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Sport eFANgelism Demographics[1]

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ABSTRACT
Brand evangelism, an advanced form of marketing where consumers voluntarily advocate on behalf of the brand, can bring numerous benefits to a firm. It would be a new era to explore brand evangelism within the spectator sport context. This study concentrates on eFANgelism demographics based on gender, generation, number of children owned and education level.
KEYWORDS: EFangelism, Brand Evangelism, Sport Fanatism, Demographic Characteristics

1. Conceptual Background

Sports is full of passion, but the sports industry is also a business—one of the biggest ones. By 2017, the global sports market generated revenue of around 91 billion U.S. dollars (,https://www.statista.com/statistics/370560/worldwide-sports-market-revenue/) rising from 76 billion U.S. dollars (Fig.1). Plunkett Research (2016) reported the estimated size of the global sports industry - the market with an economic dimension, which offers products, services, places and ideas related to sport, fitness or leisure time to its consumers. - as 1.3 Trillion US$.

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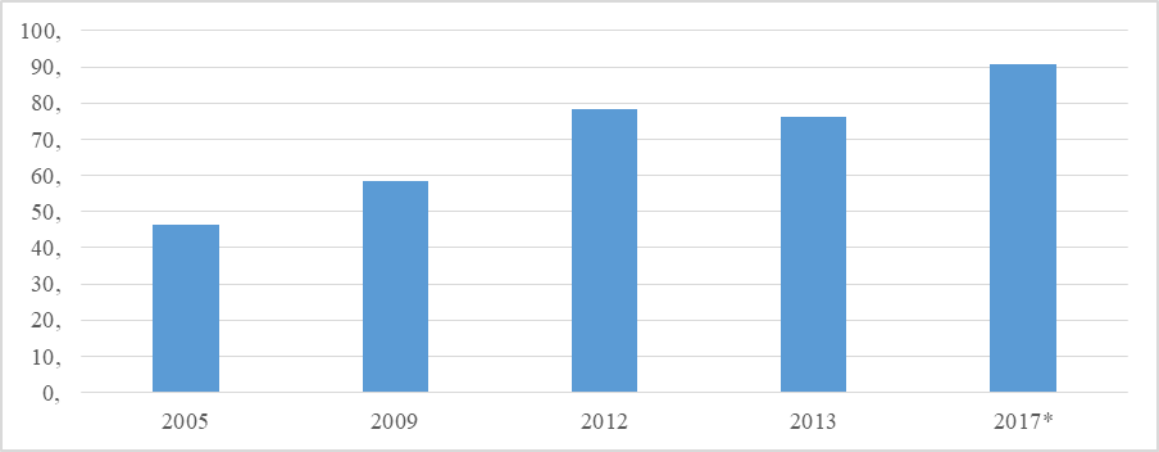

Fig.1. Global sports market - total revenue from 2005 to 2017 (in billion U.S. dollars)

Source: https://www.statista.com/statistics/370560/worldwide-sports-market-revenue/

But not all sports disciplines are represented equally in these finances. Number one, worldwide, is—no surprise here—association football (soccer), with a 43% share of the global financial sports market. Football (American) is also on a distant second place, with 13%. Baseball (12%), Formula 1 (7%) and basketball (6%) are the only three sports also having an over 5% share in addition to the top two. They're followed by hockey (4%), tennis (also 4%) and golf with a 3% total market share in terms of finances (https://medium.com/sportyfi/how-big-is-the-sports-industry-630fba219331).

As of in all business firms rely on the frequent visiting and purchasing behavior of customers to maintain a long-term relationship (O'Connor, 2005). Sports teams realize several benefits through customer experience and team identification (Fullerton, 2007). Teams must establish personal commitment by providing audiences with optimal service and establishing a psychological connection between spectators and teams. Therefore, customer experience is critical to the future management of professional sports leagues (Klaus & Maklan, 2012, 2013; Meyer & Schwager, 2007).

Brand evangelism was defined by Matzler, Pichler, and Hemetsberger (2007) as the behavior of "spreading positive opinions and trying fervently to convince or persuade others to get engaged with the same brand". Numerous benefits are received by brands with evangelistic

consumers, as these individuals promote the brand. Furthermore, brand evangelists provide a level of credibility to other potential customers as they are not a member of the organization they are praising, which can lead to the building of strong brand communities (Matzler et al., 2007).

A new term, "eFANgelism" has been created by Dwyer, Greenhalgh and LeCrom (2015) to define brand evangelism in sports.

2. Research

2.1. Research Question and Objectives

This study was guided by the following research question:
Does brand evangelism within the sport fans vary according to demographic factors?
The objective of this study is to understand if the eFANgelism scores of sport fans change according to gender, generation, marital status, number of children owned and education level. Because this is a quantitive research question, the formal hypotheses are as follows;
H_1: There is a significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to gender.
H_2: There is a significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to generation.
H_3: There is a significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to marital status.
H_4: There is a significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to number of children owned.
H_5:There is a significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to education level.

