

# Sport Marketing and Sponsorship

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## Introduction

In total 23 articles are identified for the section of sport marketing and sponsorship with seven of them devoted to the theme of sport sponsorship, and the rest to sport marketing related topics. Written by 65 authors, the majority of these articles (15) come from IJSMS, a journal exclusively dedicated to research of sport marketing and sponsorship. In addition, 4 other studies come from SMR, 3 from ESMQ, and one from JGSM. In this section of the Sport Management Digest, an overview of these publications will be offered with five of them being reviewed in more details.

## Advances in Sport Marketing and Sponsorship

A breakdown of the articles identified regarding themes and topics can be found in table 1 below, and it can be seen that just over two thirds of them (16 papers) are about sport marketing related topics with brand equity and consumer behaviour as the main focus areas of study (12 papers). In addition, sport sponsorship is another critical area of research with sponsorship effects and determinants as the main focus. Next, five articles will be reviewed in more detail with 2 of them coming from SMR and the other 3 from IJSMS.

Table 1 Selected Publication in Sport Marketing and Sponsorship

Themes	Topics	Authors	No
Sport marketing	Sport brand equity and consumer behaviors	Melton & MacCharles(2021)	12
		Behnam, Sato & Baker (2021)*	
		Yim, Byon, Baker & Zhang (2021)	

		McCullough & Trail (2021)	
		Joo, Koo & Nichols (2021)	
		Papadimitriou, Apostolopoulou, Branvold & Gargalianos (2021)	
		Mayer & Hungenberg (2021)	
		Yu, Robinson & Lee (2021)	
		Kose, Argan & Hedlund (2021)	
		Paek, Morse, Kim & Jung (2021)*	
		Yim & Byon (2021)	
		Uhrich (2021)	
	Sport product advertising	Siani, Mohammadi, Hosseini & Dickson (2021)	1
	Social media marketing	Balliauw, Onghena & Mulkens (2021)*	1
	Stakeholders' attachment	Takamatsu (2021)	1
	Sport event tourism marketing	Hallmann, Zehrer & Rietz (2021)	1
		Desmarais, Boobyer & Bruce (2021)*	
		Felbert & Breuer (2021)	
Sport sponsorship	Sponsorship effects and determinants	Angell, Bottomley, Brečić, Filipović, Gorton, Logkizidou & White (2021)	7
		Kamath, Ganguli & George (2021)	
		Alonso Dos Santos, Sánchez-Franco & Prado Gascó (2021)*	

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Total	23
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Note: \* refers to articles reviewed in detail.

The first two articles on sport consumer behaviour come from SMR and IJSMS respectively. Using service-dominant logic as the theoretical framework, Behnam, Sato, & Baker (2021) seek to examine the relationship between consumer engagement and value co-creation and whether they could predict behavioral loyalty in the context of fitness clubs. In addition, the moderating role of psychological involvement between consumer engagement and behavioral loyalty is also examined. With data collected from 559 participants from fitness clubs in Urmia, Iran, structural equation modelling is used to test the hypothesis and the results confirm positive associations between consumer engagement, value co-creation, and behavioural loyalty. More specifically, value co-creation is measured as a two-dimension construct and it is revealed that consumer engagement has a positive indirect effect on behavioural loyalty through co-production, although not through value-in-use. Furthermore, the moderating effect of psychological involvement on the relationship between consumer engagement and behavioural loyalty is also confirmed, where the relationship would be stronger for individuals with higher psychological involvement. The study extends the literature by not only empirically testing the relationships between consumer engagement, value co-creation, and behavioural loyalty, as suggested by extant literature, but also confirming their applicability in a fitness club context.

In the second paper on sport consumer behaviour, Paek, Morse, Kim & Jung (2021) turn their attention to online consumers of licensed sports products, reflecting the changing landscape of industry with the rapid growth of online retailing. Based on a survey study with data collected via Qualtrics from 331

sport fans who recently had online shopping experiences over the official online shops of the four major leagues of North America, the authors examine relationships among perceived website quality, flow, web satisfaction, and shopping well-being by using structural equation modeling. Results of this study show that flow plays a mediating role between perceived website quality and web satisfaction, which in turn is positively associated with consumers' shopping well-being. This study contributes to knowledge by considering the various situational cues of the websites as the preconditions of flow state in the context of sports merchandising, and thus offers implications for managers of sport commerce websites regarding the function of flow as an essential factor via the optimization of website services and sport consumers' attitudes.

