



INTERNATIONAL
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by CIES Education

INTERNATIONAL MASTER IN MANAGEMENT, LAW AND HUMANITIES OF SPORT

Executive Summaries

PRESENTATION OF DISSERTATIONS CLASS OF 2021-2022



In partnership with



Programme

12:15	Doors Open
12:35 – 12:45	Welcome - Denis OSWALD, CIES Director
12:45 – 13:15	Kick-off the Renaissance: How to make National Football a Brand? - An analysis on rebranding practices from the football industry - Adil Ansari Rajeev ABRAHIM (Trinidad & Tobago), Rong CHEN (China), Guadalupe Maria DIAZ (Argentina), Adél KÖVES (Hungary)
13:15 – 13:45	An analysis of the social and commercial impact of athlete activism on the Premier League - Debola ADEBANJO (Nigeria), Yann CALDER (Switzerland & Australia), Nabor GARCIA (Chile & Spain), Aisha Nazia NASIR MAYIN (India)
13:45 – 14:15	How can sport organizations consider the realities of pregnancy and motherhood in the professionalization of women's team sports? - Geneviève FAVRE-SAVOIE (Canada), Carl LEE (Grenada), Chang Hwan (Alex) OH (South Korea), Emmi ZOCCOLAN (Switzerland & Italy)
14:15 – 14:30	Break
14:30 – 15:00	Fan in the Mirror: A Cross-Continental Analysis of the Ideological Motivations & Influence of 'Ultra' Fan Groups - Aaryaman BANERJI (UK & India), Stephanie BERMEO VILLEGAS (Colombia & France), Rodrigo TITTOTO ACRA (Brazil & Italy), Nada SAKR (Egypt)
15:00 – 15:30	Impact of Football Docuseries: Lessons of previous shows for application to the women's game across its six Confederations - Bolor BAYARSAIKHAN (Mongolia), Verdiana CICCONE (Italy), Harley MITAROS (Australia & Greece), Abdelrahman NADY (Egypt)
15:30 – 16:00	Movies, Music, Minting NFTs: How can football keep Gen Z entertained? - Yasmine HELMY (Egypt), Khushal PALICHA (India), Andrea PIZZATI (Honduras), Alberto Dimitri TROVAMALA (Italy)
16:00 – 16:30	Break
16:30 – 17:00	Stay Dangerous: How the Incorporation of Music through New and Existing Sports Can Help Drive a Better Fans Experience and Viewership for the Summer Olympic Games - Maria Belen BUENO (Peru), Levan KALANDADZE (Georgia), Jeremy SALLEY (USA), Diane TUMUTONESHE (Rwanda)
17:00 – 17:30	No impact at home? Understanding how West African football academies could be more than instruments for European club success - Melvin Touti Baly MENDY (Senegal & France), Romaney PINNOCK (South Africa & Italy), Akhmed TILLAIEV (Uzbekistan), Jaejoon YU (South Korea)
17:30 – 17:35	Closing remarks - Denis OSWALD, CIES Director
17:35	Apéritif

Kick-off the Renaissance: How to make National Football a Brand? - An analysis on rebranding practices from the football industry



Adil Ansari RAJEEV ABRAHIM (Trinidad & Tobago), Rong CHEN (China),
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Introduction

"It's the best feeling ever to be representing your country in a big tournament and if experiencing that doesn't give you the hunger to do it again, you shouldn't be playing football at all"

- Aron Gunnarsson (former captain, Iceland national football team)

The charisma of national team football is that very special emotional connection a fan feels towards, and the deepest sympathy incomparable to supporters of any club. This level of self-identification is the earmark of representative football, and is what a football federations can potentially capitalize on in comparison to professional clubs. However, in today's rapidly changing sport industry, performance and achievement seem to have been prioritized over self-identification, national identity and relatedness to local culture, in the case of numerous football federations across the globe. In consequence, the sole focus on accomplishment has resulted in neglecting the importance of brand-image for football federations when it comes to portraying their national teams, among other brand domains as part of the nation's heritage. A brand is an intangible asset, but also one of the most valuable assets a sport entity possesses today. Recognizing the importance of brand image for national football federations, it is believed to be of great significance to conduct the project: *Kick-off the Renaissance: How to make National Football a Brand? — An analysis on rebranding practices from the football industry.*

Research Methodology

The study commences with a general framework and overview of today's rebranding phenomenon in the football industry, investigating club football through a set of recent, successful examples, as well as understanding the National Football Federation's rebranding landscape, by analyzing the situation for the 211 FIFA Member Associations during the last two world cup cycles (8 years).

The aim of this research is to explore in the first place why it is important to brand a national federation, and as such, capitalize on four different, yet interrelated parts as follows: (1) **National Identity**: Investment in local unity and collective emotions, (2) **Political Power**: amelioration of diplomacy, soft power, and external relations, (3) **Commercial value**: heighten of economic arguments, and (4) **Participation**: development of football in the country.

Through the analysis of selected study cases from national football federations from each of the drivers described; the study will secondly identify the positive and potentially applicable aspects of rebranding practices. The main objectives of the paper being, on the one hand, to emphasize the importance of the notion “brand” when it comes to a national federation and reflect on the positive effects it can have; as well as to provide a step by step guideline (1) for Confederations on how to incorporate a rebranding domain within their development project for Member Associations, and (2) for National Football Federations on how to implement a successful rebranding project.

Main Research Findings

Out of the 211 FIFA Member Associations,

- 67 have done a rebranding in the last 8 years. (32%).
- 38 have implemented a communication strategy behind their rebranding project. (18%).
- Implementation of a communication strategy behind the rebranding project was not relevant until 2020, where 10 out of the 13 rebrandings had a communication plan.
- The main driver for undergoing a rebranding is for commercial purposes, this being the case of 17 National Federations.
- UEFA is the confederation with the largest amount of rebrandings conducted in the last 8 years (26). 11 of them were carried out with the support of UEFA Grow program.
- UEFA is the only confederation offering support in terms of brand domains to their Member Associations.

Case Studies Analysis

Eight National Federations were selected as case studies to be further investigated in detail. Two cases per driver were chosen, as follows:

- National identity as driving factor: The cases of Iceland and Mexico.

Both National Football Associations paid homage to ancient folklore by incorporating those cultural elements into their logo. Factors of motivation differed. For Iceland, the rebrand came off the back of their UEFA European Championship quarterfinal run in 2016 and FIFA World Cup qualification. Mexico sought a rebrand after their United 2026 bid to host the FIFA World Cup was successful.

- Political driving factor: The cases of Kosovo and Eswatini.

Kosovo and Eswatini's governing bodies for football were both eager and hasty to implement changes to the outlook of their football identity to properly reflect the present day political landscape. For Kosovo, the political driver was their independence in 2008. For Eswatini, it was the renaming of their country to the Kingdom of Eswatini, burying its former name - Swaziland - deep into their past.

- Commercial driving factor: The cases of San Marino and Korea.

