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A mental model of sports fan purchasing behavior: from a self-concept perspective

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In making purchasing decisions, people often try to associate themselves with the brand or products that they intend to identify with. This manifestation of self is often done through the path of symbolic consumption. This type of consumption behaviour is closely linked with the assumptions of self-concept and image congruity theory. However, in the consumer behaviour literature, self-concept has often been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct owing to various levels of selves identified by researchers. At this point, to understand the linkage between the manifold of selves and sports fan purchasing behaviours is of great importance for sports marketers.

Thus, sports fan behaviour is of the main interest of this paper to apply such concept to explain their psychological affiliation with their supporting teams or sport events. This review collecting past research will not only help to understand consumer behaviour but also acknowledge the diversified consumer trait across consumer groups. This review article scanned through 48 articles published in 10 marketing journals and one specific sports management journal within the last decade that involves the application of self-concept hypotheses and identified different types of selves in connection with the resulting behaviour of buying or not buying, from this point, a mental model has been proposed to associate these different types of selves with various sports fan behaviours for further studies.