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FEMALES ARE MORE EMOTIONAL; EVEN TO THEIR
FAVORITE PLAYER? GENDER BASE COMPARISON OF FAN
LOYALTY TOWARDS STAR PLAYER

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ABSTRACT

The common perception in Asian societies is that, female's attachment level to others is higher as compared to males. Fan loyalty in sports fans is not only subject of team-fan relationship but player-fan relationship as well. The purpose of this study is to discover gender base player-fan relationship to find out loyalty level among male and female fans for their beloved player and establish that either "female trust level" to their heroes is more obsessive or it is just another prototype assumption. This study also checked the effect of patronage in females and males. The concept of trust in player used as measuring tool. 12 Item scales derived from previous studies consist of trust in players, vicarious achievement motive, player identification and patronage intention used to conduct study. Results reveal that females are more attach to their favorite player however when it comes to buying merchandises of player, males have higher intention to buy products because females have limited choices available in the market because of cultural differences.

KEYWORD: Fan Loyalty, Sport Marketing, Star Player, Female Fans.

1. INTRODUCTION

The common perception in Asian society about females is “emotional”. Their love, hate, attachment assumed to be more zealous and emotional. Although it is question of more psychology and sociology and less sport but in this research this prototype statement treated as ground zero of the study. This study would investigate “emotional” claim to find out either this concept works in fan and loyalty meaning as well or not.

The one concept is in the marketing world existed, women especially Asian women are less interested in sport. But in Turkey this concept vanished at all when after trouble between fans in Istanbul organizers decided to allow only females and children under 16 years as spectators. The result of that football match, with only women spectators was at Turkish football club Fenerbahce’s ground, the club’s game against Manisapor, match attendance figure was 41000 (the Guardian, 2011). Erhart (2011); Tanaka (2002); Ratna (2011) and Pope (2010; 2013) are among very few researches based on female fans.

South Asian women considered, even till today as more house wives than professional working women. Because of above mentioned concept the research on females as sport fans never been much popular subject in academic researchers. But when compare these both statements it looks like irrational that one on hand females are not interested in sport while on other hand female are more emotional fans as well. This study will establish clear picture of the status of female fans and their level of attachment comparing to males. According to consideration of “females are less interested in sport teams” instead of team , player loyalty would be measure and compared as it is easy to follow a person then whole team while emotional attachment could be more real when it is human instead of a thing.

The fan loyalty has been more focused on establishing brand equity and team identification (Bauer et al., 2008; Funk & James, 2006; Heere & Dickson 2008). Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) provided based for fan loyalty by presetting brand equity. The focal point of the researches however was the major factors influencing fan loyalty (Funk, et al., 2000; Funk & Pastore, 2000; Gladden & Funk, 2002), and the motives of sport consumers (McDonald et al.,2002; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995).

2. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to find out and comparison between attachment level of in male and female fans. The second major issue in this study is patronage or purchasing intentions of fans. This study will go through fans loyalty and intentions to buying products related to their beloved player that represent their attachment to their favorite player. This study will further look the effect of trust, identification and loyalty to purchasing favorite player related products.

The hypothesis of the study are

- H1: Female fans are more attached to their favorite player
- H2: Male fans have more re-patronage intention then female fans
- H3: Trust, vicarious achievement and identification have positive significance on re-patronage intention of fans.
- H4: Trust effect the most on re-patronage intention of fans
- H5: Identity effect least on re-patronage intention of fans

3. METHODOLOGY

Quantitative research method used for this specific research. Primary data conducted from football fans and analyze through SPSS.

4. SAMPLING DESIGN

A questionnaire consists of twelve items: trust in player (three items), vicarious achievement motive towards player (three items), player identification (three items) and re-patronage intention (three items). Trust in player adopted from Doney & Cannon (1997), Hennig-Thurau et al. (2002), and Wu et al. (2012).

Vicarious achievement motive towards player is feeling taste of success when player succeed. In the current study vicarious achievement motive towards player derived from and Wu et al. (2012), Trail et al. (2003) and McDonald et al. (2000).

Player identification derived from researches of Wu et al. (2012) and Trail et al. (2003).

Re-patronage intention of fans adopted from Bauer et al. (2008) and Wu et al. (2012) but as this study consist of player loyalty instead of team loyalty so items alters in favor of star player from team.

All items of questionnaire measured on 5-point Likert scale.

5. STATISTICAL DESIN

After collecting total 128 surveys completed out of them 117 were fill out completed and able to use in the study. Among 117 completed questionnaires 49 completed by female while 68 filled by males, which was as expected because in Pakistan females avoid to talk with strangers and their attitude is introvert. Data were analyzed by using statistical package SPSS 21. Correlation, Multi regression and ANOVA functions performed on data.

6. GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

Questionnaire were collected from three different cities of Pakistan from December 9, 2013 to February 15, 2014

randomly. Three different groups of people gather data in three different cities which are Multan, Lahore and Karachi. Data collector instructed to guide the background of the study before filling the form.

7. RESULS

From table 1 the higher means among female fans indicating about more intensity in the following of their beloved player which proved H1 and somehow support the common phrase as women are more emotional. Level of attachment is higher on trust on player. This segment belongs to honesty and character of player. The overall image of player matters most among fans in this study's result regardless of gender.

