# Explore the association of sports consumer behaviour and the structure of sports management

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## Abstract

Although sports organisations have made huge sums of money off of the popularity of spectator sports over the past three decades, the industry as a whole has recently seen significant shifts. According to Howard and Crompton, modern sports organisations must deal with rising costs, a saturated market, an economic disconnect, and the introduction of new technology (2005). The cost of running a sports organisation has skyrocketed in recent years, greatly outpacing the increase in income. The average salary in the NBA is more than $4 million per year, and a new NFL stadium may set you back more than $1 billion. The typical price tag for a Division IA programme is well over $20 million. Spectator dollars are a hot commodity, and the race to win them has never been fiercer. In the United States and Canada, sports fans may choose from more than 600 professional teams and 1,000 collegiate sporting programmes. In addition, as ticket costs continue to rise, many middle- and lower-class Americans are feeling alienated from the teams they formerly supported because of financial constraints. The advent of new technology presents both opportunities and threats to sports organisations.

Keyword: Sports Organisations, Financial Constraints

## INTRODUCTION

As a significant part of the North American economy, sports are a significant industry. Sport is one of the fastest growing sectors in the United States, with a market value ranging from two hundred and thirteen billion dollar to five hundred and sixty billion dollar (Howard & Crompton, 2005). Sport spectating is a popular pastime, with the spectator sport sector accounting for the majority of the industry's revenue. Taking part in spectator sports is a common occurrence in the United States and Canada (Higgs & McKinley, 2005). Many Americans' life revolve on going to see their favourite teams play and showing their support for the squad. Reading the papers or watching TV would be very difficult if there was no mention of sports. People are more interested in sports trivia than in current affairs, such as the

economy or politics. Consumer spending on spectator sports in the United States is estimated at around thirty three billion dollar per year, as stated in Street & Smith's Sports Business Journal (2007).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

  Relational marketing has developed considerably in practise as well as academics since Berry (1983) originally introduced it in the services marketing field. The rise of relationship marketing is due to the widespread assumption that relationship marketing initiatives may enhance seller performance outcomes like as sales, market share, and profitability by building better customer connections (Crosby et al., 1990; Morgan & Hunt, 1984). Relationship marketing research now encompasses a wide range of marketing disciplines. Among these are B2B advertising, sales management (Boles, Johnson & Barksdale, 2000; Boorom, Goolsby & Ramsey, 1998; Brashear, Boles, Bellenger & Brooks, 2003); Smith & Barclay, 1997); brand management (Fournier 1998; McAlexander Schouten Koenig, 2002; Parvatiayar & Sheth, 2001); Smit, Bronner & Tolboom, 2007);worldwide marketing (Schumcher, 2003; O'Malley & Prothero, 2004; Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995) (Bello & Gilliland, 1997; Sin, et al., 2005; Pan & Tse, 2000 ). In addition to banking (Liang & Wang, 2007; Molina, Martin-Consuegra, & Esteban, 2007; Prince, 1989), information technology (IT) (Eastlick, Lotz & Warrington, 2006; Gruen, Osmonbekov, & Czaplewski, 2006; Sigala, 2006), the automobile industry (De Hildebrand E Grisi & Ribeiro, 2004; Morgan and Hunt, 1994), retail business (Fullerton (Bee & Kahle, 2006; McDonald & Milne, 1997; Tower et al., 2006). Short-term trade schemes appear to have been mostly replaced by relationship concepts in marketing research and practise (Palmtier et al., 2006).

Research on relationship marketing has taken place in a wide range of fields and situations, all of which have their own definitions of relationship marketing. Because of this, I'll go over the literature on relationship marketing conceptualization quickly before presenting our conceptual model of relationship quality's definition. To paraphrase Berry (1983), "Relationship marketing" is "attracting, sustaining, and improving client relationships in multi-service businesses" (Berry, 1983, p.25). As a result, several researchers have come up with their own definitions of relationship marketing (Gronroos, 1994; Kotler, Bowen, Makens, 1996; Morgan & Hunt, 1984; Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2000). Despite the fact that

  Although definitions and techniques to relationship marketing differ, they all recognise three core elements: process, purpose, and parties (Sheth & Parvatiyar). To begin, definitions stress relationship marketing's process element, with the dominant notion being that the process is characterised by the development, improvement, and maintenance of relationships.

