

The relationship between the social responsibility of club with products consumption and fans' trust of football premier league teams

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this research is to study the relationship between social responsibility of club with products consumption and fans' trust of football premier league teams. The present research is of correlation type and has been performed as a field study. The statistical universe includes all fans of premier league teams in 2013- 2014. The statistical sample was selected among the fans attended sport stadia. Considering at least 9000 fans attended each play, the sample size according to Morgan Table was estimated 380 persons (each team: 190) and available sampling method was used. To collect data, the social responsibility standard questionnaire (Stewart, 2003) with reliability coefficient (0/88) was used. In Iran, It was validated by Bakhshandeh (2012) and its content validity and construct had been approved by him. And so the questionnaires of fans' trust (Oswin and Kampitez, 2008) with reliability 0/76 and the usage of products (Kim,2008) with reliability 0/70 were used. To analyze data, addition to descriptive statistical indexes, the statistical methods of Spearman correlation coefficient, and Kolmogorov- Smirnov were used. The results showed that there was a significant and positive correlation between the aspects of club social responsibility and the usage of products ($r=0/35$, $p=0/001$). Also there was a significant and positive relationship between the aspects of social responsibility and fans' trust ($r=0/33$, $p=0/001$).

Keywords: Social responsibility, products consumption, trust, Premier league, Fans.

INTRODUCTION

Today, football has the most fans and is the most popular sport in the world. In our country, Iran, has the most athletes and fans too (Asadi, 2009). Undoubtedly, the most important part of a sport event is the attendance of fans in the club (Masoumi, 2008).The level of attitude and fans' support from the football club is considered as a key variable in the income- making section for the club. Therefore, employing some appropriate strategies for attending fans in the clubs requires sufficient awareness of the kind of their support. Since the fans support their own popular team and remain loyal to it according to some various interests, identifying their sport consumption behavior can help attract, protect and develop numerous fans (Saat Chian, 2011). Opposition to traditional perspectives, the task of companies and organizations is not only profit taking, but also they have responsibilities in their own business environment whose name is social responsibility (Ebrahimi and Roodani, 2009). Thus, due to the special place of football, there has been a strong relationship between football clubs and their communities. Football clubs don't want to win at any price, but according to Nick Hornby:" they owe a popularity and competence feeling to their fans "(Rooska, 2011).

Walker and Kent (2009) have said that the social responsibility in the sport industry is different from the other areas because this industry has some characteristics which distinguish it from the other organizations in the trade area (Walker and Parnet, 2010). The football club also is an influential force and member of a society like citizens. The football clubs not only in the field but also in the outside initiatives including social responsibility cause to progress the society (Rooska, 2011). Therefore, one of the social problems which has attracted attention of authorities and practitioners of different societies is inattention and lack of loyalty of organizations and managers to their social

responsibility and task. This subject, especially in Iran is very important due to some certain conditions and necessity of comprehensive development, (Nikoomaram and Mohamadian saravi, 2009). In today's comparative world, the fans are in favor of the clubs and their satisfaction is the major factor of taking competitive profit of the clubs. To satisfy the fans requires meeting their needs completely and identifying exactly their demands, expectations, tendencies, abilities and limitations in usage of the services or purchasing products (Chavosh bashi, 2010). The fans play a deniable role in surviving sport industry. They are so important which are counted among major capitals of every professional club and sport leagues and clubs are identified by fans (Hassan Zade, 2011). The researchers also believe that the fans are considered as pillars of sport industry, because they provide athlete with a live and direct environment, so that the athlete cannot exhibit a good play in the competition (Khabiri, 2004).

One of the social problems which many of authorities and practitioners of different societies pay attention to it is inattention and lack of commitment of organizations and managers to their own social responsibility and task. This important subject, especially in Iran has been considered due to some certain conditions and necessity of comprehensive development, (Nikoomaram, Mohammadian Saravi, 2009).

Studying the social responsibility issue is important due to several reasons:

1)The managers' decisions influence deeply the different parts of the society.2) If the individuals, groups, organizations and institutes of the society hold themselves responsible for various events, happenings and crises and attempt to solve the various problems, many crises and problems will be solved at a short time and a healthy and pacific society will be exist. 3) To improve and protect their place in the society, organizations should pay attention to their own social responsibilities and have legality in the society. 4)All performances of organization influence the society and this effect, good or bad, will be reflected on organization itself ; therefore managers' malfunction causes many problems for society that finally will involve themselves. 5) The cost of society in which managers haven't any sense of responsibility is very high (Alvani and Ghasemi, 1998; Chavoshbashi, 2010).

