Consumption Intentions and Attitudes of Women Sports Fans

There is a dearth of research reflecting the understanding fans of women's sport concerning the consumption intentions. This study examined fans' attitudes toward women's cognitive and affective evaluations as they related to consumption intentions, salient product attributes of women's sports related to fans' consumption intentions, and group differences on attitudes. The results of the investigation indicated cognitive and affective aspects of attitude were predictive of consumption intentions. As a result, the respondent's positive affect regarding his or her favorite women's sport was a factor that increased his or her likelihood of consuming women's sports. Additionally, the cognitive component of attitude also contributed to the prediction of future behavioral intentions. Therefore, the researchers recommended that marketers should design strategies that are in line with both affective and cognitive aspects of fans' attitude toward women's sports to increase attendance and viewership. The findings of this study confirm the validity of positive relationships between attitude and consumption in the women's sports. Second, analyzing consumers' evaluations of the women's sport product concerning product attributes such as excitement and entertainment is significant as consumers tend to appreciate several attributes of a product/service that satisfy their needs and/or assist them in achieving their goals. Finally, this study indicated the significance of understanding the various market segments such as age or athletic participation as they revealed different perceptions of women's sports differ. Thus, the emergence of a diverse fan base for women's sport will require attention to these differences in targeted marketing communication.

Mumcu, C., Lough, N., & Barnes, J.C. (2016). Examination of women's sports fans' attitudes and consumption intentions. *Journal of Applied Sport Management, 8*, 25–43. doi:10.18666/JASM-2016-V8-I4-7221

Online Versus Traditional Marketing Classes

Research has indicated that the electronic methods in use for online team communication augment the communication quality in project-based work situations. The purpose of this study was to determine if (a) online student teams were more cohesive than traditional teams and (b) cohesion affects performance and satisfaction. Over a 2-year period, 50 online undergraduate students and 38 undergraduate students enrolled in traditional principles of marketing classes took part in the study. The courses identically designed regarding the delivery formats during each term including team formation, assignments, tests, and team projects. The main difference between the classes was that traditional classes met 3 days a week in a classroom, while the online students never met in person for class. Students were assigned to teams of 3–4 members using the alphabetic order of the class roster. Alphabetic assignment is typically used in the business school to randomly distribute skills and experience among teams. Results indicated that compared with the traditional teams, online teams produced better objective outcomes such as team performance. Online teams also reported higher satisfaction with their teams, more understanding to interpersonal issues such as being polite in communications, and more trust to the point of generating stronger social contracts concerning rules for monitoring team activities. Employing online teams may provide a basis for enhancing business and marketing education. The author concluded that online education, particularly in marketing, remains a rich source for improving professional marketing preparation.

Hansen, D. (2016). Cohesion in online student teams versus traditional teams. *Journal of Marketing Education, 38*, 37–46. doi:10.1177/0273475315594463

Endangered Animals As Mascots, What Fans Know

This work considered the connection sport fans have with their university-endangered animal mascot. Students from a Division I institution ($n = 177$), whose mascot is an endangered animal, took part in an online survey regarding their fan identification and their awareness regarding the status of their mascots. The results indicated that 69.5% of respondents correctly recognized their school's mascot as an endangered species, but only 10.7% correctly identified the approximate number of animals in the wild as less than 100. Further analysis revealed that highly identified fans had a greater interest in understanding how to protect the endangered animal mascot. This research points to the important attachment a team mascot can hold for fan and the role a mascot can play in the overall team identity. Furthermore, sport managers should recognize and consider how a team's mascot could be leveraged for positive environment and socially oriented goals, such as protecting endangered species.

Sartore-Baldwin, M.L., & McCullough, B.P. (in press). Examining sport fans and the endangered species nonhuman animals who represent their affiliated team mascot. *Society & Animals*, 1–20.

