

An empirical study on the relationship between sport team identification and repurchase intention – the moderating effect on sport fan curiosity

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Aim of abstract / paper

The purposes of the current study were to investigate whether team identification positively predict repurchase intention of sport event, and to explore the moderating effect of sport fan curiosity on the identification-repurchase intention relationship.

Theoretical background or literature review

Previous research regarding curiosity was undertaken in the educational scenarios (Reio, Petrosko, Wiswell, & Thongsukmag, 2006). Sport fan curiosity is an emerging research topic in the spectator sport context. Due to the unique nature of uncertain outcome of sport events, most of the sport fans are crazy about the competitions (Funk, 2008). Individuals are inclined to respond to the stimulus that is uncertain (Kashdan, Rose, & Fincham, 2004). Spectator sport events in nature are regarded as an interesting, attractive and uncertain stimulus. The uncertainty of sport events was deemed to trigger sport fan's curiosity (Park et al., 2011). In the past, most of the studies attempting to explore sport fan behavior were conducted from the social and psychological perspectives (Funk, Mahony, & Ridinger, 2002; Madigan & Chen, 2008; Trail & Robinson, 2005). Additionally, research suggested that sport fans who have greater sport team identification were more likely to attend the sport events and to purchase the licensed merchandise (Beccarini & Ferrand, 2006; Dale et al., 2005; Hunt et al., 1999; Madigan, 1995; (Theodorakis, Koustelios, Robinson, & Barlas, 2009; Tobar, 2006; Wakefield, 1995; Wann & Branscombe, 1993). As a result, this current study was to investigate whether team identification positively predict repurchase intention of sport event, and to explore the moderating effect of sport fan curiosity on the identification-repurchase intention relationship.

Methodology, research design and data analysis

Four hundred and two spectators in the Chinese Professional Baseball League (CPBL) were recruited using stratified sampling technique. The measurement instruments in this study included Sport Fan Curiosity (Park, Ha, & Mahony, 2014) and Repurchase Intention (Kwon, Trail, & James, 2007) utilizing 7-point Likert scale. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to ensure the construct validity. In addition, Cronbach's alpha coefficients in this study indicated satisfactory reliability. Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted with demographic variables and team identification in the first block followed by the interaction effect of team identification and sport

fan curiosity in the second block in order to control Type I Error (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003; Frazier, Tix, & Barron, 2004; Kerwin & Doherty, 2012). SPSS 18.0 and LISREL 8.51 were used for data analysis with level of significance of .5.

Results, discussion and implications/conclusions

The results from hierarchical linear regression analysis revealed that team identification positively predicts repurchase intention ($\beta=.679, p<.05$). In addition, the interaction term of sport fan curiosity and team identification is statistically significant ($\beta=-.74, p<.05$), meaning that sport fan curiosity moderates the team identification-repurchase intention relationship. Sport franchises can increase the level of sport fan curiosity to elevate spectators' repurchase intention.

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