In addition, it is widely accepted that the goal of relationship marketing is to maximise the gains for all parties involved. Lastly, relationship marketing is characterised by entities that engage in relational exchanges with a central company, with the form of the connection varying depending on the partners. When it comes to business partners, Morgan and Hunt identified ten distinct categories: (1) suppliers of products; (2) service providers; (3) competitors; (4) non-

profits; (5) governmental entities; (10) ultimate customers; (11) intermediate customers; (12) functional departments; (12) employees; and (13) business units. This study is focused on the ultimate clients, in this instance sports fans as potential business partners and collaborators. As a result, based on past research, I have the following idea: Establishing, improving, and maintaining relationships with sport customers is the goal of relationship marketing for sports teams and consumers.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A small quantity of research has examined the use of relationship marketing within sports, despite an increase in the number of studies on the topic and an increased need for its use in sport marketing practise. Several areas of relationship marketing research in sport management need to be expanded and improved despite the fact that current studies in the sport management realm have provided valuable insights (Bee & Kahle, 2006; Cousens, Babiak, & Bradish, 2006; McDonald & Milne, 1997; Tower, Jago, & Deery, 2006).

For starters, prior sport management relationship marketing research hasn't done a good enough job of uncovering the unique characteristics of the team-sport consumer connection in comparison to relationships in the business-to-business, industrial, or other consumer markets. because research in applied fields, such as sport management, does not just replicate results from other disciplines, but also seeks to develop new knowledgeif the findings can be correctly used, it will be useful to look into the specific characteristics of relationship marketing in the sports consumer market, as well as the common qualities seen in both sports and general marketing settings.

In addition, past sport management relationship marketing studies seldom examined how individual psychographic and demographic variables impact the consequences of the connection between the team and the sport consumer on sport consuming habits. In order to build more complete frameworks to explain sport consuming behaviour within the team-sport consumer connection, researchers will need a deeper knowledge of the psychographic and demographic elements that influence this correlation. The ability to segment customers based on psychographic and demographic information will help practitioners create a successful relationship marketing plan. Finally, the existing literature's study findings are suspect due to a dearth of empirical data to back up the models and conclusions. To enhance our understanding of relationship marketing, we'll need to do empirical study in the sports industry. With respect to relationship marketing as a whole, I'm particularly interested in the topic of relationship quality.

An "**Overall evaluation of the strength of a relationship, conceived as a composite or multidimensional construct encompassing the many but connected aspects of a relationship**" can be used to describe relationship quality (Palmatier, Dant, Grewal, & Evans, 2006, p138). Nearly two decades ago, Crosby, Evans, and Cowles (1990) based on Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh's (1987) foundational work on relationships established the notion of relationship quality. Since then, a lot of time and attention has been put into researching various aspects of relationship quality.

Three factors make the notion of connection quality a relevant one for academic study. To begin, the quality of a relationship may provide light on what makes a relationship work and what doesn't. It's also helpful to know how good a relationship is since it may assist spot any difficulties that may arise and how to fix them. In the end, a close look at the quality of the relationship can be a useful tool for evaluating the relationship marketing effectiveness because previous research has shown that the quality of the relationship is a key predicator of company performance, such as customer loyalty (De Wulf, Odekerken-Schröder, & Iacobucci, 2001); Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, & Gremler, 2002; Sirdeshmukh, Singh, & Sabol, 2002 (Crosby et al., 1990; Doney & Cannon, 1997). The sports team and the sports consumer may both benefit from a greater grasp of the idea of relationship quality, it seems reasonable to assume A study of the existing work indicates significant limitations on current literature, despite the large volume of research on relationship quality. To begin, it appears that no one has come to an agreement on the core constructions that make up relationship quality, or on the structural structure of those constructs. In addition, the topic of relationship quality in sports consumer behaviour situations has received very little attention. Finally, academics and practitioners in sport management cannot quantify the quality of the team-sport consumer connection and evaluate the impact of relationship marketing initiatives using a tried-and-true scale.

## Objective of the Study

- To inspect the impact of the association on various sport consumption behaviors.

