Topic:

Sport Sponsorship: The Relationship Between Team Loyalty, Sponsorship Awareness, Attitude Toward the Sponsor, and Purchase Intentions

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ABSTRACT

The purpose in this study was to understanding the relationship among the attitude, behavior loyalty, sponsorship awareness, attitude toward the sponsor and purchase intension of the both actual sponsor for the team Sport Lisboa e Befica (SLB) in Portuguese soccer league.

Data were collected by fan of the soccer team. The data was used conform factor analysis (CFA) to testing the significant of the hypothesis models.

There are finding the difference significant among the relationship of the both sponsor.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sport sponsorship has been growing in popularity worldwide, that the key of marketing strategy. In 2011, the worldwide sponsorship market was estimated at $48.6 billion, with approximately 68% of the total money being invested in sport properties (IEG, 2012).

Sport sponsorship was important tool for corporate sponsor and the valuable income for the professional sport teams.

Recent researches have examined the role of the fan’s. The psychological of the fan’s are very important reaction on the sponsor such as:

- Sponsor awareness
- Attitude toward sponsor
- Purchase intensions

The purpose in this study was to examination the relationship between both attitudinal and behavioral components of team loyalty with sponsors’ awareness, attitude toward actual sponsors, and purchase intentions.
2.0 Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Sport Sponsorship
According Meenagen in 1911 was defined sponsorship as: “an investment, in cash or in kind, in an activity, in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that activity”.

Sport sponsorship can be viewed as a business-to-business relationship between a sponsor and a sport entity for mutual benefits. In sport context, sponsorship supports the monetary, or kind of the resources needed to improve/develop the quality of the team and other aspects of the club.

Through the sports, the sponsor obtain the tangible and intangible benefits of being associated with the sport entity, increasing brand awareness, brand image, new target markets, boosting sales and market, brand loyalty, opportunities, and the ultimate goal to orienting consumer’s or fan’s preferences toward sponsors’ products.

2.2 Actual Sponsors in Professional Sport
The actual sponsor associated with professional team has a reaction on the brand sponsor, toward to their team. The important key of the brand is relation with the team or event to determining how the customer responds on sponsor.

2.3 Team Loyalty
The customer loyalty was defined as a favorable of the attitude and purchase behavior of the customer for the brand.

In the sport context, team loyalty represents of psychological of the fan’s, enduring positive behavior and attitude toward of the team.
The behavior loyalty of the fan’s including the aspect:

- Sport involvement
- Following the team
- Team identification
- The money spent in merchandise
- Frequency attendance the arena or watching on TV.
- Fan’s believes of the team
- Regular purchase the product

**H1: Attitudinal loyalty has a direct positive effect on behavior loyalty**

Based on the literature review suggests the favorite team plays as an important on sponsor reaction. The fan’s stronger devotion to a team, the level of team identification, sport involvement was positively related to sponsor awareness.

**H2a: Attitudinal loyalty has a direct positive effect on sponsorship awareness.**

**H2b: Behavioral loyalty has a direct positive effect on sponsorship awareness.**

Parker and Fink (2010) and Hong (2011) maintain that being a fan of a team contributes positively to the attitude toward the sponsors. The previously studies was highlighting that the attitudes toward actual sponsors are influenced by consumers’ identification with the team or sport.

**H3a: Attitudinal loyalty has a direct positive effect on attitude towards actual sponsors.**

**H3b: Behavioral loyalty has a direct positive effect on attitude towards actual sponsors.**
Ko et al. (2008) and Lee et al. (2011) suggest that the consumer’s which customer higher involvement or attendances are likely to buy the product from generic sponsors of an event.

*H4a: Attitudinal loyalty has a direct positive effect on intentions to purchase products of actual sponsors.*

*H4b: Behavioral loyalty has a direct positive effect on intentions to purchase products of actual sponsors.*

### 2.4 Sponsorship Awareness

The sponsor awareness refers to a customer ability to identify the brand, the brand recognition, remember the past exposure, brand recall. The sponsor awareness has effective the target audiences who must be known to exist of the brand.

Ko Schlesinger & Güngerich have emphasized that sponsorship awareness is an important component in consumers’ attitudes toward the sponsors and purchase intentions.

*H5: Sponsorship awareness has a direct positive effect on attitude towards actual sponsors.*

*H6: Sponsorship awareness has a direct positive effect on intentions to purchase products of actual sponsors.*

### 2.5 Attitude Toward the Sponsor

The attitudes toward degree of the sponsor which favor or disfavor are pivotal factor sponsorship effectiveness. According to Ajzen (2001), an attitude toward an object plays a significant role in predicting a person’s behavioral intentions.

Following Alexandris et al. (2007) suggest attitude toward the sponsor is an important predictor of purchase intentions.