U.S. Politics and Steroids Screenings in Texas

This paper provides an overview and example of the role politics play in influencing sport policy and procedures. Through examining how the largest drug screening program of high school athletes developed and then was eventually disbanded, this conceptual paper highlights de-escalation behavior and the application of escalation of commitment theory. Furthermore, this work emphasizes how politics influenced the creation of a steroid testing program at a time when steroid use was declining and at a cost to taxpayers that was difficult to justify. Ultimately, this conceptual paper suggests the wider application of escalation of commitment theory to better understand various current issues in sport.

Berg, B.K., Winsley, K., Fuller, R.D., & Hutchinson, M. (2017). From crisis to de-escalation: An examination of politics in a U.S. high school steroid testing program. *International Journal of Exercise Science, 10*(6), 890–899. Available at http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/ijes/vol10/iss6/7

The Importance of Effective Operational Management

Organizational strategy and innovation receive all of the headlines, but organizational effectiveness still moves the needle, yet receives no notoriety. Research, however, suggests organizations with strong managerial processes perform significantly better as it relates to productivity, profitability, growth, and longevity. This study sought to rate companies on 18 core managerial practices. With a sample of more than 12,000 companies, the data suggested achieving operational was difficult and large, persistent gaps in basic managerial practices existed. Several reasons were offered by the authors to explain these two major findings including management overconfidence, government regulation, and false perceptions of operational effectiveness. In all, it is suggested that this research should impact how managers are trained. Management education should blend organizational effectiveness with strategic decision making as opposed to viewing them as separate processes.

Sadun, R., Bloom, N., & Van Reenen, J. (2017). Why do we undervalue competent management? Neither great leadership nor brilliant strategy matters without operational excellence. *Harvard Business Review, 95*(5), 120–128.

Harnessing the Power of Virtual Fan Communities

Virtual fan communities (VFCs) or online message boards are not only an important means of communication, but also a lucrative platform for advertisers and sponsorships. Previous research has suggested that VFCs are influential sources of team identification and consumption behavior, yet empirical examination in media and communication literature was lacking. As a result, this study explored the impact of engagement with, and attitudes toward, a specific VFC website. The results suggest attitudes toward the site predicted time on the VFC and time spent on the site increased online interaction. Differences were also uncovered between nonsubscribers and subscribers. In all, VFCs have become increasingly important touch-points for team sport fans, and the current results provide important implications for digital marketers and managers.

Walker, M., Hodge, C., & Bennett, G. (2017). The freeloader effect: Examining the influence of engagement and attitudes in a virtual fan community. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 26*, 130–139.

Women Add Social, Financial Value to Organizations

Women are underrepresented on top management teams (TMTs) and in chief executive officer (CEO) positions despite research that suggests women's presence in the upper echelons of organizations may positively affect firm performance. The reasons why women are underrepresented have been the topic of many theoretical debate and empirical study. To bring more clarity to organizational performance when a woman has representation on a TMT or as a CEO, Jeong and Harrison conducted a meta-analytic study using a sample of 146 primary studies in 33 different countries. This analysis is unique in that it examines firm performance prior to women's representation in upper echelons of management, as well as during their time in leadership. Performance measures included the long-term financial success of an organization, strategic risk-taking, and role congruity. Results suggested that organizations with women on TMTs or in CEO positions have more long-term financial success than organizations in which women are not represented in the upper echelons of management. Women are also less likely to make strategic decisions that could be harmful to the organization, thus ensuring the long-term financial success of their respective firms. Still, social perceptions of role congruity often result in short-term financial stock declines when a woman joins the organizational hierarchy. This loss is mitigated by the unique behavioral resources (e.g., controlled informational processing, information elaboration, strategic risk-taking) women contribute to TMTs. Initial analysis on corporate social performance also suggests that when women are present in leadership, stakeholders perceive higher levels of social responsibility. Organizations seeking long-term financial success and enhanced social performance would do well to include women on TMTs.

Joeng, S., & Harrison, D.A. (2017). Glass breaking, strategy making, and value creating: Meta-analytic outcomes of women as CEOs and TMT members. *Academy of Management, 60*(4), 1219–1252. doi:10.5465/amj.2014.0716