Both federations conducted a rebranding project with the aim of raising their commercial value. San Marino Football Association changed its original federation and national team logo, to a new one which contains the coat of arms of San Marino, as well as designed a unique font, the championship logo and the futsal cup logo to unlock the commercial potential. The Korea Football Association changed its crest with a minimalist design to demonstrate its forward-looking attitude. With the new brand visual portfolio, the Korea Football Association is able to create more commercial opportunities.

- Participation driving factor: The cases of Japan and Anguilla.

Improving participation is the main target behind these two federations' rebranding practice. The Japan Football Association benchmarked FIFA's rebranding case to unify its logo matrix, creating an accordant brand image from national teams to grassroots and youth development competitions to encourage the football participation. The Anguilla Football Association leveraged its limited resources, specifically an individual designer's voluntary effort, to undertake a rebranding project, aiming to improve the participation in football-related activities.

Recommendations

A) *For Confederations*

It is of great significance for Confederations to encourage rebranding initiatives amongst their member associations and to provide support when necessary. This effort not only being valuable for the Member Associations themselves, but also creating an impact in the Confederation's own value. By having federations with a strong brand-identity and an ameliorated commercial value, the Confederation's value would increase simultaneously, impacting on the following: (1) fortifying the divergent brand domains, such as the different competitions under the confederation, (2) improving competitive balance within the confederation, thus making the competition more attractive, (3) attracting a higher range of sponsors in terms of amount and quality, (4) increasing the broadcasting portfolio (coverage, signing deals), (5) attracting more fans to the continental competitions, and overall (6) strengthening relatedness between Federations and the Confederation.

B) *For National Federations*

Throughout the research, as well as the study cases conducted, numerous benefits have been identified in regards to undergoing a rebranding for National Federations. Regardless

of the size of the federation, an identity rebranding shall impact in the following: (1) Enhancement of local unity and collective emotions (Resulting in increased attitudinal and behavioral loyalty of the fans), (2) international recognition and promotion of the country (such as strengthening one's position of hosting future international competitions), (3) Increase of commercial revenues (including but not limited to the attraction of new sponsors, acquisition of broadcasting deals, increase in merchandise and ticket sales and entrance to international markets) and (4) increase in participation levels (development of grassroots and women's football, the so-called trickle-down effect).

Conclusion

Branding, as priorly being a common practice in club football, have shown to be increasingly relevant in national team football, which then escalates to a wider scope of national federations and confederations. Today, there still remains a wide range of confederations and member associations that don't have the sense or know-how of brand management. This study hence identified the relevancy of rebranding on both the confederation level, as well as the federation level. Accordingly, it provides a step by step guideline (1) for Confederations on how to incorporate a rebranding domain within their development project for Member Associations, and (2) for National Football Federations on how to implement a successful rebranding project.

An analysis of the social and commercial impact of athlete activism on the Premier League



Debola ADEBANJO (Nigeria), Yann CALDER (Switzerland & Australia),
Nabor GARCIA (Chile & Spain), Aisha Nazia NASIR MAYIN (India)

Context

Athlete activism has been a contentious issue in sport since the early 1900s when Black athletes in the US first started to use their platform to push for recognition and legitimacy in an openly racist and apartheid society and sport industry. Names such as Paul Robeson, Rube Foster and Jesse Owens were the early pioneers in protesting for change. Later, athletes like Muhammad Ali, Arthur Ashe, Anthea Gordon and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, John Carlos and Tommie Smith took up the mantle demanding dignity, respect and social justice. More recently, especially during the pandemic, athlete activism has again come to the forefront of events and conversations in and around sports. Accompanying these conversations were polarizing opinions and emergence of new trends on the back of the involvement of athletes like Colin Kaepernick, Serena Williams, Naomi Osaka, Megan Rapinoe and Marcus Rashford, all of whom fought for different social issues ranging from racism, mental health, gender equality and food poverty. Furthermore, the English Premier League caused some surprise when in June 2020, they publicly and actively supported the Black Lives Matter protest which had been initiated and overwhelmingly approved by players. This was meant as a gesture of solidarity with protests in the US, the UK and elsewhere following the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police. Crucially, there had also been calls from fans and other key stakeholders for the Premier League to support its players in support of the cause. However, after other controversial policies supported by the Black Lives Matter movement surfaced (eg. Defund the Police), the Premier League was forced to renege their support, drawing a clear distinction between a moral cause and a political movement. This conflict of interest poses an opportunity to explore the decisions of sporting organizations when it comes to supporting athlete activism and their motives as it concerns various stakeholder opinions.

Introduction

As a result, the purpose of this project is to analyze some of the topics that remain the subject of much debate amongst academics, sport governing bodies, and activists, one of which is the legal implications of the restrictions of an athlete's right to protest and freedom

of speech as it concerns international human right laws. This was done by analyzing the existing restrictions against athlete activism within major organizations like the IOC and FIFA and their contrast to fundamental human rights as well as its correspondence in the context of labor laws. In relation, we narrowed in on the Premier League, exploring its current regulations on athletes and roles key influencers and decision makers play as it concerns these regulations. Stakeholders like the clubs, unions, sponsors, media and fans were analyzed which helped us further explore the effect athlete activism can have on the perception, social and commercial aspects of the Premier League.

Research methodology

In order to arrive at our conclusions, we undertook research based on existing studies, findings and analysis (secondary data collection) combining them with primary data collection carried out through interviews. For our secondary data, we examined statutes and regulations of the IOC, FIFA and the Premier League, using the information to deduce the motives for restrictions in activism and the global legal landscape for stakeholders. To enable us to provide a well rounded analysis of the situation, we compared studies and research of activism in other sports leagues away from football as with the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) and the National Football League (NFL) in America to analyze their peculiarity in actions and risks as well as the social impact and commercial impact as it concerns fans behaviors and brand perception in these climes.

Our primary data collection involved interviews with academics who have extensively researched the topic in the aspects of law, as well as the social and commercial areas. We asked broad questions around athlete activism, some targeted around the sports in the countries they live while also including the global view of the situation. These interviews reaffirmed some of our secondary research while throwing up new questions in the areas of motives of activism for athletes and sports organizations. These one-on-one interviews were conducted via the online application "Zoom" and lasted about forty-five minutes to an hour.

Elsewhere, we gathered primary data by conducting a survey targeted at football fans around the Premier League; it garnered over 155 respondents who anonymously answered fifteen questions about their interests and consumer behaviors in relation to the athlete activism witnessed in the Premier League. We asked them to rate their perception towards the Premier League as a brand with available options ranging from 1 being Strongly Dislike; to 7 being Strongly Like. The main aim of the questionnaire was to analyze the effect of the economic and commercial aspects of athlete activism as it concerns stadium attendances, viewership and overall brand reputation.

Research findings and recommendations.

