

ANALYSIS OF BARRIERS TO ATTRACTING SPONSORS IN WOMEN'S SPORT FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF AHWAZ CITY EXECUTIVES

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate barrier to sponsors' attraction in women's sports from the viewpoint of managers in Shiraz. This research is descriptive – survey and field survey. The statistical population of this research includes all the companies in Shiraz, whose number is equal to 600 companies and the staff of sports boards, which is equal to 26 sports teams. Based on the Morgan sample size, 220 companies and 26 sports teams were identified as a total of 246 individuals in this study. In this study, a standard Isdiary questionnaire (2010) was used which confirmed the formal and structural validity and reliability. In order to analyze the data of the present research, it was used the statistical methods of exploratory analysis and path analysis using SPSS and AMOS software. The results of the factor analysis indicated that in total, 4 barriers contained about 67% of variances. The results of this study indicated that media barriers with the effect 50% had the greatest impact on the barriers to attract sponsorship in women's sports. Therefore, due to the necessity of barriers to attract the sponsor in women's sport, it is recommended from the managers' viewpoint which the subjects about media barriers should be considered by authorities and sports boards in Ahwaz.

Keywords: sponsors, media barriers, women, Ahwaz city

Introduction

The necessity of the globalization of the sports industry, which began in the 1980s, lead to change the role of sport in society and created the income generation opportunities. In fact, sports and economies are interacting together, on the one hand, governments and private companies with investing in sports can benefit from a lot of resources, on the other hand, sports can play an important role in various aspects of their economic development. The one of methods for funding for sports activities, especially championship activities is to attract the companies and organizations for sponsorship (Muharamzadeh 2006; Akhenci 1992; Ethiqi 2002; Minagan 2001). Today, companies consider the sponsorship as one of the communication tools and they tend to increase awareness of the company's products. In fact, the sponsorship is a very important means of marketing communication which it has been effective in reaching the desired advertising for a company and its sub-branches and indirectly helps the company by supporting a business (Madrigal 2001; Bennett 1999). It can be said that sports sponsorship is one of the most important sources of income in today's sport (Elahi and his colleagues, 1386).

The concept of financial sponsorship isn't a new phenomenon; it originated almost 140 years ago and it was first introduced in the 1970s in the world of business (Van Heyrden 2005; Ayerson and Johnson 2004). So far, both in sport and in other areas, it has not been defined the financial support in a comprehensive manner but financial support is defined as providing financial assistance to an activity by a commercial organization with the aim of achieving business goals (Minagan, 1983). Shank expresses sport sponsorship as following: "investing in sports (athletes, teams, leagues or sports programs) is to support corporate, business or advanced goals" (Ayerson & Johnson, 2004). There are many types of sponsors. Many sponsors begin their work directly with academic teams. Some of those supports the various teams. For example, in relation to women's sport, the women's basketball team cooperates with Nike, Adidas supports the women's sport program. Asics supports women's volleyball team. There are other companies that support the sports teams but they are not directly involved with the teams. In general, sponsors always play an important role in the world of sport and their strength in exercise becomes more than before.

Among the goals of sponsorship for corporations, the expansion of sales market . the development of awareness, the creation of a positive image and competition with other companies and increased sales is of great important. While the better communication with government and using of benefits of advertising isn't very important for companies (Karl 2003, Izadi 1383) ; when talking about sponsoring of women's sports, it can be seen that there are many problems in this regard . Overall, a review of previous research indicated that some scholars have been looking for obstacles to the development of sport sponsorship in the countries and in the economic system (Elahi and his colleagues, 2007 ;Jiko 2004 ; Hoda 2001) and others have highlighted factors such as widespread television inactivity, ineffective marketing management and low credibility of the logo and sports sign in the development of attracting sponsor (Stralysen 2005, Doherty and Murray 2007, Kishak 2004).

Given the differences in the views, goals and desires of managers and sports authorities with private company managers in investing in the sports industry, the managers and sports authorities should identify the goals and criteria of these companies and private firms and by providing a favorable field , remove the barriers to invest by the sponsors and improve them to invest more in the country's sport industry . Fortunately, in Iran ,the sponsorship is of great important in recent years and after professionalization of national leagues and tournaments .Today, most professional clubs in the country have sponsors and companies, businessman and large industries found that by investing in sports sector, they can help to the sport and health of the country and benefit from the business opportunities but despite the growing professionalism of women in sport and countless competition, fewcompanies are willing to invest in women's sport . what are the factors as a barrier to support the sponsors of women's sports.