## Research Questions

- To what extent are sports consumption habits influenced by the quality of the relationships that exist?

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To evaluate the measurement models for relationship quality constructs, relationship quality outcomes, and relational personality traits, five separate confirmatory factor analyses were conducted on each group of factors using Mplus 5.1. Among various specialized software packages for SEM, Mplus was used in both the pilot study and main study for the following reasons: (1) Mplus offers several options to handle categorical (including Likert-type scale) and non-normal data; (2) Mplus incorporates a model-based imputation method to manage missing data (3) Mplus can model both continuous latent variables and categorical latent variables; (4) Mplus can analyze multilevel SEM with complex sample data; (5) Mplus can correctly analyze a correlation matrix using constrained estimation methods; (6) Mplus provides factor scores; (7) Mplus offers extensive Monte Carlo facilities both for data generation and data analysis; and (8) Syntax of Mplus is comparatively straightforward.

## Research Design

To acquire empirical data on relationship quality, sport consumption behavior, relational personality traits, and demographics surveys were conducted both online and face-to-face. Data analysis was performed using various statistical techniques such as Confirmatory Factor

Analysis (CFA), Structural Regression, and Multiple Sample Structural Equation Modeling. The research design section presents the framework used in this study in the following order: (1) Participants and procedures (2) Instrumentation (3) Pilot study (4) Data analysis.

## Data Analysis

The data was analysed in four distinct phases. At first, the study's variables were given descriptive statistics. Second, we checked the survey data for red flags and validated the essential assumptions that informed the statistical methods we employed. Finally, a structural model for relationship quality and relationship quality outcomes was evaluated after measurement models for the components were analysed. Finally, we looked at how possible moderators may have an influence on one another.

## STATISTICAL CHARACTERIZATION

To summarise the fundamental features of the data in this study, descriptive statistics were calculated using SPSS 15.0. These statistics included measures of central tendency (e.g., mean, mode, median, etc.) and measures of variability (e.g., range, variance, standard deviation, etc.).

## Examining Existing Data and Putting Assumptions to the Test

All variables were checked for correct data input, outliers, and a good match between data features and the essential assumptions of the various SEM approaches employed in this work using a variety of SPSS and Mplus programmes before the major analyses.

Explore's extreme value output was used to determine the significance of outlying variables. Depending on the kind of outlier, standard strategies for reducing their impact may include removing the offending instance or variable, performing a transformation, or making a change to the scores. SPSS Descriptive Statistics and Histograms were used to check for data normality. This study utilised Mardia's test for multivariate normalcy (1985)

PRELIS 2.80 allowed for the calculation of multivariate skewness and kurtosis coefficients, as well as normalised estimations of these coefficients. Multivariate non-normality can be deduced if the skewness and kurtosis Mardia Normalized Coefficients are both statistically significant. Speculated issues with SEM analysis arise when the normalcy assumption is broken to a significant degree.

Nonnormality has been proven to not affect the performance of the Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square statistic (SB 2, 1994), which may be used to assess models estimated with maximum likelihood estimation (Bentler & Yuan, 1999; Curran, West, & Finch, 1996; Hu, Bentler, & Kano, 1992). Consequently, SB 2 should be used to modify chi-square-based model fit indices. Since it was impractical to investigate all paired scatterplots, we randomly chose them and used SPSS Graphs to determine whether or not the observed variables were linear. Data transformation can be used to fix problems caused by violating linearity assumptions. Multicollinearity was found by inspecting the input matrix's determinant.

Data singularity. When asked for, SPSS Factor Analysis will provide you with the determinant of the input matrix. In the presence of severe multicollinearity or singularity, the offending variables should be eliminated or collapsed into a single composite variable.

## FORMULATION FOR QUANTIFYING

Five sets of constructs (relationship quality constructs for the UF football team and the iPod, relationship outcome constructs for the UF football team and the iPod, and relational personality characteristics) were evaluated using Mplus 5.1's confirmatory factor analyses. In the present investigation, the CFI and the standardised residual mean squared residual (SRMR) were utilised as goodness of fit indicators to assess the general model fit (1999). Recommendations included using a CFI cutoff-value near (more than).95 and an SRMR cutoff-value near (less than).09 (Hu & Bentler).