We have been able to deduce that athlete activism remains a complex legal issue in sport and to quote Brendan Schwab, one of our interviewees for this research paper, 'the legal

framework is not settled.’ Opinions still are divided regarding the legality of some of the restrictions on athlete free speech which are imposed by certain sporting governing bodies like FIFA and the IOC in contrast to the fundamental human rights granted to all humans by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights on free speech.

These arguments for these restrictions, mostly spearheaded by the IOC, believe that restrictions to human rights can be justified under a limited set of conditions, including as a means to protect the ‘political neutrality’ of sports, an argument that has over the years been legitimized by the European Court of Justice and CAS.

We have however reaffirmed that owing to considerable pressures from activists and continuous conversations, organizations have relaxed rules as with the IOC Rule 50 ahead of the Tokyo 2020 games and are openly reviewing restrictions on athlete activism. A further illustration can be seen with the Commonwealth Games who are paving the way towards leniency for athlete protests and demonstrations. The organizers of the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham have said they will ensure that there is no ban for any athlete who takes a knee in support of Black Lives Matter movement. Similarly, the Premier League’s support of the Black Lives Matter protests at the end of the 2019/20 season are also proof of an ongoing shift in the tide and while they maintain the importance of remaining ‘apolitical’, they have demonstrated that they are willing to support causes that are seen to be for social good.

As it concerns the social and commercial impact, Colin Kaepernick’s case study has shown the influence athletes’ can have on public opinion, as we found that research confirmed a change in the public’s perceptions of Kaepernick’s kneeling protest. While only 20% of NFL fans were supportive of the act in 2016, a more recent survey from YouGov showed that more fans across Europe are now in support of the players taking the knee compared to those who are against it.

Elsewhere, our case studies analysis of Marcus Rashford’s activism against child food poverty and Naomi Osaka’s involvement in Black Lives Matter have demonstrated how athlete activism can bring about wider conversations around an issue and lead to a greater understanding and eventual change. We also found that it is crucial for brands and sponsors to pay attention to consumer perception and behavior shifts regarding athlete activism as a report from a secondary research showed that consumers are 4.5 times more likely to buy if a brand addresses human rights. The same report also declared ‘trust’ to be the new brand equity. However, we identified through our primary data collection in our survey that the moderate and highly identified fans do not care as much about activism as perhaps other consumers and are likely to support their teams regardless of the support granted to their athletes as it pertains to social causes of race, politics, sexuality to name a few. In relation we were also able to extrapolate the different reactions to different activism weighing their risk levels.

Political protests are a lot riskier for leagues and clubs than climate protests or even issues relating to gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights, a topic that was considered risky thirty years

ago. It is therefore critical for leagues and clubs to constantly monitor public perceptions of societal issues as well as engage better with their fans as both practices will adequately help balance the risks of supporting their athletes' in activism while exploring and tapping into the potential rewards.

Challenges

The controversial and sensitive nature of the topic made it difficult to access as many athletes as we had initially planned for. This also proved to be the case for sponsors and partners which we had initially considered to include in our research to better understand their perspectives and involvement in activism. There was also a limitation to the existing research on the impact of athlete activism in Europe with and finally our survey majority of respondents to our survey were from outside of Europe and while they are ardent consumers of the Premier League, the representation from the region of the Premier League would have been more contextual for our commercial output.

How can sport organizations consider the realities of pregnancy and motherhood in the professionalization of women's team sports?



Geneviève FAVRE-SAVOIE (Canada), Carl LEE (Grenada),
Chang HWAN OH (South Korea), Emmi ZOCCOLAN (Switzerland & Italy)

In 2017, Fifpro issued a global report on employment in women's football and surveyed female footballers on a number of issues, including pregnancy and motherhood. The results of this survey show that over 90% of female players intended to retire early, the main reason being, for 47% of these players, the intention to start a family. Although only 2% of the players responded that they had children, 61% of them stated that they had received no childcare support.

In this regard, many athletes have highlighted, in recent years, the lack of protection in women's sports and the need to improve the working conditions of female athletes. Indeed, the growth and professionalization of women's sports raises new legal and contractual issues and brings the question of maternity to the forefront. However, sports organizations have for many years dealt with athletes' claims on an ad hoc basis, without addressing the underlying reasons why many athletes find it difficult to reconcile motherhood with professional sport, leaving, therefore, an important question unanswered:

Considering the specific needs of women athletes: How can the realities of pregnancy and motherhood be better considered in the professionalization of women's team sports?

In our research, we assessed the current state of knowledge on maternity and professional team sports through multidisciplinary research, which allowed us to better understand that the social and institutional structures and support systems around mother athletes must be improved. Indeed, despite policies offering them maternity leave, the demands of elite sport on athletes' bodies, the lack of maternity and childcare support offered by employers, and the lack of certainty around contractual agreements, are all factors contributing to a perceived incompatibility of pregnancy and professional team sport. Female athletes have inherited, and attempted to integrate, a sport model designed by and for men, in which many challenges collide with the realities of motherhood, such as training schedules, frequent travel to games, and contractual realities that often place athletes at a disadvantage, considering the importance of the stakes to their careers and personal lives.

Our analysis of the conditions of female players is derived from the conceptual framework offered by the definitions of gender equality and equity provided by the International

Labour Organization (“ILO”) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Gender equity is defined as “fairness of treatment for both women and men, according to their respective needs and interests”.¹

Methodology

In order to better understand the realities of pregnancy and motherhood in professional and semi-professional women’s sport, we conducted research in three phases to collect both quantitative and qualitative data and subsequently assess our recommendations.

In the first stage, the policies and guidelines of 11 international federations and players association and 91 of the main semi-professional and professional women’s leagues around the world were assessed to better understand the current status of policies and protections for players during pregnancy. The policy survey included the IFs and leagues of the following sports: basketball, cricket, football/soccer, handball, field hockey, ice hockey, netball, rugby, softball, volleyball, and water-polo. We concluded that few leagues had published comprehensive policies in this area, and that the best practices in this regard were mainly coming from a few leagues, which are overwhelmingly located in the United States, Europe and Australia.

In the second stage, qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted with women athletes who experienced pregnancy in their careers to better understand their needs and realities during and after pregnancy, as well as the main challenges they faced during this period of their sports career. In addition, a selection of key actors in the industry, including a lawyer (FIFPRO), a player’s agent (Tongue Management) and a manager of women football (N3XT Sport), were interviewed to understand what sports organizations have been doing so far to protect and help athletes during and after their pregnancies, and what other measures could still be adopted.

In the third stage, and after drafting a first version of our recommendations, qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted to test our recommendations with 3 other key actors from the industry, including managers from a league (AFL) and an international federation (FIBA) and a team’s doctor (FC Barcelona’s women team).

Findings

Three main themes emerged from our interviews with athletes and key actors, including the (1) legal and economic aspects (2) social and material aspects and (3) personal aspects of maternity and motherhood in sport.

