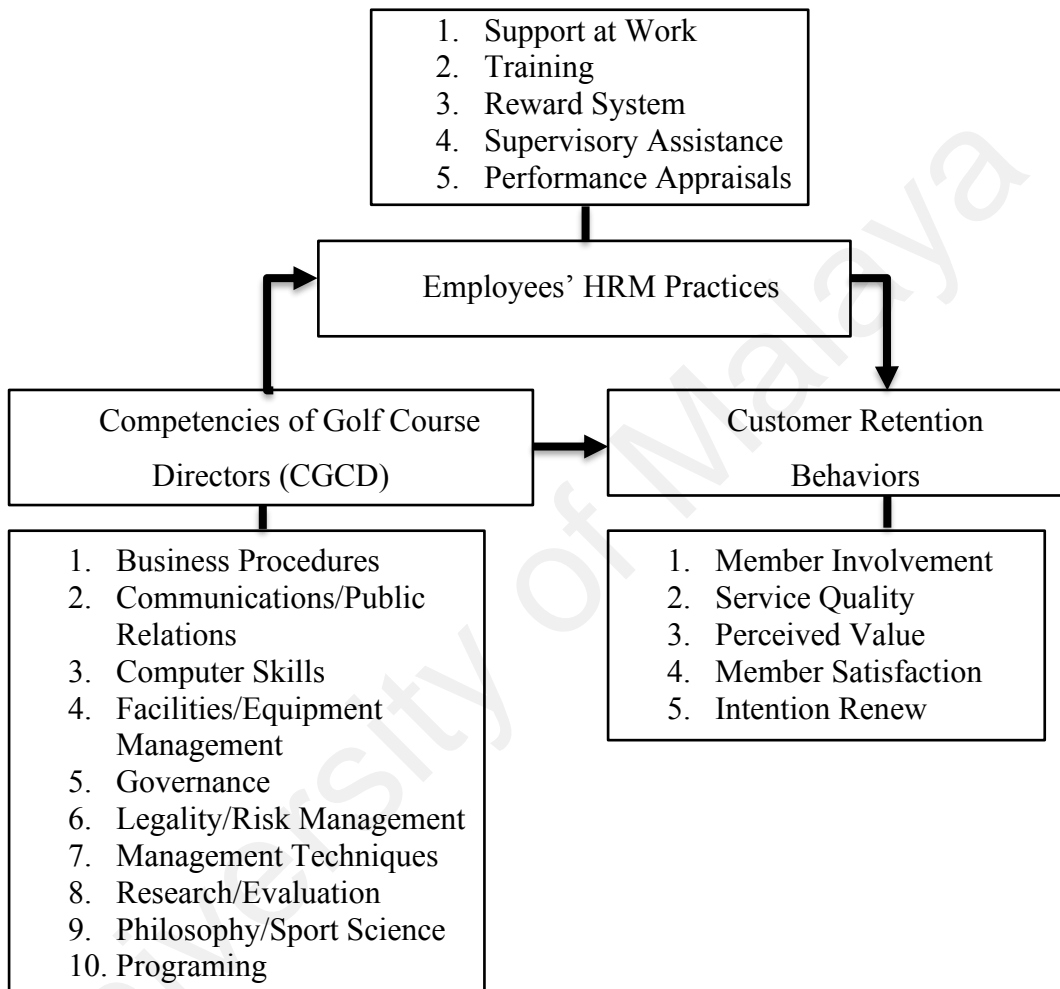


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

1.9 Summary

Nowadays, golf is one of the most popular leisure sports, which have grown into an enormous business in Asia. Currently, Malaysia is considered as the golfing haven of South-East Asia. In all organizations, the most important principle for reaching effective purposes is management. Golf clubs with high leadership competencies perform each of the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM) to improve their quality of services. The research on management competencies and its application in sport management has a well-known practice. Moreover, researchers have echoed the principle role of human resources in sport activities. When the role of competencies is well understood, the golf club can include them in the TQM in order to increase the client satisfaction (golfers) and evidently, the performance and efficiency of the golf club. Little work has been done to identify and explain contemporary Human Resource Management (HRM) practices of staff, including directors of golf clubs related to member retention. The purpose of this study was to examine the current level and the participants' quality perceptions in the relationship among competencies of directors, HRM practices of staff, and member retention within the Malaysian Golf Clubs to advance the causal relationships among them. It was also aimed to develop a conceptual framework and a measurement model.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a comprehensive insight on theories and models that are relevant to the research. The Total Quality Management as the main theory with conjunction of Expectation Confirmation Theory (ECT) was employed in this study. This research has attempted to propose a strategy in managerial system of Golf Clubs in Malaysia. In line, a theoretical framework was developed in order to enhance member retention and member satisfaction. The combination of selected theories is well equipped to provide strong ground for successful delivery of this research.

2.2 Golf Industry

The game of golf has experienced an extraordinary era and it has evolved significantly to say the least all around the world. Many golfers view it not only as a chance to practice and improve their skills, but also to interact with some of the most breathtaking environmental locations worldwide. It is well claimed that no other sport 'promotes the magical, Zen-like tonic of a walk in pristine natural surroundings' as golf does (Wheeler & Nauright, 2006). Only in playing golf, one can find him or herself surrounded by the tranquility touch of nature and yet instead of letting go in submission to the overwhelming beauty and tranquility, one instead focuses and takes charge for golf is a sport of thought rather than heart. It is a calculating, mind activating endeavor that forces the mind to assess and evaluate making decisive decisions in a short span of time. However, the indisputable bond between nature and golf is well established since golf courses are innately associated with the adjacent sceneries, vegetation, and wildlife.

The origin of golf, according to the PGA, is still arguably unknown. Countries such as China, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, and France have been playing golf since the early 13th century. Yet, the Scots claim, quite proudly, that they invented golf, because the

games that have been played, widespread across the highlands near Edinburgh and Glasgow in modern Scotland, is strikingly similar to modern golf. More noticeably, they recognize and self-proclaim that Scotland should be credited for sending and in many ways 'exporting' golf to other countries. Historical records show that sailors and traders from Holland and Scotland played golf in the beginning of the middle Ages, instead of taking part in the national sports. In 1754, golf became an official game recognized worldwide. In the mid-18th century, golf first rumbled in Scotland but by a century later, the game picked up an enormous pace and was being played across the globe, namely in Europe and North America and soon the game became as one of the most luxurious, prestigious and 'feverously' contagious sports of the modern era (Choi, 2005).

In 1950s, the growth of golf transformed the game to a phenomenon, a business of its own. The game was transformed to the third biggest sports business in the US after football and basketball (Graffis, 1975). Business tycoons began investing heavily into golf and lavish golf courses were built in the US and across the globe. However, golf courses in the United States are categorized into: (1) public (governmental or municipal courses held by a city), open to the public, and (2) private (country club), open for exquisite and unique private members, and (3) semi-private, open to citizens with optional membership. In terms of profitability, each of these courses follows a different purpose (Choi, 2005). Originally, private clubs were mainly founded for social purposes instead of a profitable institution (Choi, 2005). Between 1880 and 1930, golf clubs and country clubs grew together (Moss, 2001) and structured sports activities started to play a social role and turned into a main part of American culture (Moss, 2001). Intriguingly, the locals found meaning and coherence in small ethnically and socially homogeneous communities (i.e., ethnic and status) (Moss, 2001). Country clubs of the US were social centers for their neighboring areas, and certain groups were asked to play golf because of general sociability in an arguably still class-based society.

Nowadays, however, the country clubs have maintained their social purpose, but the aforementioned private golf clubs make much more money. Financial back-up and membership fees enable owners of private golf course make an enormous amount of money (Choi, 2005). This is due to the fact that golf was able to progress impressively through the past decades yet it has maintained its exquisite elegance and attracts the wealthiest portion of the society; from bankers to celebrities, golf has been a fascination, to say the least. Nevertheless, during the past two decades many public golf courses have been created for less wealthy people who could not pay a membership fee to join private clubs and play on private golf courses. There is new trend that is picking up and nowadays people from all walks of life, across the age spectrum, from men to women, old and young play and enjoy the sport and it is not too far-fetched to claim that gold has become a new phenomenon of the twenty first century with millions of players worldwide generating billions of dollars in both investment and revenues. It is worth mentioning that during the industrial era in mid nineteenth century, the US government spent more on recreation facilities and parks (Edginton *et al.*, 2002). However, although recreation districts or even the municipalities maintained the government-supported parks, it took almost a century until these recreational areas were turned into perfect places to establish golf courses for the public. Golf became popular quickly owing these public places and the sport became the hysteria of a generation (Choi, 2005). Nevertheless, it must be well admitted that municipal golf courses have their own limitations since they are closely dependent on the number of golfers who play at public courses

2.2.1 Golf Perceived Value

Irrespective of the type of golf course, nowadays individuals of all ages and abilities play and enjoy golf for several reasons. To recognize the golfers' needs, it is essential to understand the motives of those who play golf. Petrick *et al.* (2001) studied how often female and male participants played golf, the number of different golf courses they played

at, and the number of golf rounds they play in a single game. In their research, they used five groups of golfers from high experienced players from many golf courses to low experienced golfers who had been playing on only a few golf courses. The study revealed that individuals play golf for a number of reasons; namely, for competition, for leisure, for family pleasure and for status, such as meeting other golfers and spending time with business colleagues (Petrick *et al.*, 2001). The most apparent example of the latter is how the past four presidents of the United States from Bill Clinton, George W Bush to Barack Obama, who broke the other two's record in playing the most number of games in golf to finally the most recent president of the United States, Donald J Trump who has even surpassed the other three in his first year in office in playing the most number of games in golf, mostly for political reasons since many world leaders are now famous to conduct their most eloquent and exclusive political and business meetings with the most influential individuals on the golf course as it is seen as a metaphorical element of politics. The notion is best seen in J B Priestley's masterpiece 'Inspector Calls' when Arthur Birling threatens the inspector for going too far in the investigation by reminding him that he plays 'golf' with the inspector's boss the high constable and, in one of the most dramatic scenes of the play, the inspector famously replies 'I don't play golf' which ironically refers to the fact that the inspector will not be intimidated by the upper hand for the word 'golf' refers to politics and power. On the other hand, Cohn (1991) studied the mental features of peak performance in golf. He used open-ended interviews to measure internal factors in golf experiences. As a result, the following psychological dimensions were inferred from the interviews: (1) enjoyment, and a sense of mastery in attaining goals, (2) temporary, concentrating on the time frame; (3) self-confidence; (4) effortless and automatic performance, needing slight awareness; (5) sense of control over thoughts, emotions and actions; (6) concentrating only on the present (not on holes yet to be played or even former holes that have been played); (7) absence of tension; relaxed-

mind; (8) lack of fear; and (9) narrow focus during the performance (Cohn, 1991; Petrick *et al.*, 2001). Likewise, Petrick *et al.* (1999) examined the many causes of golfers' satisfaction and perceived value. Once individuals believe they have achieved more than they have spent for either a service or a product, perceived value is therefore attained (Petrick *et al.*, 1999; Zeithaml, 1988).

Petrick *et al.* (1999) evaluated demographics, perceived value, overall satisfaction, important features of golfing, services, and features provided by the club and mastery. Findings showed those golfers' perceived values and satisfaction was different in various courses. They also reported that demographic factors were related to the overall perceived value and satisfaction of golfers and varied based on the type of golf course (Petrick *et al.*, 1999). Moreover, there were differences in type of golf course services and features anticipating perceived value and satisfaction of golfers across golf courses. In terms of external characteristics of a golf course, maintenance of greens and tees staff courtesy, availability of tee time and pace of play management contributed mainly to satisfaction. Overall, it can be concluded that golf is a satisfying activity (Choi, 2005) and the people who play golf remain loyal and peaceful while engaged in the activity since it is psychologically and in some ways socially satisfying (Beard & Mounir, 1980).

Because of the growing number of golf courses, golf course directors should explore the factors that have effect on golfers for use and re-using facilities. For example, factors such as age, employment, sex, income, purchase intentions, mastery, and number of children are associated with perceived value and satisfaction. These factors play a key role in the degree of satisfaction that one receives in playing the enticing game of golf (Petrick *et al.*, 2001). Higher perceived value and satisfaction may increase frequent usage (Jayanti & Ghosh, 1996; Spreng *et al.*, 1996). It is worth mentioning that information about golf course amenities and personal factors are estimates of golfers' perceived value

and satisfaction at different golf courses. Consequently, it is expected that golf course directors be able to change the marketing plans and golfing experience to make the most of their resources and their customers' experience (Jayanti & Ghosh, 1996). Nevertheless, the many operations in the game of golf, both physical and psychological, include completing various complex and complicated tasks. Therefore, it is not too far-fetched to expect that golf directors be aware of the importance of the legal aspects because issues of law have been inextricably woven into their managerial responsibilities. In today's litigious and ever alarming and sensitive society, one minor mistake may lead to the risk of unforgivable lawsuits against that could and would have irreversible effects on any golf facilities because of the many participants and such a large financial asset involved. Yet, the current golf management program by the PGA neglects legal aspects as part of golf management competencies. Over the past three decades, litigation and award expenses related to recreational sport have steadily increased Rapp (2012) and are expected to continue to increase in the future as reminded more recently by Hyde and Young (2015). Owing to an growing number of claims and frequency of sports injuries, today a fundamental sense of risk management and legal aspects is an vital measure of golf management professional preparation and competencies (Choi, 2014).

In terms of the legal competency study, Young (2001) specified the fundamental legal knowledge needed among recreational sport professionals with experience in both municipal and educational settings. Essential legal topics for recreation sport professionals included (in order of importance): risk management, administrative law, tort law, contract law, products liability, constitutional law, judicial system, and legal research (Young, 2001). Last but certainly not least, golf directors have various responsibilities such as organizing golf tournaments, supervising golf clinics, managing golf carts, merchandise, foods, and beverages, as well as monitoring and maintaining facility and equipment. Therefore, it is no beyond expectations to demand high

competence of their behalf and expect the authorizes in charge of golf courses to be extra cautious and extra careful in preserving the premise immune to legal complexity for the consequences could have dyer effects on the precious assets that might not be reprehensible.

2.3 Management

Organizations work continuously to improve productivity of their resources. Further, it is widely recognized that organization effectiveness is inseparably linked to their management performance. Management performance is the degree and quality of managers' contributions in understanding the objectives of their unit and organization. Therefore, organizations should identify the managers' types that are suitable and effective for their long-term needs and success. Managers' performance depends not only on their experience, but the competencies they bring into their job (Shirazi & Mortazavi, 2009). Leadership competencies that leaders should hold include the knowledge, attributes, abilities, and skills and they need to establish these to do their jobs and roles proficiently. Leaders have three main roles: establishing a direction, motivating and aligning individuals (Kötter *et al.*, 1990). Interestingly, identification and development of managerial competencies are in many ways imperative tools for the effective management of human resources with the aim of attaining strategic goals of the organization. In many ways, this is due to the fact that the developments and the changes are a direct result of the managers' personality and their competencies, which is a major consideration in the development of the organization. Indeed, they are regarded as central sources of reaching to a competitive benefit.

Today, knowledge management offers a discreet form of management that is well rooted and founded on the basis of knowledge used by the knowledge-based organizations and institutions. Indeed, because of globalization, distances are shortened and so the need

for universal thinking is triggered more vigorously. Financial capital and technologies are going into the background and are applied nowadays conforming to knowledge. Non-physical possessions and the capability of applying them in practice have proven to be essential. In knowledge-based organizations, people hold knowledge, so the development and identification of their competencies should be taken into account. Thus, managerial competencies, namely behavior required to achieve the necessary level of performance together with effective organization management has turned into the main cause of success and a competitive benefit (Königová *et al.*, 2012). The term “competency” is frequently used to emphasize working capacity of people for conducting real actions in real situations. Theoretically, definition of competency is, therefore, based on two key notions. The First notion embodies competencies as supremacy and power related to a certain person or body. On the other hand, another notion denotes the capacity that is the capabilities to perform a certain activity, to hold certain general and specific skills and characteristics and to be fully competent in the assumed area. Competence is the potential ability that one has in overcoming an obstacle while performance is the actual degree of success that one obtains in conducting the action in real life for a real life situation.

In general, several specific values, knowledge, skills, abilities, traits, motives and attitudes are necessary for the individual growth and successful contribution of every individual in an organization. In other word, it is the behavior essential for attaining the necessary performance level. This denotes the performance feature of a competency defined by the inputs level (knowledge, values, traits, abilities, motives, skills, and attitudes) and evaluated by the outputs (Choi, 2005). Therefore, categorize competencies can be subcategorized into three key development stages in terms of their development. The first phase involves personal competencies (Choi, 2005). The second one is grounded on probability of managing abilities in an organization through competency models (Choi, 2005). While the last in many ways, the most significant phase identifies central

competencies; total main competencies of the organization that can be used to obtain competitive advantage (Choi, 2005). Threshold competencies are defined as competencies essential for managerial work, but there is a noteworthy causal relationship between its competence and better outcomes. Königová *et al.* (2012) defines basic competencies as essential skills and knowledge for a manager's work performance, which are related to certain tasks and ensure personal efficiency of the manager. High performance competencies are fairly constant appearances of behavior that helps the teams directed by the manager achieve outstanding, above standard outcomes. These are divided into motivational, cognitive, performance and directional competencies (Königová *et al.*, 2012). As Spencer and Spencer (1993) state, managerial competencies build a particular subcategory of abilities, articulating purpose of exerting certain particular effects, which are very important for managers (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). Managerial competencies bring about the abilities and skills, which lead to effective performance within a workplace (Hogg, 1993).

Evidently, a study also shows that good managers need the threshold groups of competencies (knowledge, experience and expertise, several rudimentary cognitive competencies), and competency clusters distinguishing excellent from average managers (emotional intelligence competencies, social intelligence competencies, and cognitive competencies) (Boyatzis & Boyatzis, 2008). Moreover, the literature recognizes other constituents of managerial competencies, which have contributed considerably to professional achievement (Birdir & Pearson, 2000; Jeou-Shyan *et al.*, 2011; Sanghi, 2007; Woodall & Winstanley, 1998). Essential managerial competencies for normal and superior performance define managerial competency models, which are measured through observed behaviors (Königová *et al.*, 2012). In sport management, also the concept of abilities, skills, and competencies is an area of research. The position of sport and its impact on human life cannot be denied. The request for fitness and sport and

growing involvement in leisure sport activities show that more individuals find fitness valuable. Greater interest for participation in recreation and sport has resulted in the request for growing education of experts in this area (Parkhouse & Ulrich, 1979).

According to Schoonover *et al.* (2000), competencies offer great solutions for major problems such as elucidating staff expectations and standards and aligning people with the business strategies of the organization. According to (Kelner, 2001), competencies are individual characteristics that distinguish performance in a certain role or job. Quinn *et al.* (2003) have clustered managerial competencies into: facilitator, monitor, mentor, coordinator, innovator, producer, broker and director. Later, Wu and Lee (2007) determined six clusters, including strategic action; self-management; teamwork; global awareness; communication, planning and administration. Nevertheless, these competency models typically have several competencies under each cluster. Effective management of globalization challenges requires companies to have sufficient number of skilled managers. For evaluating a global competent manager, more stress is put on multiple intelligences approach than the competency approach. Considering the knowledge-based nature of competition, global managers should hold a wide variety of competencies. Particularly, a successful global manager thinks tactically in a global setting, yet performs as a local institute in the nationwide market (Sheridan May, 1997). Recognizing management competencies allows managers to act more efficiently and develop the scopes of effective leadership and management behavior (McKenna, 1998). Furthermore, that global manager competencies are essential for business achievement in current global and multicultural economy (Rosen & Digh, 2001; Wu & Lee, 2007).

Several concepts have been applied to approach the roots of competence and its storage as asset. Often, human competence is debated based on human and intellectual capital. Human capital denotes the competence of the members of an institute to grow their work

(Mbah & Ikemefuna, 2012), whereas intellectual capital includes human capital and matters like social and structural capital. Organizational competencies that include innovations, information systems, corporate culture, Research and Development activities and client affairs are made with human capital. Staff knowledge and skills are also covered. In the following, several approaches to management of competence are discussed. However, nature of knowledge management is more technical and concentrates on the problem of how Information Technology systems support gathering, processing and distribution of information within firms (Laakso-Manninen & Viitala, 2007). Brown (1999) studied the use of the Internet as a marketing means. This questionnaire survey revealed that most Web Sites offer information about the company and promoted organization awareness. He recommended that sport marketers should concentrate on the on-line relationship between seller and consumer. Along with the advance of Internet marketing, it was anticipated that changes would take place in managers' activities and scope owing to new technology. Technological advancements have altered the activities of golf course directors. Technology seems to be a means that golf course directors can use it to achieve customer loyalty, sell products, and recognize business ideas in the most effective way. The Internet and computer usage needs that golf course directors wisely regard a whole variety of critical matters such as virtual advertising, income opportunities with regard to making tee times, merchandising and sponsorship (Stotlar, 2000).

Choi (2005) anticipated that new strategies and trends would help increase profits in the sports industry. Many sport organizations are concerned about improved cost containment and revenue generation, because the general development in the sport economy perhaps does not endure. Golf course directors should thus explore a range of strategies formerly inaccessible or not methodically used to stay trustworthy in the sports industry, and to make more incomes as a consequence of economic declines. Golf usually

is considered as luxury rather than a need; therefore, golf course directors should exploit creative policies, including use of new technology, holding competitions, tapping on new markets, improved targeting, and reconnecting with old customers (Choi, 2005). In fact, both general management and academic literature on human resource development and competence management have reported several new theories and approaches over the past twenty years. However, the following are main areas of development: knowledge management, strategic human resource management, learning organization, individual skills/ competence management, competency-based strategic management and intellectual capital management (Laakso-Manninen & Viitala, 2007). Choi (2017) explored the status of management competencies among golf course directors among various regions in the United States. He constructed a competency model for golf course directors to aid directors meet organizational goals, and to enhance organizational effectiveness.

2.4 Director's Competency

The competency covers the knowledge and skills of work. The required job competencies need to be recognized to train competent individuals to fill a job. The personality traits, competency, knowledge, and skill are important for success in a profession (Goodarzi *et al.*, 2012). The terms competent, competence and competencies denote a quality or state of being able and fit. Vazirani (2010) claims that competency denotes fitness of a person in his/her job. Competencies are fundamental characteristics of individuals that indicate ways of thinking or behaving, which generalizes across a wide range of situations and endure for long periods of time. The competency is a capability that results in a successful outcome (Seal *et al.*, 2010). It is a set of distinct yet related behaviors, systematized around an underlying goal or purpose named as the intent.

Competencies result in exceptional performance in a person's work. They integrate skills, qualities, traits and attributes that assist individuals to be effective. Competencies provide a framework for developing and evaluating personal skills (Ramdass, 2012). Frey and Ruppert (2013) and Mohsin *et al.* (2017) categorized competencies to personal and organizational. Acquired by individuals, personal competencies are capabilities such as personality, knowledge, abilities, skills, and experience, while organizational competencies are the embedded structures and processes that endure within an organization even if an individual leaves the organization. Competency enables an individual to apply knowledge in a given situation with self-assurance in attaining the outcome. Experience, commitment, and competency develop critical abilities, mind-sets, skill-sets, and attitudes such as active listening, effective communication, conflict management, negotiating trade-off skills and variety management.

The literature indicates an association between performance and competency. According to Sarmawa *et al.* (2015) investigation of literature, commitment, competency, and organizational citizenship behavior can improve the performance. According to McClelland (1973) and Sarmawa *et al.* (2015), competency is a person's characteristic affecting directly to the performance, or can predict the performance very well. The sport manager should know the capabilities to fill a work (Goodarzi *et al.*, 2012).

Sport managers, particularly those who work with international and national organizations, require different qualifications based on their fields. Researchers defined many dimensions for managerial competency in sport domain in various countries. Some of the researches are introduced in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Competency Dimensions

Author	Dimensions of Competency	Field	Significant Dimensions
Toh and Jamieson (1997)	1) Business Procedures, 2) Communications; 3) Facilities/Equipment, 4) Governance, 5) Legality, 6) Management Techniques, 7) Officiating, 8) Philosophy Foundation, 9) Programming Techniques, 10) Research, 11) Safety & Accident Prevention, 12) Science	Sport USA	1) Governance, 2) Sport Foundations, 3) Budgeting, 4) Risk Management, 5) Computer Skills, 6) Communications.
Barcelona (2001)	1) Business Procedures, 2) Communications, 3) Facilities/Equipment, 4) Governance, 5) Legality, 6) Management Techniques, 7) Officiating, 8) Philosophy Foundation, 9) Programming Techniques, 10) Research, 11) Safety & Accident Prevention, 12) Science	Golf Sport USA	1) Golf Skills, 2) Programming, 3) Communications, 4) Business, Budgeting, 5) Governance, 6) Technology, 7) Risk Management
Koustelios (2003)	1) Business Procedures, 2) Communications, 3) Facilities/Equipment, 4) Governance, 5) Legality, 6) Management Techniques, 7) Officiating, 8) Philosophy Foundation, 9) Programming Techniques, 10) Research, 11) Safety & Accident Prevention, 12) Science	Sport Greece	1) Financial Management, 2) Human Recourse Management, 3) Administration/ Marketing, 4) Communication
Koustelios (2005)	1) Business Procedures, 2) Communications, 3) Facilities/Equipment, 4) Governance, 5) Legality, 6) Management Techniques, 7) Officiating, 8) Philosophy Foundation, 9) Programming Techniques, 10) Research, 11) Safety & Accident Prevention, 12) Science	Sport Greece	1) Knowledge of Sport, 2) Financial Management, 3) Marketing & Communication, 4) Human Resource Management

Table 2.1, continued

Author	Dimensions of Competency	Field	Significant Dimensions
Choi (2005)	Modify Toh, 1997 instrument 1) Business Procedures, 2) Communication/Public Relations, 3) Computer Skills 4) Facilities/Equipment, Management, 5) Governance; 6) Legality/Risk Management, 7) Management Techniques, 8) Research/Evaluation, 9) Philosophy/Sport Science, 10) Programming, Techniques/Event Management.	Golf Sport USA	All are important
Tripolitsi oti <i>et al.</i> (2007)	1) Business Procedures, 2) Communications, 3) Facilities/Equipment, 4) Governance, 5) Legality, 6) Management Techniques, 7) Officiating, 8) Philosophy Foundation, 9) Programming Techniques, 10) Research, 11) Safety & Accident Prevention, 12) Science	Sport Greece	1) Management techniques, 2) Sport Science, 3) Event Management, 4) Public Relations, 5) Computer Skills/Research, 6) Facilities Management, 7) Governance, 8) Safety/Injury Prevention
Ko <i>et al.</i> (2011)	Systematic literature review 1) Management Techniques, 2) Sport-Related Theory and Foundations, 3) Service Provision and Development, 4) Foreign Language and Learning Ability, 5) Leadership, 6) Finance & Economics, 7) Communication, 8) Political Awareness, 9) Risk Management, 10) Information Management & Technology, 11) Management Theory & Knowledge Management.	Sport Taiwan	All are important
Farzalipour <i>et al.</i> (2012a)	1) Programming Techniques, 2) Event Management, 3) Facilities and Equipment Management, 4) Commercial Methods, 5) Politics and Public Issues, 6) Research and Event Marketing, 7) Communications and Public Relations, 8) Management Techniques, 9) Risk Management, Computer Skills	Sport Turkey	1) Program Planning Techniques , 2) Event Management, 3) Sports Facilities and Equipment Management, 4) Research Management , 5) Event marketing

Table 2.1, continued

Author	Dimensions of Competency	Field	Significant Dimensions
Goodarzi <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Based on Toh, 1997 instrument 1) Business Procedures, 2) Public Relations, 3) Computer Skills, 4) Facilities Management, 5) Governance, 6) Risk Management, 7) Management Techniques, 8) Event Management, 9) Research and Marketing Management	Sport Iran	According to their importance: 1) Event Management, 2) Facilities Management, 3) Research & Marketing Management, 4) Business Procedures, 5) Governance, 6) Public Relations, 7) Management Techniques, 8) Risk Management, 9) Computer Skills
Gjologaj (2014)	Interview with sports managers 1) Leadership, 2) Communication Skills, 3) Personnel Management, 4) Sports Knowledge, 5) Legislation Knowledge, 6) Achieving Objectives, 7) Marketing, 8) Problem Solving, 9) Public Relationship, 10) Financing, 11) Facilities Management	Sport Albania	All are important
Arsalan Soltani <i>et al.</i> (2017)	Interview with sport managers to define the competency dimensions 1) Business Procedure, 2) Communication, 3) Supervision & Evaluation, 4) Management Technique & Risk Management, 5) Sports Foundation, 6) Programming Technique, 7) Professional Ethics, 8) Performance Management & Improving, 9) Culture, 10) Responsibility & Result Oriented	Sport Iran	All are important
Choi (2017)	Modify Toh, 1997 instrument 1) Business Procedures, 2) Communication/Public Relations, 3) Computer Skills 4) Facilities/Equipment Management, 5) Governance; 6) Legality/Risk Management, 7) Management Techniques, 8) Research/Evaluation, 9) Philosophy/Sport Science, 10) Programming Techniques/Event Management	Sport Golf USA	1) Golf Studies, 2) Management Techniques, 3) Facility/Equipment Management, 4) Governance, 5) Research/Evaluation, 6) Computer Skills, 7) Communications/Public Relations, 8) Budgeting, 9) Legal Compliance, 10) Financial Management, 11) Program Techniques

It can be seen from Table 2.1 that different dimensions of competency are proposed in the literature for sport domain. Most of the researches conducted their studies based on Toh and Jamieson (1997) scale. Some researches confirmed the importance of all dimensions, while others selected some dimensions. This is normal due to vary the country and the nature of the study (different approaches, respondents, etc.).

Toh and Jamieson (1997) identified his competency management instrument that includes 12 dimensions for sport in USA. After that, all other researches, in spite of their scarcity, utilized the same dimensions for various sport domains. Choi (2005) was the first who modified that instrument to include 10 dimensions and used them for golf sport industry. However, there is no big difference between the original and the modified instrument. Choi also used his modified instrument in 2017 to study the golf competency management in various regions in the USA. Therefore, Choi studies are most related to this research work since they are related to golf management competency.