Methodology

This study is a applicable study in terms of goals and a descriptive study in terms of collecting the information and a analytical study in terms of type of study which was collected the information through a questionnaire as field collection . the statistical population of this study includes all companies in Ahwaz city, whose number is equivalent to 600 companies and sports club authorities, whose number is equal to 41 sports teams . Based on the Morgan sample size table ,220 companies and 26 sports teams, which the researchers successfully collected a questionnaire from 26 sports teams, a total of 246 people were identified as the sample of the study . In this study, Izadyar questionnaire was developed in 2010 .The questionnaires are set based on the Likert scale with 5 values and individual information part contained 5 questions . The financial support questionnaire was comprised of 38 questions in 5 dimensions that covered the research objectives and was designed in Likert scale from a 1-5 (very low) to 5 (very high) .Validity of the questionnaire in Iran was used by Izadyar(2010) and indicates the content validity and acceptable appearance of the questionnaire . to work better ,the researcher measured the content and construct validity .

The reliability of Izadyar questionnaire (2010) was 0.44 .In this research, Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire which the reliability coefficient for the whole questionnaire was 0.85 . In this study, the data were evaluated using descriptive statistics . Descriptive statistics were used to describe, classify and determine the raw scores by calculating the mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum for drawing the tables . To verify the normal distribution of data, it was used the normal distribution test, Koolmorgov- Friedman test, exploratory factor analysis and path analysis as well as Cronbach's alpha to calculate the reliability coefficient . The statistical operation was performed using software SPSS, version 18 and software AMOS version 20 .

Findings

Table 1 shows the distribution of responses by age group .The collected data shows that the number of respondents in the age group of 31-40 years old was about 41.43%, in age group 41-50, about 25.79% and in the age group of 51-60 years was 50.80% and the total number of respondents was 246 . The Maximum frequency is related to the age group of 51-60 years with a frequency of 114 respondents and the minimum frequency is for the age group of 31-40 with a frequency of 50 respondents .

Table 1: Age Frequency Distribution

Age group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
31-40 years	50	23.41
41-50 years	76	25.79
51-60	114	
Total	220	100

Table 2: Fit Index of Final Model

	NFL	AGFI	GFI	CFI	RSMEA	X ² /df	Df	Chi-square(x ²)
Rate	0.929	0.928	0.925	0.921	0.042	2.569	84	215.854
criterion	More than 0.90	More than 0.90	More than 0.90	More than 0.90	less than 0.05	Less than 3	≥0	————
Interpretation	Desireable fit	Desireable fit	Desireable fit	Desireable fit	Desireable fit	Desireable fit	Desireable fit	Desireable fit

Table 3: Factor Rate

Variable/effects	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
Media barriers	0.505	-----	0.505
Economic barriers	0.435	-----	0.435
Management barrier	0.380	-----	0.380
Government barrier	0.234	-----	0.234
Cultural barrier	0.118	-----	0.118

As shown in Table 3 ,The whole research model shows a suitable model according to indicators of good fitness . Also according to the path analysis results, it was identified the media barriers with the effect of 0.50 as the first barrier, the economic barriers with a 0.43 as second barrier, management barriers with 0.38 as third barriers, the government barriers with the effect 0.23 as forth barrier and cultural barriers with the effect 0.11 as fifth barrier .

Table 4: Prioritizing Media Barriers to Attract Sponsors in Women's Sports

Sig	Df	Chi-square	Average rating	Barriers	Priority
0.0001	8	27.80	5.93	The lack of media coverage of the event	1
			5.75	The lack of print media coverage	2
			5.70	Lack of attention to the correct and clear distribution of sponsor advertising by the media	3
			5.59	The problems in the quantity and quality of television broadcasting competition	4
			5.53	Not displaying a good number of other countries'professional competitionson TV	5
			5.43	Low impact of sports support in introducing company products to the community	6
			5.29	Poor transferring the business message of company through sport	7
			5.03	Not efficient sports support to access targeted markets	8
			5.79	Lack of public awareness of sponsor products	9

As seen in table 4 ,given the average rating of the internal components of media barriers, from respondents' viewpoint, the lack of media coverage of the event with the average 5.93 is the most important barrier and not efficient sports support with the average 5.03 is the lease important barrier.

Table 5: Prioritize the Economic Barriers to Attract the Sponsor in Women's Sports

sig	df	Chi-square	Average rating	Barriers	Priority
0.003	7	30.02	3.90	No increase in sales of goods and services	1
			3.79	Unreliable communication with the current customers	2
			3.47	Lacking new customers	3
			3.23	Not competition with rival companies	4
			2.94	Economic instability in the country	5
			2.90	Lack of income generation in sport	6
			2.48	Lack of adequate funding for financial support	7
			2.12	World economic crisis	8

As seen in Table 5 ,given the average rating of the internal components of economic barriers, from respondents' viewpoint, the lack of an increase in sales of goods and services with an average 3.90 is the most important barrier and the global economic crisis with an average of 2.12 is the lease important barrie3.