The football clubs maintain their relation to the citizens of society through doing initiatives of the social responsibility (Vindesour, 2001; Wood ad Loosdon, 2001) and thus increases fans' support. One of the ways to return on investment for the clubs is such increased support of fans(Rooska, 2011).

Moshbeki and Khalili Shojaie (2010) in their research concluded that there is a positive and significant correlation between the organizational factors and the social responsibility of organization. They stated employees' mental pattern is the most effective major factor on organization social responsibility.

Also Hasani and Heydari Zade (2013) in another research named "Fitness of causal – structural relations of Islamic Ethics in work on the social responsibility and individual responsiveness given to mediator effects of service culture " concluded that there is a positive and significant correlation between Islamic ethics of work with social responsibility and individual responsiveness. Also, the mediator role of service culture in the relationship between Islamic ethics of work with social responsibility wasn't approved, but the findings show the mediator role of service culture in the relationship between Islamic ethics of work with individual social responsibility.

Walker at al. (2010) in their research related to the social responsibility of Olympic games named " Social responsibility and Olympic games: The mediator role of customers' characteristics " studied the influence of the social responsibility of Olympic games on customers' responses. Their results showed that in general the spectators ' awareness of the social responsibility was low. The results of their research demonstrated the spectators ' awareness of the social responsibility has a positive and significant effect on credit of Olympic games, repeat business, mouth – to- mouth expression and products consumption (Walker, 2010).

AbdolRahim (2011) in a research named " The importance and effect of social responsibility on the customers' behavior in Malaysia" studied the importance of the social responsibility in the customers' behavior. Their results showed that the customers expect the organizations to provide information about what they do and the customers support the organization which follow the initiatives of social responsibility.

Dogar (2010) also studied the social responsibility of the private companies in two scopes of ethical and social expectations. Their results showed a positive relation between the social responsibility and the financial performance of the organization. These results also demonstrate that there is a positive relation between organization's social responsibility and the levels of customers' satisfaction, but it was not significant. Swaen and Chumpitaz (2008) in their research named" The influence of social responsibility on customers' trust " studied the effect of customers' perception related to the initiatives of organization social responsibility on their trust in the organization. Their results showed the initiatives of social responsibility influence customers' trust, directly and indirectly.

Russel (2010) in a research titled " Here or There ?customer's reactions to corporate social responsibility: egocentric tendencies and their moderators " examined the customers' response to the initiatives of the social responsibility in the different geographical regions. They concluded that although the customers approved the initiatives of the social responsibility in the nonlocal societies, these initiatives haven't any influences on their support

and purchase intention. Given to studying the above research background, it can be said that decision making of sport clubs managers can have several great and deep effects on the various sections of a society. Therefore managers' awareness and attention regard to their social responsibilities during decision making is very important ; because an irrational and incorrect decision and regardless to the social influences can impose many irreversible damages on the society (Nikoomaram and Mohamadian Saravi, 2009).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present research is of correlation kind and in terms of objective, is functional. The statistical universe of research includes the fans of 16 teams of football premier league (2013- 2014) ; considering there are millions of fans in throughout Iran, and on average about 9000 spectators attended clubs. For more confidence, the researcher selected his statistical sample only among spectators. The sample size was estimated 380 spectators by Morgan Table (each team 190). Considering the probability of fall and increasing generalizability among the fans of each team, 200 questionnaires were distributed and the available sampling method was used. In this research, 3 inventories were used. The social responsibility inventory has Composed of four aspects of ethical, economic, legal and humanistic responsibilities and was measured by 12 questions from the social responsibility standard inventory (Stewart, 2003). The inventory of fans trust has been designed in 2008 by Swaen and chumpitaz and includes 6 questions. It has been arranged on 5 point Likert scale. The products consumption inventory has been designed in 2008 by Kim and has 4 questions and is based on 5 point Likert scale.