2.5 Human Resources Management

Human resource is a significant source of knowledge and skills in an organization. Therefore, efficient human resources management (HRM), including careful planning, organizing, leading and controlling, should be a strategic target of organizations (Usrof & Elmorsey, 2016). HRM is the efficient human resources utilization to attain organization goals. Human resource management is a management approach that strives to attain competitive gain through strategic development of an extremely capable and committed work force. Therefore, HRM can be considered as the process of obtaining, developing, and maintaining relationships of individuals to achieve its core objectives (Indumathi & Selvan, 2014). HRM is defined by researchers in different ways. Shahnawaz and Juyal (2006) defined HRM as the total philosophy about the organization and how to manage people and is not restricted to certain functions where HRM focuses

on commitment and conformity rather than control and compliance. Quresh *et al.* (2010) stated that HRM is the policies and practices required to achieve individuals or human resource aspect of a management position including selection, compensation, training, and performance appraisal in decision making.

There is evidence on considerable effect of HRM practices on performance of employees. Employee performance has direct relation to organization performance. Successful organizations regard the HRM practices to be critical factor with direct impact on employee's performance (Hassan, 2016). HRM practices influence organizational performance through their impact on employee behaviors and development. These practices determine the employees' type who are selected, the employee's skills, and their opportunities and incentives to design new and better ways of performing their jobs (Ibrahim & Zulkafli, 2016). Peregrino de Brito and Barbosa de Oliveira (2016) stated that human resources may contribute to superior performance and develop basis of sustainable competitive benefit provided that they are rare, valuable and hard to reproduce. Researchers defined many dimensions for human resources management in different domains. Some of the researches are introduced in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Dimensions of HRM

Author	Dimensions of HRM	Field	Significant Dimensions
Taylor and McGraw (2006)	Based on the literature 1) Selection, 2) Training, 3) Performance Appraisal, 4) Reward System	Sport Australia	All are important
Renee Baptiste (2008)	Based on the literature 1) Staffing and Recruitment, 2) Training and Development, 3) Worker Involvement, 4) Pay and Rewards, 5) Flexibility, 6) Involvement in Decision-Making, 7) Communication	Government Organization England	All are important
Wei <i>et al.</i> (2010)	Based on the literature 1) Extensive Training, 2) Participation & Communication, 3) Incentive, 4) Compensation	Manufacturing Plants Taiwan	All are important
Katou and Budhwar (2010)	Based on the literature 1) Recruitment, 2) Training and Development, 3) Compensation and Incentives, 4) Employee Participation, 5) Job Design	Manufacturing industries Greek	All are important
Unlue <i>et al.</i> (2012)	1) Planning, 2) Employee Choice and Placement, 3) Training and Development, 4) Career Planning, 5) Performance Assessment, 6) Payment, 7) Protection, 8) Discipline, 9) Separation Functions in order	Sport Turkey	1) Employee Choice and Placement, 2) Training and Development, 3) Career Planning, 4) Performance Assessment 5) Protection, 6) Discipline, 7) Separation Functions in order
Husin <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Based on the literature 1) Support at Work, 2) Training, 3) Reward System, 4) Supervisory Assistance, 5) Performance Appraisal	Sport Golf Malaysia	1) Support at Work, 2) Reward System, 3) Supervisory Assistance, 4) Performance Appraisal
Ijigu (2015)	Based on the literature 1) Recruitment & Selection, 2) Training & Development, 3) Performance Appraisal, 4) Compensation	Banks Ethiopian	All are important

Table 2.2, continued

Author	Dimensions of HRM	Field	Significant Dimensions
Ahmed (2016)	Based on the literature 1) Recruitment & Selection, 2) Training & Development, 3) Compensation, 4) Performance Appraisal	Banking Sector Sudan	Ascending v due to their significance 1)Performance Appraisal, 2) Recruitment & Selection, 3) Training & Development, 4) Compensation,
(Singh & Kassa, 2016)	Based on the literature 1) Recruitment & Selection, 2) Training & Development, 3) Performance Appraisal, 4) Compensation	University Ethiopia	Ascending due to their significance 1) Compensation, 2) Recruitment & Selection, 3) Performance Appraisal, 4) Training & Development
Abdul Hameed and Shaik Mohamed (2016)	Based on the literature 1) Recruitment and Selection, 2) Compensation and Reward, 3) Performance Appraisal, 4) Teamwork, 5) Training and Development	Hospitals India	1)Recruitment and Selection, 2)Training and Development
Nwachukwu and Chladková (2017)	Based on Guest, 1997 model 1) Training & Development, 2) Employee Compensation, 3) Human Resource Planning, 4) Work Environment	Banks Nigeria	1) Training & Development, 2) Employee Compensation, 3) Human Resource Planning
El- Ghalayini (2017)	Based on the literature 1) Staffing and Recruitment, 2) Performance Appraisal, 3) Compensation and Rewards, 4) Training and Development.	International Governmental Organization Kuwait	All are important

As shown from Table 2.2 the studies related to sport domain are few comparing to other domains, because HR practice in a complex organization cannot simply be applied to sports organizations as HRM is the most problematic and critical phenomenon for operation of an organization (Chelladurai, 2006; Taylor & McGraw, 2006). Sports are getting more commercialized, and sports organizations have turned more competent (Bauer *et al.*, 2005). Unlua *et al.* (2012) showed that human resources managements of hospitals and sports enterprises have resemblances in many functions such as employee choice and placement, planning, career planning, training and development, payment, performance assessment, discipline, protection and separation functions. Sports businesses should manage their activities, time, human resources, energy loss and money to achieve their goals (Unlua *et al.*, 2012). Organizations should capitalize in human resources for the efficient and effective organization of operations. Today, sports organizations apply a strategic approach to human resource. HR planning is mainly the process of facing changes and uncertainty, therefore, factors such as selection, recruitment, orientation and rewards, training and development must be considered to endure with a competitive advantage. Proper application of well-planned HR practices may result in efficient and effective operations (Weerakoon, 2016). Husin *et al.* (2012) is the most related study to this research because it investigates the human resource dimensions in golf sport, which helps in comparison process. However, they used the same dimensions as other research in Table 2.2 used even in various domains.

2.6 Member retention

Member retention refers to the tendency of repurchase that is described as person's decision for buying a service again, the decision to attend in future activity, and how activity will take place (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1990). According to Clem (2011), member retention variables include not only member involvement, but also service quality, as well as perceived value, and member satisfaction along with the intention to have membership

renewal schemes. Member retention turned into a typical issue relates to evaluating products and services quality and loyalty of customers, thus organizations must follow a suitable member retention strategy that guarantees success to increase their market share and achieve competitive advantages. The companies need a high level of customization to match expectations and needs of each customer. Company's' capacity to attract and maintain customers is contingent on its ability to develop confidence, involve customers and provide quality services and products. TQM norms, techniques and practices can achieve these objectives (Apudo *et al.*, 2016).

According to the Technical Assistance Research Program Institute (TARP), acquiring a new customer costs five times more money than to maintain a current customer in the United States. In addition, approximately 95 percent of individuals who had a bad experience do not criticize; they just leave. Consequently, it is important to recognize rudiments of service performance and factors with impact on satisfaction level of a golfer to maintain the current ones (Groch, 2013). Member retention is a critical customer relationship management strategy. Retention programs must include a customer-centric management approach to distinguish customer needs, segmentation of profitable customers and satisfaction and loyalty facilitation. Member retention is a main objective of customer relationship management CRM. Most companies utilize CRM to acquire new customer, however, many consider that CRM real value is member retention. This allows companies to learn more about customers, how to satisfy them, and how and why customers interact with the company (Nataraj, 2010). Researchers defined many dimensions for member retention in different domains. Some of the researches are introduced in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Dimensions of Member retention

Author	Dimensions of Member retention	Field	Significant Dimensions
McDougall and Levesque (2000)	Based on literature 1) Service Quality, 2) Perceived Value	Church Congregation Canada	1, Service Quality, 2) Perceived Value
Hume and Mort (2008)	Based on literature 1) Member Involvement, 2) Service Quality, 3) Perceived Value, 4) Satisfaction	Art industry Australia	All are important
Clem (2011)	Based on literature 1) Member Involvement, 2) Service Quality, 3) Perceived Value, 4) Member Satisfaction, 5) Intention Renew Membership	Golf Sport USA	All are important
Clem <i>et al.</i> (2013)	Based on Clem, 2011 1) Member Involvement, 2) Service Quality, 3) Perceived Value, 4) Member Satisfaction, 5) Intention Renew Membership	Golf Sport USA	All are important
Tamuliene and Gabryte (2014)	Based on literature 1) Customer Satisfaction, 2) Relationship Quality, 3) Switching Cost, 4) Member retention	Mobile Operators Lithuania	All are important
Han and Hyun (2015)	Based on literature 1) Perceived Quality, 2) Satisfaction, 3) Trust, 4) Perceived Price Reasonableness	Medical Tourism Industry Korea	All are important
Lim <i>et al.</i> (2016)	1) Customer perceived value, 2) Satisfaction, 3) Service Quality	Health and Fitness Clubs USA	1) Customer perceived value, 2) Satisfaction, 3) Service Quality

Yates (2002) stated that the value of a club membership relies on the received and perceived benefits. For a golf club, the perception of value rests in the provided service quality. Kyle *et al.* (2010) in his study on ski resorts in northern Greece stated that enhancing the delivered services quality leads to retain consumers. In general, satisfaction, perceived value and service quality are the most indicators of customers retention as shown in Table 2.3. The studies of Clem (2011) and Clem *et al.* (2013) are most related to this research work because they investigate the retention dimensions in golf sport.

2.7 Total Quality Management Theory

Quality management is at the core of a business to achieve high quality standard in the certain subdivision, since it focuses on development and management of process, as well as cover of essential resources. The following reasons explain why this Quality Management is TOTAL (Várnai, 2006):

- All organization members participate in the specific processes,
- It is used in all organization activities,
- It is related to all organizational levels, and all departments of the company.

The total quality management (TQM) was developed by (Deming, 1986) as an organization-wide method emphasizing on the quality notion as a key principal goal via participative management (Clark, 1990). During the 1980s and 1990s, TQM started to affect national business systems, and was generally regarded as a an upheaval in management (Ahaotu & Pathirage, 2015). TQM is a series of practices that emphasize on the steady improvement, reducing rework, satisfying the need of the customers, advances more teamwork and increases participation of employees, competitive benchmarking, the process redesign, long-range thinking, continuous assessment of the outcomes, as well as a more intimate relationship with the providers and team-based problem solving

(Pourrajab *et al.*, 2011). The foundation of TQM is appreciating that all organizational departments and staff need to work in harmony to fulfill the need and necessities of the customers.

Researchers proposed many definitions of TQM. Ngambi and Nkemkiafu (2015) defined TQM as a concept based on continuous improvement in the performance of processes in an organization and in the quality of the products and services. Madar (2015) defined TQM as philosophy aiming to guide all its activities and processes towards customers and improve them in a way that they lead to lasting benefits. Ahaotu and Pathirage (2015) defined TQM as an inclusive and organized approach to organizational management that intends to improve the quality of services and products through constant alterations in response to incessant feedback. TQM as organization activities involves managers and workers in a company in a necessary and integrated effort to improve performance. These incorporations result in higher customer satisfaction by regulating costs, quality, and product developments (Hashmi, 2007). Jehangiri (2017) defined TQM as a collective, interconnected system of quality practices related to organizational performance and customer satisfaction. TQM practices comprise customer relationship (customer involvement and satisfaction), top management support; workforce management (employee training and empowerment), supplier relationship, quality information and benchmarking, product/service design, and process management. The management practices are human resources management, management of process quality, information and analysis, and strategic quality planning.

As a summary, TQM is a systematic approach to improve organizations performance and customers' satisfaction by continuous enhancement of services and products, which requires the cooperation of top management and human resources at all organizational levels. Based on the TQM, every organization tries to enhance its productivity and

customer satisfaction (Choi, 2005; Deming, 1986). Individuals should be authorized to make essential decisions and know when to use that given power to manage the intrinsic variability and complexity of service delivery technology and production. The main features of TQM emphasize on customer and incessant development and employees involvement (Choi, 2005; Deming, 1986). Employees are the most valued resource within a corporation who need constant training and should receive enough education on methods, prescriptions, and quality, which typically comprises problem solving strategies, team skills and QM principles (Ngambi & Nkemkiafu, 2015). TQM is perhaps most precisely considered as a tactic for execution of strategies demanding high level quality services or product. Basically, TQM integrates several eminent management values into a systematic and coherent framework. By the systematic relations of these values, the TQM may increase quality (Mohamed, 2014; Sabur, 2015). The principles of TQM place the stress on:

1. Expression of strategic view
2. Objective and precise evaluations
3. Benchmarking
4. Extensive employee authorization and teamwork
5. Endeavoring for incessant improvement
6. Stress on a systems vision of quality that theorizes quality-related activities as being extremely inter-reliant
7. Management dedicated to quality
8. Great stress on customer fulfillment

The main principles of management for considerable improvement of an organization or business effectiveness are (Deming, 1986):

1. Creating reliability of purpose for enhancing services and products.

2. Adopting the new viewpoint.
3. Terminating reliance on inspection to attain quality.
4. Ceasing awarding business on value only; reducing total price by working with a lone provider.
5. Continual improvement of process for development, production and service.
6. Organize on-the-job training.
7. Embrace and organize leadership.
8. Ejecting fear.
9. Collapsing obstacles between staff areas.
10. Removing slogans, appeals and targets for the staff.
11. Removing numerical allocations for the staff and arithmetical goals for management.
12. Eradicating obstacles that hold up pride of workmanship, and the annual merit or rating system.
13. Creating a dynamic program of self-improvement and education for everyone.
14. Encouraging everybody in the company to work achieving the change.

Implement the elements of TQM, which guarantees the improvement of services, increases customer satisfaction, and ensures the progress of the programs and additionally the increase in quality. Indeed, the implementation of TQM leads to change in national and international organizations especially leads to change in sports organizations, federations, committees and clubs (Bakhtiari & Talebpour, 2013). TQM implementation is a significant organizational change that necessitates change of organization's processes, culture, beliefs, and strategic priorities (Jehangiri, 2017).

As a summary, the benefits of implementing the TQM are (Atwati *et al.*, 2013; Madar, 2015).

1. Improving the company's reputation
2. Increase the competitiveness of the organization.
3. Significant upgrade in quality of services or products- Customer satisfaction increase, leading to added sales;
4. A substantial decline in resources waste
5. Increased productivity due to staff efficient use of time
6. Increasing the market share in long term
7. The staff are inspired by extra responsibilities, teamwork and participation in decision-making on TQM
8. Lower costs
9. Focus on nonstop improvement
10. Increase organization's flexibility in its transactions with higher capacity variables on investment opportunities, and avoid obstacles and risks.
11. Constant improvement for all levels, activities, and sectors.

2.7.1 Total Quality Management Theory and Competency Behavior

The rapid development of the golf industry has created an urge for an expertise approach in golf club management. Moreover, the surge of golf as a leisure practice has resulted in an outstanding chance to examine its financial and managerial requirements. Leisure and Golf managers should understand the possibility of financial loss and learn to professionally handle the massive risk of their businesses. Consequently, there is a crucial need for the management of leisure services and golf organizations to encourage professionalism through different formal learning and management practices. The TQM literature indicates that proper managerial leadership determines the disparity in the success rate of TQM execution (Perles, 2002). However, there is no consensus about the leadership competencies that are essential to execute certain TQM principles (González & Guillén, 2002).

The whole organization needs to be driven by competency in order to be successful since the key factor is adaptability (Boyatzis, 1982). Managerial competencies were established on an account of existing and evolving business requirements (Fjelstul, 2007; Meyer & Semark, 1996). Therefore, Competency of Golf Course Direction (CGCD) is categorized into the following competency areas: (1) communication/public relations; (2) business procedures; (3) governance; (4) facilities/equipment management; (5) computer skills; (6) management techniques; (7) legality/risk management; (8) research/evaluation; (9) programming techniques/event management; and (10) philosophy/sport science (Choi, 2005). Several principles of TQM are closely related to competencies. First, frontline employees are often far more knowledgeable than supervisors about the jobs and customer needs. Organizational authority to make important decisions should be placed further down the management chain. Empowering frontline workers to do planning analysis and decision-making tasks are normally reserved for managers that lead quality improvements. Nevertheless, a second principle of TQM is the simple notion that the key and the most effective person responsible of ensuring customer satisfaction is most often the very first employee that the client encounters. When customer requests have to be passed up the line for management approval, customers begin to take emotional credit for demanding adequate service rather than welcoming the idea of receiving a superior service. Exceeding the expectations of the customer and operating efficient processes require employees who are well trained as well empowered to deal with situations on the spot that would ensure the intended customer satisfaction. Competency studies with the objective to identify skills and knowledge necessary to perform a task are important in sport management (Barcelona & Ross, 2004; Horch & Schütte, 2003). Researchers have highlighted the significance of continuous assessment of the competencies required for effective performance in the sport industry because of the changing social environment (Lambrecht, 1987; Toh & Jamieson, 1997).

Therefore, it goes without say that enhancing individual workplace competencies is a required component in becoming an organization of high quality service, and in achieving that level of intended quality workplace competencies plays a crucial role. Nowadays, there is need for a new set of competencies organizations that can identify competencies, and develop those who fall short would inevitably succeed in the long term. TQM competencies mean that individuals are evaluated on whether they satisfy pre-defined values in a pass/fail method. The outcome is the number of those satisfying and not satisfying the aforementioned standards (Cooper, 2000). Moreover, top management needs to act as a leader for executing the TQM. Businesses with high capabilities perform TQM principles more efficiently and can develop higher quality products. Furthermore, high competency behavior brings about the client focus; employee involvement; incessant improvement; and supplier quality management to name a few of its many benefits (Das *et al.*, 2011).

Some studies found that the TQM is significantly linked with productivity, cash flow, organizational performance, sales growth employee morale, customer satisfaction, and delivery. Intriguingly, TQM is improvement of implementation of every feature and effect of organization's activity, targeting enduring quality improvement, improvement of work conditions as well as improvement of competence of the employees and work methods. Consequently, the TQM aims to optimize processes, achieve customer satisfaction, safeguard long-term benefits, and success for the organization and clients (Cooper, 2000; Das *et al.*, 2011; Samson & Terziovski, 1999).

2.7.2 Total Quality Management Theory and HRM

Management of HR has a great role in aiding the necessary changes that empower staff, providing more systematic training, establishing team-based reward systems, and communicating role in quality to employees. The TQM programs can, in both practice and theory, raise the significance of the human resource management function. Therefore, the notion of human resource is very essential in reaching and obtaining the overall quality in the organization (Deming, 1986). Applying TQM to an organization has extensive inferences for HRM. TQM necessitates creativity independence, and self-control among staff requiring higher collaboration rather than simple compliance (Abu-Doleh, 2012; Kumar, 2012). The HR function must create a TQM outline that guides its activities. This blueprint includes following main aspects: benchmarking HR policies against leading TQM organizations, writing a HR mission statement, re-engineering work processes, and identifying external and internal customer needs (Kumar, 2012). Table 2.4 compares traditional and total quality approaches of human resource management.

Table 2.4: Comparison of Traditional and Total Quality HRM Approaches (Kumar, 2012)

Variable	Traditional HRM Approach	Total Quality HRM Approach
Philosophy	A fair day's work for a fair day's pay.	Shared responsibility, Commitment and rewards.
Business Objectives	Increased productivity, profitability; quality is secondary; focus on labor.	Increased quality, productivity, customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction and loyalty.
Quality Objective	Adequate quality to remain in business; staff- driven approaches to quality improvement.	Total quality management and continues improvement at and across every level.
Business Information Sharing	Limited to information on an as – needed basis for job performance.	Open books, share board information on profits, productivity, quality
Major Constituencies	Managers, stockholders, customers, employees.	Customers, all employees, stockholders.
Education and Training	On-the-Job Training, feedback on job performance.	Quality and economic education, multiple skill training, problem solving and group process.
Reward structure	Management designed and administered.	Designed and adjusted by management – employee committee; formal, early union involvement.
Job Security	Labor as a variable cost; layoffs common during business downturns.	Formal commitment key consideration in all decisions.

The TQM mainly aims to constantly improve organizational processes leading to high quality services or products. The link between HR and TQM has a significant effect on business organizations. The integration of HRM and TQM assists organization to survive in the future (Swamy, 2013). There is a strong evidence that total quality management and human resource management are getting more intertwined as we step into the new century (Chang & Katrichis, 2016) because both of them employ the same assumptions and theoretical paradigms and frameworks concerning leadership, involvement of employees, training and teamwork, as well as the unique and peculiar inclination to link these perspectives to business performance in practice and theory (Boselie & Van der Wiele, 2002; Kadiresan *et al.*, 2015). Human resource management practices are growingly considered as dependent variables. The technical perspective assumes that organizations intend to design, run, assess, compensate, educate and develop their staff to warrant that right individuals are in the right job at the right time (Collins, 1979). Human resources as a whole and employees in particular have an essential role in service-oriented organizations, which binds the companies to profits (Anderson, 2006; Garg & Dhar, 2014). Due to its complicated nature of sport products, it is hard to persuade consumers to purchase services and remain subscribed. The only way to convince them that the offered services have high quality is to warrant high quality cues they use to assess the services. However, this is only possible by the employees' astute and assured assistance through behaviors and attitudes corresponding to the service quality emphasis of organizations. Therefore, human resource practices in organizations that look for greater service quality need to stress on the of employees' wellbeing, because once the wellbeing of the respective employees is ensured, perceptions of customers regarding service quality will inevitably improve and that will have a positive domino effect on the organization as a whole.

The technical perspective result in studies designed to create techniques for increasing the congruency between employees' abilities, skills and knowledge on one hand, and the demands of the profession on the other hand (Barnes-Mauthe *et al.*, 2015). Organizational effectiveness is the alleged outcome of good matching, which both the organization and individual employees benefit from and mutually complement one another on since the relationship is correlational and mutually effective in many ways. The focal issues regarded in human resource development are quality training and education, human resource management, employee acknowledgement and performance, employee participation, and employee morale as well as their respective wellbeing. The human resource development is a significant contributor to a meaningful and appropriate quality management in an organization, because the practice of ensuring quality and the philosophy of conducting such measures need to be part of the whole employees (Shahraki *et al.*, 2011).

According to Husin *et al.* (2012) human resource management (HRM) variables included reward system, support at work, performance appraisals, supervisory assistance and training. Besides, the HRM practices such as performance appraisal; job design, training, staffing, career management, compensation and teamwork, which are to name a few, come of the many of the most significant areas of the HRM. A theoretical belief states that HRM practices mostly concentrate on staff practices, such as compensation, recruiting, and training. The HRM methods include designing and applying a series of internally consistent strategies that guarantee a firm's human capital helps to the attainment of its business goals (Baird & Meshoulam, 1988; Husin *et al.*, 2012; Shahraki *et al.*, 2011). Abu-Doleh (2012) investigates the effect of HRM practices on the implementation of TQM, and the impacts of TQM and HRM practices on the organizational quality performance. The results reveal that employee career planning, training and development, and selection and recruiting had the highest influences on the

TQM implementation. In addition, TQM and HRM practices have significant effects on organizational quality performance, particularly customer satisfaction, employee quality awareness, and company image. The TQM needs a specific approach to HR plan for successful implementation in order to ensure the necessary effectiveness (Abu-Doleh, 2012). The HRM rules in firms with a TQM orientation try to nurture empowerment, communications, commitment to quality and teamwork with a variety of reinforcements and rewards that would bring about high level of employee satisfaction as well as efficiency and effectiveness (Wickramasinghe & Alawattage, 2012).

Teamwork, effective staffing and choosing staff with good abilities, knowledge, attitudes and skills, development, training and professional career development were deemed crucial to the TQM implementation (Adawiyah & Pramuka, 2012; Clinton *et al.*, 1994; Ooi *et al.*, 2012; Wilkinson *et al.*, 1992; Yang, 2006). Evidently, there is strong and substantiated evidence that performance evaluation systems are not able to meet both employees' expectations and TQM demands (Soltani, 2003; Soltani *et al.*, 2004). Bowen and Lawler (1992) explained the relationship between TQM and HR as the main factor in the quality improvement adds to the value of firm's functions and products through HR (Bowen & Lawler, 1992; Jiménez-Jiménez & Martínez-Costa, 2009). They stated that both HRM and TQM practices influence performance in a positive way. Consequently, it may be established that every TQM program needs to be together with a series of HRM practices that help teamwork, employee authorization, training and development and employing, compensation and appraisal practices that link the quality management system to employees (Jiménez-Jiménez & Martínez-Costa, 2009). The HR department has a significant role in developing and communicating the TQM vision, preparing the organizational details for implementing TQM procedures, the actual application and providing required support to maintain the fervor about TQM. HRM can play as a tool with significant role in implementing TQM in two aspects (Izvercian *et al.*, 2014) :

1. By modeling the TQM principles and philosophy at department operational level, the HR department acts as a starting point for the TQM process across the enterprise.
2. With the enterprise management team help, the HR department can transfer this process from the department level to enterprise level by creating an organizational culture required for the developing and accepting TQM.

2.7.3 Total Quality Management Theory and Member retention

Even though many research studies have assessed member retention strategies used in service businesses, research on member retention strategies used in golf clubs for maintaining 'loyal' members is minimal. Indeed, considerable research has been carried out in member retention in the retail business. Noticeably, they have concluded that retaining relationships with customers is driven by dependency (constraint based) or desire (dedication based) (Bendapudi & Berry, 1997).

Total quality management directly denotes handling strategies for purifying products and the quality of services by the organizations in order to satisfy the clients' requirements. Therefore, it is not too naive to assume philosophy and the vigorous implementation of TQM improves the service organizational performance, as mentioned by Khamalah and Lingaraj (2011), particularly in terms of retention, clients attraction, problem rectification, satisfaction, fewer errors and higher intra-organizational interactions (Lam *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, it is not too far-fetched to assume and presume that TQM is an inclusive management strategy, with the aim of satisfying and inspiring clients. Yet, its main purpose is customer satisfaction, and incessant improvement, which is necessary to safeguard and satisfy the customer expectation. Therefore, it can be inferred that the TQM practices have significant effect on customers'/employees' loyalty and satisfaction (Jun *et al.*, 2006).

Prior to that in 1998, it was revealed that the power of QM practices have a noteworthy positive relationship with the outcomes of service quality, such as improved competitive advantage, increased productivity and stimulating customer relationships and employee morale as mentioned by Terziovski and Dean (1998). The precisely carefully crafted experiential study showed that TQM practices are positively and significantly associated with service quality, innovation and continuous improvement, which has been proven to be a necessity to meet the need of the respective customers (Sit *et al.*, 2010). The TQM should guarantee for firms to be able to fully satisfy the genuine expectations and needs of their respective clients. It has been detected that when employee morale, productivity, and client relationships improve, a competitive advantage of service company certainly improves accordingly (Lam *et al.*, 2012). The TQM method assimilates the following basic central features into one coherent component that has continuous improvement, involvement and commitment in order to achieve its ultimate goal that is customer satisfaction and the efficiency of the work force as a whole. Therefore, it is well argued that the best performance judges are those who are served (Delcourt *et al.*, 2013), in which in this case be the customers of the premise. Thus, customers as end users of services are the validated authorities, who may state whether or not the provided service had significant quality. Moreover, “customer’s perceptions rather than ‘widget’ (manufacturing organization’s product) quality are the key and crucial driving force behind management practice in the service sector” (Anderson, 2006). As such, service quality perceived by customer determines the organization productivity.

Evidently, as it is not possible to conceptualize the existence of service consistently and physically, their performances and qualities depend completely on the customers’ perceptions, who not only consumers but also producers of the respective services (Chelladurai, 2006; Edvardsson, 2005). For instance, golfers who use ‘worn out’ outfits or sets or those who are not in the good mood to play do not enjoy the game even if the

golf course is its utmost suitable condition. Consequently, the provided standard of quality is essential in the perception of customers who rely on what is served, and regard other emotional factors. Commitment to initiate boundless improvement in services and quality, involvement means the full force of participation for all members of the team in attaining a shared goal (namely from top to bottom), perform as a single department for better outcomes and dwell on continuous improvement by looking for potential defects and error, and removing it immediately. The TQM targets the matters of client satisfaction and supervision on executing the marketing idea, as mentioned by (Talib, 2013). Furthermore, the TQM structure was divided into the service and product design, participation of business executive, supplier management, strategic management of service quality, quality information, process management, customer relationship management and training (Ma *et al.*, 2005). It is worth mentioning that the client satisfaction can improve his/her loyalty, meaning that the chance of repurchase intention improves. The more quantities and number of times that customers make purchase, the enterprise gets better profit (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). As a result, improving the customer satisfaction has the subsequent advantages, including reduced price elasticity, higher loyalty gained from current customers, reduced cost of transaction and failure, preventing customers from changing to the competitors, keeping low costs to attain prices that are attractive for customers and improving the enterprise reputation (Huang *et al.*, 2016). Nevertheless, the issue of customer satisfaction and its relationship with customer loyalty is quite vital to the progress of the institution. Fornell *et al.* (1996) suggested that the customer satisfaction might bring about loyalty in many cases. The companies improve the quality of services and products, so customer loyalty, reputation, and customer satisfaction will increase (Chen *et al.*, 2014; Corredor & Goñi, 2011; Fornell *et al.*, 1996).

Several researches indicate a positive association between member retention and customer satisfaction. It is more probable that satisfied customer return and stay with a company compared to unsatisfied customer who may go elsewhere. Customer satisfaction is an antecedent of member retention and is a central determinant of member retention. Customer satisfaction has positively association to member retention, and customer size and the current satisfaction level determine the effect (Ogbari & Borishade, 2015). Increased satisfaction of customer will result in a higher rate of member retention, higher customer repurchase practice, and will eventually bring higher profitability. High customer satisfaction results in high member retention and loyalty, which signifies an essential factor for business success (Pham, 2015).

