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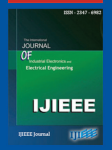
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MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS OF RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC RELATIONS: A RESEARCH ON SPORT CLUBS

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Abstract- The purpose of this study is to measure the benefits of the relational approach in public relations and to determine the effect on the emotional and behavioral attitudes of the target groups. In this research, sport clubs have been chosen as the foundation and existing members have been selected as target groups. The research has been conducted in two different countries, Turkey and Ukraine, and the effects of cultural influence on relational outcomes have been compared. According to the research results, it was found that "control mutuality", "trust", "satisfaction", and"commitment" principles as a relational outcome have a positive effect on emotional and behavioral attitudes.There was a significant correlation between relational outcomes of sport clubs members in each countries and this correlation was similar.

Keywords- Public Relations, Relationship Management, Sport Clubs

I. INTRODUCTION

In order to achieve the results desired from a relational point of view, the needs and expectations of the target audience need to be integrated into the success strategy of the organizations. Therefore, focusing on relational outcomes rather than on communicative processes with a target-focused perspective has become a focus of public relations practices.

Evaluating relational outcomes to measure the effectiveness of public relations efforts is the most widely accepted approach in the public relations literature. Relational approach has been included in the definition of public relations by Cutlip, Center and Broom (1994), Broom, Casey, Richey (1997), Ledingham and Brunig (1998, 1999, 2000), Hon and Grunig (1999) and Ledingham (2003). Public Relations Society Of America (PRSA) focuses on relational influence while focusing on the definition of public relations and defines it as "a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics."

The effectiveness of relationship management in public relations has been studied by scholars of public relations in many different fields; Conflict resolution (Huang, 2001), University-student relations (Hon and Brunner, 2002, Jo, Hon, Brunner, 2005), Fundraising process for individual donors (Waters, 2008), Crisis communication (Brown and White 2010, Park and Reber 2011, Ki and Brown 2013), Employer-employee relationship (Waters et al, 2013), Social media relations (Sisson, 2015), Nonprofit relationship management (Pressgrove & McKeever, 2016).

This study will be used for relationship management in public relations in order to measure the quality of relations between sport clubs and members. Thus, it is aimed to contribute to the academic literature.

Measuring The Effectiveness of Organization-Public Relations

Measuring the effectiveness of relational outcomes in the field of public relations is different from measuring the successes of organizations such as marketing, advertising, sponsorship orcorporate reputation. Very different approaches have been adopted to measure the effectiveness of organizational-public relations.

Hon and Grunig (1999: 19-20) developed a scale that measures dimensions of relational evaluations between the organization and the target group and based on six dimensions of interpersonal relationships and stated the four indicators of the quality of an organization-public relationship;"control mutuality", "satisfaction", "trust" and "commitment". This scale, prepared by Hon and Grunig (1999) for the Public Relations Institute, is a valid and reliable measure in the field of public relations and has been used by many researchers. (Hon and Brunner, 2002; Ki and Hon, 2007, Jo 2006, Waters 2008). Contrarily, "dissatisfaction", "distrust", "control dominance" and "dissolution" are the four factors that measure negative dimensions of organization-public relationship (Moon, Rhee, 2013: 707).A questionnaire consisting of 21 items was developed using Hon and Grunig's scale to measure the participants' relational outcomes for sport clubs. The items in the research context have been changed to be applicable to the field of sport clubs. For example, scale items such as; "This sport club really listens to what people like me have to say," for control mutuality (4 items) scale; "I feel very confident about this sport club's skills" for trust (6 items) scale; "There is a long-lasting bond between this sport club and people like me," for commitment (5 item) scale; "Most people enjoy dealing with this sport club" for satisfaction (5 items) scale. Public relations perceptions are considered as a subjective dimension and independent variables. Within the scope of the research, answers to the following questions have been sought:

Research Question 1: How do members describe their relationship with sport clubs?

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Research Question 2: What is the correlation between the members' relational outcomes with the sport clubs (control mutuality, trust, commitment, satisfaction,)?
Research Question 3: Will the relations results of the members with the sport clubs differ according to the level of the country?

I. RESEARCH

Sport clubs and their members of Turkey and Ukraine have been included in thisresearch.80 people (34 women, 46 men) surveyed in Turkey and 74 people (38 women, 36 men) surveyed in Ukranian. The data were collected from the members of the sport clubs on a voluntary basis with the questionnaire technique.

Within the scope of this research, the time required for the formation of an attitude towards the sport club was determined as one month and the survey questionnaire was applied to existing members who have been in the sport club member for at least one month. Questionnaires were measured on a 5-point likert scale (1- strongly disagree, 5-strongly agree).