¹ International Labour Organization, “ABC of women workers’ rights and gender equality,” *International Labour Organization* (2007). https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/publication/wcms_087314.pdf

Legal and economic aspects

Our research highlighted the importance of strong policies and contractual protections for athletes, such as the FIFA's provisions on maternity leave and female athletes in the RSTP, which regulate contracts between professionals and clubs and impose minimal contractual protections for female athletes, based on the Convention 183 of the ILO. While some clubs will be helpful and understanding in trying to find accommodations for pregnant players despite the absence of formal maternity policies, the practices adopted by professional women's teams can vary from club to club and from athlete to athlete. Athletes who are not protected by regulations such as the RSTP in the case of football, providing for a right to return to play after childbirth and preventing dismissals for any reason related to pregnancy, face the risk of being dismissed and losing their job.

Social and material aspects

In the absence of specific guidelines or policies, the support offered from clubs seemed to vary from case to case. What was missing for the athletes interviewed was some kind of support for their training sessions while being pregnant and after childbirth. Indeed, many players faced challenges when returning to play, as athletes go through physiologic and biomechanical changes during pregnancy, and specific training programs were often necessary to ensure proper rehabilitation or prevent injuries. In addition, many athletes faced challenges with facilities, training schedules and support during matches, as they had to bring their child to practices and competitions.

Personal aspects

Support from family and friends appeared to be the biggest support for mother athletes during pregnancy and post-partum. For them, and especially during this period of their lives, emotional and moral support was extremely important, and only provided by their family and friends. While many athletes needed their relatives for traveling and during matches, many leagues and clubs offered no financial assistance to athletes who were still breastfeeding and thus had to pay for family members to come and watch their children.

Summary of Recommendations

The above-mentioned findings highlighted the need for better protections at the international level and more supportive environments at the club level. Consequently, our recommendations were divided in three main parts: (1) Policy reform for International Federations and further initiatives, (2) Best practices for leagues and clubs to implement to meet the specific needs of mother athletes and (3) Recommendations for other stakeholders.

Policy reform for international federations

- Adopt regulations which include all the minimal contractual expectations, including a minimum of 14 weeks of paid absence with at least two third of the salary, parental leave for non-bearing parents and for adoption, continuation of all benefits and insurance

during maternity leave, protections against dismissal and right to return and mandatory extension for contracts ending during pregnancy or maternity leave.

- Monitor the implementation of the regulations at national level, and the compliance of clubs.
- Give grants to small clubs/leagues with female players with kids to ensure a supportive environment to players and children.
- Create working groups of doctors/obstetricians and trainers to study about pregnancy and elite career in order to make more specific guidelines for athletes.
- Offer specific and relevant training courses and workshops to coaches, team managers, officials, team doctors and physiotherapists on the topic of pregnancy, maternity, and the health and needs of mother and child.
- Develop regulations to increase the participation of women in leadership positions.

Best practices for leagues and clubs

- Develop guidelines and adopt regulations at the league level to ensure fairness for all players, including the right to alternate employment during pregnancy, the right to an adapted training during pregnancy and after childbirth, the right to breastfeed during training with an access to a private room for breastfeeding with a fridge to store breast milk.
- Organize workshops and training sessions for pregnant athletes in collaboration with athletes' unions.
- Provide mother athletes with a nursery room, babysitters and private space for breastfeeding with access to a fridge for breastfeeding.
- Provide childcare during matches and while traveling for competitions, or at a minimum pay for the travel of the child and a support person, such as a parent or grandparent.
- Prepare a plan in advance to ensure that all staff are prepared to work with a pregnant player.

Recommendations involving other stakeholders

- Include in host nation agreements obligations to provide specific facilities for breastfeeding athletes, such as breastfeeding rooms.
- Coordinate and organize talks between mother athletes and pregnant athletes of different countries, to enable the sharing of experience.
- Increase the presence of stories about pregnant athletes and athletes with children, both in the media and on sport organization's social media accounts, in order to normalize the image of athletes with children.
- The IOC should create an international registry of elite athletes who are pregnant to collect data and increase the knowledge in the field and the protections offered to athletes.

- Sponsors should develop best practices and guidelines, and depending on the needs, keep supporting athletes financially and start supporting them with material goods, such as baby items.

Conclusion

We believe that pregnancy and maternity should be embraced as a distinctive and unique feature of some women's players careers, and these players should be adequately protected by the institutions for which they are working. In this regard, international sport governing bodies and leagues have an important role to play in ensuring a harmonized policy regarding maternity and pregnancy and a women's sport model professionalized in a way that accounts for the specific needs of female players. It is only by doing so, that sports organizations will be able to promote gender equity in sport and to bring professionalization into line with the definitions of equity set out by the ILO. In line with FIFPRO's recommendations, we urge sport organizations to adopt these minimal protections for every professional female player. However, based on the result of our analysis, more must be implemented to address the fact that the sports industry has many inherent challenges that make pregnancy and motherhood difficult for many players. Our research has shown that gender equity can only be achieved if the model of women's team sport considers the physical and psychological well-being of mother athletes during and after pregnancy, as well as their need for a supportive environment to ensure that they themselves, and their children, are able to thrive. Moreover, while this project focused on the specific measures necessary to help mother athletes, we also concluded that fathers or non-bearing child partners are essential to help with the well-being of both mothers and children. Therefore, there should also be parental protections that could have a great impact on the men's sport model and lead to greater equality of opportunity between men and women in sport.

Fan in the Mirror: A Cross-Continental Analysis of the Ideological Motivations & Influence of 'Ultra' Fan Groups



Aaryaman BANERJI (UK & India), Stephanie BERMEO VILLEGAS (Colombia & France), Rodrigo Tittoto ACRA (Brazil & Italy), Nada SAKR (Egypt)

Context

Football has hugely evolved over the last century, with substantial changes in its tactics, rules and structure. The evolution of the game and the football ecosystem has impacted the relationship between clubs and football supporters, bringing several changes in the behaviour of fans inside and outside the stadiums and giving birth to new styles of fandom, such as Ultras.

Despite Ultra fan groups with their clubs possessing some intrinsic link to specificities of the region in which they evolve, it is possible to observe several similarities and behavioural patterns regarding their organisation, *modus operandi*, methods of financing and ideological motivations across different continents.

In order to understand these similarities and differences, this research focused on four case studies – *Pasopati*, *La Doce*, *Irriducibili* and both *Ultras Ahlawy* and *Ultras White Knights* – selected from Indonesia, Argentina, Italy and Egypt respectively. The purpose of these case studies is to serve as a reflection of the broader cultural role of similar configured groups within each region, and to represent a wider pattern of behaviour amongst such organisations. By doing so, effective contrasts may be gathered between different geographies, both on a micro, specific level with regards to the individual study cases, and more macro, generalist perception of broader cultural practices of Ultra groups.