*H7: Attitude towards the sponsor has a direct positive effect on intentions to purchase products of that sponsor.*
2.6 Purchase Intensions

Purchase intension was suggested by Dees, Bennett, and Villegas (2008), that purchase intentions represent an indicator of an individual’s motivation to make a specific purchase behavior. Thus, the purchase intentions as endpoint of the sponsorship effectiveness, that to understanding the relationship among behavior and attitude of fan’s on actual sponsor.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 1 — Hypothesized model.

3.0 Methodology

The research was setting of the top Portuguese soccer league, with the team Sport Lisboa e Benfica (SLB) and two of its main sponsors.

**Sponsor A** is an alcoholic beverage brand and has no sponsorship deals with other Portuguese soccer teams.

**Sponsor B** is a television and internet-service provider, which has sponsorship deals with the two major rival soccer teams of the league.

3.1 Participants and Data Collection

The data were collected by mail survey with the support of the SLB marketing personal.
The mail was sent to 4000 supporter randomly from the database of SLB. The survey was returned 2068 survey. 1834 surveys were usable for data analysis (45.85%).

3.2 Measures
The mail survey was to assess team loyalty, sponsorship awareness, attitude toward the sponsors, and purchase intentions. All measurement items was translated into Portuguese and back translated into English.

- **Team loyalty**: Team loyalty was measured using both attitudinal and behavior.
  - Attitude loyalty dimension was measured by 5 items (7-point Likert-type scale)
  - Behavior loyalty dimension was measured by 3 items (7-point Likert-type scale)

- **Sponsorship awareness**: This dimension was measured by asked the name of the brand sponsor. Which a list of twelve brand names including six true sponsors and six nonsponsors was used to assess recognition. The score for the respondent from 0 to 12.

- **Attitude Toward the Sponsor**: The attitude toward sponsor was measured by 3 items (7-point Likert-type scale).

- **Purchase Intentions**: The purchase intentions dimension was measured by 4 items (7-point Likert-type scale).

3.3 Data analysis
Data were analyzed using AMOS 20.0. The data was performed a two-step maximum likelihood structural equation model (SEM).

**Step 1:** The research was used Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to measurement the models of each sponsor.
**Step 2:** The research was used the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test research hypotheses model of each sponsor.

4.0 Results

4.1 Measurement model
The step one measurement model was indicated:

**Sponsor A:**

- The factor loading all items was larger than 0.500, ranging from 0.505 to 0.974
- The composite reliability ranging from 0.71 to 0.95
- The average variance value ranging from 0.45 to 0.85
- Model fit: $\chi^2/df = 8.82$, TLI=.97, CFI=.98, GFI=.96, RMSEA=.07

**Sponsor B:**

- The factor loading all items was larger than 0.500, ranging from 0.501 to 0.965
- The composite reliability ranging from 0.71 to 0.97
- The average variance value ranging from 0.45 to 0.91
- Model fit: $\chi^2/df = 4.93$, TLI=.99, CFI=.99, GFI=.98, RMSEA=.05

4.2 Structural Model
The results Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was indicated the significant of both the hypothesis model:
Sponsor A model:

Sponsorship awareness 

\[ \chi^2/df = 8.01 \]

TLI = .97

CFI = .98

GFI = .96

RMSEA = .06

Attitudinal loyalty

\[ .09^{**} \]

Behavior loyalty

\[ .08^{**} \]

Purchase intension

\[ .08^{**} \]

Attitude towards the sponsor

\[ .72^{**} \]

Sponsor B model:

Sponsorship awareness

\[ \chi^2/df = 4.34 \]

TLI=.99

CFI=.99

GFI=.98

RMSEA=.04

Attitudinal loyalty

\[ .09^{**} \]

Behavior loyalty

\[ .07^{**} \]

Purchase intension

\[ .17^{**} \]

Attitude towards the sponsor

\[ -.10^{**} \]

\[ .76^{**} \]
5.0 Discussion and Implications

5.1 Discussion

The results indicate that not all hypotheses proposed in the study were supported, and management can be derived from these findings. The role of behavioral loyalty on the attitude toward the sponsor was significantly different for the two brands.

Sponsor A is an alcoholic beverage, the customer can buy or use during the games time. Sponsor B is a television and internet-service provider, the products can not buy or use during the games time.

In addition, the price may be important factors to understand fan’s response to sponsors. These were found the role of brand’ logo displaying on team shirts and the displays sponsor brand in the stadium. Given the sponsor could also design new logos to attract the customer, increasing the brand recall, attitude toward the sponsor, brand awareness, and purchase intentions.

5.2 Implication

The first: the context of sponsorship was limited to one professional soccer team and two of its sponsors.

The second: the data were collected through a mail survey and it may have contributed to sample selectivity.

The third: the psychometric properties of attitudinal loyalty suggest the need of scale refinement in future research.

The fourth: fans’ perception of team performance during the season was not controlled, the sponsor success need to follows the team’s on the field success.

The fifth: purchase intentions as an endpoint as opposed to actual purchase behavior.