

INVOLVEMENT WITH RECREATIONAL SPORT PARTICIPATION: THE ROLE OF PERSONAL NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES

Abstract ID: EASM-2015-124/R1 - (590)

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Date submitted: 2015-03-19

Date accepted: 2015-05-12

Type: Scientific

Keywords: Sport Involvement, Leisure Negotiation Strategies

Category: 12: Sport Policy

Synopsis:

The present study aimed to study which cognitive and behavioral negotiation strategies are used by individuals with different sport involvement levels. The data were collected by participants in local authority sport programs in Greece. The results revealed statistical significant differences among individuals with different sport involvement levels, in terms of the negotiation strategies. The implications are discussed

Abstract:

Introduction

It is well documented today that the study of sport involvement can contribute to our theoretical understanding of sport consumer decision-making, since research has shown that involvement is associated with behavioral and attitudinal outcomes such as, increased customer retention and loyalty levels, increased intensity of sport participation, sport specialization and development of positive-word-of-mouth. It is, therefore, of practical and theoretical interest to identify the factors that lead to the development of sport involvement. The identification of these factors can guide the development of appropriate marketing strategies.

Literature Review

This study used the theoretical framework of Leisure Constraints Negotiation (Jackson et al., 1993) in order to study the development of sport involvement. On extending the hierarchical model of leisure constraints Jackson et al. (1993) proposed that the successful negotiation of leisure constraints, with the use of cognitive and behavioral strategies, determine sport participation and subsequent aspects, such as sport specialization and involvement. The present study aimed to study which cognitive and behavioral negotiation strategies: a) are used by individuals with different sport involvement levels, and b) are the most effective ones in overcoming the perceptions of leisure constraints and increase sport involvement.

Methodology

In order to achieve the objectives of the study a detailed negotiation scale was developed, based on both the concepts of Leisure Constraints Negotiations (Alexandris et al., 2013), and Processes of Change (Nigg & Courneya, 1998), as discussed within the Transtheoretical model of Behavioural Change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983). The new scale included 11 dimensions of negotiation strategies: Consciousness Raising (three items), Dramatic Relief (three items), Environmental Re-evaluation (four items), Self Re-evaluation (four items), Social Liberation (four items), Counter Conditioning (four items), Helping Relationships (four items), Reinforcement Management (four items), Stimulus Control (three items), Time management (three items) and Financial (three items). Their factorial validity and reliability was established with the use of a confirmatory factor analysis (NFI= 0.89, NNFI = 0.93, CFI=0.94, IFI=0.94, SRMR= 0.06, RMSEA= 0.05 and consequent reliability analysis (alpha scores >.80 for all the sub-scales). The four dimensional scale of leisure involvement Kyle & Chick (2002) was used for the measurement of sport involvement, as it has been adjusted to Greek population. Five hundred and eighty (N=581) individuals (63% women and 37% men), who were participants in local authority sport programs participated in the study and completed the above questionnaires. The Ward method using K-means clustering was used to segment participants.

Findings

The cluster analysis revealed that the three involvement group solution (high, medium and low) was the most meaningful. Univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the three groups' scores in terms of the negotiation strategies. The results revealed statistical significant differences among the three involvement groups in all the negotiation dimensions. The most significant statistical differences were found in the Time management (F=122.8, p<.001), Financial (F=69.3, p<.001), Reinforcement management (F=59.1, p<.001), and Stimulus Control (F=59.1, p<.001) dimensions. The high involvement group was shown to use more intense both behavioral and cognitive negotiation strategies in relation to the other two.

Conclusion

These results show the value of the Transtheoretical and Constraints models in studying sport consumer behavior. They are discussed in terms of the hierarchical model of Leisure Constraints and the Transtheoretical Model of Behavioral Change. The marketing applications will also be presented.

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