Furthermore, by exploring both the extent to which Ultra fan groups and their behaviour are incited by ideological motives, and whether both the magnitude of this and the bracket of ideology varies between regions, the paper scrutinises fresh academic territory, and occupies a significant space within the literature. In turn, leads to a more acute understanding of the workings of Ultra groups, and therefore can provide the scope to create a model through which several stakeholders of the football ecosystem will be able to more efficiently interact with such Ultra groups and more successfully alleviate problems related to them.

Interdisciplinary content

By investigating these areas, this project stretches across each of the disciplines covered by the FIFA Master programme. The humanities aspect naturally comes through the investigation of the politicisation of the sport, and the social spaces football has occupied both historically and into the present day. This is complemented by a significant management element. The research analyses how Ultra groups currently fit within the sports ecosystem, outlining their structure, methods of financing and the problems they create for managing sports events, as well as best practices to build a sustainable future with such organisations within the ecosystem. From a legal perspective, the project analyses how Football Governing Bodies have been dealing with supporters' misconducts within and outside the stadiums, examining their regulations such as the FIFA Disciplinary Code and UEFA Safety and Security Regulations, as well as the application of the theory of strict liability before disciplinary bodies and the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS).

Research questions

The project is driven by four research questions designed to cover the scope and breadth of the topic. These are:

1. To what extent are 'Ultra' football fan groups driven by ideological incentives?
2. Is there any correlation between ideologies followed by 'Ultra' fan groups cross-continently?
3. To what extent are 'Ultra' fan groups successful in influencing local political climates?
4. Given a greater understanding of the ideological drivers of 'Ultra' fan groups, what recommendations may be advised to aid better interaction between various local and international stakeholders, and 'Ultra' fan groups?

Methodology

The investigation of such a comprehensive set of questions requires the canvas of secondary literature already published around 'Ultra' groups, in order to provide context and background. Whilst literature on the specific topic of ideological motivations of 'Ultras', is, as aforementioned, lacking, utilising the range of work that has been conducted on other aspects of 'Ultra' groups is crucial to understanding elements such as the configuration of such groups. This in turn should provide a platform and foundation from which more original research may be conducted. Jones' text, for example, does not cover ideology as part of Ultras' *raison d'être* specifically, provides critical content with regards to their operations and structure in Italy, whilst Fuller's work explores their social make-up from an anthropological perspective, which could provide invaluable information regarding the general political values of their members.

Yet perhaps the most pivotal methodological approach to providing answers for such questions is the use of primary material from each locality. Specifically, sources such

as newspaper articles, video clips, and historical interviews will provide the basis for uncovering fresh information about the origins and ideologies of 'Ultra' groups. Primary sources will also include documentaries and images of graffiti and murals. This is particularly the case with regards to discovering local sentiments towards such groups, rather than simply international perspectives from organisations such as governing bodies. TyC Sports newspaper, for example, and original interviews with journalist Gustavo Grabia, have proved central to gaining fresh perspectives on Argentine 'Ultra' groups which may otherwise have not been accessible, whilst original interviews conducted with Sherif Ekramy have had a similar effect for the understanding of Egyptian groups. Indeed, much of the originality of this research should come as a result of exploring primary material which has otherwise remained largely unacknowledged, in addition to the cross-cultural comparison of such sources. Certainly, the cross-continentiality of the project transpires through the diversity of its source material, which is equilibrated across all four regions in focus. This is equally be the case with regards to the range of personal interviews conducted with a number of stakeholders including 'Ultra' fans, local government officials and academics with regional specialities, which add colour and depth to the work.

Recommendations and conclusion

Through this paper, it has become clear that the notion of Ultra fandom in general, is cross-continential in nature. The close analysis of each of the case studies of Ultra groups within Italy, Argentina, Egypt and Indonesia, as well as similar groups in several regions, made evident that Ultra groups across the globe possess many common features, particularly with regards to their structure, motivations and behaviours.

Similarly, it has become transparent that the most seminal common point between these groups is that their motivations are universally not attached to sporting performance, but more ideological pillars, particularly regarding political, social and cultural beliefs. This then translates to Ultra groups exhibiting common behaviours in order to express such ideologies, from the largely harmless choreographed use of banners, slogans and chants, to more troublesome use of vandalism and acts of violence.

As a consequence, this project has sought to recommend a fresh set of procedures centred around proactive and preventative responses. This has been specifically tailored for several sections of the footballing ecosystem, including governments, national and international federations, media and football clubs. By undertaking such measures and standardising procedures, there is a stronger possibility that the problematic behaviours of such Ultras may be successfully tackled, whilst the groups themselves feel a level of integration and significance that allows them to become more passive in their own approaches without losing their core identities and links to their clubs and communities.

Impact of Football Docuseries: Lessons of previous shows for application to the women's game across its six Confederations



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Introduction

"The world is changing very fast... big will not beat small anymore. It will be the fast beating the slow," declared Rupert Murdoch in July 1999, when his News Corp media empire launched its first ever internet venture, then with Japanese media conglomerate SoftBank. Murdoch's bold statement proved to be an eerily accurate prediction of the world's digital industrial revolution, a result contributing to the success of the reputed media mogul's innovative global cable television media empire in the 1990s. Since News Corp's first step into internet media in 1999, sports media has undergone a complete metamorphosis in little over two decades.

Today, national terrestrial and cable television are dwarfed by international online streaming services, wealthy new global media competitors (such as Netflix, Amazon and Apple) have emerged to decentralise the rights ownership of sports broadcast. The way in which society consumes sport has been completely disrupted by a constant flow of multimedia information by traditional and non-traditional creators on social media platforms and the consumption of media on handheld smart devices (tablets and smartphones). Traditional media companies are no longer the sole proprietors of sports media content; sports federations, clubs, leagues, sponsors, fans and even the athletes themselves are now the competitors using new media to earn a lucrative portion of the attention, commerce, and influence. Indeed, Murdoch's David-and-Goliath-esque prediction was proven correct; the nimble and smart defeated the big and slow, impressively decentralising the sports media market in less than 20 years.

This new dynamic and fragmented world of countless international and national sports creators posed one significant challenge; the supply of content. In the new world of on-demand media, content is king, and the availability and regular flow of new content is crucial to survival. Football clubs, member associations and confederations are expected to entertain their fans 24/7, rather than the traditional 90 minutes per week. With attention spans dwindling in the new digital era, clubs have had to find new ways to discover new fans beyond their own social media channels and advertising-reliant marketing mix; leading them to more meaningful, long-form digital content.

Documentary series, also referred to as 'docuseries' are a rapidly growing concept in the 'Netflixized' world. Often, the most iconic docuseries by Netflix cause massive ripples in

society, including titles such as Tiger King impacting exotic animal ownership laws in the US, 13 Reasons Why on teenage mental health and many more. These paradigm shifts are groundbreaking and can change consumer behaviour and societal acceptance and rejection of certain topics, questions and themes. In sport specifically, sports clubs have launched their own docuseries in search of new fans. Arsenal, Tottenham, Juventus, Sunderland, Boca Juniors are notable, yet no entity has launched better than Formula 1. Resultantly, an arms race has begun; with football clubs, national federations, leagues, players and media organisations seizing their underused archived content to tell stories and monetise their brand through documentary series. As the sports entertainment market begins to saturate, the lofty heights achieved by Formula 1 remain unbeaten, leading many sports media departments to ask; what's the secret formula to creating an impactful docuseries?

