

# THE CONSEQUENCES OF FAN ORIENTATION ON TURKISH SOCCER CLUBS

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## Abstract keywords

Marketing, Marketing orientation, Sports marketing, Sports market, Sports club-fan relationship

## Aim of abstract/paper - research question

The aim of the study is to explain the dimensions of fan orientation on Turkish sport clubs.

## Theoretical background or literature review\*

Market orientation refers to the organization wide generation of market intelligence pertaining to current and future needs of customers, dissemination of intelligence within the organization, and responsiveness to it (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). Organizations must make long-term commitments to maintain the relationship through quality, service, and innovation. Consequently, market orientation has been assumed as a prerequisite to success and profitability for most organizations (Kara et al., 2005). However, much less attention has been devoted to developing a valid measure of market orientation in sports organizations. In today's world, of the organizations, sport organizations play an increasingly important role in modern societies, as its influence spans across many spheres of activities (Pons et al, 2006). From an economic perspective, sport accounts for a significant part of the entertainment and service industries (Mullin, Hardy, and Sutton 2000). Although sport organizations have been enjoying substantial benefits from the success of spectator sport segment for a very long time, they are experiencing a number of significant changes in the sport business environment (Kim, 2008). Facing these changes sport marketers need a paradigm to understand their customers' (fans) wants and needs in order to present them better service and products. So the aim of the study is to explain the dimensions of fan orientation on Turkish sport clubs.

## Methodology, research design and data analysis

In this study researchers define marketing orientation for the sports clubs named "Fan Orientation" about current and future needs of sport fans. A questionnaire was developed incorporating items revealed in focus groups and personal interviews with people who are the fans of soccer teams attending their teams' games and buy licensed merchandise. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part is comprised of 27 statements related fan orientation of sport clubs. The second part included demographic variables and individual differences of fans. To analyze data collected from fans of Eskişehirspor, a popular soccer club of Turkish Super League, principal factor analysis was used to sort out and classify the variables as well as to convert them into main factors. The empirical results of this study were; (1) communication and personalization (2) comfort of the stadium (3) promotion (4) licensed merchandise (5) wants and complaints of fans (6) famous people. The total of scale reliability was 0.90, thus the dimensions had high coefficient scores greater than the exhorted level of 0.70 (Kim et al., 2003; Nunnally, 1978).

## Results, discussion and implications/conclusions\*\*

Today sport clubs realize the value of their fans because of understanding they are the key factor to achieve increases in productivity, revenue and profitability. It's really important for sport clubs to understand their fans' wants and needs. By being fan oriented and by using information acquired from their fans sport teams can have the ability to enhance their fan value and thus, team profitability. So, sport club managers and sport club marketing managers should care about their fans' wants and needs. Findings from this study provide managerial implications that can be used to better manage and market a sport club. As with all research, this study is not free of some limitations and suggests avenues for future research consideration. The current study focused specifically on limited number of people. Future research on perceptions on sport facility design could be extended to include wider demographic base, both geographically and international-wise, to further explore the extent to which the findings are generalizable.

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