

Addressing the Conversion of Athletes' Temporary Fans into Loyal Fans

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Abstract. Following the 2023 Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, two athletes, Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha, performed admirably and won multiple gold medals for China, resulting in the formation of a large number of new temporary followers. The major objective of this article is to investigate how to change fan loyalty. A case analysis will be conducted using two fans, Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha, in which the mixed market theory is integrated to explore and analyze the situation. The first generation of the problem is that fans can get an alternate sense of accomplishment from the athletes during the competition, and the corresponding suggestion is to strengthen the timely response to the fans' behaviors, to bring the athletes and the fans closer together, and to deepen the fans' loyalty. The second reason for the problem is that the fans' patriotic feelings only emerge during matches between China and other countries, and the corresponding suggestion is that the athletes interact more with the fans after the matches, bringing the athletes and the fans closer together. The third reason for the dilemma is that table tennis is China's national sport, and the country and its people value it highly. The corresponding advice is to improve relevance and participate in more charitable activities in order to set an example for today's youth and inspire them to do good things that will contribute to the peaceful growth of society.

Keywords: Vicarious Achievement, Patriotism, National Ball.

1. Introduction

With the opening of the Asian Games in Hangzhou, national interest in sports has grown significantly and positively. Table tennis, as China's national sport, is well-known not only in China but also around the world, where many people are interested in and participate. Ma Lin and Zhang Yining won gold medals in men's and women's singles at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, and the Chinese table tennis team won gold as a team. After years of iteration, fresh, youthful athletes continue to emerge, with Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha in the new generation of athletes garnering the most attention among Chinese table tennis athletes. The budding stars of two-table tennis have extremely high and strong abilities. The two of them performed admirably at the Hangzhou Asian Games, achieving excellent results; they won for the Chinese team, which drew a lot of attention, and everyone admired them both. Many fans shared videos of the two of them during the game on social media. Some admirers buy the things they endorse or the magazines that feature them. They gained a lot of transient fans during this time. During the Hangzhou Asian Games, the two gained a large number of new temporary admirers; however, many of these fans quit following them after the event. The fans of the athletes I studied are in a very unstable state in this particular context; however, according to the research, the temporary fans of the athletes are in a very unstable state in this particular context, and many of them may only love them at that time because of the two athletes' great accomplishments during the hosting of the Asian Games.

The study of sports enthusiasts has a lengthy history. Extensive literature exists on the subject of sports fandom, and included below are a few examples. In a study conducted in 2018, Li Di examined the characteristics of fans of tennis player Maria Sharapova as the subject of investigation [1]. In the year 2022, Li Shumei conducted an analysis of the athletes participating in the Rio Olympic Games, focusing on their self-shaping techniques on social media and the impact of fan attention [2]. In 2018, a study was conducted to evaluate the concluding features of the idolization phenomenon of table tennis players by studying the emotional interaction of Wu and Feng's cyberspace fan community [3]. While there have been numerous studies conducted on Chinese table tennis, including those focusing

on temporary fans, national table tennis, and fan loyalty, there is a lack of research exploring the specific outcomes of this aspect. Due to the unique nature of the relationship between these two athletes, there is a possibility of an emotional connection. All fans claim that they are romantically involved, distinguishing them from other ordinary athletes. Consequently, their fan base will differ from that of regular players.

Therefore, this study identifies a deficiency in existing research. Thus far, only a limited number of publications have examined the various categories of table tennis supporters and the tactics employed to cultivate loyalty. This study establishes the research question in the following manner to address the existing gap: This research inquiry aims to explore strategies for cultivating loyalty among transient sport enthusiasts towards sports programs, with a specific focus on the case of fans. The objective of this study is to examine strategies for augmenting fan loyalty and fostering a deeper affection for sports among enthusiasts. This article will use the Wang Chujing and Sun Ying-proposed structure to address the investigation problem. It will focus on analyzing and observing the specific data and phenomena related to the increase in fan base and loyalty of renowned athletes. Additionally, it will examine the underlying reasons for this growth.

2. Case Description

This exploration is a relatively new field that has evolved from the temporary fans of Chinese table tennis stars Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha. Following the Hangzhou Asian Games, Sun Yingsha and Wang Chuqin's fan base grew significantly, attracting a large number of new temporary supporters. These fans and others who came before the Hangzhou Asian Games enjoyed a vastly different experience. First and foremost, the loyalty is not as strong as the commitment of fans who have long supported the two sportsmen. They may fall in love with them at the Hangzhou Asian Games for a multitude of reasons and then lose interest in them thereafter, a phenomenon known as transient fandom. These supporters are unlikely to have a significant influence on the fan economy. Here are two distinct sorts of fans they claim to create. Many devoted followers around the country posted numerous high-flame clip marketing movies featuring the two of them in big retail malls or subway station tunnels.