2.8 Expectation-Confirmation Theory

Oliver (1980) developed the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), which includes a customer behavior model, typically used to outline and predict repurchase intention and satisfaction. Oliver stated that repurchase intentions are considerably reliant on prior satisfaction, whereas satisfaction is obtained from expectation and disconfirmation of services or products, with disconfirmation having the highest direct effect on satisfaction. Disconfirmation comprises of Chen *et al.* (2010):

1. Confirmation: actual performance meets the anticipated standard
2. Negative disconfirmation: actual performance does not meet the anticipated standard
3. Positive disconfirmation: actual performance surpasses the anticipated standard

Satisfaction denotes the feeling of disappointment or satisfaction gained through comparing the performance of a service or product to its anticipated level. Satisfaction is a critical factor in business, having effect on customers repurchase intentions to services or product. Perceived performance then was added to ECT as satisfaction antecedent, and further recognized that both perceived performance and expectations have effect on disconfirmation (Chen *et al.*, 2010). According to ECT, customers initially develop an expectation prior to purchase, then form insights on the performance of the service or product following a period of use. Afterward, they decide on their level of satisfaction based on the extent to which their expectation is confirmed by comparing the initial expectation and the performance of the service or product (Valvi & West, 2013). The expectation-confirmation theory (ECT) is an important theoretical framework that is being widely used for studying customer satisfaction member retention strategies (Clem, 2011; Oliver, 1980). The ECT includes a commonly used customer behavior model that outlines and envisages satisfaction and intention to re-purchase and basically, in plain words, what it means to have customers return to the brand. The key model constructs are four key factors starting with satisfaction, as well as expectations, and more intriguingly disconfirmation and finally performance (Baharum & Jaafar, 2015). The ECT is shown in Figure 2.1.

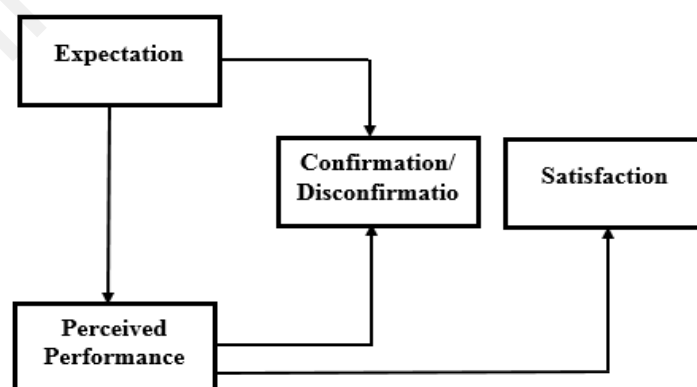


Figure 2.1: Expectation Confirmation Theory by Oliver (Rao & Choudhury, 2017)

2.8.1 Expectation-Confirmation Theory and Member retention

The ECT is broadly used in the marketing and consumer behavior literature to study the relationships between post-purchase behavior, consumer satisfaction and repeated purchasing (Ho *et al.*, 2015). Intention to re-purchase depends greatly on previous satisfaction, whereas satisfaction is achieved from disconfirmation and expectation for the products or services. The term ‘Disconfirmation’ has arguably the most interesting tune and in order to understand the term, one needs to look at its implication. Disconfirmation is the most direct effect on satisfaction (Oliver, 1980). Furthermore, performance is as a significant precursor of satisfaction, and both perceived performance and expectations have effects on disconfirmation (Churchill Jr & Surprenant, 1982). Client’s process of continuance decision-making reveals some features comparable to intention of re-purchase in the field of marketing (Bhattacharjee, 2001; Chen *et al.*, 2010). Additionally, the expectation–confirmation model proposes that the consumer’s satisfaction level with a service is dependent on his/her preliminary expectation, as well as inconsistencies between service performance and expectation (Thong *et al.*, 2006). Evidently, one major predictor of consumer satisfaction is expectation based on client’s direct experiences (Thong *et al.*, 2006).

Generally, it can be concluded that the ECT conceives service expectation as a significant factor in satisfaction with service, because service expectation provides the reference point and the benchmark for clients to make evaluative judgments about the main service. A high expectation or baseline level is likely to enhance clients’ satisfaction, whereas low expectation decreases satisfaction (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Since customer satisfaction has significant relationship with customer retention (Ogbari & Borishade, 2015), where a high satisfaction of customer leads to increase his retention (Pham, 2015), therefore, the ECT is used to determine the members retention in the golf club based on their satisfaction on the services provided by the club.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework is a pathway designed to formulate the strategy of the study in a consistent manner so that the results would be valid and reliable. It consists of specific constructs that are derived from the literature and theory, and specifically developed for the uses of the study. Therefore, and based on the literature, this research proposed a theoretical framework to provide access to a range of topics in management and customer satisfaction among Golf Club Settings. The TQM (Deming Jr & Deming, 1996) in conjunction with the expectation-confirmation theory (ECT) by (Oliver, 1980) were employed in this research. The theoretical framework demonstrates the relationships between competencies of directors, staff serviced-based (HRM) practices and member retention behavior in the Malaysian's golf clubs. Total quality management requires positive relations among competency, and HRM to enhance member retention based on ECT theory. Figure 2.2 depicts the theoretical framework.

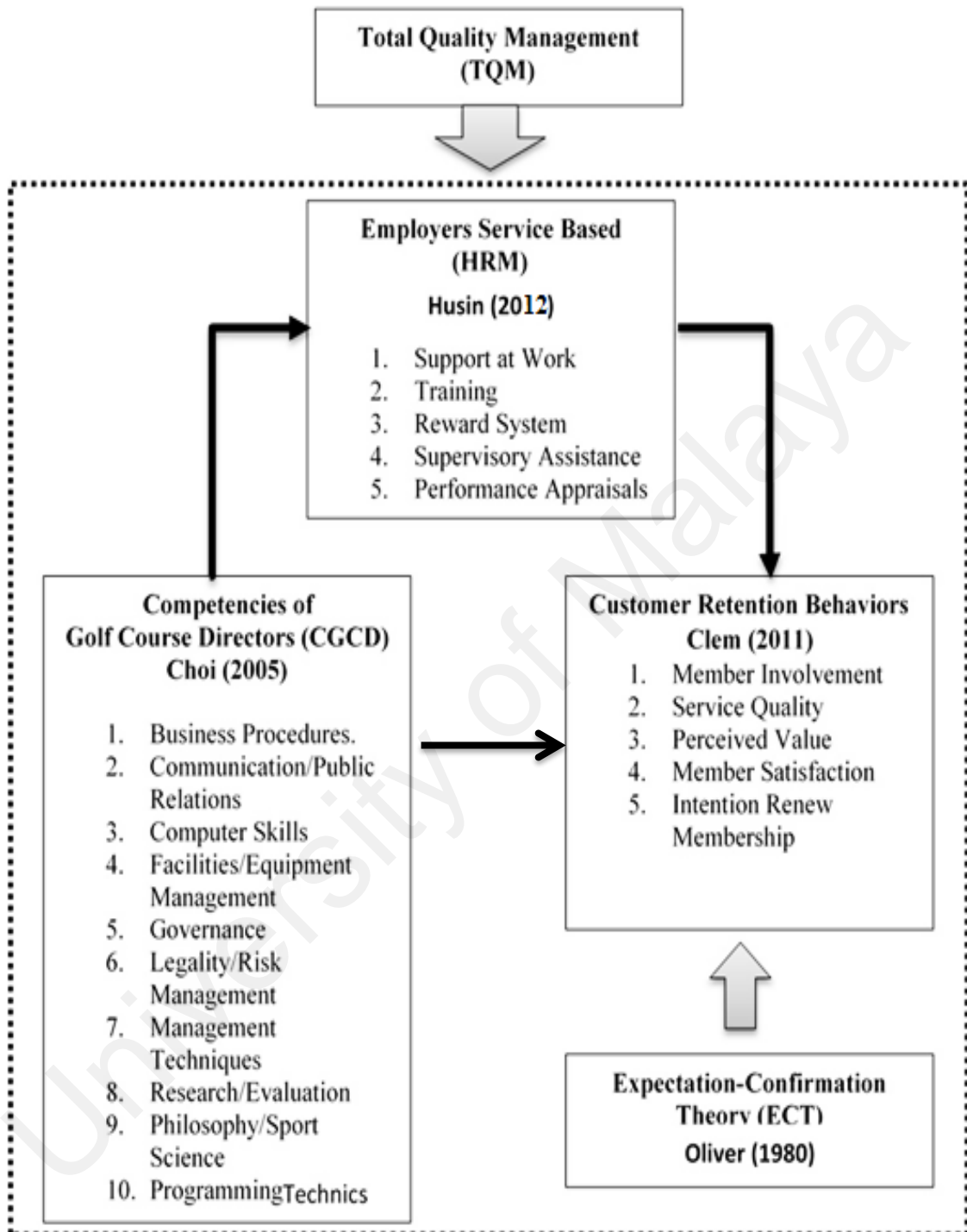


Figure 2.2: Theoretical Framework of the Study

2.9.1 Relationship between Competency and HR Relation

Identification and development of managerial competencies are aimed at attaining strategic goals of the organization. In knowledge-based organizations, people hold the knowledge, and so identification and development of their competencies should be considered. However, human resources development and management should be considered at a strategic level. Gaining a competitive advantage is hard without having long-term goals, vision, and HR development strategy (Königová *et al.*, 2012). HRM has a critical role in developing and sustaining success practices. One main task of HRM is to create and sustain organization competencies. When an organization realizes that its competitiveness is significantly related to diverse competencies, strategic implication of HRM stepping into the foreground (Laakso-Manninen & Viitala, 2007). Competency management includes all instruments and methods adopted in an organization to methodically evaluate present and upcoming competencies essential for the work, and to measure existing HR's competencies (Cernuşca & Dima, 2008). The key source of the competitive benefit is the qualified, powerful, and effective human resources. Therefore, quality and knowledge of HR and works have main roles in the sustainable development of society (Rastgoo, 2016). HR systems may favor the development and/or application of organizational competences, and concurrently these systems can ruin organizational competences and/or restrict their development and presentation (Ordóñez de Pablos & Lytras, 2008). According to Enoch *et al.* competency has become a significant factor in HR development practices. As a conclusion, in a constantly varying environment, companies may not survive without constant development of their human resources and competencies (Laakso-Manninen & Viitala, 2007).

2.9.2 Relationship between Competency and Member retention

Organizations should know factors that may improve the efficiency and competency of staff. Staff competency refers to having the essential knowledge and skills to provide a service. Providing good advice to customers or effective behaviors to resolve their business-related difficulties can also affect customer satisfaction. Increased staff competency will result in higher customer satisfaction (Peng & Moghavvemi, 2015). Competent staff have a significant role to develop loyal and satisfied customers. They are the invaluable assets for any organization and the actors who appear front stage in the service drama when they serve customers (Potluri & Zeleke, 2009). The satisfaction is a necessary condition for member retention and loyalty (Kobylanski *et al.*, 2011). Customer satisfaction improves member retention by refining service and product performance. Customer satisfaction and retention have nonlinear relationship; when customer is satisfied with the organization, he/she will remain with the organization (Danish *et al.*, 2015). Competences are the skills and knowledge that allow a company to provide a fundamental customer benefit and value that result in customer loyalty. Member retention and loyalty are the most central issues confronted by most of the CEO (Agha *et al.*, 2011). As a conclusion, identifying competitive organizational competencies can aid organizations to sustain and ensure maximum retention of customers.

2.9.3 Relationship between HR and Member retention

Most of the organizations understand that consumer retention is the main topic of their management and marketing decision (Ullah *et al.*, 2015). HRM is a crucial engagement and retention driver at entrepreneurial organizations (Hussien, 2017). A HRM practice has positive relationship with customer satisfaction. This shows that managers need to reinforce HRM practices by refining work skills, improving service quality, providing up-to-date training for employees, improving employee loyalty and satisfaction by

encouraging teamwork and appropriate rewarding system, serving needs of customers and going beyond their expectations to improve loyalty and satisfaction (Al-Refaie, 2015). Effective HRM practices significantly impact employees' performance and employee loyalty and satisfaction lead to higher member retention (Al-Refaie, 2015). HR function may concurrently, has positive effect on customer satisfaction. It has the ability to improve competency of an organization and employee satisfaction, which then influences shareholder and customer satisfaction (Chuang *et al.*, 2015).

The research investigates and identifies the significant dimensions of competency, HRM and member retention constructs that contribute to enhance the managerial system of Golf Clubs in Malay. The dimensions of the three constructs are in agreement with all dimensions of all investigated researches in different domains, which are reviewed and summarized in Tables 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3. The research utilizes the HR dimensions based on Husin *et al.* (2012) as it relates to golf sport in Malaysia, which can help for comparison. The research also utilizes the competency dimensions based on Choi (2005) as 1) his study relates to golf sport; 2) he utilized the instrument developed by the pioneer in this field (Toh & Jamieson, 1997). The research utilized the member retention dimensions based on Clem (2011) as they are the common and important dimensions among all researches. The dimensions are explained in details in the following (Abdul Hameed & Shaik Mohamed, 2016; Al-Nuaimi *et al.*, 2013; Choi, 2014, 2017; Choi, 2005; Goodarzi *et al.*, 2012; Hassan, 2016; Husin *et al.*, 2012; Loots, 2016; Wilkes IV, 2008).

1. Competency Dimensions

- **Business Procedures:** refer to applying sports economics principles, legal framework for financial management and executing marketing techniques. In business procedures, head golf professionals and directors observed financial management, such as dealing with a budget to generate profits for their organization (Choi, 2017; Choi, 2005; Goodarzi *et al.*, 2012).
- **Communication/Public Relations:** The public relations role was regarded as an essential management competency. The public relations include starting interaction with other golf courses, clubs, and agencies. These skills are essential to do tasks in golf management and sports management (Choi, 2005).
- **Computer Skills:** the skills of using computer technologies like email and internet, developing appropriate system of public communication, applying computer software for registration, booking, timetabling, and using computer software to simplify the tasks. These skills are necessary to perform tasks in golf and sport management (Goodarzi *et al.*, 2012).
- **Facilities/Equipment Management:** includes planning strategies and policies to avoid misuse of equipment and facilities, everyday inspection of equipment and facilities, proper planning to maintain equipment and facilities. Sport managers consider management of facilities and equipment as essential management competencies (Choi, 2005; Goodarzi *et al.*, 2012).
- **Governance:** includes making procedures for partners and employees to act appropriately, making appropriate policies for performance of partners, applying methods to adjust behaviors of spectators and participants, managing orderly incidents, events, reports and protests (Goodarzi *et al.*, 2012).
- **Legality/Risk Management:** Legal knowledge in relation to legal liability, the law, and risk management are essential for golf course directors. Sport managers

and golf course directors need to understand legal concepts associated with the manager's segment of the leisure industry, recreation, or golf. Risk Management include training the concept of basic business, training specific risks in sport activities, significant legal factors and sport laws, providing a safe program to avoid accidents and incidents, generating legal agreements between partners and employees (Choi, 2014; Choi, 2005; Goodarzi *et al.*, 2012).

- **Management Techniques:** refer to establishing organizational policies for staffing and planning, interviewing, employment and training part-time and full-time employees, and strategic planning to complete programs (Choi, 2005; Goodarzi *et al.*, 2012).
- **Research/Evaluation:** includes conducting research to develop programs, evaluation of partners' satisfaction, explain SWOT analysis for contract parties, disseminating research findings, and creating a design to assess programs (Choi, 2005).
- **Philosophy/Sport Science:** include, elucidating the golf values and benefits to persons, demonstrating an understanding of recreational sport opportunities, demonstrating satisfactory golf skills, demonstrating proper personal fitness, applying theories of competitive and cooperative play (Choi, 2017; Choi, 2005).
- **Programming Techniques/Event Management:** include developing physical fitness programs, encouraging members, customers, and golfers to adopt leadership roles, overseeing hiring golfers, members and customers (Choi, 2017).

2. HRM Dimensions

- **Support at Work:** means physical aspects of workplace and organization environment that possibly delay or facilitate effort of employees in performing the given tasks. It is supposed that when the employees are entirely prepared with

proper equipment and working in a conducive environment, they will be encouraged to produce more (Husin *et al.*, 2012).

- **Training:** is a systematic method that allows staff to gain skills and knowledge in order to perform their tasks effectively with the subsequent improvement in the behavior. Development and training contribute positively towards organizational progress (Abdul Hameed & Shaik Mohamed, 2016; Hassan, 2016)
- **Reward System:** is regarded to non-monetary and monetary incentives and compensations provided to employees for their contributions as mental and physical efforts and following the organization's regulations and rules (Husin *et al.*, 2012).
- **Supervisory Assistance:** Supervisors often provide emotional and physical support needed for employees accomplishing their assigned tasks. Supervisors participate in ratifying the organization's purposes through inspiring the service workers and monitoring their actions (Husin *et al.*, 2012).
- **Performance Appraisal:** is a systematic assessment of performance of employees in their given tasks. Performance appraisal aims to increase self-esteem of employees (Abdul Hameed & Shaik Mohamed, 2016; Hassan, 2016).

3. Member retention

- **Member Involvement:** involving in club activities and decisions have a great role in member retention and satisfaction at a golf club (Clem, 2011). Member Involvement develops an environment that empowers employees to make decisions and act pertinent to their tasks. Employee involvement aids the organization in maintaining employees as it increases commitment and ownership, and nurtures an environment to make the employees contributing and motivated (Hassan, 2016).

- **Service Quality:** global judgment or attitude of the consumers about the overall superiority or excellence of the service and outcomes from comparison to their expectations with their service perceptions as brought by suppliers. There is a disagreement between customer expectations about the performance of the actual provided service and what needs to be provided by the organization (Al-Nuaimi *et al.*, 2013).
- **Perceived Value:** is the customer's overall appraisal of the value of a service based on perceptions of what is given and what is received. Although what is given and what is received varies across consumers, purchase decisions will be based on perceived value, not on the price paid. In golfer's industry, the perceived value is great if consumer's insights of what is received are higher than what is given. Perceived value is a significant indicator of intentions to revisit golf course (Loots, 2016; Wilkes IV, 2008).
- **Member Satisfaction:** is contentment response of the consumer. Member Satisfaction is the post-consumption assessment of how well a service or product exceeds or meets customer's expectations. Satisfaction is a condition for loyalty and member retention (Loots, 2016; Vesel & Zabkar, 2009).
- **Intention Renew Membership:** referee to continue customer his membership at a specific club because it is valuable more than other entertainment forms and the attractive services offered by the club. Behavioral intention considerably results in actual behavior involving re-patronization or repurchase (Clem, 2011).

2.10 Summary

Customer focus signifies the force of organizations' endeavors to fulfill their customers' need and wishes constantly. Customer orientation infers both quality concerns and organizational practice, which directs organizations to increase their market competitiveness. Continuous improvement is an establishment for improving current business process to deliver products and services to customers. It additionally builds up a culture of progress and sound change inside organizations, which require employees' participation in vision and ongoing communication as well as in the decision-making process.

University of Malaysia

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study aimed to investigate the level of golf management competencies at golf clubs in Malaysia and its relationship with member retention behavior and staff service-based (HRM) practices of Golf Clubs in Malaysia. The research process intended to define the level competency of directors by the Competencies of Golf Course Directors (CGCD) questionnaire.

Therefore, this study mainly aimed to determine the relation between competencies of directors, member retention behavior and staff service-based (HRM) practices of Golf Clubs in Malaysia. The following chapter will, subsequently, comprise of the following stages: (1) first, there will be a brief introduction, (2) followed by the intended research design, (3) moreover, the researcher will analyze the population and the location of study, which entails the temporal and spatial factors involved in the research, (4) furthermore, there is analysis on the sampling and the sample size, (5) followed by data aggregation, (6) as well as instrumentation, (7) completed by the validity and the reliability of the designated instrument, (8) ended by data collection and (9) finally data analysis. The third chapter deals with the detailed phases in each stage.

3.2 Research Design

In this study, the researcher decided to work on the quantitative approach for this experiment and the reason is because quantitative approach is chosen to generalize and lead to prediction and provide sufficient explanation to understand the relationship between golf management competencies and its relationship with member retention behavior and staff service-based (HRM) practices in Malaysian Golf clubs. As stated by Punch (2009), quantitative approach is more objective by nature and therefore, arguably, more independent form of research basis compared to qualitative approach since the

factors involved will be analyzed more discreetly than in qualitative approach that would have little usefulness in such a study where the variables are qualitatively evaluated in terms of numerical changes and operational definitions that could be assessed in terms of quantitative manners (Punch, 2009).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher decided to use a correlational research design to determine the relationship among the assessed variables. Ary *et al.* (2009) stated that such research is particularly beneficial when the study field is wide and the variables are many and in this research since the researcher sought to find relationships that are either significantly meaningful or not with regard to one another and those factors involved a variety of factor, therefore, correlational research design seemed to be the optimum choice. Ary *et al.* (2009) emphasizes the fact that correlation is appropriately used for the following three procedures; (1) first, it is used to determine relationships between different variables, (2) secondly, it is used to measure and assess consistency, and (3) last but certainly not least, it is used to predict outcomes.

Subsequently, in this research, survey method using self-administered questionnaire will be adopted to collect information from targeted respondents. In the quantitative method, the questionnaire administered is used merely for the purpose of finding data from the sample of selected respondents, which will allow the researcher in the identification of trends in attitude, opinion, behavior, and characteristics of population (Hanson *et al.*, 2005).

3.3 Population

The Malaysian Golf Association (MGA) was founded in 1929 as the country's leading body in charge of the game and responsible for the legal guidelines in golf across the country. It has been assigned to promote the game of golf while preserving the integrity and traditions of the country. Therefore, this NGO (Non-Government Organization) is

ruled by volunteers fervent about the game along with a management body that is in charge of the legalities and the formalities of the association ("Malaysian Golf Association," 2014). Over the years, the portfolios of Association have increased from the Malaysian Open, national amateur open, comprised of fourteen state amateur opens, and national amateur close to handling handicaps through National Handicap System to promote training of the athletes and grass root programs to characterize Malaysia in the worldwide events as it has been recently mentioned by the ("Malaysian Golf Association," 2014).

It has been well proven that Malaysia is quickly developing as the new hub of golf in South-East Asia. Currently, there are nearly, and quite impressively, 200 golf courses that exist across the country. Malaysia has been flourished in its flora and fauna as the perfect target for merging an unforgettable holiday with a thrilling game of golf. Nevertheless, the golf course so-called 'spree' started in the late '80s with mostly foreigners, particularly from the UK, Australia and the States began investing in the wide greenery of Malaysia and began building golf courses across the country. In the early 1990's, golf tourism was its height, and it soon became one of the favorites that foreign and domestic developers used to defend their occasionally overgenerous golf projects. In many ways, this is why Malaysia is seen to be among the most amazing global standard golf courses that is ever tempting for international golfers to visit in the past few decades (Carden, 2010). Geographical diversity of Malaysia allows golfers to practice in tropical islands, on lowlands, highlands or even, quite impressively, in the middle of million-year-old limestone caves and exquisite virgin rainforests, or even in the middle of Malaysia's multiethnic, multicultural capital city Kuala Lumpur or even in the green suburbs of its major metropolitan cities. These golf gems are not only remarkable in design and perfect in maintenance, but also provide excellent playing environments (Carden, 2010).

Kuala Lumpur holds several high-quality golf courses. Indeed, some of world's best golfers have taken part in contests in Malaysia, and today all golf tourists can follow their footprints and duplicate their experience here in the country. Impressively, every golf traveler must pay a visit to Malaysia for it contains, maintains, and sustains of the most breathtakingly beautiful sceneries that the realm of golf has ever seen. Its rich history, multicultural society, astonishingly picturesque golf courses, amazing choices of delicacy in cuisine, and natural attractions can certainly create a long-lasting memory. Being a tropical country with all year-round warm weather, every year Malaysia hosts several golf tournaments. In fact, it offers great hotels, an advanced transportation network, a diverse mix of culture and food harmonized by a warm, mainly English-speaking country providing golfers with warm hospitality, the tourism industry is well married to its golfing hysteria that can bring about a successful venture in both business and sport. Malaysia has many topnotch courses, designed by distinguished designers, located in sites ranging from the suburbs of Kuala Lumpur to the tropical resort islands of Langkawi and Penang to the north, as well as the dense rainforests of Sabah and Sarawak to the east and the mountains of Genting Highlands in the countryside of Kuala Lumpur on the west coast. With more than two hundred golf courses across the country, golfers never need to go too far to seek the pleasure of playing a new game of golf, on a brand-new course, having a uniquely new experience for the country is flourished with fine golf courses across the country.

At the World Golf Awards in Portugal, Malaysia was also recognized as the Best Golf Destination in Asia. Currently, Malaysia hosts four main international golf tournaments every year, i.e., the CIMB Classic, Maybank Malaysia Open, EuroAsia Cup, and Sime Darby LPGA Malaysia. From these tournaments, Malaysia have earned RM312 million revenue in 2014 as compared to RM305 million in 2013 (Tourism Malaysia, 2015). Evidently, the golf market is a noteworthy opportunity to nurture and make considerable

revenues for the government as well as tourism industry. As a niche contribution, potential of golf to entice certain visitors can bring in more returns for the tourism destination. Thus, clubs face challenges in maintaining members after their first join (Williamson, 2001). That is why club managers have problems increasing their rates of member retention. Some managers have focused on retaining loyal members, instead of finding new ones (Agoglia, 2003). One reason is that it is more difficult and costly to recruit new members than maintaining and satisfying the current ones (Kotler, 2009).

The target population and unit of analysis consist of all Malaysian Golf Clubs affiliated under Malaysia Golf Association (MGA). The population of this study is estimated to be 173 Golf Clubs as illustrated in (Table 3.1) according to the Malaysian Golf Association report (2014) all Golf Clubs that kindly contributed to this study were private and semi-private Clubs and no state run or state affiliated clubs were involved in any way in the conduct and the administration of this study.

Table 3.1: List of Official Gold Clubs in Malaysia (2014)

No	State	Number of Clubs
1	Perlis	1
2	Kedah	11
3	Penang	6
4	Perak	11
5	Selangor	38
6	Kuala Lumpur	11
7	Negeri Sembilan	9
8	Melaka	6
9	Johor	24
10	Pahang	15
11	Terengganu	9
12	Kelantan	3
13	Sabah	18
14	Sarawak	11
Total		173

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Method

It is often deemed a complicated task to identify the exact sample size. For example, if the sample size is smaller than the anticipated size, chance of failure convergence, lower accuracy of parameter and improper solution would lurk to increase (Comrey *et al.*, 1992; Hair *et al.*, 2006a). In contrast, a bigger sample size than what is necessary will waste money and time to get the participants' responses (Bell & Bryman, 2007; Hair *et al.*, 2006a; Zikmund, 2003). Consequently, it is an essential to know the size of sample in a way that it could be generalized to all the target population with reliable outcomes.

The sample was designated in this study by consideration of the most cited rules of thumb in multivariate analysis and the requirements of structured equation modeling

(SEM) using the PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares-SEM), which does not necessitate a large sample size compared to the CB-SEM (Covariance Based-SEM). Indeed, PLS-SEM functions well with small sample sizes and multifaceted models, essentially makes no assumptions about the primary data and there are no identification issues with small sample sizes (Hair *et al.*, 2014) The subjects were golf professionals (managers or directors), staff, and members of golf clubs in Malaysia. Statistical data can be gathered in two forms; a census, or a sample. To ensure the accuracy of a sample, it is essential that it is of a reasonable size and that the participants are randomly selected. Evidently, it is desirable and essential to carry out the sampling in two separating stages. To begin with, the population is composed of a number of first-stage or primary sampling units (PSU) being Golf clubs in the Malaysia (N=173) because of managers/directors for each club, made up of a number of second-stage or Secondary Sampling Units (SSU) for customers and staff at each club. Moreover, a census sampling was taken of the first-stage or Primary Sampling Units (PSU) and for all affiliated golf clubs the first questionnaire which was related to the director was sent. From total 173 Golf clubs a total number of 34 questionnaires were received. In the first step an online questionnaire for directors was prepared using Survey Monkey web site (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/>).

Online surveys increase the response rate by 30 to 60%, and offer low-cost administration, simplicity of modification and fast results (Bamboo web directory, 2005) (Choi, 2005). On the other hand, comparable methods have been employed in other studies for management competency analysis (Whetten & Cameron, 2002). As total number of Golf clubs were 173 and also considering the respondent's rate, in this research it was required to collect adequate sample size to access different golf environments to determine management competencies of golf course directors. Therefore, the director's questionnaire was sent to all 173 Golf clubs in the first step of data collection. Furthermore, from all Golf clubs who filled out the director's questionnaire, five

customers and five staff served as the source of the data as secondary sampling units (SSU) in each golf club were randomly selected (Yee *et al.*, 2008). A total 200 questionnaires for each staff and members were distributed, 196 questionnaires returned for staff, which 25 of them were not completed also 183 customer questioners were returned, in which 12 of them were not filled out either. To account for likely issues that can come up during the research, the sample size was increased 20% such that a total of 200 questionnaires were distributed among both staff and member who were selected randomly among 34 Golf clubs. Figure 3.1 shows the process of sampling

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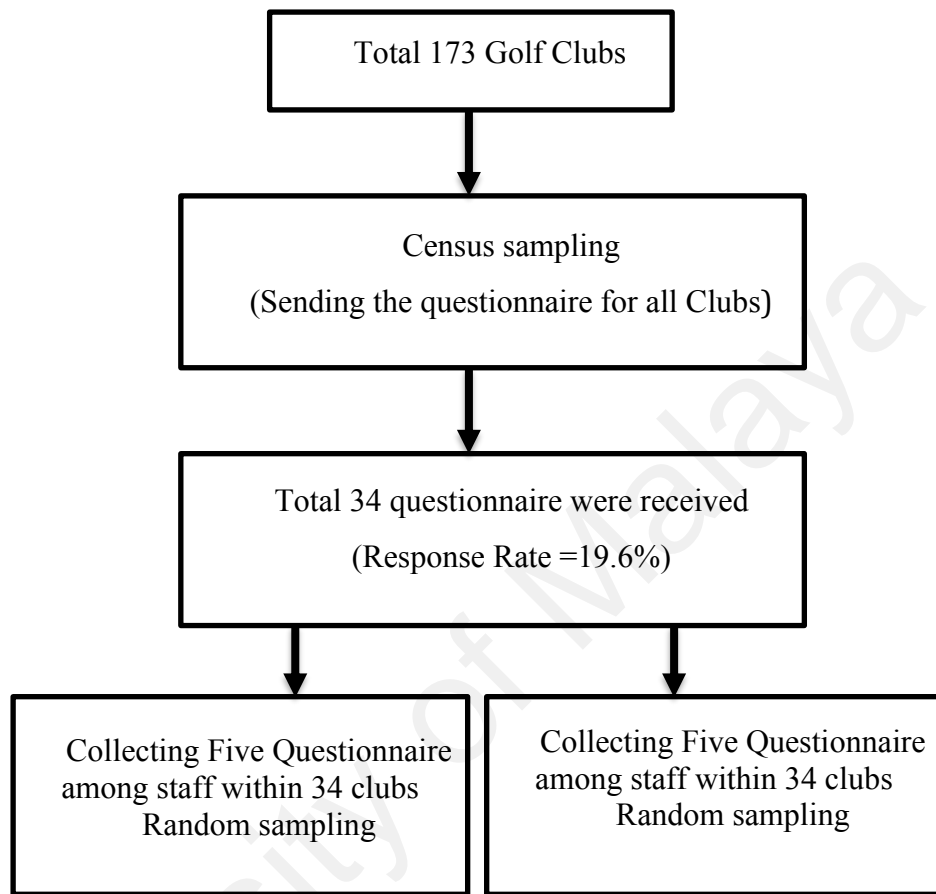


Figure 3.1: Process of Sampling for managers or directors, staff and members

3.5 Data Aggregation

The PSU (primary sampling unit) in this study was each golf club, designated as a unit of analysis. Therefore, to evaluate the research null-hypotheses which focused on relationship between managers, staff and directors and considering this matter that for each club there was only one questionnaire for the respective managers while for both staff and customer questionnaire more than one sample was collected in order to meet the requirements for a combined data set for the analysis, collected data from all golf clubs for both staff and customer (almost five) were aggregated in the spirit of final analysis. The average of collected data for both staff and customer were calculated for each golf club separately and then combined with manager data set to test the research null-hypotheses using the PLS-SEM method.