With the rise of social media marketing, Balliauw, Onghena & Mulkens (2021) seek to identify the factors or attributes that influence the value of advertisement posts on social media of football players or clubs by using a discrete choice model. Based on a survey study with data collected from 40 sponsorship managers of active football sponsors and their advisers, it is revealed that size of followers, on-field performance and price are some of the key factors that would affect the advertising company's utility. In addition, the used social media channel would also make a difference, as Facebook and Instagram are preferred over Twitter, due to the latter's limited degrees of freedom for advertisers. This is one of the first studies identifying which factors significantly affect companies' utility derived from advertising on football clubs' or players' social media, and the results could help clubs' and players' managers create better sports social media advertisements by better accommodating those factors valued most by the advertising companies.

The final two papers are about the sponsorship effects and their determining factors. Through a survey study with open-ended questions with data collected from 203 New Zealand citizens or permanent residents, Desmarais, Boobyer & Bruce (2021) investigate the opinions of New Zealanders about a sport

transgression and ensuing crisis management approaches of multinational sportswear manufacturer Adidas, one year after its decision, initiated an image crisis. While researchers have examined how sport fans react to sponsorship-linked scandals, sponsors are normally considered as victims of someone else's actions (e.g. athletes) (Kwak et al., 2018). This study extends literature by redirecting the focus onto the effects of a sponsor-initiated transgression. It also adds to knowledge by exploring the lingering effects of poor relationship and crisis management by a sponsor, which contrasts with the overwhelming focus on effects during or in the immediate aftermath of a sport crisis or scandal. The results demonstrate how perceived disrespect can cause enduring damage to a sponsor's reputation and relationships with national public and national sport fans, which provides valuable lessons for sponsorship practice.

In the last paper, Alonso-Dos-Santos et al (2021) examine the influence of articulation on the effectiveness of sports sponsorship by using an experimental design,. In contrast to existing literature suggesting that articulation would improve visual attention, perceived congruence and memory of sponsor brands, this study shows that articulation in sports posters does not make any difference in perceived congruence or recall, and even worse, it would actually divert visual attention from the brand to the text, diminishing recall. The study extends knowledge by shedding new light on the role of articulation in sponsorship activation, and offered implications for practice. In addition, the authors are commended for employing neurophysiological techniques through the use of Eye tracking technology in their study to produce objective evidence and thus reduce possible behavioral biases.

## **Conclusions**

The sheer volume of publications indicate that sport marketing and sponsorship remains a robust and dynamic area of study. While brand equity and consumer

behaviour as well as sponsorship effectiveness and its determining factors are still the main focus areas of research, the publications reviewed here also highlight that scholars are increasingly embracing a multidisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary approach featuring research methods and techniques coming from other disciplines such as neurophysiology. The works also reflect the changing landscape and ecosystem of the sport industry with growing scholarly attention paid to the emerging social media and online retailing.

## **Reference**

Kwak, D. H., Lee, J. S., & Chan-Olmsted, S. (2018). Athlete scandals and endorsement marketing: Research trends and introduction to topics. *Journal of Global Sport Management*, 3(2), 99–106.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/24704067.2018.1457972>

## **Annotated bibliography**

*Behnam, M., Sato, M., & Baker, B. J. (2021). The Role of Consumer Engagement in Behavioral Loyalty through Value Co-Creation in Fitness Clubs. Sport Management Review, 24(4), 567-593. DOI: 10.1080/14413523.2021.1880772.*

The authors aim to explore the associations between consumer engagement, two dimensions of value co-creation (co-production and value-in use), and behavioral loyalty while considering the moderating role of psychological involvement using service dominant logic as the theoretical framework. It's an empirical study that valid data of 559 are collected from fitness clubs in Urmia, Iran. The results show positive associations between consumer engagement, value co-creation, and behavioral loyalty. Co-production plays a mediating role between consumer engagement and behavioral loyalty while value-in use not. Psychological involvement has a moderating effect on the relationship between consumer engagement and behavioral loyalty. These findings

contribute to sport marketing on co-create value and provide managerial suggestions for fitness club managers to create positive interactions with customers for improving behavioral loyalty. However, the limits of generalization of the research model should be considered as well.