2.2. Data Collection

An online survey was used for the final data collection. The survey was advertised by social media channels (Facebook and Twitter). The data were collected from 05 February to 30 March. The percentage of response rate was less than 10% with 205 completed responses .

Nominal scale was used for demographic variables and five-point Likert scale was adopted for eFANgelism.

To measure eFANgelism score, Sport eFANgelism Scale developed in English by Dwyer et al, (2015), which was adopted to Turkish by Yuksekbilgili (2017) was used. The Turkish version of the Sport eFANgelism Scale has 12 questions.

2.3. Descriptive statistics

The results showed the percentage of female was 47.30 percent and percentage of males was 52,7 per cent. Among the respondents, 32,7 per cent were born before year 1980, 67,3 per cent were born between year 1980-1999 and there was no born after year 1999. In terms of martial status, the percentage not-married was 41,8 per cent and married were 58,2 per cent. The percentage of respondents with no children was 63. 6 per cent, one child was 27.3 per cent, two children was 5,5 per cent, and three of more children was 3,6 per cent. In terms of education level, the percentage of primary school degree was 3,6 per cent, high school degree were 16,4, associate degree were 14,5, bachelor's degree were 27,3 and master's degree were 38,2.

2.4. Findings

The reliability coefficients of the Sport eFANgelism Scale were found as α=0.936.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare eFANgelism scores of female and male sport fans. There was not a significant difference in eFANgelism scores of sport fans for females (M=2,245192, SD=1,034877) and males (M=2,339799, SD=1,100966); t(548)= -1,035010, p = 0,301121. So H_1 is rejected.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare eFANgelism scores of X generation sport fans and Y generation sport fans. There was a significant difference in eFANgelism scores of sport fans for X generation (M=2,2452, SD=1,9213) and Y generation (M=2,3398, SD=2,4769); t(548)= -5,885, p = 0,000 (So H_2 is accepted. The eFANgelism score for Y generation is significantly higher than X generation sport fans ($\mu_{X\ Generation}$=2,2452; $\mu_{Y\ Generation}$=2,3398).

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare eFANgelism scores of not-married sport fans and married sport fans. There was a significant difference in E-fangelism scores of not married sport fans (M=2,6377, SD=0,9328) and married sport fans (M=2,0488, SD=0,93328); t(548)= 6,607, p = 0,000. So H_3 is accepted. The eFANgelism score for not married sport fans are significantly higher than married sport fans ($\mu_{not\ married}$=2,6377; $\mu_{married}$=2,0488).

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the eFANgelism scores of the sport fans having no, one, two, three or more children. There was a significant change on eFANgelism score at the p<.05 level for the four conditions [F(3, 546) = 28,691, p = 0,000]. So H_4 is accepted. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for sport fans of no children (M = 2,5530, SD = 1,0164) was significantly different than sport fans having one children (M = 2.0278, SD = 1,0782). Also the mean score for sport fans having one children (M = 2.0278, SD = 1,0782) was significantly different than sport fans having two children (M = 1,423, SD = 0,5649). However, sport fans having two children (M = 1,423, SD = 0,5649) did not significantly differ from the sport fans having three or more children (M = 1,093, SD = 0.0961).

3. Results

3.1. Avenues for Future Research

While this study has identified relation of several demographic factors with eFANgelism, the writer acknowledge that many more factors that can affect the eFANgelism score exist and deserve further exploration. This research only focuses on eFANgelism demographics based on gender, generation, number of children owned and education level, which actually neglects sport type, income, occupation and religion. So, these factors can be a productive area for future investigation. Apart, the study is conducted in Turkey, at which 63,4 % of the population is following the main football league (Sportsnet Group, 2017). Adopting the eFANgelism scale to other languages and other locations would provide useful comparison data. Clearly, more research is needed on this area.

3.2. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to understand if the E-fangelism scores of sport fans change according to gender, generation, marital status, number of children owned and education level. The data obtained showed that there is no significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to gender. Also the results indicate that there was a significant difference in eFANgelism scores of sport fans for X generation compared to Y generation; the eFANgelism score for Y generation is significantly higher than X generation sport fans. Also, the findings underline that the eFANgelism score for not married sport fans are significantly higher than married sport fans, as expected. This study is a modest contribution to the ongoing debates about children ownership and eFANgelism level relation; sport fans having one children were significantly different than sport fans having two children, sport fans having two children did not significantly differ from the sport fans having three or more children. ,
Due that there is no research on this field based on the demographics of sport eFANgelism, the author had no chance to compare the results.

3.3. Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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