

# Sympathy with Sport Organizations and Willingness to Pay

Jose Atilano Pena López, University of a Coruña, Spain, atilano@udc.es

Jose Manuel Sánchez Santos, University of a Coruña, Spain

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## Abstract

The analysis of sport consumption is enormously complex if we confronted it with any other expression of scenic art. This complexity is rooted in the anthropological bases of sport and it is especially evident in the psychological implications that individuals experiment in connection with this kind of consumption in general. The derivations of this fact display manifold effects, from a clear influence in the functions of individual well-being, to the existence of a greater or smaller endowment of social capital in its different expressions. Thus, for example, the supporting of a club is not assimilable to loyalty in consumption, nor the utility of watching sports is a simple function of the results. In sum, the characteristics of this bond imply that the approach must necessarily be multidisciplinary since it displays economic, sociological and psychological effects, all of them integrated under the general epigraph of behavior of the consumer.

The present work is focused on the study of the causality and characterization of the relations of identity and sympathy (understood this one as interdependence of the utility functions) between a club and a supporter, and the effects that these can have on the demand of sport activities.

As starting point we make a survey of the diverse theoretical models on the personal implication of a subject in this type of activities. These conducts have already been object of an important set of works that have pointed out the importance of the sociocultural context, as well as the cognitive and affective factors of attraction as other conditioning this behavior.

In this sense, our work adopts the theoretical perspective of the general model proposed by Funk and James (2001), which, opposite to partial models (hierarchy of effects in the purchasing, escalating commitment...) develops a general explanation of the psychological processes that sublie to the appearance of the different degrees of bonding, integrating in a continuum the diverse attitudes of consumers. On the other hand, this model allows to establish a set of borders, tied to the individual evaluative processes by means of which a person internalize a social situation and that mark the qualitative different stages of bonding with a sport object of attraction. These borders consequently mark stages in a continuum that follows a behavioural logic that we will contrasted on our sample of study.

Simultaneously, between the distinguishing characteristics that are associated to identification or last stage on this process, the interdependence of the utility functions (sympathy), constitutes the clearest featurel. This disposition causes clear repercussions in the attitude towards the club like incondicionality, willingness to pay...

Our empirical model is centered in the study of the results of a survey made on the metropolitan population of A Corunna (Spain) on supporting, demand and willingness to pay with regard to the local soccer club (Real Sport Club of A Corunna). The results allow us to contrast applying logit( binomial and multinomial) methodologies, the diverse explanatory theoretical proposals on the four stages of implication and very specially the behavioral characteristics of the last phase or identification stage.

Also we will approach, from a theoretical and empirical point of view, the effects that the existence of sympathy relations has in sports consumer behavior and, in particular, the effects that these bonds have in the willingness to pay. Also it is developed an explanatory model on the determinants of this kind of conducts and its incidence in the demand of sport activities.

Between the initial results it is worth to mention the high repercussion of the television broadcastings, as well as the social context and the remarkable weight of the sociocultural variables. On the other hand, the existence of a clear entailment between sympathy and willingness to pay is verified.