3.6 Instrumentation

The main instrument used to collect data in the current research was the questionnaire. Sekaran (2003) pointed out that questionnaire need to include questions that help gather information about a specific situation with lower level of errors and higher rates of reliability. Indeed, questionnaire is defined as a pre-designed series of questions that enable analyzing respondents' idea about a certain phenomenon.

Nevertheless, there are two reasons that the present study adopted questionnaire to collect data. First, administrative questionnaire can gather information about idea of a large number of individuals towards a situation, which is less time consuming and costly compared to the face-to-face interview. Secondly, a questionnaire does not require as much skills as that of an interview (Sekaran, 2003). However to decide about variables and developing objectives some semi structured interviews with the experts in tourist industry as well as few tourists were asked to share their knowledge and idea for improvement.

Questionnaires are necessary for the procedure of survey in a given research (Babbie & Rubin, 2008). In the study conducted by (Rea & Parker, 2014), it was indicated that the questionnaire functions as the most suitable data collection method for certain questions. Data collection for this study employed the survey method through the structured standardized self-administered questionnaire and the respective results showed that the questionnaire proved to be the most effective means of evaluation and assessment for a qualitative method of research that was used and utilized in the aforementioned study.

This study employed three separate questionnaires as faced-based (online) self-completion survey methods were concerned to conduct the study. In order to get insight on the directors' perception on management competencies, the instrument entitled "the Competencies of Golf Course Directors (CGCD)" was used (Choi, 2005). On the other hand, in order to measure the employers' service-based (HRM) practices, it was necessary to adopt a questionnaire previously developed and validated in Malaysia to warrant the validity of the questionnaire, and so HRM practices of staff research survey was used (Husin *et al.*, 2012). Nonetheless, the third instrument that was used in this study was the Member Retention Behavior Research Survey that was designed to evaluate the member retention behavior and measure its success rate (Clem, 2011). In this study, three different Likert scale were used according to the original questionnaires and since the PLS-SEM was used for data analysis with standardized measures, these different scales can be used directly for data analysis using the SEM method (Badredine & Moskowitz; Cerin *et al.*, 2010; Topchyan, 2013).

3.7 The Competencies of Golf Club Directors (CGCD) Questionnaire

This questionnaire was adapted from (Choi, 2005) with respecting permission, and its validity and reliability have already been proved accordingly. The aforementioned

questionnaire consists of two sections: demographic Information and competencies, in which the original questionnaire included 99 items but were reduced to 76 items after factor analysis consist of two main components (golf operation competencies and client care development competencies). The competencies area included 76 statements in the first section of the questionnaire (See Appendix A).

However, each competency statement evaluates self-reported significance of various types of directors of golf operations. A four-point Likert-type scale was used to collect information on the management competencies perceived important for the effective performance of the director. A four-point scale was chosen as it needs the respondents to give answers of either somewhat or very important to management competencies instead of providing a neutral answer as applies to a five-point scale. This means that the responses would have no tendency to be ‘socially acceptable’ and respond to the medium choice given and rather be inclined to respond on the two sides of spectrum in different degrees. The four-point scale allows the researcher to get more accurate and more reliable answers since there is no middle ground for the respondents to fall comfortable on with regards to their personal response.

According to Choi (2014), the “neutral” category located at the center of the scale changes the interpretation of the data. StatPac ("The “Don’t Know”, “Undecided”, and “Neutral” response options," 2005) showed that factual questions that don’t include the neutral option create larger amount of accurate data. Therefore, the following four-point Likert scale rated the importance of competency statements in the following manner:

- Unimportant
- Somewhat Important
- Very Important
- Critically Important

On the other hand, the 76 competency statements were divided into 10 areas of competency, including (1) business procedures; (2) communication/public relations; (3) computer skills; (4) facilities/equipment management; (5) governance; (6) legality/risk management; (7) management techniques; (8) research/evaluation; (9) philosophy/sport science; and (10) programming techniques/event management.

Moreover, part two of the questionnaire dealt with demographic information including sex, age, salary, working experience, club membership size, academic achievement and position title. Factor one comprised of 56 items, while the second factor had 20 items. Reliability analysis for these instruments was reported based on Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were at 0.89 and 0.97 level of significance, indicating quite high and significant reliability of measurement for each factor.

It is through management skills and competencies that management practice, management strategy, personality attributes, tools and techniques, and style work to create effective results in organization (Whetten & Cameron, 2002). Early studies related to management competencies for recreational sports managers confirmed the importance of legal competencies. The following presents the items of the questionnaire based on the variables:

- **Business Procedures**

Business processes, procedures, and standards are essential for training staff as well as formal processes such as staff performance reviews. Formalized processes and procedures save money and time by increasing efficiency. Staff can do more work in shorter time through set processes and procedures, and the business owner may devote less time to overseeing the daily running of the business. Moreover, processes and procedures enhance the consistency of service delivery and product by staff ("Business processes, procedures and standards," 2015).

Table 3.2: Questionnaire Items Related to Business Procedures

Items	ref
1. Apply basic accounting principles	
2. Identify sources of revenue and expenditure for the budget	
3. Prepare and defend a budget proposal	
4. Monitor the budget	
5. Apply sport economics principles	
6. Utilize basic bookkeeping procedures	(Choi, 2005)
7. Apply established purchasing policies and procedures	
8. Prepare financial reports	
9. Implement marketing techniques	
10. Implement legal framework for fiscal management	
11. Maintain records of operational costs	

▪ **Communication/Public Relation**

Public Relations establish and maintain relationships mutually beneficial between the areas of the public and an organization. While it creates the reputation of the organization, it also plays a key and vital role in the assessment of public relation features of the firm (Cutlip *et al.*, 2006). This scale (table .) included 4 items which was measured based on 4 point scale (un important, somewhat important, very important and critically important).

Table 3.3: Questionnaire Items Related to Communication/Public Relation

Items	ref
1. Promote harmony among personal	
2. Maintain effective communications with staff	
3. Utilize presentation aids	(Choi, 2005)
4. Consult club/golf course staff and members/customers	

- **Computer Skills**

Computer Competency is the ability and knowledge to efficiently use computers and other forms of technology. Computer literacy also refers to the comfort level with which a uses computer programs and other respective applications in both the management as well as the administrative realm of the organization. Moreover, another important component of computer competency is the staff’s knowledge on how computers work. This scale (table .) included 8 items which was measured based on 4 point scale (un important, somewhat important, very important and critically important).

Table 3.4: Questionnaire Items Related to Computer Skills

Items	ref
1. Develop a sound public relations plan	(Choi, 2005)
2. Maintain good public relations with constituents	
3. Utilize computer operating system (eg., Windows, Mac	
4. Utilize computer software for word processing, spreadsheet,	
5. Utilize customized computer software programs for such purposes as scheduling, reservation, registration, etc.	
6. Utilize computer technologies as electronic mail, Internet, etc.	
7. Utilize data bases as an information tool to assist in decision making	
8. Develop a sound public relations plan	

- **Facilities/Equipment Management**

Management of equipment and facilities in sport and physical education programs is one of the main areas of administrative concern of the sports administrators. Sports equipment and facilities are vital in the physical education and sports. Indeed, the facilities and equipment determine the type of offered sports programs. Abore (2009) suggested that standard equipment and facilities are vital pre-requisites to good and remarkable performances in sports. Different types of activities necessitate different equipment and facilities. Consequently, any limitation results in difficulties in offering

the desired variety of sports activities (Alexander, 2015). This scale (table .) included 6 items which was measured based on 4 point scale (un important, somewhat important, very important and critically important).

Table 3.5: Questionnaire Items Related to Facilities/Equipment Management

Items	ref
1. Administer a facility reservation system and an equipment lease and purchase system	(Choi, 2005)
2. Conduct routine inspections of facilities and equipment	
3. Implement system for inventory of equipment and supplies	
4. Develop appropriate means of storing equipment and supplies	
5. Provide input into strategic planning for facility development	
6. Design strategies/policies to prevent misuse of facilities and equipment	

▪ **Governance**

The Information Governance Competency is foundation of a firm for the development, commissioning, and evaluation of training and education to support effective function. Moreover, it is a valuable reference point for job design and workforce planning in this aspect of service. Noticeably, the framework is organized in 5 respective ‘domaines’ reproducing various aspects of information handling, and 4 levels each explaining a different type of responsibility. This method was designed to allow training providers/commissioners to modify education for the specific needs of persons, organizations and groups (Wright, 2011). This scale (table .) included 8 items which was measured based on 4 point scale (un important, somewhat important, very important and critically important).

Table 3.6: Questionnaire Items Related to Governance

Items	ref
1. Utilize procedures to regulate the conduct of customers, members, and/or golfers	(Choi, 2005)
2. Establish eligibility guidelines for customers, members, and/or golfers	
3. Use sound procedures for settling protests	
4. Prepare written documentation of protests	
5. Supervise governing or appeal board	
6. Develop policy	
7. Establish procedures reflecting fair treatment of both staff and customers, members, and/or golfers	
8. Demonstrate an understanding of both basic business and sport laws and other important legal matters	

▪ **Legality/Risk management**

It goes without say that because of an growing number of claims and prevalence of sports injuries, sense of risk management and legal aspects is an important part of the professional preparation and golf management competencies for contemporary golf directors (Choi, 2014). Nowadays, golf courses must equip themselves to the strongest forms of legal consultants from solicitors to attorneys with close contact to law firms that would ensure the legal safety of the club against possible legal law suits that might damage both the reputation as well as the institution of the organization. This scale (table .) included 4 items which was measured based on 4 point scale (un important, somewhat important, very important and critically important).

Table 3.7: Questionnaire Items Related to Legality/Risk management

Items	ref
1. Establish a safety program to prevent injuries and accidents	(Choi, 2005)
2. Coordinate training for staff on legal and safety issues	
3. Exercise effective decision making in dealing with accidents	
4. Demonstrate an understanding of specific inherent risks of golf	

▪ **Management Techniques**

Competent management is defined as the capability to achieve organizational objectives, keep high levels of professionalism and employee performance, efficient use of existing resources, and offer outstanding service to customers. It is well argued that management and its level of competence may have a central role in the success of the organization. The management is the acting brain of the organization and its speed, cunning wit, level of discretion and prompt decision making can allow the organization to work in the utmost efficient manner that would ensure not only higher competence but also as a result better and stronger member retention that would assess accordingly in this research. This scale (table .) included 12 items which was measured based on 4 point scale (un important, somewhat important, very important and critically important).

Table 3.8: Questionnaire Items Related to Management Techniques

Items	Ref
1. Utilize effective office procedures to handle registrations, reports, notices, etc.	(Choi, 2005)
2. Conduct meetings with professional staff	
3. Implement planning strategies for programs (e.g., tournaments, special events, group lessons, etc.)	
4. Prepare and review informational reports	
5. Evaluate staff for career development	
6. Utilize effective problem-solving skills	
7. Prepare organizational guidelines for staffing and programming	
8. Establish standard of performance for program operation	
9. Schedule staff for work	
10. Utilize effective time management techniques	
11. Motivate staff	
12. Communicate performance expectations with staff in a written job description	

- **Research/Evaluation**

Research is defined as the search for knowledge, or any systematic investigation, to establish novel facts, prove new ideas, solve new or current problems, or develop new theories via a Systematic or Scientific approach. The main objective of the research is discovering, understanding, and the development of systems and methods for the progression of knowledge in a many global scientific matters. This scale (table .) included 4 items which was measured based on 4 point scale (un important, somewhat important, very important and critically important).

Table 3.9: Questionnaire Items Related to Research/Evaluation

Items	ref
1. Develop a sound program evaluation plan	(Choi, 2005)
2. Analyze and evaluate various golf programs using appropriate statistics	
3. Conduct research for the purpose of club/ golf course improvements and development	
4. Evaluate the overall performance of club/golf course	

- **Philosophy/Sport Science**

The philosophy of sport deals with the conceptual analysis and examination of main ideas and issues of sports. It is generally concerned with articulating the purposes and nature of sport. The philosophy of sport creates comprehensive and substantive views of sport, and collects visions from various fields of philosophy. The philosophy of sport is not static: its approaches require an integrally self-critical conception of intelligent action, which continuously challenges its guiding principles and preconceptions both as to the purposes and nature of philosophy and sports (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). This scale (table .) included 13 items which was measured based on 4 point scale (un important, somewhat important, very important and critically important).

Table 3.10: Questionnaire Items Related to Philosophy/Sport Science

Items	ref
1. Articulate the benefits and values of golf to individuals	(Choi, 2005)
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the broad spectrum of recreational sport opportunities	
3. Use basic recreational golf terminology	
4. Demonstrate adequate golf skills	
5. Demonstrate good personal fitness	
6. Apply leadership theories applicable to the game of golf and/or the organization	
7. Apply theories of cooperative and competitive play	
8. Comprehend the effect golf has on increasing/reducing stress	
9. Identify aggression patterns of participants	
10. Demonstrate an understanding of human limitations in golf	
11. Demonstrate an understanding of exercise physiology and anatomy	
12. Demonstrate an understanding of the sociological and psychological aspects of sport	
13. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between health and golf	

- **Programming Technique/Event Management**

Holding such events requires management science, until related managers could hold such events. Because of more registration of event industry & its management, it is more famous than other professional management types. Different athletic contests, according level and number of participants needs its special planning & managing. Most events because of their importance, extent, & relation with whole community need many complicated supplies that require special skills.

Using various skills is one of the key & logical features of event managers that complicate event managing. Event management includes planning, coordination, classification and evaluation of each event, and event manager is the person who is responsible for putting these components together. It is obvious that to hold an event desirably, a manager should plan as well as using all facilities, human & material

resources to achieve organizational goals that are holding the event desirably. Event managers should continuously develop & update their skills (Farzalipour *et al.*, 2012b) This scale (table .) included 6 items which was measured based on 4 point scale (un important, somewhat important, very important and critically important). .

Table 3.11: Questionnaire Items Related to Programming Technique/Event Management

Items	ref
1. Implement appropriate system of procurement and evaluation of officials and/or marshals	(Choi, 2005)
2. Organize clinics for tournament officials and/ o marshals	
3. Adapt programs to the special needs of persons with disabilities	
4. Develop physical fitness programs	
5. Organize golf clinics	
6. Encourage customers, members, and/or golfers to assume leadership roles	

3.8 Employee’s HRM Practices Questionnaire

The questionnaire was adopted from (Husin *et al.*, 2012). It was accompanied including information about the project, explaining when and how to return the filled questionnaire and guaranteeing anonymity of respondents in prospect publications on this thesis. The questionnaire consisted of a section including items questioning the perceptions of respondents about HRM practices including performance appraisals, training, and their respective support at work, supervisory assistance and reward system. Through a 6-point Likert scale, the participants were asked to specify the extent to which they were agreed with the items, “1” being as strong disagreement to “6” as strong agreement. Again, the questionnaire was designated in an even number so that the respondents would have a comfort zone in the middle ground to fall comfortable on and to make sure that their respective responses would be more accurate and reliable avoiding

middle, average, socially acceptable answers that are irrelevant to the efficiency of the research in finding significant relationship between competencies and member retention.

The samples were non-managerial employees (Appendix B). Employees were evaluators of the concept, not managers. As receivers of human resource practices, employees' information is more direct and relevant in comparison to the managers, who tend to deliver unrealistic images of the environment. Demographic questions consisted of job position, age, gender, marital status, education, work length, and salary. The following presents the items of the questionnaire based on the variables.

- **Support at Work**

It is a factor in nurturing service climate for the organizations (Schneider & Bowen, 1985). Support at Work denotes physical aspects of workplace environment and organization that possibly delay or facilitate employees' effort in completing a given task. Once the employees own proper equipment and work in a favorable environment, they are encouraged to produce more (Griffin & Ebert, 2006), and have service-related outputs (Barnes-Mauthe *et al.*, 2015; Mikic Little & Dean, 2006).

Support at work in the golf clubs includes organizational rules, job descriptions, procedures and policies, work demands, workload distributions, work design, safety measures, and scheduling system. Golf clubs Employees are expected to do their jobs efficiently if all essential equipment functions efficiently, the workplace has satisfactory safety measures, the procedures and rules are easily understood, and they can ask for assistance. This scale (table .) included 5 items which was measured based on 5 point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Table 3.12: Questionnaire Items Related to Support at Work

Items	Ref
1. In this club, safety is adequate.	Husin <i>et al.</i> , 2012
2. The club's processes and procedures help to promote employees' work efficiencies.	
3. All employees are provided with handbooks.	
4. In this club, employees have enough people to get the jobs done	
5. Conditions on the jobs do not permit employees to reach the work goals.	

- **Training**

Training includes teaching of effective skills in doing assigned tasks, from making managerial decisions to solving customer problems and enforcing new service-related procedures and policies. This training leads to outstanding work performance skills, advanced quality-based team work, inter- personal skills, and problem-solving (Lytle *et al.*, 1998). This scale (table .) included 5 items which was measured based on 5 point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Table 3.13: Questionnaire Items Related to Training

Items	ref
1. Employees receive sufficient on how to do their jobs.	Husin <i>et al.</i> , 2012
2. Through training, the club communicates regularly about the importance of providing excellent service.	
3. During training sessions employees work through exercises to identify and improve their attitudes toward customers.	
4. Employees spend much time and effort in simulated training activities that help them demonstrate higher levels of performances.	
5. Employees receive personal skill training that enhances their abilities to deliver high quality job performances.	

- **Reward System**

The term 'Rewards' clearly denotes all financial and non-financial compensations and incentives offered by the organization to staff to compensate for their physical and mental

contributions as well as following by the regulations and rules. Indeed, according to the reinforcement theory (Skinner, 1953), rewards are used to result in employees' desired behaviors. This scale (table .) included 5 items which was measured based on 5 point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Table 3.14: Questionnaire Items Related to Reward System

Items	ref
1. In this club, good performances do not necessarily get rewarded.	Husin <i>et al.</i> , 2012
2. In this club, promotions go to the people who really deserve them.	
3. Management provides excellent incentives and rewards to every employee at all levels.	
4. This club noticeably celebrates excellent service.	
5. Employees are satisfied with the recognition they receive for doing good jobs.	

▪ **Supervisory Assistance**

Role of a supervisor is providing emotional and physical support essential for employees to do their assigned jobs (Goleman, 2000). Supervisors involve in ratifying the purposes of the organization through encouraging the service workers and monitoring their activities. From the employees' viewpoint, the supervisors are the front of the organization. Therefore, the assistance provided by respective supervisors improves employees' performance and morale. This scale (table .) included 5 items which was measured based on 5 point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Table 3.15: Questionnaire Items Related to Supervisory Assistance

Items	ref
1. Supervisors recognize employees doing high-quality work.	Husin <i>et al.</i> , 2012
2. Employees are always unclear of what their supervisors expect them to do.	
3. Supervisors use the rewards they have to let employees know when they have done fine jobs.	
4. Supervisors are responsive to employees' requests for help or guidance.	
5. Supervisors are supportive of employees' ideas and ways of getting things done.	

- **Performance Appraisal**

Interestingly, performance appraisal is another vital constituent in the management of human resources (Boswell & Boudreau, 2002). This practice refers to the “observation and assessment of employee performance against pre-determined job- related standards, for purpose(s) delineated by the organization”(Cheung & Law, 1998). Performance appraisal functions on two levels: helping employees advance their present performances and making them comprehend their duty for their own job (Husin *et al.*, 2012; MacLean, 2001). This scale (table .) included 5 items which was measured based on 5 point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Table 3.16: Questionnaire Items Related to Performance Appraisal

Items	ref
1. Managers consistently tell employees about the standards used to evaluate job performances.	Husin <i>et al.</i> , 2012
2. The performance appraisal process is linked to compensation plan.	
3. The performance appraisal process is not standardized and documented.	
4. Client input is important in the performance appraisals.	
5. Promotions and pay increases are based on achieving documented performance objectives.	

3.9 Member retention Behaviour Questionnaire

Last but certainly not least, this instrument, the member retention behavior questionnaire, was adopted from Clem (2011) with a relatively good and high reliability. The questionnaire was reported to have Coefficient Alpha above 0.70 for all the constructs (Clem, 2011). The instrument comprised of five sections with 24 items and one demographic section as illustrated in (Appendix C). The questionnaire proved to have a significantly high level of efficiency and its twenty-four-item questionnaire ensured the researchers to be eliciting in deriving the member retention factor.

Golfers states their level of disagreement or agreement with each item based on a 7-point Likert. Responses were coded as 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree, 4 = Neither Agree/Disagree, 5 = Somewhat Agree, 6 = Agree, and 7 = Strongly Agree. Demographic questions consisted of sex, age, marital status, education, and type of membership. The following presents the items of the questionnaire based on the variables.

3.9.1 Member Involvement

Involvement is a distinct, inner state of arousal with intensity, persistence and direction properties connecting involvement to motivational state of a consumer (Andrews *et al.*, 1990). The involvement is generally associated with personal relevance, where level of involvement of consumers with a situation, object, or action is controlled by the degree of perceiving that concept as being personally applicable (Clem, 2011) This scale (table .) included 4 items which was measured based on 7 point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Table 3.17: Questionnaire Items Related to Member Involvement

Items	ref
1. I golf at the club frequently.	
2. I use the dining facilities for food and beverage regularly.	
3. I am a frequent participant in social or recreational activities at the club.	Clem (2011)
4. I am currently or have previously served as a member of a board or committee at my club.	

3.9.2 Service Quality

The level of service provided by private country clubs to members has an impact on the members' satisfaction and their intentions to maintain their club membership. Hennig-Thurau and Klee (1997) proposed 3 possible relationships between satisfaction and service quality. First, service quality is a precursor to satisfaction. Second, satisfaction is an antecedent to service quality. Last, the two constructs are one in the same. According to Lee *et al.* (2000), service quality is considered as an precursor to customer satisfaction, and responsiveness is the most powerful measure of service quality in individual-based industries. This scale (table .) included 7 items which was measured based on 7 point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Table 3.18: Questionnaire Items Related to Service Quality

Items	ref
1. I am satisfied with parking at the club.	
2. The club is well organized and performs services right the first time.	
3. The staff at the club makes me feel comfortable and confident.	Clem (2011)
4. I am happy with the condition of the golf course.	
5. I am happy with the condition of the clubhouse.	
6. When I am at the club, my expectations are met.	
7. The staff at the club provides me with personalized service.	

3.9.3 Perceived Value

is the benefits that customers receive for the cost of the service, or based on the insights of what is exchanged and what is received (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1988). Customers mainly make decision based on how they perceive the facts, not the actual facts (Morrison, 2010). Perceptions differences are the result of variation in the value of the same service between customers based on their perceptions of quality and price. There are four main areas of value: quality for price, getting what you want, and getting what you have paid for and low price (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1988). Sweeney *et al.* (1999) and Zeithaml *et al.* (1988) added the measure of performance. Perceived value (Yang & Peterson, 2004) and customer satisfaction (Oh & Parks, 1997) are main antecedents of customer loyalty in service industries (Oh & Parks, 1997; Sweeney *et al.*, 1999; Yang & Peterson, 2004; Zeithaml *et al.*, 1988). This scale (table .) included 3 items which was measured based on 7 point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Table 3.19: Questionnaire Items Related to Perceived Value

Items	ref
1. The club provides with great value as compared with any other clubs.	
2. Overall, the club offers attractive product/service costs as compared with alternative clubs.	Clem (2011)
3. Comparing what I pay to what I might get from other competitive clubs, I think my club provided me with good value.	

3.9.4 Member Satisfaction

There is evidence that customer loyalty has positive relationship with customer satisfaction. Fornell *et al.* (1996) reported that increased customer satisfaction rises customer loyalty, in terms of likelihood of repurchase. Similarly, perceived value and core service quality were stated as the most significant motivators of customer satisfaction with relational service quality (McDougall & Levesque, 2000). Satisfaction is said to have

effect on behavioral intentions in service environments (McDougall & Levesque, 2000). This scale (table .) included 4 items which was measured based on 7 point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Table 3.20: Questionnaire Items Related to Member Satisfaction

Items	ref
1. I am satisfied with my decision to join this club.	
2. I believe that becoming a member at this club was a wise choice.	Clem (2011)
I am happy with my experiences at the club.	

3.9.5 Intention Renew Membership

When customers verify or surpass their pre-purchase prospects about a service, they become satisfied (Oliver, 1980). Intent to renew membership in a golf club or intention to re-purchase is one way to operationalize loyalty (Back & Lee, 2009). The intent to repurchase is a person's decision to purchase a service once more, to involve in an upcoming activity with a service provider, and the way that activity will occur (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996). While many studies have been conducted on member retention and satisfaction strategies in the service industry, the research on member retention strategies of golf clubs are minimal. This scale (table .) included 4 items which was measured based on 7 point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Table 3.21: Questionnaire Items Related to Intention Renew Membership

Items	ref
1. I intend to continue keeping my membership at this club.	
2. My membership at this club is more valuable to me than other forms of entertainment/leisure.	Clem (2011)
3. Compared to other area private clubs, my club offers attractive services.	

3.10 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

(Kinnear & Gray, 2006) point out that “a test is said to be valid if it measures what it is supposed to measure.” Non-random error affects validity when research tools capture procedures different from the ones they were supposed to study (Carmines & Zeller, 1979; Kinnear & Gray, 2006). Validity indicates the relationship between the processes being studied and measurement items. Usually, these relationships are described as “not related or “more related”(Carmines & Zeller, 1979; Thornberry & Krohn, 2000).

Content validity essentially refers to a researcher’s personal opinion of how well measures correspond with what they are meant to assess (Huizinga & Elliott, 1986; Thornberry & Krohn, 2000). It is usually confirmed by logical analysis of test content through professional assessment to establish the degree to which the instrument items signify the content domain adequately (Onwuegbuzie *et al.*, 2009).

Despite all research instrument were adopted based on previous research which has been tested for reliability and validity. in order to confirm this issues which are critical in survey based research a panel of judges is created to assess the test content. Usually, experts accomplish content validation (Johnson & Christensen, 2008), in which they will verify if items of the instrument are precisely measuring the objectives or content being examined to identify the extent of content validity. Therefore, a panel of elite and highly prestigious experts ensured the three research questionnaires and the validity of these instruments. The designed questionnaire has been validated by a panel of experts in the field, in which a content validity has been utilized to give a certain decision about each single item. The constructs have been defined along with their related items in a single table with three decisions for each item (perfect match, moderate match, and poor match) to be filled by the experts. This provided the researcher an insight about the validity of the proposed/adapted items to be utilized in the data collection procedure. The

investigator contacted individuals through telephone or email to select the expert panel and to ensure their contribution. Six experts participated in this study: 3 academic experts and 3 directors or head professionals.

Table 3.22: List of Experts for Questionnaire Validation

	Qualification/ Position	Field
Expert 1	PhD, Associated Professor	Management
Expert 2	PhD, Statistic	Research methodology & statistics
Expert 3	PhD, Associated Prof	Sport management
Expert 4	Director	Golf club A
Expert 5	Manager	Malaysian Golf Association
Expert 6	Manager	Malaysian Golf Association

3.11 Pilot Study

In order to evaluate the reliability of questionnaire it was appropriate to apply Alpha Cronbach test as common procedure for measuring the reliability of instruments. This test is done to determine inner equality of research instruments. The piloting of the instrument was conducted among 14 directors, 24 customer and 27 staff to evaluate the reliability of the related instruments. To test reliability, the Cronbach's Alpha test was used, which is the most common measure of internal consistency. An alpha above 0.70 means that the whole test is internally consistent and all items are reliable (Hair *et al.*, 2016)

Corrected Item-Total Correlation refers to the correlations between the questionnaire's total score and each item. All items of a reliable scale must have satisfactory correlation with the total. An item with below 0.3 corrected Item-total correlation with the overall score is omitted from the scale (Hair *et al.*, 2016) (Appendix A,B and C). Table 3.2 presents the reliability coefficients for different parts of the questionnaire based on the

pilot study. According to these results, all the variables had alpha values over 0.70, therefore, it can be concluded that three questionnaires for all variables were reliable.

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Table 3.23: Cronbach's Alpha Value of the Three Instruments

Instrument	Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Competencies of Golf Course Directors	Business procedures	11	0.91
	Communications/ public relations	3	0.71
	Computer skills	6	0.85
	Facilities/ Equipment management	7	0.71
	Governance	7	0.84
	Legality/ risk management	4	0.81
	Management techniques	11	0.79
	Research/evaluation	8	0.76
	Philosophy/ sport science	13	0.95
	Programming techniques / event management	6	0.72
Total		76	0.96
Employers' service- based (HRM) practices	Support at Work	5	0.73
	Training	5	0.78
	Reward System	5	0.73
	Supervisory Assistance	5	0.76
	Performance Appraisals	5	0.79
Total		25	0.72
Member retention behavior	Member Involvement	4	0.88
	Service Quality	7	0.86
	Perceived Value	3	0.76
	Member Satisfaction	3	0.83
	Intention Renew Membership	3	0.71
Total		20	0.89

3.12 Data aggregation

Data collection for the current research was done in two consecutive steps. In the first step data were collected among directors / managers of golf clubs. A covering letter inviting participation together with a hyperlink to the website (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/>) containing the questionnaire was sent by email to all secretaries/managers of Malaysia golf clubs. A reminder email was sent out to non-respondents one week after the initial emailing.