Subsequently, the goal of this exploratory study is to identify what factors of sports docuseries can achieve meaningful impact for women's football. The women's game lags far behind the men's game in traditional commercial metrics. The men's game dwarves' female football in television and commercial metrics, with the women's game desperately trying to play catch up in a digital world that's rapidly changing. In many third world markets, female football is simply just trying to be accepted as a culturally acceptable activity. Perhaps it's time the women's game became more innovative in the way it presents itself.

In all cases, these series are male-specific sports. With the launch of FIFA+ Over-the-Top (OTT) platform and the rapid rise of women's football, this study investigates if the use of effectively executed docuseries could accelerate the bridging of the gap between men's and women's football. The project intends to explore the success of prior football and sporting series through streaming channels and theoretically apply these learnings to the women's game, assuming its application to its six confederations. Our overall goal is to understand if docuseries are a viable method for female football to accelerate its reputational, brand and commercial growth, enabling it to *attract attention, drive commerce and gain influence* and ultimately, succeed in the long term.

The Research

The research project explores the concept of docuseries with a specific focus on how to produce them effectively and measure the overall impact they can provide as a marketing and commercial tool for sports organisations. The early innovators have enjoyed success in pioneering the format of storytelling, as the rest of the sports world (including women's football) scurries to replicate their formula in their own media spheres. As the market saturates, the plotlines have become formulaic, predictable, and nowhere near as intriguing as the earliest renditions of docuseries, despite largely following the exact same methods of the previous practitioners.

This leads us to our research question:

How does a female football organisation, such as a club, league or federation, produce its own documentary series in order to create meaningful impact achieving marketing, commercial and reputational impact?

To succinctly answer the research question, this study employs both primary and secondary research methods in its approach. Supported by deep secondary research, the project draws upon existing expert opinion in media sources such as articles, interviews, videos and news reports. Specifically, the paper relies upon secondary research to source statistics, existing analysis, existing quoted expertise, and historical contexts that underpin our research. Given the recency of the docuseries 'golden age,' many of the following sources are drawn from the media rather than academic sources, however academia plays a key role in establishing context overall.

Two key methods of primary research are utilised in this study: fan surveys and expert interviews. The online fan survey was delivered by Google Form and is primarily targeted at measuring perceptive impact of the docuseries upon their willingness to purchase, willingness to consume broadcast product and attitude towards the club. The interviews are split in two stages; firstly, to aim to understand the intent and experiences of docuseries production experts, and secondly, to investigate with female football development leaders the viability and effectiveness of applying docuseries as a marketing strategy for the women's game.

Best Docuseries Practices

(a) Creating a Feeling of Immersion

The overwhelming feedback from responses in the fan survey was the desire to feel immersed in the inner sanctum of the sporting entity. Across numerous responses, respondents referenced the behind-the-scenes details, the ability to 'get closer' to the athletes and coaches and seeing the unseen and unknown behind closed doors as the most exciting part of watching docuseries. Overall, respondents mostly wanted to feel like they were there; not just seeing and hearing the unseen, but feeling the deep emotions, environment and actions that live broadcast simply cannot capture. The balance of responses seemed to suggest fans desired participation in the changeroom; viewers want to feel the emotions at the same level as the athletes and imagine themselves existing within the sporting environment.

(b) Authenticity without Sanitisation

Throughout the fan survey responses, viewers' immersion in the storyline of the relevant sporting entity depended greatly on the 'realness' of the story they were being told. Respondents across all age and geographical segments responded well to series that they perceived as 'the genuine story' and ultimately rated higher in enjoyment and impact stakes. Whilst the temptation for a sporting entity may be to present a selective, truncated, and polished image of its operations, the responding viewers demonstrated positivity in their responses to the off-script, imperfect moments of the club.

Across almost every expert interview, the most consistent response for achieving docuseries impact was the avoidance of over-sanitisation. This pertains particularly to club's limiting the exposure to the truthful atmosphere and environment in the revered all-access-area

that the club claims to open to the fans. The experts interviewed in this study particularly highlighted the ability of the fan to detect inauthenticity and recognise outright marketing department interference in the plotlines, characters and themes presented.

(c) Connect Viewer to Character with Human Interest Stories

Next, many of the qualitative responses in the fan surveys largely reference characters or exposure to characters as a key factor of their enjoyment of the series. Many of the recorded responses used terms such as 'humanising players,' 'dressing room atmosphere,' 'how the coach motivates his players,' the psychological factor, the human element and many more to describe what elements of the docuseries made them enjoy the series. This has been notably delivered in Netflix's Drive to Survive, Amazon's All or Nothing and the Australian Football League's Programming.

Recommendations

Target Increase in Value of Broadcast

Evidently, the most significant impact that women's football can achieve via docuseries is to increase the value of the broadcast deal of their competition. Women's football broadcast is exponentially dwarfed by its male counterparts and ultimately, a major source of income and growth for the sport comes through its commercial deal. It is recommended that female football competitions utilise docuseries as a new primary product in their host broadcast agreements.

The proposed docuseries should not just subtly integrate key broadcasting messaging but actually be considered part of the broadcast package of the competition or league. Ultimately, this may direct female football docuseries production towards host broadcasters and rights owners partnerships, which supplements the competition, federations or club with increased programming expertise and resources to draw upon to deliver higher quality and more compelling content.

Maximise Authenticity, Avoid 'Utopia'

Secondly, it is crucial that any docuseries focuses on authentic storylines, even if it showcases the weaknesses of the relevant sporting entity. The aforementioned cross-comparison between docuseries Juventus: First Team and Sunderland 'til I Die demonstrated that unveiling the sporting entity's vulnerability is appreciated by fans and is much more impactful to the organisation's key performance indicators on brand awareness, equity, willingness to watch live broadcast and willingness to purchase. Resultantly, docuseries must not sanitise their product and show too little of the truth behind-the-scenes; the viewer and fan simply will not believe any sporting entity is run as 'utopia,' especially when the docuseries is produced as a self-reflection by the sporting entity itself. Thus, the recommendation for docuseries producers is to strongly define a unique plot conflict before the docuseries production. The conflict cannot just be 'can they win;' the conflict must incorporate strong and emotional themes, derived outside the sport itself.

Attract and Compel Fans with Topical Themes

Within the compelling and unique plot, docuseries are more likely to succeed in connecting with the fan and causing a commercial and reputational impact when accentuating relevant themes within the plot of the docuseries. Drive to Survive is able to successfully present the subplots of all Formula 1's ten teams due to its ability to accentuate riveting underlying themes, such as Dmitry Mazepin's nepotistic stranglehold on racing team Haas. These themes, when showcased effectively, cause an emotional reaction within the viewer and allow a deep connection between them and the sporting entity.

