Role of Perceived Social Benefit on Behavioral Loyalty: A Moderated-Mediation Analysis

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Previous studies have evidenced that sport events have the potential to benefit the hosting community in various ways (e.g., economic, social, cultural). Understanding these positive impacts of events is crucial to organize, host, and promote any event; yet, the effort should also yield the continued success of the event. An event’s success can be determined by the satisfaction of attendees and their loyalty, which will lead the event into another future success. To date, however, there has been limited research examined the impact of social benefits of events on attendees’ behavioral loyalty. This study unfolds the moderating effect of social benefits on the link between event attendees’ satisfaction and behavior loyalties (i.e., Revisit Intention and Recommendation).

Event satisfaction is the overall evaluation formed by the perceived quality that is experience-based. Previous studies have found that satisfied individuals are likely to be loyal to attend and recommend the event to others. Social benefits are perceived benefits that people experience from the event such as increased opportunities for entertainment, socializing, community pride, social identity and cohesion, etc. This study assumed that social benefits are the moderating factors for behavioral loyalty [i.e., Revisit Intention (RI) and Recommendation (REC)] rather than the antecedents of satisfaction (cf., Yürük et al., 2017). Also, a mediating effect of RI on REC was hypothesized as a goal-directed behavior of social exchange. The hypothesized model included the indirect effects of two-way interactions between Event Satisfaction (SAT) and social benefits [i.e., Enhanced Community Excitement (CE) and Community Attachment (CA)] on REC through mediator RI.

The data were collected from spectators of a professional golf tour in the Midwestern U.S. A total of 298 responses were included in the analysis. A face-to-face survey was employed, and the instruments were adopted from previous literature (e.g., Inoue & Havard, 2014). The majority of the respondents were male (65%), white (83%), married (54%), college/higher degree (71%), and above $100k income (54%). Moderated-mediation effects of CE and CA were tested on RI and REC respectively using PROCESS. The model for testing moderating effects on RI showed statistically significant predictability (R² = .34, F = 28.66, p = .001). All of the paths were significant [SAT→RI (β = .74, t = 2.31), SAT*CA→RI (β = -.053, t = 3.30), p < .01], except the mediating effect of CE on RI (μ = .68). For the moderated-mediation effects on REC, all of the model paths were significant [R² = .67, F = 95.61, SAT→REC (β = .67, t = 4.05), RI→REC (β = .35, t = 11.61), SAT*CE→REC (β = -.07, t = -2.54), SAT*CA→REC (β = -.03, t = 3.82), p < .01]. The findings provided support on the moderated-mediation effects of social benefits on both RI and REC, which suggests that the relationship among satisfaction, revisit intention, and recommendation in the existing literature could be altered as moderating and mediating functions of social benefits. An interesting finding was that CE showed a positive effect only on REC. Also, the significant predictability of RI on REC would provide new insight into the studies on behavioral loyalty. Further details will be displayed along with a discussion on the findings and limitations of the study.