A follow-up letter was emailed about 21 days after the original mail, acknowledging subjects who filled out and sent back the questionnaire, and those who did not respond to the survey. Almost three weeks after the first email, a final reminder including the questionnaire link was emailed to subjects, who had not replied yet. Eventually 34 directors of clubs had completely responded to this questionnaire.

In the second step data were collected among employee and customer of 34 golf clubs to complete the next two questionnaires (employers' service-based (HRM) practices and member retention behaviors). The researcher surveyed these 34 clubs for data collection among staff and customers. Both these questionnaires were completed by 5 respondents from staff and members (Yee *et al.*, 2008). The process of data collection was completed by researcher's personal attendance and also mailing the questionnaires for both employee and Members.

3.13 Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using structural equation modelling. Following sections explained in detail.

3.13.1 Descriptive Statistics

The data were coded, calculated, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, Version 22.0) and Smart-PLS 3. Descriptive statistics (minimum, maximum, frequency, mean, percentage, and standard deviation) and exploratory factor analysis were performed.

3.13.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

EFA is used to find the underlying structure of a fairly large set of variables. It is a method within factor analysis that aims to determine the relationships among measured variables. It is not necessary to do EFA prior developing the CFA, yet it is an appropriate initial step for the CFA (Brown, 2006; Thompson, 2004).

The quantity of factors to be examined are assumed until the CFA is done, e.g., when one factor is only anticipated for the CFA. In case two factors are gained through the EFA, the CFA is modified to a two-factor model. Alternatively, if one factor is only found by the EFA, the one-factor model is tested in the CFA. Therefore, it is essential and valuable to do the EFA prior to the CFA, albeit it is not necessary (Kim, 2009). Exploratory factor analysis was done through orthogonal method with varimax rotation and Principal components analysis (PCA), in SPSS (version 22.0).

3.13.3 Structure Equation Modeling

SEM is a combination of multiple regressions and factor analysis, which includes a set of statistical approaches that enable complex relationships between one or more dependent and one or more independent variables. Theoretically, the SEM may be done to respond to any research question comprising of the direct or indirect observation of one or more dependent or independent variables.

Nevertheless, the main objective of the SEM is to describe and validate a proposed causal model and/or process. Consequently, the SEM is regarded as a confirmatory method that attempts to define relationships among several constructs (latent variables). Through the SEM, researchers can examine the interrelated relationships among several independent and dependent constructs (Byrne, 2001; Hair *et al.*, 2006a; Hair *et al.*, 2006b; Kline, 2005). Furthermore, the SEM is a multivariate statistical technique, enabling researchers to test the structural and measurement components of a model by simultaneous examination of the relationships between several dependent and independent constructs (Gefen *et al.*, 2000; Tabachnick *et al.*, 2001).

A soft modeling method to SEM is the PLS that has no assumptions regarding distribution of data (Vinzi *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, the following situations, PLS-SEM is a good alternative to CB-SEM (Hwang, 2010; Wong, 2013): 1. Small sample size; 2. Predictive accuracy is important; 3. Applications have minor theory; 4. Correct model specification may not be guaranteed. Therefore, SEM methods were most suitable for this research study comprising of several independent-dependent relationships, conjectured in the proposed model. This study aimed to find the effect of director's competencies on employee's service-based (HRM) and member retention behavior; thus, inferential statistics (PLS) was adopted to examine the research hypotheses. The PLS approach enabled the researcher to foresee and comprehend the formation and role of every construct and their relationships.

PLS tries to increase the variance in the dependent variable. Besides, PLS-SEM is used efficiently for complex models and small sample sizes, and has no assumptions regarding the original data. PLS has gained more popularity recently, since it can be employed for less-developed theories and complex models, as well as for explaining certain pre-determined constructs for causal effects. Four items are related to PLS- SEM applications:

the data, the PLS-SEM algorithm, model properties, and model evaluation matters (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Two parts of a PLS path model are the measurement and the structural models.

3.13.4 Measurement Model

The measurement model defines the measurement properties of the observed variables and stipulates the rules on the way the latent variables are measured in terms of the observed variables. Specifically, measurement model deals with the relations between latent and observed variables. These models describe hypotheses regarding the relations among a series of observed variables, such as questionnaire items or ratings, and the constructs or unobserved variables to measure. The importance of measurement model relates to be a reliability test for the observed variables used to measure the latent variables.

If a measurement model poorly fits to the data, at least a couple of the observed variables are not reliable. Composite reliability (CR) is used for testing the reflective measurement models in order to assess individual indicator reliability, internal consistency, and average variance extracted) to test convergent validity. Furthermore, the cross loadings and Fornell-Larcker criterion are employed to test discriminant validity

The measurement or outer model links latent variables (LV) to the observed (manifest or indicator) variables. Manifest variables. The connection between manifest variable and constructs are called formative or weights measures, and the link between indicator and constructs in reflective measures is known as loadings.

The following statistics are outlined to help explanation for PLS results featured in Chapters 4. Loadings of indicators on constructs should be over 0.55 (Falk & Miller, 1992). The square of the loading is equivalent to the variance shared/contributed by the

construct and variable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Thus, it is better that measures share a minimum 50% of the variance with the construct because in this way the measurement error variance will be below 50% (Barclay *et al.*, 1995).

Many studies believe that loadings must be higher than 0.707 (Chin, 1998). For first time studies, loadings are 0.5 to 0.6 (Chin & Newsted, 1999). In this study, the threshold is over 0.6. Internal consistency maximized or composite reliability internal consistency are only employed for reflective constructs (Chin, 1998). Cronbach's Alpha is the first measure of internal consistency, which is a lower-bound reliability estimate. The conventional cut-off of reliability is 0.7, yet more weight is given to the composite reliability (Raykov & Shrout, 2002). High reliability indicates low effect of error variance (Raykov, 2002). This statistic of composite reliability weights indicant contribution proportionately (Werts *et al.*, 1974); also known as construct validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The formula is below:

$$(i) \quad \rho_c = \frac{\left(\sum_{i=1}^n \lambda_{yi}\right)^2}{\left(\sum_{i=1}^n \lambda_{yi}\right)^2 + \sum_{i=1}^n (1 - \lambda_{yi}^2)}$$

3.13.4.1 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is the degree to which observed variables of a certain construct have a high share of variance (Hair *et al.*, 2006a). Construct reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and Factor loadings of construct examine convergent validity of each construct (Hair *et al.*, 2006a). Furthermore, Hair *et al.* (2006a) proposed that reliability estimates must be over 0.7, standard loading estimates must be over 0.7, and AVE should be higher than 0.5 to demonstrate satisfactory convergent validity.

Consequently, the least cut-off points for reliability >0.7, AVE >0.5, and loadings >0.7 were considered in this study (Hair *et al.*, 2006a). The AVE is calculated as:

$$AVE_c = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n \lambda_{yi}^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n \lambda_{yi}^2 + \sum_{i=1}^n (1 - \lambda_{yi}^2)}$$

3.13.4.2 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is the degree that a latent construct is different from other latent constructs (Hair *et al.*, 2006a). Hair *et al.* (2006a) suggested a method to assess discriminant validity, where the average extracted variance of every construct is compared to the matching squared inter-construct correlations (SIC). The AVE bigger than the SIC value verifies the construct's discriminant validity. In this study, this method was used to test the discriminant validity of every construct (Hair *et al.*, 2006a).

3.13.5 Structural Model

The structural or inner model includes a series of latent variables linked to each other via a valid theory. LV is further divided into endogenous (no external cause) and exogenous (with external cause). The model relationships often include moderation relationships, which are more complex.

Mediation effect is the result of intervening a third construct between two linking variables. The related variables are linked through a single arrow, while sequences of two or more arrows connect the mediating effects. The moderating effect in a model happens when the independent variable changes the strength of two linked variables.

Algorithm, blindfolding and bootstrapping are the evaluation tools of Smart-PLS. The algorithm “estimates the path coefficients and other model parameters in a way that maximizes the explained variance of the dependent construct” (Hair *et al.*, 2014).

Algorithm employs the known variable to calculate an unknown. For that, the construct scores are estimated and then the estimated loadings and weights are calculated. Bootstrapping tests significance of coefficients without depending on distributional assumptions.

The analysis with Smart-PLS tests the structural model that estimates a model's capacity and the relationships among constructs (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Through structural models examination, path coefficient is estimated, and the key measures are main paths for the coefficients. The R^2 value describes the amount of endogenous constructs variance in the model. The effect size (Q^2) is a blindfolding procedure of re-sampling, in which the indicators data are deleted and predicted.

The predictive error is attained through comparison between the original and predicted values (Hair *et al.*, 2014). In this study, Smart PLS was also used to evaluate mediation effects, i.e., the relationship between the dependent and independent variables and the mediating construct. The following conditions are considered for this medication:

- The independent variable must reveal significant variation in the assumed mediation.
- The mediation must be revealed measurable influence on the dependent variable.
- A controlled effect on the path of the mediator should have an effect on the dependent and independent variables.
- It is expected that these mediation effects should yield either a full, partial, or no mediation effect.

3.13.6 Mediation Analysis

Mediation defines how a dependent variable is changed through an independent variable. A mediator is a third variable that is intermediate in the relationship between two variables. Overall, mediator represents part or all of the relationship between an outcome and a predictor. The path diagram of a single mediator model is displayed in Figure 3.2.

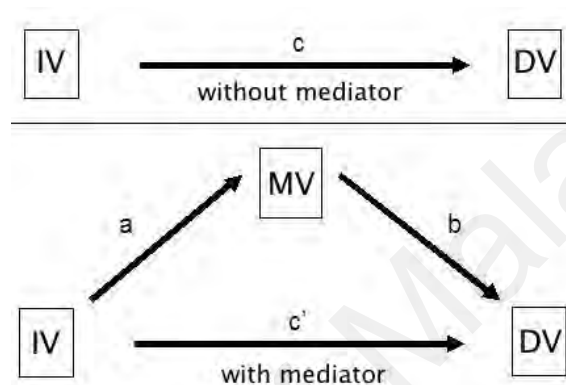


Figure 3.2: Path Diagram for a Single Mediator Model

Three regression equations are used to investigate mediation model are described below:

$$\text{Model 1: } Y = i_1 + cX + e_1 \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Model 2: } Y = i_2 + cX + bM + e_2 \quad (2)$$

$$\text{Model 3: } Y = i_3 + aX + e_3 \quad (3)$$

Where c' is a direct effect representing the relationship between X and Y adjusting for the effect of M (mediator), c represents a total effect that signifies the total relationship between dependent and independent variables without consideration of other variables, a represents the relationship between M and X and b relates the dependent variable to mediator adjusted for the effect of the independent variable. ab is the mediated effect or

the indirect effect, which is equivalent to the difference between c' and c . As a result, the total effect is the sum of a direct effect and an indirect effect.

Mediation in path models is assessed through evaluating the relationship of the direct connection between two latent variables path c and the indirect relation via the probable mediator variable path a from the mediator to the predictor, and path b from the endogenous variable to mediator.

Mediation can be assumed if $H_0: a \times b = 0$ can be rejected. The asymptotically normally distributed Z can be used as a test statistic.

$$z = \frac{ab}{\sqrt{(b^2SE_a^2) + (a^2SE_b^2)}}$$

Here, a represents the regression weight for the relationship between the mediator and the independent variable, b is the regression weight between the dependent variable and the mediator, SE_a and SE_b are the standard error regression weight (a) and (b), respectively.

3.14 Chapter Summary

Chapter three clarifies the research design, location and population of the study, sampling procedure, instruments, the process of the pilot study, the data collection procedure, exploratory data analysis, and process of the data analyses. In this study, data was collected through self-report questionnaires given to three groups of respondents (managers, employee and customers) at 34 golf clubs in Malaysia. Structural equation modelling using PLS-SEM approach was used to analyze the data regarding the construct reliability, and validity for the instruments.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 explained the research methodology related to test the proposed model, and to evaluate the study's research objectives. This chapter presents the results of the data analysis and tests of objectives. To examine the research objectives, three questionnaires were used for directors, staff, and members of golf clubs as the data collection tool.

The study results are presented in inferential and descriptive sections. In the descriptive section, variables for these three groups (directors, staff, and members) were studied and statistical parameters such as standard deviation and mean were used to demonstrate the distribution and level of respondents' ranking for every item. This study aimed to evaluate the effect of director's competencies on staff HRM practices and member retention behavior in Malaysian golf clubs. Thus, inferential statistics (PLS) was adopted to examine research hypotheses. The PLS provides more ability to understand and predict the role and creation of concepts and their relations. PLS try to enhance the described variance in the dependent variable.

Moreover, PLS-SEM works well with small sample sizes, which is one of the limitations of this research and makes almost no assumptions about the original data (Chin & Dibbern, 2010). The test of structural model and the measurement model is described in the following.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics

A number of variables were used to describe the respondent's socio demographic variables for directors, staff, and member.

4.2.1 Directors

The director and manager of golf clubs (n=34) had different background in terms of age, gender, work experience, salary and education. Table 4.1 summarizes the distribution of directors. Results of the examination of gender revealed that 97.1% of respondents were male. In regard to the age, results indicate that the highest percentages were aged between 50 to 54 years (44.1%) followed by age more than 59 years (17.6%). Regarding their education 46.9% had a bachelor degree followed by directors with diploma (28.1%). The frequency distribution for annual salary indicated that the highest frequency belonged to directors with a salary above 60000 RM (50%) and 32.4% had a work experience more than 20 years.

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Table 4.1: Frequency Distribution Based on Director's Characteristics

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	1	2.9
	Male	33	97.1
Age	35-39	2	5.9
	40-44	4	11.8
	45-49	4	11.8
	50-54	15	44.1
	55-59	3	8.8
	Over 59	6	17.6
	Education	Diploma and below	9
Bachelor		15	46.9
Master and above		8	25
Salary (RM)	Below 25,000	2	8.3
	25,000-29,999	1	4.2
	30,000-34,999	6	25
	35,000-39,999	2	8.3
	45,000-49,999	1	4.2
	60,000 or more	12	50
	Work Experience	1-4 years	1
5-8 years		2	5.9
9-12 years		8	23.5
13-16 years		7	20.6
17-20 years		5	14.7
Over 20 years		11	32.4

4.2.2 Staff

In this survey a total number of 171 staff completed the questionnaire and Table 4.2 presents a summary of staff demographic variables including age, job, marital status, gender, education, ethnic, work length and salary. As can be seen, the analysis of the staff profile showed non-customer-contact (56.1%) were higher than customer-contact service (43.9%). In regard to the staff age, results indicate that the highest percentages were aged between 30 to 40 years (53.2%) followed by age less than 30 years (40.4%). Results for gender showed that 52.6 % of staff were female and 47.4% were male. For marital status 61.4% of respondents were married and regarding their education 58.5% had a tertiary level. The frequency distribution for work length revealed that highest frequency belonged to staff with less than 5 years (54.4%) and 68.4% had a salary above RM 2000 per month.

Table 4.2: Frequency Distribution Based on Employee Characteristics

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percent
Job	Customer-contact service	75	43.9
	Non-customer-contact	96	56.1
Age	< 30 years old	69	40.4
	30_40 years old	91	53.2
	>40 years old	11	6.4
Gender	Male	81	47.4
	Female	90	52.6
Marital status	Not married	66	38.6
	Married	105	61.4
Education	Secondary level	71	41.5
	Tertiary level	100	58.5
Work length	< 5 years	93	54.4
	5-15 years	56	32.7
	>15 years	22	12.9
Salary	< RM 2000	54	31.6
	>RM2001	117	68.4

4.2.3 Member

In this survey 171 customers participated and had different background in terms of age, gender, type of membership, marital status, and education are studied using descriptive statistics, such as percentage and frequency and. Table 4.3 summarizes the distribution frequency of participants. The gender examination results indicated that 77.8% of respondents were male and 83.6% married. In regard to the age, results indicate that the highest percentages were aged between 30 to 40 years (64.9%) followed by age less than 30 years (26.3%). Regarding their education 52.6% had a bachelor degree followed by respondents with diploma (32.2%). The frequency distribution for type of membership indicated that the highest frequency belonged to member in golf (68.4%).

Table 4.3: Frequency Distribution Based on Member's Characteristics

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	133	77.8
	Female	38	22.2
Marital status	Single	28	16.4
	Married	143	83.6
Age	<30 years old	45	26.3
	30_40 years old	111	64.9
	>40 years old	15	8.8
Education	Diploma and below	55	32.2
	Bachelor	90	52.6
	Master and above	26	15.2
Type of membership	Golf	117	68.4
	Social	18	10.5
	Dining	29	17
	Other	7	4.1

4.3 Descriptive Results

Hunsperger *et al.* (2009) defines the mean as the average that shows an overall image of the data without devastating the researcher with every observation in the dataset. The standard deviation was used to assess the data dispersion. Dispersion describes the data distribution around the mean, whereas standard deviation is the study of dispersion and is the amount of deviation from mean (Hunsperger *et al.*, 2009; Parasuraman *et al.*, 2006). Here, overall and individual standard deviations and means were applied for all items and constructs for three instruments for staff, members, and directors.

4.3.1 Director Competencies

The competencies of golf course director's questionnaire were applied to evaluate the level of director competencies with ten subscales including communications/ public relations, legality/ risk management, business procedures, facilities/ equipment management, computer skills, governance, management techniques, philosophy/sport science, management techniques, research/evaluation, event management/programming techniques which were measured the director competencies. Respondents should choose 4 statements in terms of a Likert scale ranging from 1 = unimportant, 2 = somewhat Important, 3 = very Important and 4 = critically Important. The results showed that the highest overall mean belonged to legality/ risk management subscale $M = 3.16$ and lowest mean was observed for Philosophy/ Sport Science ($M = 2.49$). Based on these results the overall mean of all subscales were less than 3 (the median of scale), which shows that the level of director competencies was less than moderate level (Figure 4.1).

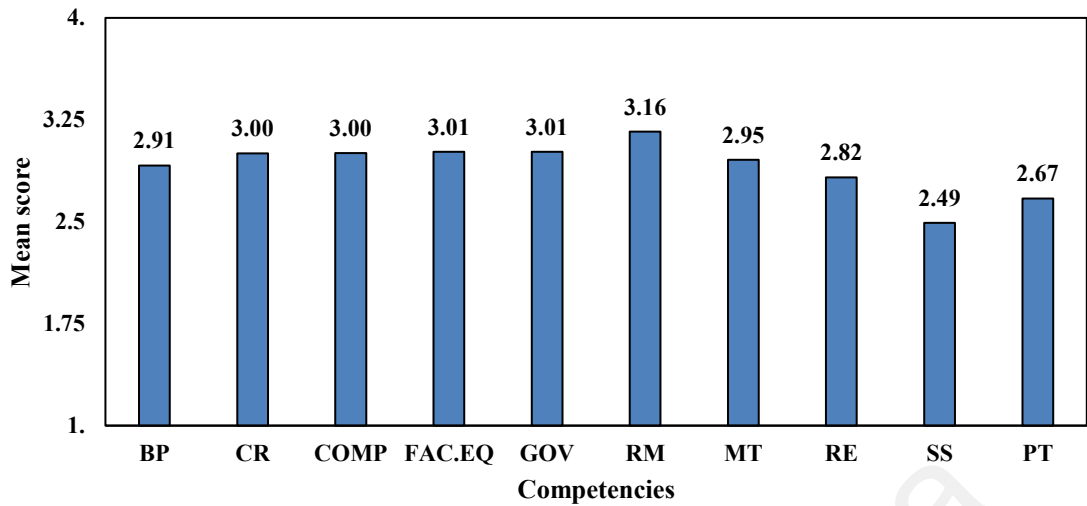


Figure 4.1: Level of Competencies of Golf Course Directors

As seen in Table 4.4, among items related to business procedures the highest mean belonging to, the “Monitor the budget.” with (M = 3.10, SD = 0.60) followed by “Maintain records of operational costs” with (M = 3.09, SD = 0.51).

In communications / public relations subscale “Promote harmony among personal” with (M = 3.21, SD = 0.59) showed the highest mean score. Among seven related items to computer skills the highest mean score was observed for item “Utilize customized computer software programs for such purposes as scheduling, reservation, registration, etc.” with (M = 3.09, SD = 0.71). As seen in Table 4.4, among items related to facilities/ equipment management the highest mean belonging to, the “Conduct routine inspections of facilities and equipment.” with (M = 3.15, SD = 0.65) “Establish procedures reflecting fair treatment of both staff and customers, members, and/or golfers” with (M = 3.21, SD = 0.53) in governance showed the highest mean score.

Among four related items to legality/ risk Management the highest mean score was observed for item “Establish a safety program to prevent injuries and accidents.” with (M = 3.26, SD = 0.66). As seen in Table 4.4, among items related to management techniques

the highest mean belonging to, the “Motivate staff” with ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.52$) “Perform SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analyses for the club/ golf course” with ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 0.52$) in research/evaluation showed the highest mean score. As seen in Table 4.4, all items related to programming techniques/event management and philosophy/sport science subscale had a mean score below 3.

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Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistic for Related Items to Director Competencies

Scale	Code	Items	Mean	SD
Business Procedures	BP1	Apply basic accounting principles	2.94	0.54
	BP2	Identify sources of revenue and expenditure for the budget	3.00	0.65
	BP3	Prepare and defend a budget proposal	3.00	0.60
	BP4	Monitor the budget	3.10	0.60
	BP5	Apply sport economics principles	2.65	0.59
	BP6	Utilize basic bookkeeping procedures	2.76	0.61
	BP7	Apply established purchasing policies and procedures	2.97	0.67
	BP8	Prepare financial reports	2.85	0.74
	BP9	Implement marketing techniques	2.97	0.67
	BP10	Implement legal framework for fiscal management	2.82	0.72
	BP11	Maintain records of operational costs	3.09	0.51
	Total		2.91	
Communications/ Public Relations	CPR1	Promote harmony among personal	3.21	0.59
	CPR2	Maintain effective communications with staff	3.12	0.69
	CPR3	Utilize presentation aids	2.71	0.63
	CPR4	Consult club/golf course staff and members/customers	2.97	0.52
		Total		3.01
Computer Skills	CS1	Develop a sound public relations plan	3.06	0.60
	CS2	Maintain good public relations with constituents	2.88	0.64
	CS3	Utilize computer operating system (eg., Windows, Mac)	3.03	0.52
	CS4	Utilize computer software for word processing, spreadsheet,	2.94	0.60
	CS5	Utilize customized computer software programs for such purposes as scheduling, reservation, registration, etc.	3.09	0.71

Table 4.4, continued

Scale	Code		Mean	SD
Computer Skills	CS6	Utilize computer technologies as electronic mail, Internet, etc.	3.00	0.55
	CS7	Utilize data bases as an information tool to assist in decision making	3.03	0.52
	Total		3.00	
Facilities/ Equipment management	FEM 1	Administer a facility reservation system and an equipment lease and purchase system	2.94	0.42
	FEM 2	Conduct routine inspections of facilities and equipment	3.15	0.66
	FEM 3	Implement system for inventory of equipment and supplies	3.00	0.70
	FEM 4	Develop appropriate means of storing equipment and supplies	2.88	0.77
	FEM 5	Provide input into strategic planning for facility development	3.03	0.58
	FEM 6	Design strategies/policies to prevent misuse of facilities and equipment	3.09	0.621
	Total		3.02	
Governance	GOV 1	Utilize procedures to regulate the conduct of customers, members, and/or golfers	2.97	0.67
	GOV 2	Establish eligibility guidelines for customers, members, and/or golfers	3.03	0.63
	GOV 3	Use sound procedures for settling protests	2.97	0.52
	GOV 4	Prepare written documentation of protests	3.00	0.74
	GOV 5	Supervise governing or appeal board	2.82	0.76
	GOV 6	Develop policy	3.24	0.50
	GOV 7	Establish procedures reflecting fair treatment of both staff and customers, members, and/or golfers	3.21	0.54
	GOV 8	Demonstrate an understanding of both basic business and sport laws and other important legal matters	2.88	0.64
Total		3.02		

Table 4.4, continued

Scale	Code	Items	Mean	SD
Legality/ Risk Management	LRM1	Establish a safety program to prevent injuries and accidents	3.26	0.67
	LRM2	Coordinate training for staff on legal and safety issues	3.21	0.69
	LRM3	Exercise effective decision making in dealing with accidents	3.21	0.64
	LRM4	Demonstrate an understanding of specific inherent risks of golf	2.97	0.67
	Total		3.16	
Management Techniques	MTQ1	Utilize effective office procedures to handle registrations, reports, notices, etc.	2.97	0.39
	MTQ2	Conduct meetings with professional staff	2.88	0.48
	MTQ3	Implement planning strategies for programs (e.g., tournaments, special events, group lessons, etc.)	3.03	0.46
	MTQ4	Prepare and review informational reports	2.65	0.54
	MTQ5	Evaluate staff for career development	3.00	0.43
	MTQ6	Utilize effective problem-solving skills	3.00	0.60
	MTQ7	Prepare organizational guidelines for staffing and programming	2.82	0.58
	MTQ8	Establish standard of performance for program operation	2.82	0.52
	MTQ9	Schedule staff for work	3.06	0.55
	MTQ10	Utilize effective time management techniques	3.09	0.45
	MTQ11	Motivate staff	3.21	0.59
	MTQ12	Communicate performance expectations with staff in a written job description	2.94	0.55
	Total		2.96	
Research /Evaluation	REV1	Develop a sound program evaluation plan	2.76	0.55
	REV2	Analyze and evaluate various golf programs using appropriate statistics	2.68	0.54
	REV3	Conduct research for the purpose of club/ golf course improvements and development	2.82	0.52
	REV4	Evaluate the overall performance of club/golf course	2.94	0.55

Table 4.4, continued

Scale	Code	Items	Mean	SD
Research /Evaluation	REV5	Evaluate customers, members and/or golfers level of satisfaction	3.00	0.55
	REV6	Prepare publications (e.g: club news, major journal reports)	2.59	0.56
	REV7	Apply updated knowledge in golf research to practice	2.79	0.64
	REV8	Perform SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analyses for the club/ golf course	3.03	0.52
		Total	2.83	
Philosophy/ Sport Science	PSS1	Articulate the benefits and values of golf to individuals	2.62	0.55
	PSS2	Demonstrate an understanding of the broad spectrum of recreational sport opportunities	2.59	0.56
	PSS3	Use basic recreational golf terminology	2.74	0.45
	PSS4	Demonstrate adequate golf skills	2.59	0.50
	PSS5	Demonstrate good personal fitness	2.56	0.61
	PSS6	Apply leadership theories applicable to the game of golf and/or the organization	2.50	0.71
	PSS7	Apply theories of cooperative and competitive play	2.47	0.56
	PSS8	Comprehend the effect golf has on increasing/ reducing stress	2.38	0.60
	PSS9	Identify aggression patterns of participants	2.32	0.64
	PSS10	Demonstrate an understanding of human limitations in golf	2.26	0.71
	PSS11	Demonstrate an understanding of exercise physiology and anatomy	2.44	0.61
	PSS12	Demonstrate an understanding of the sociological and psychological aspects of sport	2.41	0.61
	PSS13	Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between health and golf	2.50	0.62
		Total	2.49	

Table 4.4, continued

Scale	Code	Items	Mean	SD
Programming Techniques/ Event Management	PTEM1	Implement appropriate system of procurement and evaluation of officials and/or marshals	2.91	0.45
	PTEM2	Organize clinics for tournament officials and/ o marshals	2.79	0.48
	PTEM3	Adapt programs to the special needs of persons with disabilities	2.50	0.71
	PTEM4	Develop physical fitness programs	2.74	0.62
	PTEM5	Organize golf clinics	2.38	0.65
	PTEM6	Encourage customers, members, and/or golfers to assume leadership roles	2.71	0.58
		Total		2.67

4.3.2 HRM Practices of Staff

This questionnaire was used to measure the level of HRM practices of staff with five subscales including support at work, reward system, training, supervisory assistance and performance appraisals with five items which were measured the HRM among staff. Respondents should choose 6 possible answer in terms of scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree. The results showed that the highest overall mean belonged to Training subscale $M = 4.41$ and lowest mean was observed for support at work ($M = 4.10$). Based on these results, the overall mean of all subscales were above 3.5 (the median of scale) which shows that the level of HRM practices of staff were above moderate level (Figure 4.2).

As seen in Table 4.5, among items related to support at work the highest mean belonging to, the “In this club, safety is adequate.” with ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 1.02$) followed by “The club’s processes and procedures help to promote employees’ work efficiencies.” with ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 1.14$). “Employees are satisfied with the recognition they receive for doing good jobs.” with ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 1.20$) in reward system subscale showed the highest mean score. Among related items to training the highest mean score was observed for item “Employees receive sufficient on how to do their jobs.” with ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 1.11$). As seen in Table 4.5, among items related to supervisory assistance the highest mean belonging to, the “Employees are always unclear of what their supervisors expect them to do.” with ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.84$) followed by “Supervisors and supportive of employees’ ideas and ways of getting things done.” with ($M = 4.42$, $SD = 0.56$). “Managers consistently tell employees about the standards used to evaluate job performances.” with ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 0.98$) in performance appraisals subscale showed the highest mean score.