Table 6: Prioritize the Management Barriers to Attract the Sponsor in Women's Sports

Sig	df	Chi-square	Average rating	Barrier	Priority
0.0001	8	29.12	3.92	Disagreement between the board of directors to decide on financial support	1
			3.81	Not accepting sports sponsorship as a good marketing means	2
			3.67	The lack of monitoring of the work of sports authorities regarding the fair competition of sports sponsors	3
			3.47	Unwillingness to spend time and engage in sports	4
			3.12	uninteresting of directors in sponsoring sports	5
			2.93	Lack of long-term marketing plans in the company	6
			2.87	The exclusiveness of the company and the lack of need for advertising	7
			2.57	The absence of a specific reference in the cost of payment list for financial support	8
			2.12	The existence of financial and administrative rules for lack of financial support for corporate executives	9

As seen in Table 6 and regarding the average rating of internal components of managerial barriers, from respondent's viewpoint, the disagreement between the board of directors to make financial support decisions with the average of 3.92 is the most important barrier and the existence of financial and administrative rules for lack of financial support for corporate executive with an average of 2.12 is the least important barrier .

Discussion and Conclusion

The information collected based on the frequency distribution of age indicates that the number of respondents in the group aged 31-40 years was about 23.41%, in the group aged 41-50 about 25.79% and in the group aged 51-60, 50.80 and total respondents was 246. The results of path analysis showed that media barriers have the greatest impact and 50% . Ehsani et al (2008) in a study titled “ Investigating the causes of supporting sponsors of women's sports in Isfahan “ indicated that the companies don't invest in the women's sportbecause ofuncertainty about investing in the women's sports, their lack of access to their goals and the poor transfer of business message to the company (Ehsani, 1387, Elahi et al (2007). In an study about assessing the barriers to attract income from financial support in the Iranian football industry, the lack of the right to media broadcasting in the country's football industry has been mentioned as barriers to investment in the sports industry. In this regard, Burt and Slieck (2001), Abrahamenson (2003), Eiverson (2004), Soign (2005), Sterling (2005) and Faeed (2007) consider the important role of media coverage and national propaganda on

attracting financial supporters and say that more the television and satellite shows of the competition at the national and international levels, more the amount of financial support and it is consistent with the findings of this research. Also, the finding of this study are inconsistent with the Asadi's study (1393) because in the Asadi's study, media barriers are among the top five barriers to attracting sponsors but in the present study, the media barriers are among the most important barriers. Given this finding, it seems that the reason of the difference in this finding with earlier studies could be due to an unequal number in the statistical people and a sample of research in this analysis. It is also possible that this omission of ranking may also be due to the lack of attention of the community in the use of mass media.

The results of path analysis showed that the economic barriers have the effect 0.435 while the studies by Robbins (2002) and Benav it Sigan (2007) show that large manufacturing companies such as Adidas, Nike and Ford annually allocate a budget to support sports teams. One of the important requirements to encourage the participation of the nongovernmental sector is to provide economic security and consequently, investment security. The owner of capital, when making a decision to invest, needs two issues, ensuring the profitability and not conflicting with its capital. As you see it, some of the economic barriers in this study are related to the current status of economy in the country, some related to the status of economy in the state and some related to sports. Thus, it seems that attempting to eliminate or reduce its effects on private sector investment can facilitate the entry of this sector into provincial sports. The findings of the present study are consistent with the researched of AlOKhaj (2001), Shafer (2001), Ehsani (2008), Izadi (1393), Jamaat (1394), McDonald's (2014), Roy (2000).

Therefore, the possibility of lack of support for women's sport will arise that it has been shown in the present study and the economic factors are one of the most important factors in supporting women's sports by production companies. From the perspective of the present research community, the economic factor has had a great impact on the lack of support for women's sports. These finding showed that because support for sports teams couldn't cause the boom, therefore, managers don't predicted this in their budget. Accordingly, these companies are not able to support women's sports or sports teams. The results of path analysis showed that management barriers have an effect 38%. While Kimberly et al. (2015) indicated in their studies that major corporate executive spend more on sports sponsorship because the budget needed for support is presented in the annual budget and it isn't matter.

Major managers may abandon the support when changing from one team to another team or from a discipline to another and in other affairs, special executives engage in the company's sport sector and are doing all related affairs. Unfortunately, in Iran, because the heads of companies want to do all the work themselves and monitor everything, this mentality has been created for them which sport support can waste a lot of time. The results of this study are consistent with the finding of Izadi (1393), McDonald's (2014), Roy (2000), Kimberly (2015), Johnson (2003). Findings suggest this hypothesis that management factors have an effect on the lack of support of production companies for women's sports and managers and organization have little desire to support women's sports. In other words, the lack of willingness to spend on time and the involvement of sports by managers causes to distract from their core duties.

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