





The Mediating Role of Brand Image in the Relationship Between Fan Engagement and Fans' Attitudinal and Behavioral Loyalty

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence, "In fact sports fans are one of the most important groups of sports consumers whose strong passion for fandom team identity and emotional attachment to sports clubs is often referred to as fan engagement in sports marketing literature," could benefit from a citation to support the claim about the importance of sports fans in the context of sports marketing.

The statement "measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion, and distribution shape were used" is broad. It would be useful to specify which specific measures (e.g., mean, standard deviation) were calculated and how they contributed to the analysis.

In the table summarizing the "Explained Variance of the Model," the discrepancy between the R-squared and Adjusted R-squared values is minimal. Consider discussing the implications of this in the text, particularly how it relates to the robustness of the model.

The path analysis results are presented with t-values and significance levels, but confidence intervals are not reported. Including confidence intervals would provide additional information on the precision of these estimates.

Authors revised the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The statement, "Fans are often attracted when their favorite team wins matches," is somewhat vague. Consider specifying the type of evidence or studies that support this claim to strengthen the argument.

The term "brand engagement" is used without a clear definition. It would be helpful to define this term explicitly, perhaps by referencing a key study or providing a clear conceptual framework.

The article states that "stratified random sampling was employed," but it is not clear how the strata were defined. Please clarify the criteria used to create strata within the sample population.

The description of the "Fan Engagement with Brand" questionnaire lacks detail on its reliability and validity. Please include information on how the reliability and validity of this questionnaire were established or reference relevant literature that supports its use.

The claim that "Sports clubs should seize opportunities to increase fan engagement" could be expanded by discussing specific strategies or interventions that have been shown to be effective, drawing from existing literature.

The statement, "Engagement in a relationship is not only demonstrated by behavior but also by attitudes and the reasons why this behavior occurs," is crucial. However, the reasons why behavior occurs are not discussed in detail. Adding examples or theories that explain these reasons would enrich this section.

The sentence "When consumers evaluate their interactions with a brand or organization, they may perceive value based on memorable and personal experiences," could be strengthened by citing specific studies or models that discuss the creation of consumer value through brand interactions.

The conclusion mentions that "brand image mediates the relationship between fan engagement and both attitudinal and behavioral loyalty," but does not discuss the practical implications of this finding in detail. Consider adding suggestions for how sports teams can apply this knowledge to improve fan loyalty.

Authors revised the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.