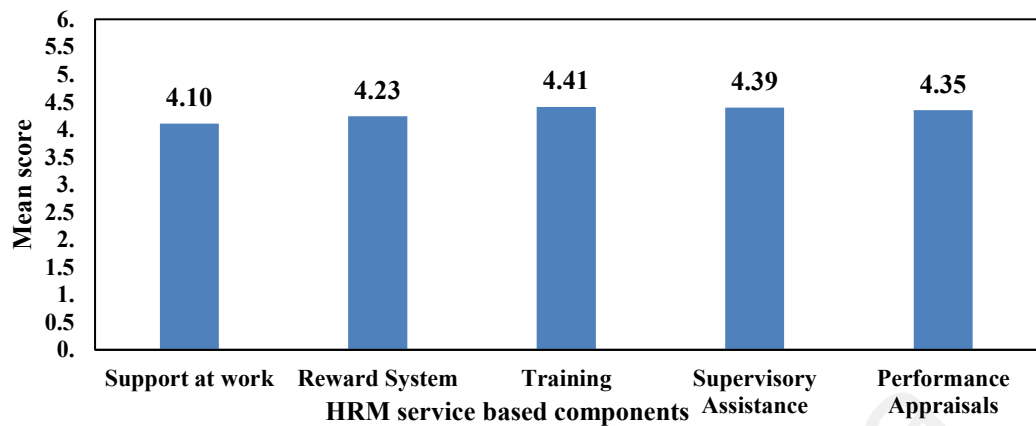


Figure 4.2: Level of HRM Practices of Staff

Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistic for Related Items to (HRM) Practices of Staff

Scale	Code	Items	Mean	SD
Support at work	SW1	In this club, safety is adequate.	4.33	1.02
	SW2	The club's processes and procedures help to promote employees' work efficiencies.	4.15	1.14
	SW3	All employees are provided with handbooks.	3.96	1.28
	SW4	In this club, employees have enough people to get the jobs done.	3.95	1.23
	SW5	Conditions on the jobs do not permit employees to reach the work goals.	4.13	1.26
	Total		4.10	
Reward System	REW1	In this club, good performances do not necessarily get rewarded.	3.94	1.47
	REW2	In this club, promotions go to the people who really deserve them.	4.35	1.21
	REW3	Management provides excellent incentives and rewards to every employee at all levels.	4.17	1.26
	REW4	This club noticeably celebrates excellent service.	4.36	1.16
	REW5	Employees are satisfied with the recognition they receive for doing good jobs.	4.37	1.20
	Total		4.24	

Table 4.5, continued

Scale	Code	Items	Mean	SD
Training	TR1	Employees receive sufficient on how to do their jobs.	4.54	1.12
	TR2	Through training, the club communicates regularly about the importance of providing excellent service.	4.39	1.05
	TR3	During training sessions employees work through exercises to identify and improve their attitudes toward customers.	4.37	0.95
	TR4	Employees spend much time and effort in simulated training activities that help them demonstrate higher levels of performances.	4.33	0.96
	TR5	Employees receive personal skill training that enhances their abilities to deliver high quality job performances.	4.42	1.00
	Total		4.41	
Supervisory Assistance	SPA1	Supervisors recognize employees doing high-quality work.	4.36	0.81
	SPA2	Employees are always unclear of what their supervisors expect them to do.	4.46	0.84
	SPA3	Supervisors use the rewards they have to let employees know when they have done fine jobs.	4.37	0.74
	SPA4	Supervisors are responsive to employees' requests for help or guidance.	4.37	0.70
	SPA5	Supervisors and supportive of employees' ideas and ways of getting things done.	4.42	0.56
	Total		4.40	
Performance Appraisals	PA1	Managers consistently tell employees about the standards used to evaluate job performances.	4.45	0.99
	PA2	The performance appraisal process is linked to compensation plan.	4.22	0.99
	PA3	The performance appraisal process is not standardized and documented.	4.44	0.91
	PA4	Client input is important in the performance appraisals.	4.39	0.91
	PA5	Promotions and pay increases are based on achieving documented performance objectives.	4.25	1.20
	Total		4.35	

4.3.3 Member retention Behavior

The member retention behavior instrument was used to measure the level of member retention with five subscales including perceived value, member involvement, member satisfaction, intention to renew membership and service quality, which was measured through the member retention.

Customers should choose 7 possible answer in terms of a Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The results showed that the highest overall mean belonged to intention to renew subscale $M = 5.69$ and lowest mean was observed for member involvement ($M = 4.50$). Based on these results, the overall mean of all subscales were above 4 (the median of scale) which shows that the level of member retention behavior was above moderate level (Figure 4.3).

As seen in Table 4.6, among items related to Member Involvement the highest mean belonging to, the "I golf at the club frequently." with ($M = 4.57$, $SD = 1.45$) followed by "I use the dining facilities for food and beverage regularly." with ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 1.28$). "I am happy with the condition of the golf course." with ($M = 5.67$, $SD = 1.32$) in service quality subscale showed the highest mean score.

Among three related items to perceived value the highest mean score was observed for item "Overall, the club offers attractive product/service costs as compared with alternative clubs." with ($M = 5.40$, $SD = 1.28$). As seen in Table 4.6, among items related to member satisfaction the highest mean belonging to, the "I am satisfied with my decision to join this club." with ($M = 5.57$, $SD = 1.32$) "My membership at this club is more valuable to me than other forms of entertainment/leisure." with ($M = 5.72$, $S.D = 1.27$) in intention to renew membership subscale showed the highest mean score.

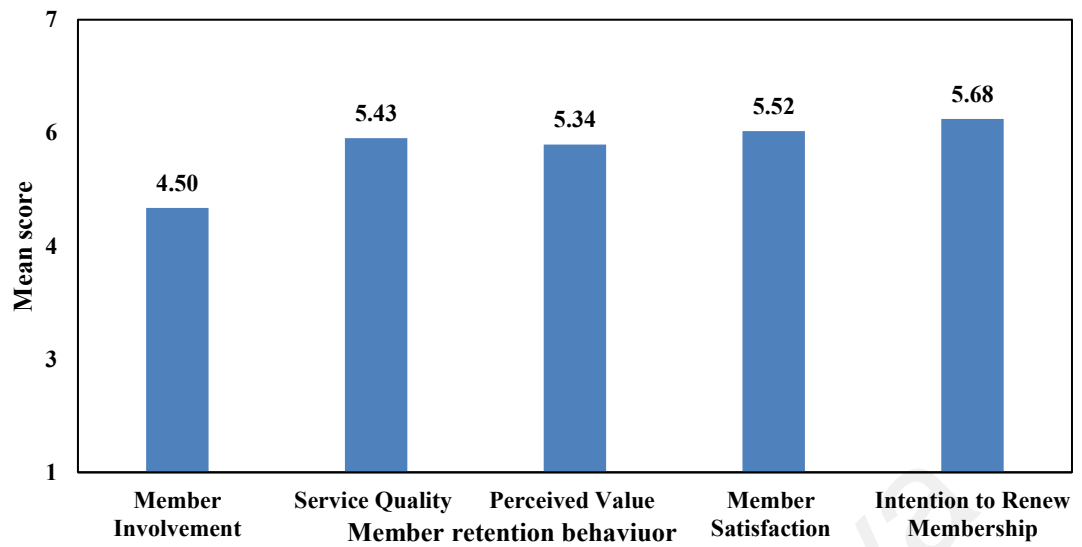


Figure 4.3: Level of Member retention Behavior

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Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistic for Related Items to Member retention Behaviour

Scale	Code	Items	Mean	SD
Member Involvement	MI1	I golf at the club frequently.	4.57	1.45
	MI2	I use the dining facilities for food and beverage regularly.	4.56	1.28
	MI3	I am a frequent participant in social or recreational activities at the club.	4.35	1.39
	MI4	I am currently or have previously served as a member of a board or committee at my club.	4.54	1.37
	Total		4.50	
Service Quality	SQ1	I am satisfied with parking at the club.	5.35	1.43
	SQ2	The club is well organized and performs services right the first time.	5.30	1.38
	SQ3	The staff at the club makes me feel comfortable and confident.	5.42	1.35
	SQ4	I am happy with the condition of the golf course.	5.67	1.32
	SQ5	I am happy with the condition of the clubhouse.	5.51	1.40
	SQ6	When I am at the club my expectations are met.	5.27	1.28
	SQ7	The staff at the club provides me with personalized service.	5.50	1.24
Total		5.43		
Perceived Value	PV1	The club provides with great value as compared with any other clubs.	5.26	1.19
	PV2	Overall, the club offers attractive product/service costs as compared with alternative clubs.	5.40	1.28
	PV3	Comparing what I pay to what I might get from other competitive clubs, I think my club provided me with good value.	5.38	1.26
Total		5.34		
Member Satisfaction	MS1	I am satisfied with my decision to join this club.	5.57	1.32
	MS2	I believe that becoming a member at this club was a wise choice.	5.47	1.31
	MS3	I am happy with my experiences at the club.	5.53	1.34
Total		5.52		

Table 4.6, continued

Scale	Code	Items	Mean	SD
Intention to Renew Membership	INT1	I intend to continue keeping my membership at this club.	5.84	1.17
	INT2	My membership at this club is more valuable to me than other forms of entertainment/leisure.	5.72	1.27
	INT3	Compared to other area private clubs, my club offers attractive services.	5.50	1.30
	Total			5.68

4.4 Preliminary Data Analysis

4.4.1 Missing Data Analysis

Hair *et al.* (2006b) explains that missing data happen when those who respond to the survey fail to provide response to one question or more, intentionally or unintentionally. Therefore, when data missing is over 25 percent, those questionnaires should not be included in the analysis. The missing data in the current research was below 5%, thus, the missing data must be changed by Median for scale variables (Hair *et al.*, 2014; Hair *et al.*, 2016). Because five-point Likert scale was employed in this study, the missing data were replaced by the median of 5 point and the result free of any missing data is was used for data analysis.

4.4.2 Outliers

Frequency distributions of Z scores were used to determine the univariate outliers (Byrne, 2001; Hair *et al.*, 2006b; Kline, 2005). Yet, no univariate outlier was recognized, since it used a 4, 6- and 7-point Likert scale ranging by median for scale variables. Outliers for imputed data were determined using univariate (standardized Z score, box-plots and histograms). Absolut ($Z > 4$) denotes an extreme observation for large sample

size (Hair *et al.*, 1998). The standardized (z) scores of the imputed variables were between -3.56 and 2.75, showing that no variable surpassed the threshold (Appendix D).

4.4.3 Common-Method Variance

Since all the model variables were collected from single respondents in a one-time survey, common method variance could influence some assumed relations in the PLS path model. We used single-factor test (Harman, 1976) to test for the possible existence of common method bias (CMW). CMV is the spurious "variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs the measures are assumed to represent" or equivalently as "systematic error variance shared among variables measured with and introduced as a function of the same method and/or source". The single-factor test was applied to all the questionnaires and the results for first factor overall variance were less than 50% and Table 4.7, showing that CMW probably did not affect the results (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986; Woszczyński & Whitman, 2004).

Table 4.7: Common-Method Variance Result

Questionnaire	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Eigenvalues	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Directors	23.98	30.36	30.36
Staff	5.18	20.72	20.72
Members	5.71	28.57	28.57

4.4.4 Non-response bias

The non-response bias denotes that systematic differences may occur between non-respondents and respondents. Armstrong and Overton (1977) proposed that non-respondents are same as the respondents that joined in the survey very late. Hence, to test for the existence of a non-response bias, it was recommended to compare the response

behavior between early and late respondents. In this study, early responses are those received prior to sending the first, while late responses were received following that date. The constructs Likert-scaled indicators of early and late respondents are subsequently tested for significant differences by means of a Mann-Whitney – U- test. The null hypothesis was that early and late respondents do not differ. The results of this test for all three questionnaires showed no significant differences between late and early responses. In short, no non-response bias existed (Appendix F).

4.4.5 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Through orthogonal method with Varimax rotation and the principal components analysis (PCA), exploratory factor analysis was done in SPSS (version 22.0) for only two questionnaires including HRM practices (staff) and member retention behavior (customer) due to adequate sample size for conducting this analysis. According to rule of 100 by Fabrigar *et al.* (1999), which was recommended at least 100 sample need for exploratory factor analysis, this analysis for the questionnaire of director's competencies was not done due to small sample size which was only 34 questionnaires.

4.4.6 EFA of HRM Practices Scale

Exploratory Factor Analysis was used to find the factor structure for 25 HRM practices items. The criteria for the factorability of a correlation used in this study were the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy, which was 0.783, and Bartlett's test of sphericity, which was significant ($\chi^2_{(300)} = 1340.82, p < 0.05$). All the diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were above 0.5, showing the inclusion of every item in the factor analysis. Initial communalities are estimates of the variance in each variable accounted for by all components, and small values (< 0.3) mean variables that do not correspond to the factor solution. All initial communalities in this study were above the threshold. All loading factors were over 0.5. The EFA results showed five factors with

eigenvalues over 1. Table 4.8 shows the total variance and eigenvalues explained by the five factors. The results after Varimax rotation indicated that the first factor, i.e., support at work, explained 12.31% of the variance, while the second factor (performance appraisals) 11.14% of the variance. The third components included items for training explained 10.52 % of the variance followed by component four (reward system) which was able to explain 10.30% of total variance. The last component was related to supervisory assistance subscale by 9.53% of explaining of total variance.

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Table 4.8: Factor Loadings Based Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation for 25 Items Related HRM Practices of Staff

Item	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
SW2	0.77				
SW1	0.75				
SW3	0.71				
SW4	0.67				
SW5	0.64				
PA5	0.46	0.45			
PA3		0.77			
PA1		0.69			
PA2		0.68			
PA4		0.66			
TR5			0.79		
TR3			0.74		
TR4			0.72		
TR1			0.62		
TR2			0.54		
REW2				0.75	
REW4				0.73	
REW3				0.68	
REW1				0.67	
REW5				0.61	0.40
SPA4					0.68
SPA5					0.67
SPA3					0.64
SPA2					0.54
SPA1					0.52
Eigenvalues	3.07	2.78	2.63	2.57	2.38
% of Variance	12.31	11.13	10.5	10.30	9.52

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

4.4.7 EFA of Member retention Behavior Scale

EFA was used to identify the factor structure for 20 items of member retention behavior. A number of important criteria for the correlation factorability were used. Firstly, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure was over the suggested value of 0.6 (0.82, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2_{(300)} = 1502.31, p < 0.05$). All the diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were higher than 0.5, approving the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis. All initial communalities in the current study were over the threshold (above 0.5).

The EFA results for all 20 items showed four factors with eigenvalues over 1. The total variance and eigenvalues described by the four factors are presented in Table 4.9. The results after Varimax rotation indicated that the first factor, i.e., service quality, explained 19.56% of the variance, while the second factor (member satisfaction and perceived value) showed 18.53%. The third components comprised items for member involvement explained 13.66 % of the variance. The last component was related to intention to renew membership sub scale by 9.57% of explaining of total variance.

Table 4.9: Factor Loadings Based Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation for 20 Items Related Member retention Behavior

Item	Components			
	1	2	3	4
SQ4	0.86			
SQ3	0.80			
SQ5	0.79			
SQ6	0.68			
SQ7	0.62			
SQ1	0.62			
SQ2	0.62			
MS1		0.82		
MS2		0.79		
PV2		0.76		
PV3		0.74		
MS3		0.72		
PV1		0.65		
MI3			0.82	
MI2			0.80	
MI1			0.77	
MI4			0.75	
INT3				0.83
INT2				0.76
INT1				0.67
Eigenvalues	3.91	3.70	2.73	1.91
% of Variance	19.56	18.53	13.66	9.57

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

4.5 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

The SEM was done using PLS approach in two stages: validation of the measurement model and fitting the structural model. Validation of the measurement model is done mainly via confirmatory factor analysis, whereas fitting the structural model is executed through path analysis with latent variables.

4.5.1 Measurement Model

Structural equation modeling is a method of analyses that tests measurement models (relations between latent variables and indicators), and to assess pathway relationships among latent variables (Harrington, 2009). The measurement model holds a measurement item that may be directly observed and measured by the CFA. The model is related to the rules of how the latent variables are assessed with regards to the observed variables, which clarifies measurement properties of the observed variables. Measurement models relate to the relations between observed and latent variables. These models designate hypotheses about the relations among several observed variables, such as questionnaire or ratings items, and the unobserved constructs or variables that were designed to measure. Discriminant and convergent validity are assessed through measurement models.

Discriminant and convergent validity are used to determine the validity of multi-item scales for every construct. The convergent validity examines if the measures of constructs that should interrelate, while the discriminant validity tests if the measures of constructs that must not be related in theory are, do not relate to each other (Bagozzi & Fornell, 1982).

Evaluation of reflective measurement models comprises of average variance extracted (AVE) to assess convergent validity and composite reliability (CR) to evaluate internal

consistency. Furthermore, the cross loadings and Fornell-Larcker criterion were applied to evaluate discriminant validity. The aforementioned criteria for the measurement model was assessed in the following sections through the reflective measurement models. According to using three different questionnaires in this research, the aforementioned criteria for three measurement models were evaluated through the Smart-PLS, Ver 3.

4.5.2 Convergent Validity

Composite or construct reliability (CR) provides an estimate of the construct's internal consistency and shows the extent to which the indicators broadly measure their own construct. CR is calculated via the composite reliability measure that necessitates that indicators of a construct show high correlation levels.

4.5.2.1 CGCD Questionnaire

Regarding to the findings of this study composite reliability (CR) for ten subscales of CGCD ranged from 0.828 to 0.957, which were above the acceptable value ($CR > 0.7$). Convergent validity indicates the degree to which numerous construct indicators should hypothetically be connected, actually demonstrate a relation. Convergent validity is measured by quantifying the average variance extracted (AVE), which calculates the amount of variance that a construct gains from its indicators versus the amount obtained from measurement errors (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Moreover, the AVE was over 0.5 in this study. Thus, the results verify that Composite Reliability (CR) and convergent validity (AVE) apply to the GCDC constructs (Table 4.10). Reliability of individual item may be evaluated by measuring the loadings of individual item with values over 0.7, indicating satisfactory indicator correlation or reliability with every construct (Henseler *et al.*, 2009). Hair (2010) proposed that if the sample size is 200 or more, outer loading of 0.4 acceptable factors loading. They suggested that the new developed scales of 0.50 or higher must remain in the measurement model.

High outer loadings on a construct indicates high association of related item of every construct with the construct. Except for CS7 and FEM1, the outer loadings of all items for all constructs were over 0.7, and the p values showed their significant contribution to the related constructs (Appendix F).

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Table 4.10: Convergent Validity for CGCD

	Item	loading	Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Business Procedures	BP1	0.62	0.62	0.51	0.92	0.90
	BP2	0.79	0.79			
	BP3	0.67	0.67			
	BP4	0.81	0.81			
	BP5	0.53	0.53			
	BP6	0.55	0.56			
	BP7	0.85	0.85			
	BP8	0.79	0.79			
	BP9	0.78	0.78			
	BP10	0.70	0.70			
	BP11	0.68	0.68			
Communications	CPR1	0.80	0.80	0.58	0.84	0.76
	CPR2	0.76	0.76			
	CPR3	0.79	0.79			
	CPR4	0.67	0.67			
Computer Skills	CS1	0.67	0.66	0.46	0.83	0.76
	CS2	0.72	0.71			
	CS3	0.60	0.61			
	CS4	0.83	0.84			
	CS5	0.69	0.69			
	CS6	0.49	0.48			
	CS7	0.40	del			
Facilities	FEM1	0.45	del	0.59	0.87	0.82
	FEM2	0.64	0.62			
	FEM3	0.78	0.81			
	FEM4	0.95	0.94			
	FEM5	0.74	0.76			
	FEM6	0.62	0.66			

Table 4.10, continued

	item	loading	loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Governance	GOV1	0.54	0.54	0.50	0.88	0.85
	GOV2	0.55	0.55			
	GOV3	0.63	0.63			
	GOV4	0.84	0.84			
	GOV5	0.72	0.72			
	GOV6	0.74	0.74			
	GOV7	0.81	0.82			
	GOV8	0.68	0.68			
Legality	LRM1	0.79	0.79	0.66	0.88	0.83
	LRM2	0.88	0.88			
	LRM3	0.86	0.86			
	LRM4	0.72	0.72			
Techniques	MTQ1	0.54	0.54	0.63	0.95	0.95
	MTQ2	0.74	0.74			
	MTQ3	0.50	0.50			
	MTQ4	0.69	0.69			
	MTQ5	0.65	0.65			
	MTQ6	0.66	0.66			
	MTQ7	0.83	0.83			
	MTQ8	0.77	0.77			
	MTQ9	0.48	0.48			
	MTQ10	0.74	0.74			
	MTQ11	0.65	0.65			
	MTQ12	0.80	0.80			

Table 4.10, continued

	item	loading	loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Philosophy	PSS1	0.59	0.59	0.45	0.82	0.75
	PSS2	0.75	0.75			
	PSS3	0.63	0.63			
	PSS4	0.72	0.72			
	PSS5	0.77	0.77			
	PSS6	0.80	0.80			
	PSS7	0.87	0.87			
	PSS8	0.85	0.85			
	PSS9	0.82	0.82			
	PSS10	0.86	0.86			
	PSS11	0.87	0.87			
	PSS12	0.90	0.90			
	PSS13	0.80	0.80			
Programming	PTEM1	0.49	0.49	0.53	0.89	0.87
	PTEM2	0.53	0.53			
	PTEM3	0.81	0.81			
	PTEM4	0.69	0.69			
	PTEM5	0.80	0.80			
	PTEM6	0.63	0.63			
Research	REV1	0.81	0.82	0.47	0.91	0.89
	REV2	0.84	0.84			
	REV3	0.66	0.66			
	REV4	0.63	0.64			
	REV5	0.67	0.67			
	REV6	0.73	0.73			
	REV7	0.88	0.88			
	REV8	0.49	0.49			

BP: Business procedures, CR: Communications/ public relations, COMP: Computer skills. FAC.EQ: Facilities/ Equipment management, GOV: Governance, RM: Legality/ risk management, MT: Management techniques, RE: Research/evaluation, SS: Philosophy/ sport science, PT: Programming techniques/ event management

4.5.2.2 HRM Practices

The CR for five reflective components of HRM practices of staff ranged 0.77 and 0.86. In addition, in this questionnaire, AVE for all subscales of HRM practices were above 0.4. Therefore, the results verify that CR and AVE are true for the constructs of this study. The outer loadings of items except REW1 for all constructs ranged between 0.50 and 0.85, which were acceptable (Table 4.11). The results of bootstrapping and significance test also confirmed their significant contribution of all items to their related constructs (Appendix G). These results revealed that this questionnaire met the convergent validity.

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Table 4.11: Convergent Validity for HRM Practices

Variable	Item	Loading	Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Performance Appraisals	PA1	0.77	0.77	0.52	0.84	0.76
	PA2	0.75	0.75			
	PA3	0.71	0.71			
	PA4	0.75	0.75			
	PA5	0.58	0.58			
Reward System	REW1*	0.30	del	0.48	0.77	0.75
	REW2	0.80	0.80			
	REW3	0.67	0.67			
	REW4	0.85	0.85			
	REW5	0.50	0.50			
Supervisory Assistance	SPA1	0.72	0.72	0.47	0.81	0.72
	SPA2	0.72	0.72			
	SPA3	0.74	0.74			
	SPA4	0.63	0.63			
	SPA5	0.60	0.60			
Support at work	SW1	0.73	0.73	0.55	0.86	0.80
	SW2	0.70	0.70			
	SW3	0.72	0.72			
	SW4	0.80	0.80			
	SW5	0.75	0.75			
Training	TR1	0.67	0.67	0.49	0.82	0.74
	TR2	0.61	0.61			
	TR3	0.79	0.79			
	TR4	0.68	0.68			
	TR5	0.72	0.72			

* Deleted item

4.5.2.3 Member retention Behavior

The composite reliability (CR) for five reflective components of member retention behavior ranged 0.83 and 0.90. Furthermore, the AVE for social network use and attitude were over 0.5 in this study. Therefore, the results verify that AVE and CR exist for the study constructs (Table 4.12). The outer loadings of all items related to five subscales of member retention behavior ranged between 0.625 and 0.888 that proved acceptable (> 0.5). The results of significance test using bootstrapping method also confirmed that all item had a significant contribution to related constructs (Appendix H).

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Table 4.12: Convergent Validity for Member retention Behavior

Variable	item	Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
Intention to Renew Membership	INT1	0.82	0.62	0.83	0.70
	INT2	0.80			
	INT3	0.73			
Member Involvement	MI1	0.76	0.64	0.88	0.82
	MI2	0.88			
	MI3	0.78			
	MI4	0.77			
Member Satisfaction	MS1	0.86	0.74	0.89	0.83
	MS2	0.88			
	MS3	0.84			
Perceived Value	PV1	0.78	0.67	0.86	0.76
	PV2	0.83			
	PV3	0.84			
Service Quality	SQ1	0.74	0.54	0.89	0.86
	SQ2	0.76			
	SQ3	0.75			
	SQ4	0.82			
	SQ5	0.75			
	SQ6	0.67			
	SQ7	0.62			

4.5.3 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is expressed when a construct is essentially different from other constructs. It means that a construct is exceptional and gets phenomena not considered by other model constructs (Hair *et al.*, 2014). To test discriminant validity, the AVE for every construct in contrast is assessed to squared correlations between the construct and all other model constructs. If the AVE surpasses the squared correlation among the constructs, the construct has satisfactory discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair *et al.*, 2006a). As Table 4.13 to 4.14 show for staff and members questionnaire, the AVE for each construct is higher than each squared correlation between constructs. Thus, discriminant validity for all of the constructs is adequate.

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Table 4.13: Correlation of Latent Variables and Discriminant Validity of HRM Practices of Staff

	PA	REW	SPA	SW	TR
PA	0.72				
REW	0.21	0.65			
SPA	0.50	0.30	0.68		
SW	0.39	-0.04	0.33	0.74	
TR	0.22	0.18	0.19	0.21	0.70

PA: Performance Appraisal; REW: Rewards; SPA: Supervisory Assistance; SW: Support at work; TR: Training

Table 4.14: Correlation of Latent Variables and Discriminant Validity of Member retention Behavior

	INT	MI	MS	PV	SQ
INT	0.79				
MI	0.04	0.80			
M	0.37	0.17	0.86		
PV	0.33	0.22	0.68	0.82	
SQ	0.27	0.32	0.27	0.33	0.73

INT: Intention Renew Membership; MI: Member involvement; MS: Member Satisfaction; PV: Perceive value; SQ: Service quality

For director's questionnaire results showed that the AVE for every construct was over each squared correlation among constructs, except for the GOV and LRM, MTQ and OSS and also between PETM and REV, which had a correlation more than squared of AVE. Thus, discriminant validity for all of the constructs was satisfactory, except for these six constructs. These results were same as previous study which totally divided these ten constructs into two main components (Table 4.15).

Table 4.15: Correlation of Latent Variables and Discriminant Validity of Competencies of Golf Course Directors

	BP	CPR	CS	FEM	GOV	LRM	MTQ	PSS	PTEM	REV
BP	0.71									
CPR	0.52	0.76								
CS	0.58	0.42	0.67							
FEM	0.34	0.34	0.54	0.77						
GOV	0.33	0.25	0.49	0.43	0.70					
LRM	0.46	0.22	0.43	0.53	0.76	0.81				
MTQ	0.51	0.42	0.60	0.42	0.37	0.38	0.79			
PSS	0.57	0.53	0.59	0.42	0.46	0.49	0.80	0.67		
PTEM	0.61	0.46	0.58	0.47	0.38	0.56	0.63	0.69	0.72	
REV	0.48	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.59	0.71	0.49	0.64	0.78	0.68

BP: Business procedures, CR: Communications/ public relations, COMP: Computer skills, FAC.EQ: Facilities/ Equipment management, GOV: Governance, RM: Legality/ risk management, MT: Management techniques, RE: Research/evaluation, SS: Philosophy/ sport science, PT: Programming techniques/ event management

The SmartPLS algorithm function also produce the cross loadings which is another criterion for evaluation the discriminant validity of a questionnaire. Appendix G shows the output of cross loading for three main instruments of this research for all constructs and indicators. According to these results, all measurement items loaded higher according to their particular proposed latent variable against other variables. Appendix G shows that the loading of every block was over any other block in the same columns and rows. Thus, the cross-loading output confirmed discriminant validity of the measurement model.

Therefore, this study concludes that the all three measurement models established their discriminant validity.

4.5.4 Second order CFA for HRM Practices and Member retention Behavior

The hierarchical component model was originally proposed by Chin *et al.* (2003) and Wold (1982) to evaluate for higher order or a second-order factor by observing the factors in the first-order variables.

The structural model of the study was included three different instruments and therefore it was a complex model. Two main variables (Mediator and dependent variable) were considered as hierarchical component or higher order models (HCMs). PLS involve testing second order structures comprising of two-layer constructs (Lohmöller, 1989). The HRM practices and member retention behavior for this study had first order components of reflective constructs, whereas the second order PLS is regarded as a good inferential tool, an appropriate method for formative constructs and the proper technique for generating measurements with new empirical or theoretical backgrounds (Rigdon, 2012).

The measurement items for the first orders were examined in terms of validity, reliability, discriminant, and convergent validity of the measures in the previous sections. To validate the second-order model of HRM practices and member retention behavior the collinearity assessment needs to be done to get significance test and the variance inflation factor (VIF) as well as outer weight of observed variables. The results of the variance inflation factor (VIF) for HRM practices and member retention behavior are shown in the Table 4.16.

Both constructs had a value for VIF less than 5, demonstrating that the indicators can represent at least 80% of the variance in the items, and the measurement scale must

calculate the severity of collinearity among the indicators in a formative measurement model.

Table 4.16: Multicollinearity Evaluation for Second Order Formative Constructs

HRM practices		Member retention	
Construct	VIF	Construct	VIF
PA	1.40	INT	1.27
REV	3.98	MI	2.06
SPA	1.54	MS	4.36
SW	1.73	PV	4.16
TR	1.51	SQ	1.91

VIF: variance inflation factor

After checking the collinearity assessing the contribution of a formative indicator should be applied to find the relevance which is based on outer weight, which results from a multiple regression (Hair, 2010). The significance of outer weight in the current study was studied using bootstrap method Table 4.17 shows the results of bootstrapping on performance construct for both outer weight and outer loading. When outer weight of an indicator is not significant, yet its outer loading is high (over 0.50), the indicator is regarded as absolutely important, but not as fairly important. The indicator would normally be retained in this situation. But if the outer loading is less than 0.50 and an indicator has a non-significant weight, the indicator should be dropped. According to our results all indicators related to both HRM and member retention behavior construct as a second order model retained in the model except “Reward” in HRM second order model which was not statistically significant.