*Desmarais, F., Boobyer, K., & Bruce, T. (2021). Lingering effects of sponsor transgression against a national fan base: the importance of respect in relationship management. Sport Management Review, 24(4), 642-672. DOI:10.1080/14413523.2021.1880743.*

The authors aim to explore the longevity of public responses to a sponsor transgression crisis. They conduct an anonymous, qualitative online survey after one year of Adidas All Blacks jersey pricing crisis in New Zealand. The post-event results show the damage caused by a sponsor's transgression and unsatisfactory crisis response is not transitory. The sponsor ignoring or underestimating the depth of national feelings in the relationship of the public with national teams has caused negative consequences. It's suggested that national team sponsors who explicitly galvanize intense feelings of patriotism need to understand and respect the national public's emotional stake in their national team rather than narrowly pursuing sales or the bottom line. This article makes contributions to crisis management and relationship marketing. However, not all respondents complete every question, which may influence the internal consistence of the survey.

*Alonso Dos Santos, M., Sánchez-Franco, M.J., & Prado Gascó, V. (2021). The effect of articulated sports sponsorship on recall and visual attention to the brand. International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship, 22 (3), 493-506. DOI: 10.1108/IJSMS-11-2019-0129.*

The authors aim to examine the influence of articulation on the effectiveness of sports sponsorship. It's an experimental design with factors of articulation (articulated vs unarticulated), congruence (congruent and incongruent) and sporting discipline (tennis, F1 and sailing) using neurophysiological measures and eye tracking technology. The results show that the articulation does not influence the perceived congruence on recall of the sponsor, nor on visual attention toward the sponsor's brand. The articulation does not exert a moderating effect on the influence of perceived congruence on recall, but does exert a moderating effect on the mediation of visual attention on influence of the perceived congruence on recall. It's suggested that articulation would not be suitable for sponsorship in the sports poster environment but comparing the results with different types of articulation in future studies would be necessary.

*Balliauw, M., Onghena, E. and Mulkens, S. (2021). Identifying factors affecting the value of advertisements on football clubs' and players' social media: a discrete choice analysis. International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship, 22 (4), 652-676. DOI: 10.1108/IJSMS-12-2019-0138.*

The authors aim to identify which factors significantly affect the companies' utility derived from advertising on football clubs' and players' social media and estimate prices for their social media advertisements. Five attributes including social media channel, number of followers, price per post, performance and visibility are decided by an expert panel with a discrete choice modelling approach employed to calculate the price of willing to pay in club model and player model respectively. The results show that more followers, better on-field performance and a lower price significantly increase the advertising company's utility. Moreover, the used social media channel has a significant influence since Facebook and Instagram are preferred over Twitter. These findings contribute to the pricing decision when social media posts are sold or included in sponsorship packages. However, the large price differences involved in



survey may lead to potential overestimation of price that need to be paid attention to.

*Paek, B., Morse, A., Kim, M., & Jung, H. (2021). Sport consumer flow and shopping well-being in online shopping. International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship, 22 (4), 721-736. DOI: 10.1108/IJSMS-06-2020-0116.*

The authors aim to investigate the impact and complexity of sport commerce websites by providing the precondition of flow as well as the consequences of flow. Relationships among perceived website quality, flow, web satisfaction, and shopping well-being are examined by using structural equation modeling. The results show that flow state plays a mediating role of sport consumer perceptions of website quality and satisfaction, which in turn is positively associated with consumers' shopping well-being. These findings contribute to the function of flow as an essential factor on e-consumers' behaviors while machine learning are suggested as a beneficial approach for prediction of behaviors in future studies.