There were also a lot of supporters studying abroad who got together to spend money and show a video of the two of them in the heat of the game on the big screen in Times Square in New York City, United States. Every game with them will include some spontaneous fan support, such as hand banners, which they will give out for free outside the arena before the game begins to fans who like both of them so that they may bring them into the arena to watch them play and cheer them on! There will also be graffiti walls and other Netflix hotspots where admirers of Sun Yingsha and Wang Chuqin may leave blessing messages for the couple. The current temporary admirers would watch their previous matches online and grab videos of the two of them from social media sites. The majority of the videos were edited and produced by loyal fans, but the temporary fans swiped them more, and there were a few temporary fans who would edit some videos and post them online; they may not get as many views as the loyal fans, who preferred to watch fans who went to the site and filmed their videos. Loyal fans choose to watch movies created by fans who went to the scene and recorded the videos personally, or high-flame videos edited by fans who are extremely adept at editing, highly energetic, and very hot-blooded short videos. After viewing several short films by Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha, the majority of their temporary followers will come to know them better and, as a result, strengthen their affection for them. There appears to be a prevalent problem among their admirers. Following the Asian Games in Hangzhou, their eating fan following rose dramatically.

3. Analysis on Problem

3.1. Reasons on Vicarious Achievement

One of the reasons why there are so many temporary fans is that they have vicarious achievement issues. Most of their casual admirers enjoy them because they provide a sense of vicarious accomplishment for these two sportsmen [4]. The complete Chinese table tennis squad is extremely powerful and dominant on the world stage. Chinese table tennis players are capable of winning medals, but athletes from other nations have a tough time doing so. So many temporary admirers appreciate them because they claim to be incredibly powerful and capable of consistently producing excellent outcomes. They may be defined as fans, which implies that they only like those who are really powerful due to their good successes, and so they are envious and admiring of them. So, if the players lose a sporting game, these supporters may dislike them and instead root for the winner. This type of fan is highly unsteady and changing. On the other hand, in competitive sports, no one is certain he will win the game; any outcome is a possibility. One athlete may not do well due to other variables, resulting in a different outcome for the entire game, making it tough for this type of fan to continue to support an athlete. When two athletes, Sun Yingsha and Wang Chuqin, won many gold medals in the Hangzhou Asian Games, they gained a large number of transient followers who fell in love with them due to their outstanding performance. After achieving excellent achievements, these supporters could be quite pleased with themselves.

3.2. Reasons on Patriotism

One of the reasons there are so many transitory followers is that they share parts of Chinese patriotism [5]. Many fans are more patriotic in their hearts when they watch the game; they only care about whether China wins in the end, and they are more concerned with the country's honor. They don't care who wins in the end; as long as the Chinese team is the champion, they will feel very patriotic, and they may also like the two athletes who won the championship for China with this emotion because these two athletes have made a lot of contributions for China, so they will like these two athletes, they are patriotic, and they will be very excited when the country receives the honor. They are patriotic. They are patriots who will be overjoyed and thrilled when their country is honored, and they are full of passion and love for China, so they may not only cheer for the Chinese table tennis players but also for other Chinese athletes who have fought for their country, and this may be true for Wang Chuchu. The number of Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha fans may fluctuate, and their loyalty will be low; they do not focus on individual athletes but rather watch the game as a group, which is not unlike the average Chinese audience. The reason why this Hangzhou Asian Games Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha's fan bases soared is also because of the geographical location of the Asian Games, held in Hangzhou, China, which gives Chinese citizens a greater opportunity to go to the scene to see them play. These new temporary fans, there must be a part of the fan who is a local fan; they are because of the athletes in Hangzhou. Achievement of major achievements,

3.3. Reasons on National Ball

The observed occurrence of temporary fans can be attributed to the influence exerted by table tennis as the national sport of China [6]. Table tennis is an exceptional and peculiar athletic activity. The national sport of China holds considerable importance within the cultural fabric of Chinese sports. Table tennis in China is largely acknowledged as a renowned and important sport with a significant worldwide presence. Furthermore, as a result of the remarkable achievements of a recent group of youthful table tennis athletes, various social media platforms are also intensifying the enthusiasm, facilitating a broader audience's engagement with the sport, and promoting manifestations of fervor and transient devotion. Nevertheless, in the present day, marked by the widespread dissemination of fragmented information on the Internet, a considerable proportion of transient enthusiasts have challenges accurately assessing the credibility of online content. As a result, this circumstance has resulted in an increased degree of volatility from the perspective of transient supporters.