Table 4.17: Outer Weights and Outer Loading Significance Testing Results Using Bootstrap

		Outer Loading	T value	P Values	Outer weight	T value	P Values
	INT	0.53	1.81	0.071	0.24	1.79	0.074
	MI	0.72	3.42	0.001	0.30	2.33	0.020
CR	MS	0.84	4.42	<0.001	0.29	3.10	0.002
	PV	0.82	5.03	<0.001	0.26	3.82	<0.001
	SQ	0.68	4.06	<0.001	0.26	3.23	0.001
	PA	0.63	4.42	<0.001	0.23	2.82	0.005
	REW*	0.23	0.88	0.378	0.04	0.35	0.722
HRM	SPA	0.66	5.74	<0.001	0.33	4.20	<0.001
	SW	0.83	13.58	<0.001	0.50	6.69	<0.001
	TR	0.68	4.42	<0.001	0.28	3.52	<0.001

PA: Performance Appraisal; REW: Rewards; SPA: Supervisory Assistance; SW: Support at work; TR: Training; INT: Intention Renew Membership; MI: Member involvement; MS: Member Satisfaction; PV: Perceive value; SQ: Service quality

4.5.5 Path Analysis

The second step of SEM analysis is the structural or path model. The structural model is applied by determining the relationships between the variables. The path model shows the specific information of the relationship between the exogenous or independent variables and endogenous or dependent variables (Hair *et al.*, 2006b; Ho, 2006). It is a statistical method based on linear regression. Thus, the direct effects of competencies of golf course directors on member retention behavior and the indirect effect of competencies of golf course directors can be examined by the mediator of HRM practices of staff in path analysis model. The mediation analysis splits the correlation of the variables in the following effects in the structural equations system:

- Direct effects of independent variable on dependent variable
- Indirect effects of a variable on dependent variable through its effect on another variable
- Total effects as the sum of indirect and direct effects

Firstly, evaluation of the structural model was about the overall model fit, then focuses on the direction, size, and significance of the conjectured estimates of the parameter by order (Hair *et al.*, 2006b). Lastly, the proposed relationship was confirmed based on the research objectives as seen in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18: List of Objectives and Relative Path

Objective	Path
O1a. There are significant relationships between the Golf Operation Competencies and the staff service-based (HRM) practices in the Malaysian's Golf Clubs.	GO -> HRM
O1b. There are significant relationships between the Client Care Development competencies and the staff service-based (HRM) practices in the Malaysian's Golf Clubs.	CCD -> HRM
O2. There is significant relationships between the staff service-based (HRM) practices and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian's Golf Clubs.	HRM -> CR
O3a. There are significant relationships between the Golf Operation Competencies and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian Golf Clubs.	GO -> CR
O3b. There are significant relationships between the Client Care Development Competencies and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian Golf Clubs.	CCD -> CR
O4. Staff service-based (HRM) practices significantly mediated the relationships between the Golf Operation Competencies and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian Golf Clubs.	GO-> HRM -> CR
O5. Staff service-based (HRM) practices significantly mediated the relationships between the Client Care Development Competencies and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian Golf Clubs.	CCD-> HRM -> CR

4.5.5.1 Relationship between Director Competencies and Member Retention Behaviors

In the first research model, the effect of main independent variables, i.e., two components of competencies (Golf operation and Client Care Development), were evaluated on member retention behavior. The path model is depicted in Figure 4.4.

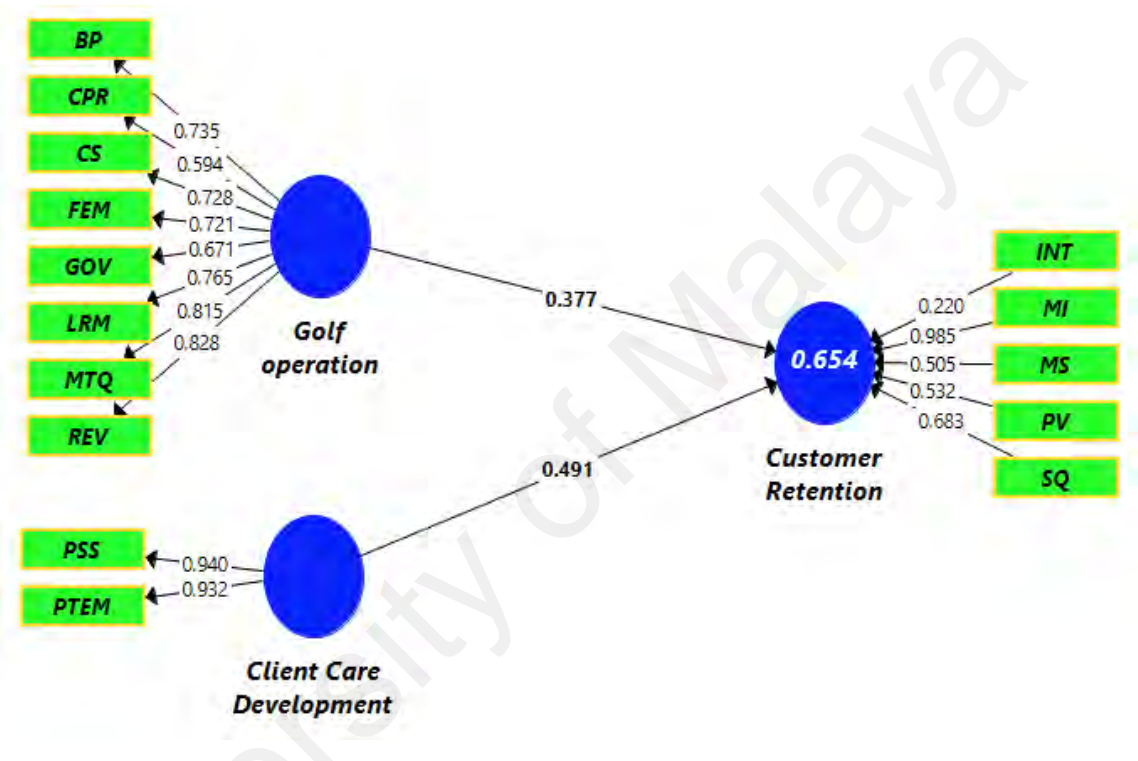


Figure 4.4: Path Model between Director Competencies and Member retention Behaviors

The results of bootstrapping method show the p-value for the relationship between golf operation and client care development with retention behavior of members (Table 4.19). Significant structural model relationships were found at p-value = 0.05. The IV of the model had a significant a positive coefficient, showing that higher level of director's competencies (Client Care Development and Golf operation) tend to attain a better retention behavior of members. Client Care Development had a positive and significant

effect ($\beta = 0.49, p < 0.05$). Also, Golf operation competencies had a positive effect on member retention behavior ($\beta = 0.38, P < 0.05$).

Table 4.19: Test ff the Total Effects of Competencies on Member retention Behaviors Using Bootstrapping

Path	β	SE	T value	P-Values	95% CI	
					Lower	Upper
CCD-> CR	0.49	0.10	4.52*	< 0.05	0.32	0.67
GO-> CR	0.38	0.11	3.16*	< 0.05	0.20	0.59

CCD: Client Care Development, GO: Golf operation, CR: member's retention behavior

* Significant at 0.05 level.

It should be noted that in contrast to confirmative SEM models, the PLS (explorative) model has no inclusive indicators to assess the models' overall goodness. If $R^2 > 0.5$, it suggests a valid representation of the dataset, showing that the set of structural equations is well defined. R^2 of the member retention in this model was 0.65, which accounts for 65.4% of the reachable fitness.

4.5.5.2 Relationship between Director Competencies and HRM Practices of Staff

In the second model, the impact of main independent variables, including two components of competencies (Golf operation and Client Care Development), on the HRM practices of staff were evaluated. Figure 4.5 shows the path model.

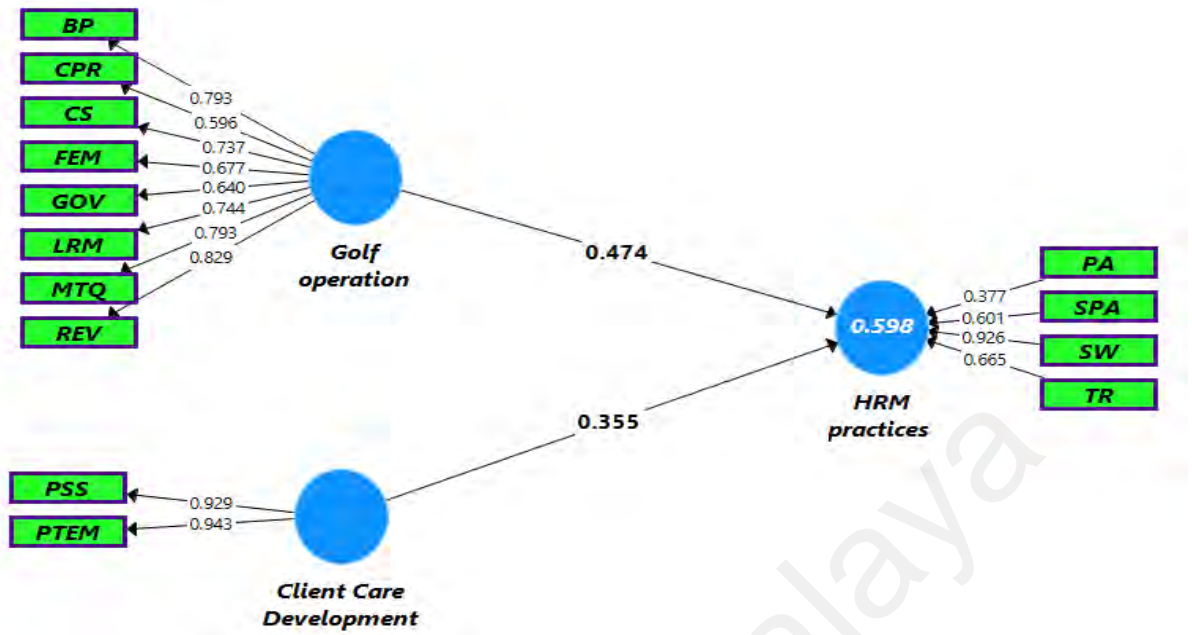


Figure 4.5: Path Model between Director Competencies and HRM Practices of Staff

The bootstrapping results show a p-value for the relation between client care development and golf operation with HRM practices of staff (Table 4.20). Significant structural model relationships were found at a $P = 0.05$. The IV demonstrated a significant a positive coefficient, meaning that higher level of both director's competencies (Client Care Development and Golf operation) will tend to achieve a better HRM practices of staff. Positive and significant effect of client care development was found ($\beta = 0.35$, $p > 0.05$). Golf operation competencies also positively affected on HRM practices of staff ($\beta = 0.47$, $P < 0.05$). For the current model, R^2 of the member retention was 0.60 (Table 4.20), which accounts for 60% of the reachable fitness.

Table 4.20: Test of the Total Effects of Director Competencies on HRM Practices of Staff Using Bootstrapping

Path	β	SE	T value	P Values	95% CI	
					Lower	Upper
CCD-> HRM	0.35	0.16	2.15*	0.03	0.04	0.67
GO-> HRM	0.47	0.14	3.26*	< 0.05	0.14	0.73

CCD: Client Care Development, GO: Golf operation, HRM practices * Significant at 0.05 level.

4.5.5.3 Relationship between HRM Practices of Staff and Member Retention Behaviors

In the third model in the framework, the effect of member retention behaviors and HRM practices of staff were studied. Figure 4.6 shows the path model.

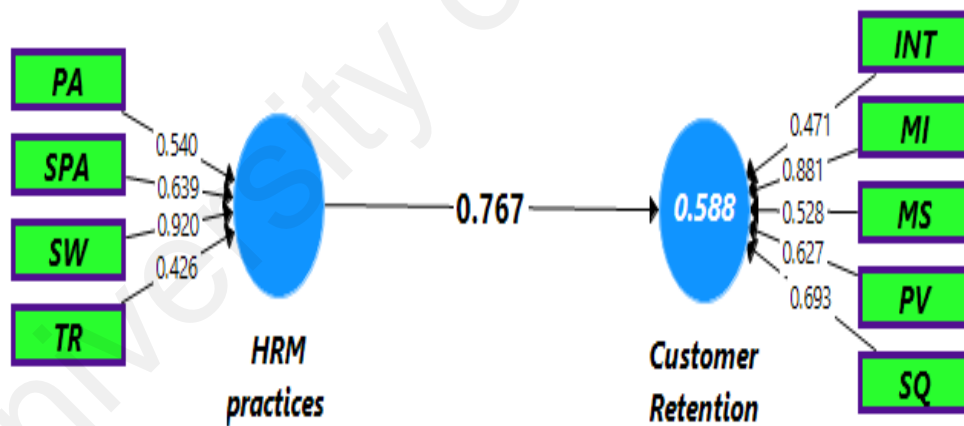


Figure 4.6: Path model HRM Practices of Staff and Member retention Behaviors

The boot strapping results showed a p-value for the relation between HRM practices of staff and member retention behaviors (Table 4.21). The structural model relationships were significant (P = 0.05). The IV exhibited a significant a positive coefficient, indicating that higher level of HRM practices of staff tends to create a better member

retention behavior. HRM practices of staff showed positive and significant effect ($\beta = 0.78, p < 0.05$). R^2 of the member retention was 0.59 (Table 4.21), i.e., 59% of the reachable fitness.

Table 4.21: Test of the Total Effects of HRM Practices of Staff and Member retention Behaviors Using Bootstrapping

Path	β	SE	T value	P Values	95% CI	
					Lower	Upper
HRM-> CR	0.77	0.19	4.05	< 0.01	0.73	0.94

CCD: Client Care Development, GO: Golf operation, HRM practices
 ** Significant at 0.01 level

4.5.6 Mediator Effect of HRM Practices

Another important aspect of a structural model evaluation is evaluating the indirect and direct relationships between endogenous and exogenous latent variables (Henseler *et al.*, 2009). These relationships are examined through mediation analysis. Here, the significance of the mediating effect was only measured.

To test the mediating effect of “HRM practices of staff”, the mediating variable was added to the relationship between two components of director’s competencies, including client care development and golf operation with member retention. Therefore, in the second step, the construct of “HRM practices of staff” was introduced into the 1st model as exogenous and independent variables (Figure 4.7), including their mediating effects on the dependent variable.

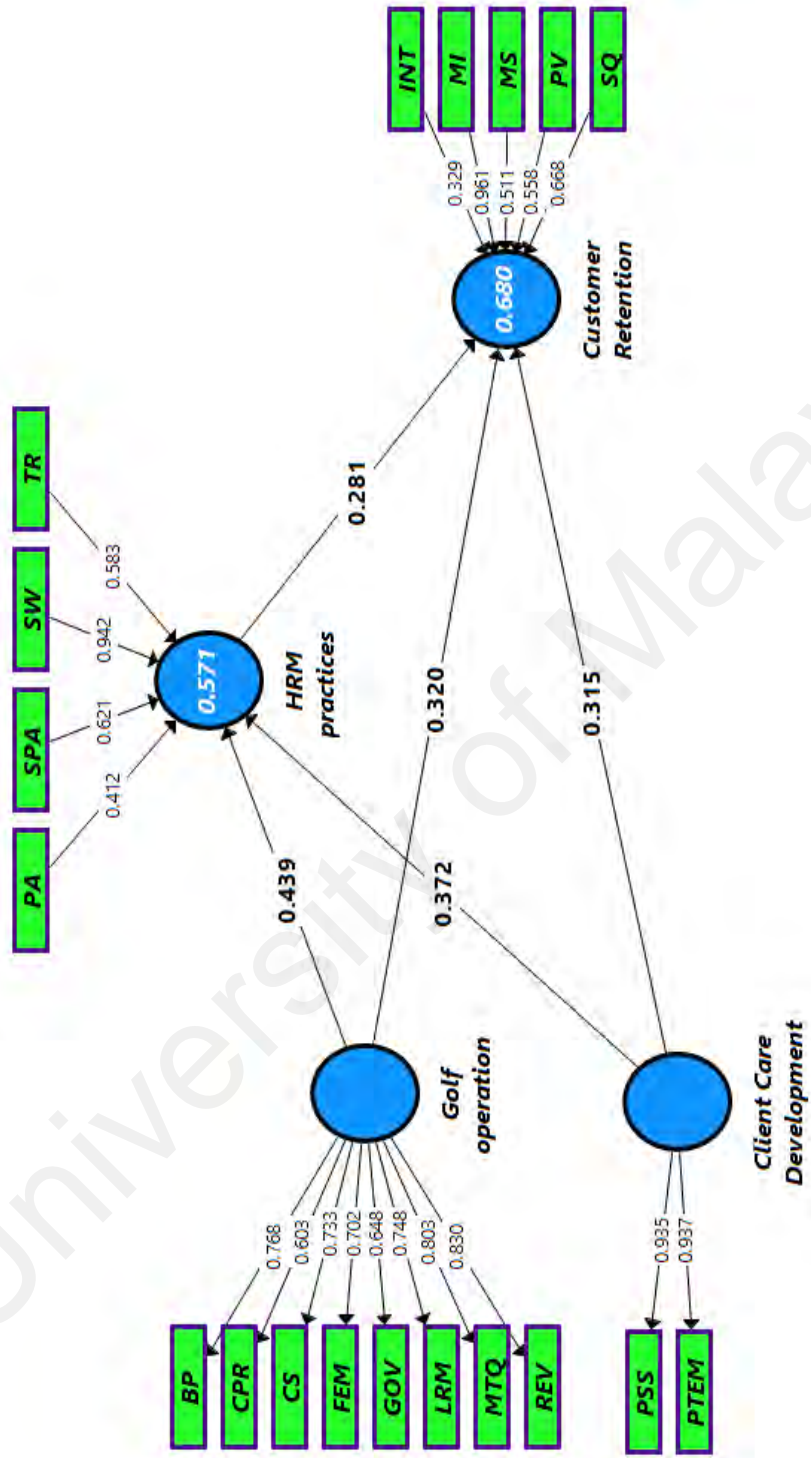


Figure 4.7: Path Model Including HRM Practices of Staff as a Mediator

After adding mediator variables (HRM) to the model, the bootstrapping results (Table 4.22) showed positive and significant effects of golf operation, ($\beta = 0.32, p < 0.05$) and client care development ($\beta = 0.31, p < 0.05$) on member retention behaviors. This indicates that the direct effects of golf operation and client care development on member retention behaviors were significant after mediation.

Golf operation had positive effect on HRM practices ($\beta = 0.44, p < 0.05$) and client care development ($\beta = 0.37, p < 0.05$). The HRM Practices revealed significant and positive effect on member retention behaviors ($\beta = 0.28, p < 0.05$).

In this model, R^2 for HRM Practices was 0.57, which accounts for 57 % of the reachable fitness for HRM Services based practices. The R^2 for member retention behaviors was 0.68 which indicated 68% of member retention behaviors can be explained by client care development, golf operation and HRM Services based practices.

Table 4.22: Test of the Total Effects of HRM Practices of Staff and Member retention Behaviors Using Bootstrapping

Path	β	SE	T-value	P-value	95% CI	
					Lower	Upper
Path a						
GO-->HRM	0.43	0.15	2.91	0.00*	0.10	0.70
CCD-->HRM	0.37	0.16	2.19	0.02*	0.04	0.69
Path b						
HRM-->CR	0.28	0.14	1.99	0.04*	0.00	0.50
Path c'						
GO-->CR	0.32	0.13	2.41	0.01*	0.04	0.57
CCD-->CR	0.31	0.12	2.51	0.01*	0.10	0.62

CCD: Client Care Development, GO: Golf operation, CR: customer's retention behavior, HRM HRM practices, * Significant at 0.05 level.

4.5.7 Test of Mediation of HRM Practices of Staff

Sobel test is commonly used for testing mediating effects, which compares the relationship between the dependent and independent variables before and after introduction of the mediation construct (Helm *et al.*, 2010). However, this test is dependent on distributional assumptions, which typically are not true for the indirect effect ($a*b$, no normal distribution of their product is resulted from the multiplication of two normally distributed coefficients). Besides, the Sobel test needs input as unstandardized path coefficients and does not have statistical power, particularly when used for small sample sizes.

In PLS-SEM, it is suggested to use Preacher and Hayes (2008) to test mediating effects and bootstrap the sampling distribution of the indirect effect. no assumptions are made about the sampling distribution of the statistics or the shape of the variable distribution in bootstrapping, and it may be used for small sample sizes. Bootstrapping thus very well suits for the PLS-SEM method. Furthermore, this method shows higher statistical power than the Sobel test.

The variance accounted for (VAF) defines the magnitude of the indirect effect concerning the total effect (namely, indirect + indirect effect). Thereby, we can determine the degree to which the dependent variable's variance is directly explained by the independent variable, and of the extent that variance of target construct is explained by the indirect relationship by the mediator variable. The VAF below 20% shows lack of mediation. On the contrary, the VAF of over 80% means a full mediation. Thus, in partial mediation, the VAF is less than 80% and larger than 20%.

The mediation test for two likely paths for member retention is presented in Table 4.23. As it can be seen, the mediation effect of HRM between both independent variables (client care development and golf operation) and member retention behavior, were

statistically significant. According to the VAF (variance account for) HRM partially mediated the relationship between two types of directors' competencies with member retention behavior.

Table 4.23: Test of the Mediation Effects Using Bootstrapping

Path	ab	SE	z value	p value	VAF	Results
GO-->HRM-->CR	0.123	0.043	2.836	0.002	28%	Partially Mediation
CCD-->HRM-->CR	0.105	0.048	2.166	0.015	25%	Partially Mediation

CCD: Client Care Development, GO: Golf operation, CR: customer's retention behavior, HRM practices

4.5.8 Multi - Collinearity

SEMs is regarded as a powerful approach for multi-collinearity of predictor variables. In multi-collinearity, two or more variables are not independent, it can be diagnosed, and it is a matter of extent. Model results are poor and misleading when the variables' interdependence is strong enough and they are used as predictors. Multi-collinearity may cause problems during multivariate analyses. Thus, coefficient estimates, and standard errors of parameter estimates will be affected. The VIF also was computed for all three steps of modeling using SPSS 22 (Table 4.24) and VIF for all variables was below 4.

Table 4.24: Collinearity Assessment

Exogenous Variable	Endogenous Variable	
	CR	HRM
CCD	2.49	2.16
GO	2.61	2.16
HRM	2.33	

CCD: Client Care Development, GO: Golf operation, CR: member's retention behavior, HRM practices

4.5.9 Effect Size f^2

When a specified exogenous construct is removed from the model, the change in the R^2 is used to examine whether the omitted construct had an effect on the endogenous constructs. This measure is called the effect size (f^2) measured as:

$$f^2 = \frac{R^2_{\text{included}} - R^2_{\text{excluded}}}{1 - R^2_{\text{included}}}$$

When a given exogenous latent variable is excluded from or included in the model, R^2_{included} and R^2_{excluded} are the R^2 of the endogenous latent variable. f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects of the exogenous latent variable, respectively (Cohen, 1988). The effect size of client care development and golf operation were medium (Table 4.26), while HRM had almost medium effect, but less than two independent variables (Table 4.25).

Table 4.25: Results of Effect Size f^2 for All Exogenous Variables on CR and HRM

Predictor	CR		HRM	
	Path Coefficients	f^2	Path Coefficients	f^2
CCD	0.49	0.12	0.43	0.14
GO	0.37	0.12	0.37	0.20
HRM	0.28	0.10		

CCD: Client Care Development, GO: Golf operation, CR: member's retention behavior, HRM HRM practices

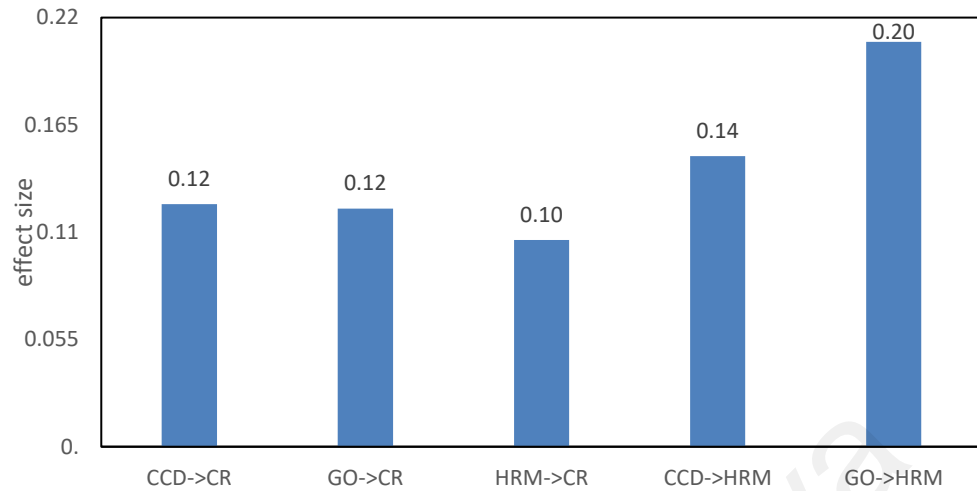


Figure 4.8: Results of Effect Size f^2 for All Exogenous Variables on CR and HR

4.5.10 Predictive Relevance Q^2

To assess predictive relevance of the suggested model, the blindfolding procedure was used with the cross-validated redundancy method (Stone-Geisser's Q^2 value). Since there were 34 observations, = 7 omission distance (D) was used for this analysis. As there were two endogenous constructs, model productivity of this method was assessed distinctly (2 sets). To verify predictive relevance of a certain endogenous construct, the results of the construct cross-validated redundancy are used; the Q^2 must be above zero. The Q^2 values of member retention behavior (0.29) and HRM practices (0.18) were above the threshold (Table 4.26), indicating predictive relevance of the model The Importance-Performance Matrix Analysis

Table 4.26: R^2 and Q^2 Values in the Model

Endogenous Latent Variable	SSO	SSE	Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)	R Square	R Square Adjusted
CR	170	137.20	0.19	0.68	0.65
HRM	136	104.81	0.23	0.57	0.54

CCD: Client Care Development, GO: Golf operation, CR: member's retention behavior, HRM practices

4.5.11 The Importance-Performance Matrix Analysis

PLS-SEM method provides information about the relative significance of constructs in describing other constructs in the structural model (dependent variables). This information are used for drawing conclusions. Nevertheless, the Importance-Performance Matrix Analysis (IPMA) expands the PLS-SEM results as it considers the performance of each construct as well. Consequently, conclusions are drawn on both performance and importance, which is mainly important to rank managerial actions including both performance and importance.

The latent variable scores are used in IPMA as well as the average values of the latent variable scores (performance) and contrasts the structural model total effects (importance) to show significant aspects for upgrading the management activities. The IPMA in this study was used for construct member retention considering three exogenous variables. Prior to the analysis, the data were rescaled. The importance values of these variables were computed based on the overall effect of every exogenous variable on member retention.

Table 4.27: Index Values and Total Effects for the IPMA of Member retention

	Importance	Performances
CCD	0.55	60.53
GO	0.75	54.66
HRM	0.43	60.99

CCD: Client Care Development; GO: Golf Operation; HRM: Human resource management

According to Table 4.27, the IPMA of competitive performance demonstrates that both aspect of director's competencies is primary importance for improving the member

retention. HRM had lower importance but had performance compare to two other constructs. Figure 4.9 also shows the graphical IPMA on member retention behavior.

The results of IPMA showed that the most important factor on CR is GO, which had the highest Importance factor compared to HRM and CCD, however the level of performance on CR is still at a moderate level.

The result is suggesting that improving the level of GO will lead to higher level of CR. The two factors including CCP and HRM had a moderate impact while their Performance level were above moderate level. This could still be increased in order to improve the CR.

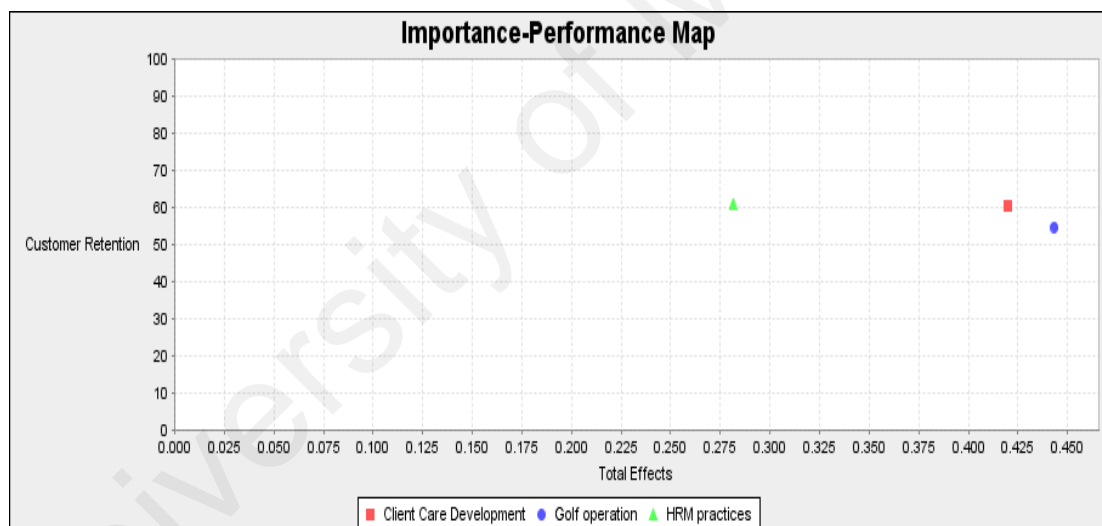


Figure 4.9: IPMA Representation of Model

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter includes the descriptive statistic and inferential analysis as well as discussions to provide deep understanding of the individual and contextual all research variables among three groups of respondents including managers, employee and customers among 34 golf clubs in Malaysia in Malaysia. In chapter four, the results of PLS-SEM are presented, and seven hypotheses were examined in the current study. The results were presented, and findings discussed respectively. Table 4.28 showed the summary of all hypotheses that were studied and indicate which of those hypotheses are supported or not supported by the present study.

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Table 4.28: List of Objectives and Relative Paths

Objective	Path	β	P-value	Result
O1a. There are significant relationships between the Golf Operation Competencies and the staff HRM practices in the Malaysian's Golf Clubs.	GO-> HRM	0.474	< 0.01	Supported
O1b. There is a significant relationship between the Client Care Development competencies and the staff HRM practices in the Malaysian's Golf Clubs.	CCD-> HRM	0.355	< 0.05	Supported
O2. There is significant relationships between the staff HRM practices and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian's Golf Clubs.	HRM-> CR	0.767	< 0.01	Supported
O3a. There is a significant relationship between the Golf Operation Competencies and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian Golf Clubs.	GO-> CR	0.377	< 0.01	Supported
O3b. There are significant relationships between the Client Care Development Competencies and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian Golf Clubs	CCD-> CR	0.491	< 0.01	Supported
O4. Staff HRM practices significantly mediated the relationships between the Golf Operation Competencies and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian Golf Clubs.	GO-> HRM -> CR	0.123	< 0.01	Supported
O5. Staff HRM practices significantly mediated the relationships between the Client Care Development Competencies and the member retention behaviors in the Malaysian Golf Clubs.	CCD-> HRM-> CR	0.105	< 0.01	Supported

**significant if < 0.01; * significant if < 0.0

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of testing the objectives in Chapter 4, the developed model and summary of conclusions. Finally, the chapter will provide limitations of the study and recommendations for future research. The discussion section explains the results of the study in relations to the available literature.