In addition to this, the root-mean-square error of approximation, also known as RMSEA, was utilised. According to Brown and Cudeck (1992), it is believed that RMSEA can alleviate issues associated with incremental fit indices (such as CFI) and absolute fit indices (such as GFI) by reducing the size of the error. Values of RMSEA that are less than.06 suggest a good match (Hu & Bentler), values that are.08 or less would imply a decent fit, and values that are more than.10 indicate an inadequate fit.

bad fitting (Brown & Cudeck). In addition, the weighted mean square residual, also known as WRMR, was utilised. This technique is recommended for usage with categorical data or non-normal continuous data (Muthén and Muthén, 2006). According to Yu and Muthén (2002), WRMR values less than 1.0 suggest a decent match, while lower values imply an even better fit.

Because a clear misspecification cannot be found by the indexed fit of the composite structural model, and because it is impossible to decide which components of the composite hypothesis can be considered satisfactory based on the global goodness of fit indices alone, the discrepancy matrix was also analysed in conjunction with modification indices (MI) statistics. This was done because it is impossible to discover a clear misspecification using the indexed fit of the composite structural model, and because it is also impossible to decide whether or not (McDonald & Ho, 2002).

In addition, internal consistency values, also known as Cronbach's alpha coefficients, were applied in order to investigate the degree to which the items that measured a certain subscale were connected with one another. Values greater than 70 are taken into consideration to be satisfactory (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In order to assess how effectively the items on a particular subscale were constructed, Average Variance Explained (AVE) values were utilised together shed light on the variability of the underlying concept. When AVE values are more than 0.50, it indicates that the overall dependability of the construct is sufficient (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The process that entails doing a 2 difference test between a model in which two individual components are constrained to be 1.0 (i.e., the two factors) and another model in which discriminant validity for each of the factors was being examined was followed and a model in which the degree of connection between two elements is left up to the user's discretion. It is possible to draw the conclusion that the two components are distinct in the population if the model that is not constrained and does not include the unity restrictions fits the data much better. The discriminant validity of the constructs was also evaluated with the help of the AVE values. The findings of each analysis may be found here.

The aforementioned were taken into account jointly in order to arrive at a final conclusion regarding which things and variables should be kept and which should be removed.

## CONCLUSION

A five-factor model has been developed to better evaluate the strength of relationships between sport consumers and the University of Florida Football team. The model's five components are as follows: belief in the team's ability to win, commitment to the team's success, reciprocity, and self-connection. It is advised, however, that iPod use a four-factor model to better depict relationship quality since this type of model combines not only the attributes of trust and commitment, but also those of reciprocity and relationship pleasure. A sport consumer behaviour model is also proposed by a second-order hierarchical model. This model takes into account the consumer's Intention for Attendance, as well as their Media Consumption and Licensed Merchandise Consumption. In addition, the quality of connections had a significant influence on consumption habits of UF Football and purchase intentions of iPods. The strength of a couple's connection has little influence on whether or not they will be happy together. In conclusion, the connection quality model presented in this research deserves further exploration from academics as well as industry experts.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are certain limits to be addressed for future study, even though this dissertation has offered significant insight into understanding relationship quality. The study's sample size is one of its major limitations. Despite the fact that this study did not gather all of its data from students, college students made up the vast majority of those who took part. So the outcomes of this research may not be as applicable to the wider population. Additionally, because this research was conducted on a college football team, its conclusions may not be applicable to other sports teams. If these findings can be applied to other sports situations (such as professional football and women's basketball), the generalizability of the findings will be increased. Second, this study made use of cross-sectional data. Despite the fact that theory suggested a causal link, the data utilised in this study cannot corroborate the temporal sequence of the association between relationship quality and intentions for consuming behaviours.

Because of this, the model created and tested in this study may be more solidly supported by long-term investigations. After that, the scale that was created and verified in this study will need to be fine-tuned. As noted previously, the scale revealed a difficulty with the discriminant validity of several components. Furthermore, the study's inclusion of relationship quality categories may not represent the complete spectrum of potential elements. The relationship between sport consumers and teams will be better understood via more empirical testing using a wider range of relationship quality criteria.

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