4. Suggestions

4.1. Suggestion on Reactions Strategy

According to the first analysis of the causes, this article proposes that athletes should employ the reaction approach, which is based on the manufacturing mix theory [7, 8], in order to effectively convert transitory supporters into loyal ones. According to the literature and theory from marketing mix theory of 4Rs, it is crucial to address the actions taken by these fans right away in order to increase the conversion of casual followers into devoted ones. The management needs to guide individuals in identifying methods to convey their appreciation and validation. For instance, the sportsman must promptly address the fan's activities, regardless of whether they are constructive, proactive, or incorrect. Nevertheless, in the event that the fan's behaviors are deemed inappropriate, the players may be required to assert themselves and deliver more affirmative statements in order to regulate the fans' conduct, since these supporters may exhibit a greater inclination to comply with the directives of their beloved sportsmen. Ordinary staff members' statements may lack persuasive power, and the behavior of fans might potentially impact the athletes' image. Therefore, it is crucial to promptly address and control fan behavior.

4.2. Reasons on Relationship Strategy

Based on the second reason analyzed, this study proposes that in order to enhance the conversion of temporary fans into devoted ones, it is imperative for athletes and sports team managers to establish enduring and robust connections with fans, hence altering their degree of loyalty. A sizable body of research using the 4Rs theoretical framework of the marketing mix theory has supported the efficacy of this particular relationship strategy [9]. They may leverage both online and physical fan gatherings to foster stronger and more structured relationships between fans and athletes. In addition, athletes have the opportunity to engage in post-game interactions with spectators, such as capturing group photographs or obtaining signatures, therefore assuming the role of Chinese representatives. They can also serve as representatives of the Chinese national table tennis team by entering schools and providing one-on-one instruction to students on playing table tennis. This approach contributes to the promotion of table tennis as a sport and encourages a significant number of young individuals to engage in the sport. By utilizing table tennis as a project, they can align with current trends and progress collectively. This approach fosters closer relationships with fans and allows a broader audience to gain a more realistic understanding of their team. Consequently, this may lead to a transformation or deepening of their attitudes.

4.3. Suggestion on Relevancy Strategy

Through the examination of the third dimension of reason and the strategy of relevance within the marketing mix theory of the 4Rs [10]. To enhance the conversion of temporary fans into devoted ones, this thesis proposes that individuals engage in philanthropic endeavors, undertake public welfare initiatives that align with their image cultivation, and actively participate in activities that foster good energy. Given appropriate advice on the conduct of modern youth, fans have the potential to emulate their favorite players. The individual intends to engage in activities that promote good energy. This promotes social stability and development. The relevant state departments will provide strong support for it. Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha should establish themselves as role models for young people. Additionally, they should demonstrate the impact of fans following their favorite athletes to achieve the same goals, which benefits society and people. This will increase their popularity and enhance the loyalty of temporary fans, as this image is becoming more prominent. The challenge persists, and the two individuals in question are among the limited number of highly virtuous and exemplary young males within the majority of athletes. Consequently, these qualities serve as their strengths. It is imperative for them to uphold and further cultivate a positive reputation, thereby distinguishing themselves and garnering greater admiration from the broader cohort of athletes.

5. Conclusion

In the context of the study after the Hangzhou Asian Games, this article investigates the sort of fan loyalty of Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha's supporters, as well as how a transitory fan may be converted into a devoted one. By evaluating the many types of fans and the causes for their development, it is concluded that the mixed market theory's connections, relevancy, and reactions may address the problem of fan-type transition. A survey of the relevant literature confirms the marketing mix theory's applicability in this field. The reason for this is that they have a high number of transient followers that are unstable and have poor loyalty, therefore they use these ways to increase their allegiance.

This article's study fills a gap in the knowledge of individuals who have previously examined Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha's fan loyalty. It is beneficial for athletes to manage their fans thereafter and learn how to keep them on their own. Their team should present these two men in a more favorable light. It might be useful for future conversations about the fan economy for these two players.

On the other hand, this paper is still some flaws in this research and it does not evaluate completely from all angles. For example, it does not compare fans of other sportsmen on the same Chinese table tennis team, nor does it examine supporters from other countries; instead, it focuses on domestic fans and requires additional development. In the future, areas that were not previously researched may be examined in greater depth to make the whole investigation more complete, and a multifaceted study will improve the accuracy of the findings.

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