In the sphere of women's football, this is particularly a pertinent point. Female football can draw upon several compelling female-unique themes; the equal pay dispute, players exhausted by working multiple jobs, gender empowerment, menstrual health and hygiene, breastfeeding, motherhood, football participation stigma, representation, role models, misogyny, sexism, and cyberbullying are all captivating potential themes to integrate into the subplot of a female football docuseries. This specifically is a strategy to be utilised in the upcoming docuseries Fearless by Australian Football League Women; a common feature in their studio's programming strategy. However, these remain 'common' talking points in women's sport and it is recommended that docuseries look deeper for non-typical themes of women's sporting docuseries to achieve uniqueness from other female sport docuseries in their storyline.

Movies, Music, Minting NFTs: How can football keep Gen Z entertained?



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Context for the study

'We have a real concern about how football is losing its grip and losing its salience a little bit. We need to do all we can, all we can, to address that and put it back at the centre of attention for the younger generation.' - Charlie Marshall, the CEO of the European Club Association

For a long period of time, the traditional way of consuming live sports through in-stadia viewing and broadcast have dictated fandom but with other forms of entertainment evolving with the digital times, sport still seems to lack behind according to some. The Global Sports Innovation Centre which is powered by Microsoft states that 'Sport is the only content genre, in the face of the ongoing digital disruption, that's retained its appointment-to-watch value, compared to historical contemporaries such as news, movies, and entertainment.'

But over the past two decades, with the explosion of technology - smartphones, data connectivity and social media, one can see a drastic shift in the consumption and behavioral patterns of sports fans. While the broadcast deals may not indicate it, the fragmentation of audiences has left many in the sports industries playing a guessing game when it comes to sport and consumption of it by younger audiences. The buzzword which almost every industry is talking about is Web 3.0 - the world of blockchain technology, cryptocurrencies, Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality and the list goes on. But is the football industry ready?

Objective of the study

Sport organizations have an opportunity and a valid reason to embrace digital experimentation so that they can bring in newer audiences, audiences that were not fans, convert the casual fans to avid supporters and make those who avidly followed the club into loyal fanatics that want to own a part of the club's historical moments. This paper will

try to understand if there is merit in theory for the football industry, particularly Premier League clubs, to take a leaf out of other domains of entertainment, in the aspect of using digital solutions. The main objective is to understand if clubs can effectively engage the different segments (based on the level of support) of their young fanbase through varied digital solutions.

Methodology

Our first aim is focusing on the main difference about attitudes and perceptions between the Gen X and the Gen Z, with a time jump that will make us skip the Millennials (or Gen Y), who have been left out of this study as their habits form a hybrid situation regarding technology. In order to have a sharp contrast in understanding the sport consumption habits, this paper looks at two distinct generations that have a completely different relationship with digital solutions. Through a quantitative survey, the paper looks at Gen Z fans' perspective on whether they are aware about new-age ways of engagement/digital solutions and as well as their motivations of supporting a club. The paper defines four clear stages of a fan journey in entertainment and in order to quantify the four stages, the survey defined specific activities that a respondent must have done in the 2021-2022 Premier League football season. The results gave a contextual understanding which when layered with the secondary research around the target group's overall behaviour and motivations, provided a comprehensive picture.

Furthermore, qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted with a total of 10 experts with 2 objectives

- To get context in the field of digital engagement in sport for younger audiences
- To understand impact of specific digital solutions in different domains of entertainment

Analysis and findings

- *Digital engagement in sport for younger audiences*

The quant survey revealed that 53% of the Gen Z respondents were not aware of the new-age digital trends. 76% of the ones defined at the 'Aware' stage, do not know about the trends. The percentage dropped to 50% for 'Casual' and 'Avid' fans, and goes as low as 10% for loyal fans, indicating that as the level of fandom increases, fans tend to know more about new-age digital trends as they plausibly are more active in interactions and can be termed as the 'early adopters' of the club's new initiatives. From this survey, it also became clear that Gen Z tend to follow a club more because of the players while Gen X supports a club a lot more due to locality, passed on tradition from family or just because how popular the club is.

From qualitative interviews revolving around digital engagement in sport, experts believed that in the future, fans will dictate more and more of the clubs' decisions. This step will

come from deep data analysis that will provide a true understanding of fans' desires and expectations. Furthermore, it was discussed that fans want a seamless experience between sponsors and clubs and in general virtual world exploration. They don't want different interfaces, accounts and learning curves. Lastly, Manchester United also recognises the opportunity to take a leaf out of other industries in order to reach younger audiences and elevate their fan experience.

- ***Case Studies highlighting digital solutions in different domains of entertainment***

Awareness Stage:

Formula 1 | Humanizing the sport through 'Off the field of play' video content

The success of 'Drive to Survive' lies in the way Liberty Media and Formula 1 have integrated its presence into the season calendar. For the past four seasons, the show has been released two weeks before the first race of the year and audiences that had no interest in the sport, suddenly started noticing it because of all the hype it created on an alternate medium known for entertainment content rather than sports.

Unlike some of the sports documentaries in football, that do a one-off season with a club, what could be a reason for 'Drive to Survive' to truly shine is consistency. Audiences over a period of time can follow the human side of the sport as each team is given more or less equal weightage. So when a Man City 'All or nothing' series is released, it is focusing on just one season and is catered more towards existing fans rather than enticing new ones to get into the sport and support the team eventually. A lot of the narrative could be argued through the technical lens of someone who understands the brand of football played by Man City.

Casual Stage:

Marvel Insider Program | Modeling a Cinematic universe to appeal to 'Every fan'

Marvel Entertainment has been known for having a diverse fan base, one of the main contributing factors to its unwavering success throughout the years lies in its ability to build an engaging universe through leveraging its transmedia storytelling strategy that caters to different levels of fandom, in a consistent manner across its diverse media channels, the brand diversified its offerings based on the fact that not all fans would be die hard ones, thus Marvel expanded their brand from just appealing to comic fans through their comic books to appealing to mass audience through movies, TV series, applications, games and theme parks that appeals to younger generations. Clubs usually have several communication channels where they engage with their audience, but most of their offerings and strategies are focused on engaging with existing loyal fans and not other types such as casual fans who might become more loyal in a later stage of their fan journey.

The key theme is that they reward fans for simply being fans; the brand invests in data collection and has established a comprehensive understanding of their fan behavior, which ensures that their value proposition are inline with existing behaviors, they understand a casual fan has different behavior patterns than a loyal one, thus engagement activities directed at casual fans ensure that they keep doing what they are already doing, until they are motivated to go to the next level of their fan journey and engage in more activities.