The social responsibility standard inventory (reliability coefficient 0/88) includes four aspects of obedience to law (reliability coefficient 0/78), economic responsibility (reliability coefficient 0/73), ethical responsibility (reliability coefficient 0/89) and humanistic responsibility (reliability coefficient 0/83) that has been validated in Iran by Bakhshande (2012). The content validity and construct of this inventory have been approved by him. The inventories of the fans trust (Swaen and chumpitaz, 2008) and the products consumption (Kim, 2008) were used with reliability coefficients 0/76and 0/70, respectively. In inferential analysis of the findings, Kolmogorov- Smirnov test was applied to determine to be normal data and Spearman correlation coefficient was used for determining the relationship between variables using software SPSS and version 20.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- 1- Age: 51/2% fans have the age range of 18-24 and 8% were above 45.
- 2- Record of support: 38/5% and 9/2% fans have supported their popular team for 2-5 and 11-15 years, respectively.
- 3- Education: 37/2% and 17/6% fans were holder of diploma and M.A and higher level, respectively.
- 4- Attendance in one season: 37/8% spectators attend 1-3 times in the club and 17/6% of them, 7-10 times.
 - a. Following the plays: 68/ 5% spectators follow all plays of their popular team and 6/5% of them don't follow the plays of their own team.

The results of the normality assumption test of the social responsibility and its aspects and the variables of research are provided in the following table (table 1):

Table 1. the results of Kolmogorov- Smirnov test

Social responsibility	Fans trust	Products consumption	humanistic	Ethical	economic	legal	
1732	1732	1732	1732	1732	1732	1732	frequency
2/882	5/490	7/205	6/641	8/118	7/405	7/075	Kolmogorov- Smirnov
0/001	0/001	0/001	0/001	0/001	0/001	0/001	0/001

As the table 1 demonstrates the significance level in the above table in none of the cells isn't more than 0/05 and this shows that our statistical sample isn't normal. Thus in the following, we must use non parametric tests. To study the relationship between the club social responsibility with the products consumption and the fans' trust of football premier league teams, Spearman correlation coefficient was used which the table 2 shows its results.

Table 2. Spearman correlation between the variables of social responsibility, products consumption and fans' trust

Products consumption	fans' trust	Social responsibility	Variable
0/35***	0/33***	1	Social responsibility
0/59***	1	0/33***	fans' trust
1	0/59***	0/35***	Products consumption

*** shows correlation is significance in the level 0/001.

Discussion and conclusion

The aim of the present research was to study the relationship between the club social responsibility with products consumption and the fans' trust of football premier league teams. The findings showed that there is a positive and significance relationship between the club social responsibility with products usage and the fans' trust. It means that increasing the social responsibility of the club, the products consumption and fans' trust also increases. The results of this research are associated with the results of Hasani and Heydari Zade (2013), Moshbeki and Khalili Shojaie (2010), Walker (2010), Abdol Rahim (2011), Dogar(2010) and Russel's (2010) Researches.

The results obtained showed that there is a positive and significance relationship between the social responsibility with the products consumption. It seems that the consumers and the fans always search the suppliers whose products have a better quality. In the today's competitive world, discovering fans' needs and demands and meeting their needs is a basic condition to success the organizations. The similar researches related to this subject include Karlson, Dona and Nokamiski(2009), in the scanning research titled The relation of brand – sport consumer. The results of these researches were associated with our results. considering the above mentioned, it can be concluded that the major aim of a football club is to increase its convenience and well being either in the form of success in the field or in the activities outside the field. It is important to say that the well being a club is not only the record of a team but also it is financial, technical and trade stability of that team. Therefore the role of the social responsibility in the sport and sport financial support and whether participation in the initiatives of the social responsibility influence the products consumption is completely clear and we observed a directs and significance relation between them.

Also, there is a positive and significance relation between the social responsibility and the fans' trust. It appears that increasing the social responsibility of the club causes increasing fans' trust in their own sport club. Lo and Bethchray (2006) studied the relationship between the social responsibility, market value and customer's satisfaction. They found that in the same conditions, the customers are satisfied with the organizations which participate in the initiatives of social responsibility. Also in the companies with the low initiative of social responsibility, the customers' satisfaction actually reduces (Lo,2006). This finding is associated with the results of a research titled “Effectiveness of the sport financial supports among the fans of football in Iran” (Eshghi, 2009). This is one of a few researches related to the effectiveness of the sport financial support in the football league of Iran in which the effect of the sport financial supports on 5 variables of the costumer's (fan) maturity process was studied.

The relevant results obtained showed a positive and significance relationship between the products consumption and fans' trust. It means increasing the products consumption increases fans' trust. It seems that if the fans more trust in their club, they will increase their products consumption. Sajadi performed a research titled “The effect of the club social responsibility on the customer identity - organization in the football premier league of Iran “ which its results were associated with our assumption and showed a significant relation.

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