The re-patronage intention is higher among male fans as hypothesized in H2. The higher mean of re-patronage intention among male fans indicating that male fans are more interested to visit stadium in regard to watch their favorite player and to buy merchandises that show their affiliation to their beloved star player.

The table2 shows the results of one way ANOVA for Trust, Identity, Achievement, on re-patronage. In the table we can see that the p-value is 0.000 which is less than the level of significance (0.05) which indicates that trust, identity and achievement has significant effect on re-patronage. Literature also support to my results. The table shows the result of regression analysis between to Trust, Vicarious Achievement, Identification and Re-patronage. The p-value for all, Trust, Vicarious Achievement and Identification is 0.000 which indicates that all items, Trust, Vicarious Achievement and player identification an influencing factor for re-patronage. Literature is also supporting to this result. With the help of table 1 and table 3, supposed H3: Trust,

vicarious achievement and identification have positive significance on re-patronage intention of fans got sufficient evidence.

Table three showed the effect of all three factors (Trust, Vicarious achievement and trust) on re-patronage could be judged and the result showed that it is Trust, which motivates most the fans to re-patronage intention. The reason behind Trust on player as key factor discussed above already. Trust represents overall image of player and in any case that would remain very positive in the mind of fans. On other hand identity of player is weakest point to motivate re-patronage intention among sport fans. The main problem with identity of player in culture of Pakistan is type of sport played most. Cricket is most popular game in the country where 60 percent sport viewers prefer to watch cricket (Aslam, 2008) like while field hockey is national sport of the Pakistan. Both mentioned games played at international level unlike world favorite football that supports club level format instead. On the club level player have freedom to join other teams but on international it is more patriotism then sportsman ship. So player identification is naturally weak contributor towards re-patronage intention among Pakistani sport fans as suggested in hypothesis 5.

8. SUGGESTIONS

There is need to adopt good marketing strategy. Clubs should focus on their fans according to their cultures. Good marketing strategy can enhance club revenue and get better re-patronage intentions from their fans. Sport research should treat cultural affect also to calculate better outcome of researches.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Females are emotional, dependent and attached to other showed in result where high rate of trust on player resulted in female fans

comparing to males. However ratio of trust is higher in both cases which explained the nature of loyalty in fans. The more trust means the more loyalty among fans. The favorite player's win feels as winning by itself. However more loyal fans ignore the item that performance of player important to me because their trust not rotate around the pitch but it spreads around player life. His social work, his hobbies his role in society helps to maintain his trust. Shahid Afridi is important example as a player. His performance in the field faced lots of low point in the Cricket grounds but due to his personal image he is still among favorite sportsman in Pakistan. Female fans, because of high level of attachment ignore or in some cases even do not follow player performance but still have good feeling about the player.

Re-patronage intention is fruit of loyalty so that clubs as brand could earn back from fans. The more loyal fans consider asset of clubs so they spent money in team shop and on gates of stadium. But case is different in Pakistan. The more loyal fans (females) are less interested to pay back to player and team. There are two sides of this unusual problem. First factor is inequality in the society. In Asian societies females are dependent socially and financially. Not only financial and social dependency but also time is hurdle for female fans as male spent 10 hour more time comparing to female fans (Ruibley & Billings,2012). Wann et al. (1999) described that female fans are more family motivated then male sport fans so their individual decision making playing very less part in regard of buying intention of club products. The second factor is role of culture. European clubs produce product for European societies. Not only products but prices also suits European and American only. Female fans have very limited choice of purchasing club merchandises in Muslim societies. Shirts,

scarfs, caps, trousers are almost unsalable items in Pakistan among female fans. If in rare case someone ready to buy shirt the price is

another hurdle. So people in sub-continent prefer to buy replica jerseys from un-authentic shops which are much cheaper.

10. FIGURES, TABLES

Table 1 Pearson Correlation between Re-patronage, Trust, Achievement, Identity

Scales	1	2	3	4	M	Female Mean	Male Mean	SD
Re-patronage	-	0.971***	0.956***	0.755***	133.20	53.91	79.20	10.85
Trust	0.971***	-	0.975***	0.729***	41.72	28.32	13.4	6.29
V. Achievement	0.956***	0.975***	-	0.714***	15.34	8.89	6.45	2.59
Identity	0.755***	0.729***	0.714***	-	9.46	5.31	4.15	4.82

(*** $p < 0.01$)

1=re-patronage, 2- Trust, 3- Vicarious achievement, 4= Identity

Table 2 One way ANOVA: Effect of Trust, Identity, Achievement, on re-patronage

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Factor	3	4746.1	1582.0	24.53	0.000
Error	114	7351.3	64.5		
Total	117	12097.4			

*** $p < .01$

Table 3 Regression Analysis: Re-patronage versus Trust, Vicarious Achievement, Identification Combination of three tables

Predictor	Coefficient	T	P-Value
Constant	35.157	-9.98	0.000
Trust	0.335	12.70	0.000
Constant	116.693	14.15	0.000
V. Achievement	0.563	45.01	0.000
Constant	18.581	14.15	0.000
Identification	0.078	7.92	0.000

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