The purpose of this study was to examine the current level and the participants' quality perceptions in the relationship among competencies of directors, HRM practices of staff, and member retention within Malaysian Golf clubs to advance the causal relationships among them in order to determine how these variables directly or indirectly will be influenced by each other. For the purpose of this study, a multidimensional and hierarchical model was developed to provide a conceptual framework and appropriate measurement scale to determine relationship among golf club director's competencies, HRM and member retention.

5.2 Descriptive Discussion

Results from the examination of the director's gender showed that 97.1% of respondents were male, of whom the majority aged between 50 to 54 years. However, the analysis of the staff profile showed that the majority of staff aged between 30 to 40 years, followed by less than 30 years. Results for the staff showed a more homogenous gender distribution, which is similar to the study by Husin *et al.* (2012). In today's world, there is great emphasize on equal employment opportunities to women in sport management (Moore *et al.*, 2010). Based on the findings of this study, more females should be appointed as directors of golf clubs in Malaysia.

A total number of 171 members completed the questionnaire and a greater number of the participants were male. It is in line with other literature. For instance, the European Golf Association reported that 70 percent of golf practitioners are male in 38 European countries between 1985 and 2011 (European Golf Association, 2011). Also, study by Lee *et al.* (2011) supports this as they reported more male versus female participation in recreation and sport activities. It is worth exploring in future researches what motivates men more than women to play golf in Malaysia. There should be more insight on how gender biases in golf can affect women's participation in golf.

On one hand, the findings showed that 46.9% of the directors of golf clubs had a bachelor's degree, followed by diploma. This is in line with the results of a recent study by Choi (2017) on 391 golf directors in the United States. The competencies of golf course director's questionnaire were applied to evaluate the level of director competencies with ten subscales including business procedures, communications/public relations, computer skills, facilities/equipment management, governance, legality/risk management, management techniques, research/evaluation, philosophy/sport science, programming techniques/event management, which measured the director competencies.

On the other hand, our findings on directors' competencies showed that the highest overall mean belonged to legality/risk management subscale, while the lowest mean was observed for philosophy/sport Science. All items related to philosophy/sport science and programming techniques/event management subscales had a mean score below 3. Therefore, it can be concluded that it is both important to recruit directors with higher education and to provide regular training courses by the MGA. A successful example is the Professional Golf Management (PGM) programs by the United States' PGA; an educational program offered designed to teach the skills and knowledge needed by golf

professionals (Choi, 2005) that can be used as a role model that have shown satisfactory results.

The importance of risk management and legal compliance in this study is comparable to Young *et al.* (2007) and Choi (2017). These studies reported that recreational sport administrators and golf directors considered legality to be an important management competency. Fields and Young (2010) found similar results. Recreational sport managers and Golf course directors require a fundamental understanding of legal concepts related to golf, recreation, or leisure industry. They should learn risks and risk prevention and be aware of the safety of people in and around their facilities. Furthermore, comprehensive risk management plan is very importance for golf directors.

According to Chase and Masberg (2008), practitioners and academicians give preference to communication skills. Likewise, Fjelstul and Tesone (2008) specified the importance of communication skills among golf and club managers, indicating that golf and club managers are not always effective communicators as they believed. Therefore, good communication skills are crucial to accomplish tasks in golf and club management. Fulthorp and D'Eloia (2015) found the role of public relations to be a significant management competency. Public recreation managers stated the significance of public relations through communication skills. The public relations role for golf course directors includes interacting with other golf courses, agencies, and clubs.

Fulthorp and D'Eloia (2015) identified leadership skills and showed that sports administrators used leadership and management skills interchangeably and used moderate to considerable amount of time and effort on both management and leadership skills. As Bennis and Townsend (1989) indicated, while leadership and management are outlined differently, both of them complement each other and have equally essential positions.

Choi (2017) similarly found leadership skills as an important golf management competency for effective operation of golf courses.

Lee *et al.* (2010) and Choi (2014) emphasized on Facilities/equipment management competencies. Their findings revealed that recreational sport managers and golf directors considered equipment and facilities management as significant management competencies. Choi (2017) also reported that golf course directors regarded managing facilities and equipment as an important competency.

While Toh and Jamieson (1997) showed computer skills as important management competencies for recreational sport managers, first-level managers were the heaviest computer users, and the computer usage increases at higher-levels (Pedigo *et al.*, 1986). As indicated in Choi (2017), golf directors use computers for several job tasks, and computer skills were considered as important management competency. Furthermore, technology seems to provide a tool through which golf course directors could determine business ideas, gain customer loyalty, and sell products. The Internet and Computer usage require golf course directors to sensibly consider critical issues, such as sponsorship, virtual advertising, the revenue opportunities, and on-line consumer/seller relationship.

To measure the level of HRM practices of staff, five subscales including support at work, reward system, training, supervisory assistance and performance appraisals were used. Among items related to support at work, the highest mean belonged to the club's safety, followed by "The club's processes and procedures help to promote employees' work efficiencies.", and "Employees are satisfied with the recognition they receive for doing good jobs." in reward system subscale showed the highest mean score. Among related items to training, the highest mean score was observed for item "Employees receive sufficient on how to do their jobs.". As seen in Table 4.5, among items related to supervisory assistance the highest mean belonging to, the "Employees are always unclear

of what their supervisors expect them to do.” followed by “Supervisors and supportive of employees’ ideas and ways of getting things done.”. “Managers consistently tell employees about the standards used to evaluate job performances.” in performance appraisals subscale showed the highest mean score.

When the employees have proper work equipment, they will be encouraged to produce service-related outputs (Mikic Little & Dean, 2006). Support at Work in golf clubs may include job descriptions, organizational procedures, rules, and policies, work demands, workload distributions, scheduling system, safety measures, and work design. Employees of golf clubs are expected to do their jobs effectively if the workplace is secured with adequate safety measures, all equipment work efficiently, there are always sufficient number of individuals to get help from, and the rules and procedures are easy to be understood and followed (Husin *et al.*, 2012). According to Husin *et al.* (2012), factors such as Rewards Systems, Performance Appraisal and Support at Work, do not equally enhance the Organizational Citizenship Behaviors of both males and females. The females appreciate the comfortable working environment more than males. This can be attributed to the fact that females are characteristically recognized as more organized and meticulous than males (Darley & Smith, 1995).

A reward system designed strategically may result in commitment to effective delivery of services and desired employee behaviors (Schneider & Bowen, 1993). Further, rewards are highly instrumental in inspiring the causal chain from employee behaviors to service quality (Elmadağ *et al.*, 2008).

The member retention behavior instrument was used to measure the level of member retention with five subscales, including service quality, member involvement, member satisfaction perceived value, and intention to renew membership, which was measured the member retention. The lowest mean was observed for the member involvement. In

addition, 68.4% of the members stated that they only come to the golf club to play golf, i.e., they don't use other facilities of the club (such as, social or dining). Involvement has an important role in member retention and satisfaction at a golf club based on research in other settings (Gahwiler & Havitz, 1998; Hume & Sullivan Mort, 2008; Laurent & Kapferer, 1985). In addition, Clem *et al.* (2013) studied golf clubs and found that intent to renew membership and member satisfaction are influenced by how involved members are in club activities. Therefore, it may be concluded that golf clubs need to strengthen their ways of involving members in more activities such as using the members in golf competition events instead of volunteers from non-members. For example, in some events in Malaysia, non-member employees of the host organization, such as the CIMB bank employees.

In Clem *et al.* (2013), member satisfaction was shown to be stimulated by members involvement, but the club's service quality also had effect on the members' satisfaction levels. As Hubbard and O'Neill (2006) explain, membership renewal decisions are influenced by the level of service quality provided by the club. Consequently, clubs need to determine the members' service expectations and improve those regularly. Members are the ultimate definers of quality service in a club (Hubbard & O'Neill, 2006). According to Clem *et al.* (2013), perceived value has effect on members' satisfaction and decision to renew membership, which supports the findings of Back and Lee (2009). Furthermore, Cronin *et al.* (2000) and Gupta *et al.* (2009) reported perceived value as a significant factor in defining customer satisfaction and extension.

Clem *et al.* (2013) showed that member retention increased with increased member satisfaction. To retain members, managers should talk to members about what facilities they want their club to offer and how the club can improve their present facilities. Back and Lee (2009) found that perceived value and image congruence contribute indirectly to

member loyalty through satisfying members. Satisfied members show a greater intent to continue their membership and spread positive word-of-mouth to others.

As Yates (2002) reports, the value of club for a member is defined by following aspects of the golf course: (1) the quality of course maintenance, (2) the quality of design of the course, and (3) the quality of the playing experience. If they have a poor experience on the course, such as delayed maintenance of the greens and long wait times between holes, their satisfaction may decrease.

5.3 Model Discussion

With regards to the model results, the following conclusions are summarized below based on the research objectives presented in Chapter One.

5.3.1 Relationship between Director Competencies and HRM Practices of Staff

The following conclusions are summarized below in response to the research questions presented in Chapter One. At first, it was research objective questions asked if that there was any significant relationship between the director competencies, i.e., (client care and golf operation competencies) and the staff service-based (HRM) practices in the Malaysian golf clubs. The related hypothesis was that there is significant relationship between the two aforementioned notions. The findings it was proved that both Golf Operation Competencies and client care had significant relationship with the staff HRM practices. The structural model relationships were significant (p -value = 0.05). The effects of both client care development ($\beta=0.35$, $p < 0.05$) and Golf operation competencies ($\beta=0.47$, $P < 0.05$) on HRM practices of staff were positive and significant. This means that higher level of both director's competencies (Client Care Development and Golf operation) will tend to achieve a better HRM practices of staff.

Similar to this study, Koenigsfeld *et al.* (2012) developed a competency model for private club managers in the United States. However, they did not include HRM practices of staff or member retention variables in their model. Each sport is unique; consequently, managers and leaders in each need different competencies. Therefore, research on a particular profession or position has generated competencies and competency models. Club directors are regarded as the link between the staff and the board of directors. Therefore, they can help to membership growth, and membership retention. The model presented here had similar components such as business procedures, communications/public relations, facilities/equipment management, management techniques, and philosophy/sport science. Findings of the factor analysis (Koenigsfeld *et al.*, 2012) showed a set of common managerial competencies for private club managers, like facility maintenance, human resources–legal, leadership–interpersonal, club governance, marketing, and strategic management.

An advantage of the competency model for club directors developed in this study is that the club directors and club boards of directors can use that as a foundation for developing an organization-specific competency model that requires human resource functions of training, hiring, and developing (Dalton, 1997).

5.3.2 Relationship between Director Competencies and Member retention Behaviours

Next, the effect of main independent variables including two components of competencies, i.e., the Golf operation and Client Care Development were evaluated on member retention behavior. It was shown that Client Care Development had a positive and significant effect ($\beta = 0.49$, $P < 0.05$). Moreover, golf operation competencies showed a positive effect on customer's retention behaviour ($\beta = 0.37$, $P < 0.05$). A value higher than the $R^2 > 0.5$ indicates that the set of structural equations is well defined and suggests

a good representation of the dataset and is valid. R^2 of the current model for member retention was 0.65, which is ready to consider 65.4% of the reachable fitness.

There is evidence that managers need to vigorously inspect the existing service from the point of view of customers, and creatively reform environment and product service (Awad, 2012). Similar to Clem *et al.* (2013), this study found that director's competencies such as communications/public relations, facilities/equipment management, management techniques, research/evaluation, programming techniques/event management have significant effect on members' intention to renew their memberships.

5.3.3 Relationship between HRM Practices of Staff and Member retention Behaviours

The third objectives was that if there is any significant relationship between the staff HRM practices and the member retention behaviours, the results revealed a positive relation, where there was high correlation ($R^2 = 0.77$) between the two factors and R^2 was 0.59, which is ready to consider 58.8% of the reachable fitness. This result supports the findings of a similar work done by Husin *et al.* (2012) on the Malaysian golf courses, who concluded that HRM practices was correlated with perceived service quality by the customers. Increased support at work, Performance Appraisal, Supervisory Assistance, and Reward System resulted in higher levels of Perceived Service Quality. These results are in line with the idea that human resources management through numerous HRM practices is important for the success of service organizations, like golf clubs.

Moreover, this is in agreement with a study of Rozita *et al.* (2014), who examined the influence of service quality on customers' behaviour intentions and satisfaction in a Sports Complex in Terengganu, Malaysia. They indicated that staff competency significantly affects customers' behavior intentions and satisfaction. As such, they concluded that service quality factors had effect on customers' behavior intentions and

satisfaction. While that study was not conducted on golf clubs, most of managerial competencies are common between different sports. Customers with high satisfaction will have more motivation to go back to the club. Customer's perceptions of service experience are vital for the success of service organizations (Al-alak & Alnawas, 2010; Kelley & Turley, 2001b; Mull *et al.*, 2005). This is consistent with this study as we confirmed that there is a positive, significant relationship between staff practices that indirectly increases satisfaction and thus member retention.

Our findings are in line with results of studies on sport participation services, in which customer satisfaction showed a significant positive effect on consumer psychological commitment and loyalty (de Barros & Gonçalves, 2009; Liang & Zhang, 2011). Some studies (Al-alak & Alnawas, 2010; Kelley & Turley, 2001a) (Mull *et al.*, 2005; Oliver & Rust, 1994) have revealed that success of service organizations relies on customer perceptions of service experiences. From a management viewpoint, directors need to examine current services systematically from perspectives of their customers and reform their service environment and products. The provision of quality experiences is very important for customer satisfaction and retention (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2006).

In the current study, it appears that the role of consumer satisfaction is more noticeable and has a more significant influence on loyalty, resulting in decision to repurchase compared to perceived value and service quality. Therefore, golf center managers should increase consumer satisfaction among customers. Moreover, our results support the idea that improved service quality enhances competitive advantage. Our findings are basically in line with those in other cultures and countries. Yu *et al.* (2014) reported that high-quality services for adult consumers in a sport and fitness center enhanced customer satisfaction, improved perceived value, decreased complaints, and eventually increased the probability of renewed membership and continued use of the center facilities. Also,

MacIntosh and Doherty (2010) revealed that the corporate values of peak attitude, trust, integrity, and innovation were meaningful to member satisfaction. Likewise, the research findings agree with the study of Vryoni *et al.* (2017) who investigated the impact of service quality on customers' satisfaction in Spa centers in Greece. They found that environmental and human factors were important for customers' satisfaction from the service quality provided the centers. Customers help increasing market share and revenue, thus satisfying them through high quality services leads to achieving competition advantages and sustains those advantages.

5.3.4 Mediator Effect of HRM Practices

Finally, it was intended to know if the staff HRM significantly mediated the relationships between the golf operation competencies and the member retention behaviors. Although the correlation was not high ($\beta = 0.12$), it is still a formidable factor. The staff HRM practices proved worthy when compared along with golf operation competencies with regard to member retention. To test the mediating effect of "HRM practices of staff", it was introduced into the relationship between two components of director's competencies (client care development and golf operation) with member retention. Therefore, the constructs of HRM practices of staff were merged into the first model as exogenous and independent variables including their mediating effect on dependent variable. R^2 for HRM Practices was 0.57 of the current model, which is considered 57.1% of the reachable fitness for the HRM practices.

It was also tested if the staff HRM practices did significantly mediate the relationships between the client care development competencies and the member retention behaviors. While the correlation was low ($\beta = 0.10$), there was a significant correlation in the

mediation of staff service-based practices and the client care development competencies with regard to member retention behaviors.

Based on the above-mentioned results, a model was developed on the basis of the core theory of TQM. The main basis of our model was the TQM theory. Based on the TQM, every organization tries to enhance its productivity and customer satisfaction (Choi, 2005; Deming, 1986). The main features of TQM emphasize on employee involvement, the customer and incessant development (Choi, 2005; Deming, 1986). The TQM literature indicates that proper managerial leadership determines variation in the success rate of TQM implementation (Perles, 2002). Therefore, philosophy and the vigorous implementation of TQM improves the service organizational performance (Khamalah & Lingaraj, 2011). After preliminary data analysis, the structural equation modeling was done using PLS approach to test the model, through which the measurement model was first validated and then fitted to the structural model. The main finding of the SEM was that for the director's questionnaire, the AVE for each construct was more than each of the squared correlation between the constructs, except for governance (GOV) and legality/risk management (LRM), management technique (MTQ) and philosophy/sport science (PSS). In addition, the programming techniques/event management (PETM) and the Research/Evaluation (REV) had a correlation more than the squared of the AVE. These findings support the results by Choi (2005). Our model showed a desirable goodness of fit, meaning that impact of directors' competencies, staff HRM services, and customer return to the Malaysian golf clubs was positive and meaningful. When the fit of the measurement model was verified, in the second step, path analysis was performed to identify the relationships among the variables. The results showed that higher level of both director's competencies (Golf operation and Client Care Development) tended to achieve a better retention behavior of customers ($R^2 = 0.65$) and a better HRM practices

of staff ($R^2 = 0.59$). On the other hand, higher level of the HRM practices of staff tended to make a better member retention behavior ($R^2 = 0.58$).

Next important step is evaluating the direct and indirect relationships between endogenous and exogenous latent variables (Henseler *et al.*, 2009). To do so, the mediator variables (HRM) were introduced in the model and showed the effect of golf operation ($P = 0.01$) and client care development ($p = 0.01$) on member retention behaviors still were positive and significant, indicating the direct effect of golf operation and client care development were significant on member retention behaviors after mediation. The HRM mediation increased the effect of director's competencies on the member retention. As such, it can be implied that 68% of member retention behaviors can be explained by client care development, golf operation and HRM practices. The test of mediation through Sobel test (Helm *et al.*, 2010) showed that significant mediation effect of HRM, and thus HRM partially mediated the relationship between two types of director's competencies with member retention behaviour.

The literature review (Chapter 2) showed that the studies on HRM, member retention and directors' competencies in sport, especially in golf industry, are generally scarce compared to other domains. The reason may be that human resources practice in a complex business organization does not easily transfer to sports organizations. Therefore, the results of this study may have important implications as it is among the very few studies available in the golf area (Choi, 2017; Choi, 2005; Husin *et al.*, 2012). The formal application of human resources well-planned practices in golf can lead to effective and efficient operations. The closest study to our work by Choi (2017) studied the importance of desirable competencies identified in analysis of golf course directors in the United States, and suggested an 11-factor golf management competency model as a guideline for operating a golf club. However, the main difference between Choi's model and our

proposed model is that we have included two other set of variables regarding the member retention and the HRM staff practices. As such, it may be considered as a more comprehensive model.

The findings of this study will help the provider to determine which part of their service at Golf clubs in Malaysia needs to be focused on to improve satisfaction and behavior intention of their customers.

Participation sports such as golf, especially, are closely related to personality of consumers and lifestyle preference (Shank, 2009). In examining participation of adults in sport programs, marketers should work with consumers partaking in sport programs, to develop further sophisticated marketing strategies based on lifestyle and psychographic factors. Our study shows that golf club directors should constantly search for innovative ways to reach the adult golf market and fulfil their needs and health objectives.

5.4 Managerial implications

The current findings of this thesis give important information regarding adequate preparation in golf management to golf course directors in Malaysia. A development of management skills helps to improve golf course director's management competencies (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). To gain organizational synergy and success, these management capabilities are essential.

Barshan *et al.* (2017) developed a model for impact of services quality on customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and inclination of customers to return to swimming pools. They adopted the SEM method to determine impact of predictor variables on criteria variables. They found that all dimensions of service quality had significant effect on satisfaction. In addition, the customer satisfaction has significant impact on attitudinal

and behavioral loyal, and attitudinal and behavioral loyalty has considerable effect on the intention to return to the swimming pools.

They concluded that it is vital for managers to get familiar with the factors resulting in attitudinal and behavioral loyalty of customers as these factors pave the way for higher customer satisfaction. As such, managers can guarantee their customers' attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. This finding was aligned with Bodet (2008), Wu (2005), Bahlakeh *et al.* (2008), Koozechian (2009), Rahmati *et al.* (2011), Seyed *et al.* (2010), which measured customer satisfaction. Attraction of customers' loyalty through fulfilling their requests should be taken into vigilant account. Most possibly, this would elevate customer loyalty levels and their inclination to return, with its results being pools' continued benefit-making. These results support the findings of Babakus *et al.* (2004), Kim and Kim (1995), Wu (2005), Rezai *et al.* (2008) and (Barshan *et al.*, 2017) According to Wu (2005), the first encounter of staff with customers may create a general judgment of customer about the sports club. Most members of sports service organizations such as golf clubs refer to them for passing their leisure hours in a peaceful atmosphere. Consequently, their contentment is a primary factor in their tendency to return.

Goodarzi *et al.* (2012) reported the priority of the competencies of sport event managers in a descending order as event management, facilities management, research and marketing management, business procedures, governance, public relations, management techniques, risk management and computer skills. Their finding was aligned with earlier studies. Tsai *et al.* (1996) stated that facilities management and relations are important competencies of sport directors in Taiwan and the United States. According to Lin (1998), business procedures as well as research and marketing management are prominent competencies of sport directors. Barcelona and Ross (2004) suggested

business procedures and event management as important competencies of all sport managers.

Usually, finding and attracting new members is more challenging and expensive than retaining the current ones; therefore, clubs should put more emphasis on member retention strategies (Clem *et al.*, 2013). Through focus on member retention, golf clubs may use valuable information collected about behaviors and preferences of their members over time by staff, making it easier to fulfill needs and wants of the members. New members do not readily access this information. Moreover, employing new members can sometimes deprive them from other country clubs, necessitating giving incentives to switch. Moreover, when customers are loyal for longer time, there are potential opportunities for increased value, because loyal customers cost less to serve, spend more over time as trust increases and recommend new customers (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). Research on golf club members' intentions to extend membership is minimal. Therefore, the role of member involvement was important in this study, because previous studies pertaining to golf clubs only assessed how services of the clubs affected decisions of members to retain their memberships (Ferreira, 1997), rather than the way the members personally impacted their own loyalty.

Back and Lee (2009) found that member satisfaction had a significant mediating effect on member loyalty. They also reported that higher member satisfaction made them keener to give a positive impression of the club to others. Clem *et al.* (2013) also concluded that member retention increased with the increase in member satisfaction. One suggested way to increase satisfaction is to add extra facilities, such as free junior golf lessons, happy hour pricing in the lounge and complementary golf clinics, to satisfy members (Foust, 2009; Pennington, 2009). For that, members need to know how the club can improve existing facilities and what amenities they want the club to provide. But clubs should

maintain quality of programs, as members rely on quality to decide on retaining or discontinuing membership. Club directors should also recruit individuals who are devoted to satisfy the members' needs through building member relationships and providing quality services. Another important factor is keeping the track of the perceived quality of the service offered by staff and satisfaction levels of members. As Yates (2002) suggests, a member values a golf club based on: (i) the quality of the playing experience, (ii) the course maintenance quality, and (iii) the design quality of the course. Satisfaction declines if members experience poor course service, such as long distances between the holes, and delayed maintenance of the greens.

5.5 Conclusion

It is well understood that golf courses are luxurious premises and the sport of golf itself entails the luxury. However, the sport is not as widespread and common as famous sports like football and badminton and even track and field and yoga. The reason could be associated with a variety of irrelevant factors, but this study showed that one of the main areas of concern is how these golf courses are managed and the competencies of their directors play a key role in the member retention that would in turn bring about better results for the sport in general and attract more members.

Therefore, one of the key implications of this research is on the reputation of the sport and how improvements at the management level would have significant long-term effects on the reputation of the sport, and a promising effect on the customer attainment that allows a sport to grow. Golf is yet a restricted sport, limited to a constraint group of people that belong to a much-diminished demographic part of the population, and this can create difficulty for the growth of the sport among other demographic groups in the population.

Sport organizations, such as golf clubs, are therefore closely dependent on human resources to succeed, because most of them are service oriented (Doherty & Chelladurai,

1999b). Therefore, it is a formidable force to be reckon and vital to understand that leadership competencies are the abilities, skills, knowledge, and qualities that leaders require to perform their jobs and roles proficiently. Management is the key concept and so leaders have vital roles namely aligning people, setting a direction and inspiring individuals (Das *et al.*, 2011). Leadership competencies and statements of managerial competencies were the bases for early development of a statement of leadership competencies (Mahmoodi & King, 1991). Management of these golf courses is therefore vital and the competencies that go with it play a key role in the efficiency of the industry and its rate to progress and so competent leaders have an international mentality and search for knowledge and proficiency outside the boundaries and get information from several sources (Brake, 1997; Das *et al.*, 2011). The main objective is to improve management and therefore the greatest implication that this research will have is undeniably on the realm of management and its understanding of member retention and staff orientation.

Needless to say that golf is a popular sport worldwide (Kelly & Freysinger, 2000), and management competencies have been explained in several sport contexts. Therefore, education becomes the key and so the researcher recommends future researchers to look into prospects of education and how such management competencies could be educated through either trainings or workshops.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning again that golf club managers need to include new technologies, tools, techniques and a range of business tactics into management, simply because operating a golf club is complex and multi-aspect, expertise is required in areas of food and beverage management, turf grass management, personnel management, accounting, merchandising and retail operations, marketing, risk management, customer services and golf teaching skill. Therefore, golf club managers

should evolve continually to manage changes as well as hold several skills in golf, technical aspects, business operations and human resources.

It is the underlying point that no club manager is needed if there is no golfer, so in order to improve the golfing industry and please prospective customers, golf professionals should encounter several features of golf operations. Golf club managers, for example, must justify the need for a significant change to golf club staff, to support them comprehend new techniques, and to implement the ideas via communication, assessment, and reward systems of golf club. In addition, managers may involve consumers and employees in conversations to resolve the conflicting ideas. Furthermore, it is vital to comprehend and foresee essential qualities in a prospective golf club manager. Golf operations managers must consider that each golf club differs from others in terms of size, quantity, and level of full-time employees assigned to provision of golf services and programs.

Malaysia is a successful, appealing hub for golfers across the globe, and having smarter management schemes could improve the country exponentially in the coming years in becoming a much bigger and a much more powerful player in both construction as well as management of exquisite and extraordinary golf clubs across the region. Malaysia is one of the top golf destinations among the sports enthusiast. Tourism Malaysia has promoted this as one of the income revenues for Malaysia's economy. Therefore, it is vital for every Golf Club to equip these membership programs and climb their operations to a very high standard. Through this quality management, Malaysia will maintain the highest management standard in the golfing world.

Managers may use the findings of current study as a guideline to enhance the service quality of administration, training, operation, and logistics for service provision. First is the training program for quality service with the purpose of improving competency skills

in managing any conflict in operational environments. Second, better recognitions should be considered for staff that always try to enhance service quality. Third, skills and knowledge need in service providers as they may aid in increase efficiency and reducing mistake in giving information about operation. Such suggestions help the club improve management towards satisfaction of customers.

This study has provoked an integrative viewpoint to understand the meaning of customers' experiences and creating the possibility of fostering sustainable golf tourism.

5.6 Limitations & Recommendations for Future Research

If a person masters all the elements of a competency model, does not necessarily mean that he/she can efficiently accomplish a task (Hayes *et al.*, 2000). Thus, superior and effective managers may be predicted through a behavior event interview (Spencer & Spencer, 1993) ; yet, it was not feasible to conduct such interviews on participants of this study because of the required time and cost.

Face-to-face self-administered questionnaires do not collect information from members who do not regularly use the club, or those who do not go to the club (Keillor & Sutton, 1993). As research denotes, these individuals are different from golfers who often visit and use facilities in club, and agree to take part in surveys (Keillor & Sutton, 1993). Consequently, the results cannot be generalized to those individuals. Future research querying customers may consider multiple data collection methods.

Several limitations of this study need to be acknowledged. It was a challenge to make comparisons between our model and other available models as our model is unique in integrating measures of directors' competencies, staff HRM services and member retention. Since previous studies did not include member retention and HRM practices of staff in one model, there was no basis for comparison between the proposed model and

their models. However, there were studies that considered either the relationship between directors' competencies and HRM practices or between directors and member retention. Also, few studies evaluated a model including member retention and HRM practices of staff, which were discussed above.

Moreover, generalization of the proposed model to other sports requires further research. A cross-validation technique is required for this purpose to verify the validity. Thus, more studies on service quality are needed on different populations. Also, this study was restricted to the issues of customer loyalty, service quality, and customer satisfaction. While these are important variables, other factors (e.g., profitability, price, and value) may be explored.

As mentioned earlier, this study was restricted to keen respondents and could be biased by non-respondents accordingly and so future researchers could look into that and try to expand their research on a wider scope of the population with higher accuracy and higher level of retention. Moreover, this research used a self-reported instrument, because those who agreed to contribute to the study responded the survey on their own terms. Therefore, the quality of answers was dependent on participants' honesty, motivation and capability to respond with little interference from the researcher. Even though, it was attempted to decrease the response error, the subjects may have misinterpreted questions and thus provided partial and/or unsuitable responses. One primary remedy for such a shortcoming could be proper translations for different language groups, varying from Malay to Chinese, so that chances of misinterpretation would be either eradicated, or at least to some extent limited.

The study initially aimed to investigate the level of golf management competencies at golf clubs, and so the main objective of the research was to study the relationship between competencies of directors, member retention behavior and staff HRM practices of Golf

Clubs in Malaysia. Nevertheless, it is beyond evident that now the same model could be researched in other south-east Asian countries and the results would have endless implications for the region as well as for the profession.

A single competency model cannot capture the entire position of managers (Antonacopoulou & Fitzgerald, 1996). There are limitations including fact that the behavior studied now may not be appropriate in the future (Winterton & Winterton, 1999). These studies may get old as new management trends develop. Therefore, new trends and challenges such as sustainable business practices should be identified in future studies. Moreover, it would be good to compare managerial competencies of Malaysian directors to other directors around the world.

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Partanian Samira, Hooi lim Boon, Aman Mohd Salleh, Danaee Mahmood. Relationship between HRM practices of staff and member retention behavior among golf clubs of Malaysia. Journal of leisure research.

Partanian Samira, Hooi lim Boon, Aman Mohd Salleh, Danaee Mahmood. Relationship between director competencies and HRM practices of staff among golf clubs of Malaysia. Journal of leisure research.

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