The internal consistency reliability analysis for the 21 item questionnaire, the Cronbach alpha values in Turkey as .905, while the Ukranian was measured as .814.
Because the first research question was intended to describe the relationship of the members to the sport clubs, the general averages of each relational outcome of the members were measured. The highest average results relational outcome in Turkey measured in “commitment” (M = 3.69, SD = .77). In the second was “satisfaction” (M = 3.58, SD = .83), in the third was“trust” (M = 3.55, SD = .83) and in the fourth was control mutuality (M = 3.47, SS = .86). The results are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Relational dimensions with members of sport clubs in Turkey

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control Mutuality	80	3,4650	,86084
Trust	80	3,5521	,83422
Satisfaction	80	3,5800	,82836
Commitment	80	3,6850	,76623

The highest average results relational outcome in Ukraine measured in “commitment” (M = 3.74, SD = .71). The second was “satisfaction” (M = 3.72, SD = .72), third was “control mutuality” (M = 3.49, SD = .59) and fourth was “trust” (M = 3.36, SD = .62). The results are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Relational dimensions with members of sport clubs in Ukraine

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control Mutuality	74	3,4946	,58775
Trust	74	3,3626	,61954
Satisfaction	74	3,7243	,71898
Commitment	74	3,7432	,71349

In order to answer research question 2, the correlation between the members' relational outcomes (control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment) with the sport clubs has been examined. The results are shown in table 3.

Table 3:Correlation between relational outcomes of sport clubs members in Turkey

Correlations

		ControlMutuality	Trust	Satisfaction	Commitment
Control Mutuality	Pearson Correlation	1	,758**	,589**	,751**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000
	N	80	80	80	80
Trust	Pearson Correlation	,758**	1	,732**	,734**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,000
	N	80	80	80	80
Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	,589**	,732**	1	,745**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,000
	N	80	80	80	80
Commitment	Pearson Correlation	,751**	,734**	,745**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	
	N	80	80	80	80

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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According to the results in table 3, there is a significant correlation between all relational outcomes. The highest correlation was measured between “control mutuality” and “trust”(.758), and the second measured between“control mutuality” and “commitment” (.751).

The results in Ukraine showed a significant correlation between relational dimensions. The highest correlation was between “commitment” and “satisfaction” (.698), and “satisfaction” and “trust” (.540) was second. The results are shown in table 4.

Tablo 4:Correlation between relational outcomes of sport clubs members in Ukraine

Correlations

		Control Mutuality	Trust	Satisfaction	Commitment
Control Mutuality	Pearson Correlation	1	,470**	,463**	,393**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,001
	N	74	74	74	74
Trust	Pearson Correlation	,470**	1	,540**	,531**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,000
	N	74	74	74	74
Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	,463**	,540**	1	,698**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,000
	N	74	74	74	74
Commitment	Pearson Correlation	,393**	,531**	,698**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,001	,000	,000	
	N	74	74	74	74

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In order to answer question 3, the members' relational outcomes to their sport clubs were compared according to the level of the countries.According to the Anova test result (95% confidence) the difference between the averages of sport members of two different countries was not statistically significant; control mutuality (F=544, ,887 > 0,05), trust (F=1.069, 403 > 0,05), satisfaction (F=779, ,687 > 0,05), commitment (F=782, ,684 > 0,05).

CONCLUSIONS

Strengthening relational outcomes for sport clubs is a determinant of attitude variables. All relational outcomes are related to one another, and changing or strengthening them means, at the same time, changing or strengthening the perception of sport clubs.

Sport clubs need memberswho primarily loyal. Assuming that past behavior can predict future behaviors, the end result is that the "commitment" dimension is more valuable than the others. Because in both countries "commitment" has the strongest positive effect. In both countries, "satisfaction" comes second.

The research was conducted only on existing members of the sport clubs. Sport clubs need to focus on developing relationships with all target groups through the focus of their corporate identities and missions on success and investing in it, as well as by public relations efforts. So sport clubs should develop practices that include groups that do not provide financial support but sympathize, instead of focusing solely on those who provide financial support to them. Otherwise, sympathizers may see themselves as excluded or as second class. This may lead to diminishing sympathizers and their support in the future.

In order for the quality of the relationships of sport clubs with its members to be long-term; sport clubs must understand how relational outcomes are formed, make measurements about how they can change over time, understand the needs and expectations of the members and be able to respond to them, provide value to its members, and devote time to develop their relationships. At the same time, they must have good representatives with a fair, accountable and transparent management approach that is appropriate to ethical and moral values. All these interactions focused on mutual benefits support the competitive structures of sport clubs.

In this study, the relationships between control mutuality, satisfaction, commitment and trust among the relational outcomes in public relations studies were investigated. All of these dimensions are directly related to each other and have contributed positively to gaining emotional and attitudinal supportive behaviors of sportclubs. In future research, it could investigate the reasons such as the psychological and social benefits that effect members' relational outcomes with sport clubs and how they change over time.

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