Avid Stage:

BTS, K-pop group

The Hallyu Wave, BTS and the rise of digital fan engagement

A closer look at our case study on the K-pop business model, the success of HYBE and how Weverse is intentionally designed to foster and promote loyalty that drives fans through all four stages of the fan journey, mobilizing them towards a more participatory approach where their needs are at the focus of every possible offering, provides an opportunity for football clubs to diversify their revenue streams and solidify their sporting identity.

Reworking the idea of dedicated mobile applications and turning them into interactive spaces that encourage consumption of cross-platform content, including behind the scenes footage and a more organic interaction with the club, could help strengthen the relationship between fans, players, and clubs. However, there are considerable challenges when it comes to the players' personality rights or clubs' broadcasting rights, and the legal implications of hosting or streaming this content permanently. It also brings into question the nature of sports as a performative activity in the entertainment business, what we expect from football players and the way they interact with fans off the pitch, as well as access to their personal lives and the way they present themselves online.

Loyalty stage:

NBA Top Shot | Different ways of being loyal fans in the modern era

NBA's Dallas Mavericks gave every person who goes to the venue a free NFT, which was dropped ahead of that game. And once you get a certain number, 10 for example, you unlock a benefit, a merchandise item etc. It's smart and they are not squeezing money out of the pocket of fans but providing them with real value.

In Europe many NFTs released by clubs are failing and this might be because clubs create their NFTs just to monetize, by selling something that may be considered a fad, trendy or gimmicky now, but that nobody else in the future will be willing to purchase. Thinking about the long-term and not the short-term monetization is the way to deliver the best NFTs. These have to represent long-term benefits for fans and show them that their loyalty will be rewarded when they buy merchandise, attend matches and so on. At the same time, they need the chance to monetize from their loyalty thanks to the opportunity of selling their collection of NFTs gathered through matches. In a nutshell: make the NFTs useful outside the blockchain and crypto communities to create more fan value. Creating more value will also help to collect more customer information and expand the database, creating a direct connection harder to get through traditional channels otherwise.

To conclude, football and the Premier League clubs should look at experimentation based on the traits of newer and younger audiences. Create stronger narratives, keep a look out for industries that embrace tech solutions and finally make it easy for different fan segments based on their level of interest to understand 'what's in it for me', so that they see true value in engaging with and investing in the sport, rather than being passive consumers who just watch highlights and keep up with the scores.

Stay Dangerous: How the Incorporation of Music through New and Existing Sports Can Help Drive a Better Fans Experience and Viewership for the Summer Olympic Games



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The Summer Olympic Games have been the most important sporting event in history, and it has been shown that it continues to be the most appealing sports and entertainment property in the world. Even though this is the reality, there is some challenges and opportunities that the International Olympic Committee is already addressing following the Agenda 2020+5, specifically Recommendation 1 which mentions:

- Continue developing an Olympic Program that remains balanced and relevant to youth, ensuring gender equality, innovation, universality, and participation of the best athletes.
- Make the Olympic Games experience more inclusive by engaging with the largest possible audience before and during the Olympic Games.
- Broadcast the Olympic Games using innovation and athlete-centric storytelling to highlight the relevance of the Olympic values.

Having said that, the three remarks above refer to new challenges and trends in which the sports are performed and consumed and how they should be reflected to ensure the experience remains breath-taking and captivating for younger audiences. This last is one of the biggest challenges that the IOC is facing: the engagement with youth. Using the incorporation of new sports to the Olympic programs, the IOC have been moving forward to keep younger generation engaged.

This research project wants to address the question: how the incorporation of music through new and existing sports can help drive a better fans experience and viewership for the Summer Olympic Games. In that sense, this project has explored how music enhances the fan experience as well as analyzed the increasing popularity of urban sports among young people in order to understand how the development of certain sports can boost the popularity of the Olympics and engage with youth. Moreover, the project suggests music can fit in galvanizing the development of certain established Olympic sports.

The research has been conducted dividing four sections which has helped to systematize the research:

1. **Framework:** Our original framework focuses on understanding the link between music and sports. Moreover, why fan experience is vital in this context, and how it has changed in the last decades influencing on the consumer behavior. Finally, to explore which are the new trends among youth in this mega-event using various benchmarks. This is done through its historical link, its current usage within the Olympic movement, the entertainment component that is prevalent within U.S. sports, and the emphasis of fan engagement within sports.
2. **Case studies:** To help enhance our argument for music's incorporation, we focused on the four different case studies of events that have used music to help enhance the fan experience and engagement. First was the 2018 Buenos Aires Summer Youth Olympic and its usage as a trial run for the IOC for numerous concepts. This ranged from the urban park to testing out newer "urban sports; many of which have now made their way into the Summer Olympics program such as 3x3 Basketball, Sports Climbing, and Breakdancing. The second case study was the impact of Esports through fan engagement. From the Asian Games emergence to its range through a multitude of mediums in sports. It's attention to create and innovate engagement is noted as the future within sports. The third case study is towards the X Games and more importantly its X Fest festival that happens during the event. X Fest, which is at both the summer and winter X Games respectively, has had music at its core since its beginning. X Fest has show the ability to drive a profitable fan experience through music along with its sponsorship activation. Large names across the music industry such as Metallica, Kanye West, Nicki Minaj, deadmu5, Ice Cube, and A\$AP Ferg, etc has been a testament towards its massive appeal of added value. Finally, a dry run case study at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Summer Olympic Games and Copacabana. During the beach volleyball event, it became an international sensation as it stepped towards its local roots as a more festive event than previous installments. It was a successful concept that will be looked to as a model within the games.

relevant cases will be analyzed to evaluate cases of success and to build a benchmark between different sports and sports events outside Olympics. Interviews to relevant people will be conducted in order to gather information, insights and advice for the proposals.

3. **Assessment of the Olympic Disciplines:** Our criteria was created to assess which sports are better compatible with music. Based on this criterion each discipline was grouped and scored. The main goal is to categorize them to narrow down the proposals. To do so, we created a banding system of the sports that will help us enhance which sports need to be included with priority using a balance criterion. The purpose of banding the sports disciplines is to narrow down the scope of this research project proposals. We propose to group the sports into three categories: green sports, orange sports, and red sports. This classification depends on the potential of the discipline to incorporate or boost music usage within it, considering the assessment made and explained before. Sports that have a vast potential or sports that are already using music as an essential part of their competitions or presentation will be in the Green category, while sports

that have, for example, a code of silence as part of their rules are most likely to be in the Red category. After further review, we concluded the following sporting event disciplines in these categories:

- [0 – 1[: 14 Red Sports
- [1 - 1.6[: 20 Orange Sports
- [1.6 - 2]: 14 Green Sports

This is with the Green Sports being-

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1) Cycling (BMX Freestyle) | 2) Athletics (Track) |
| 3) Basketball | 4) Basketball 3 x 3 |
| 5) Boxing | 6) Football |
| 7) Rugby Sevens | 8) Skateboarding |
| 9) Sport climbing | 10) Surfing |
| 11) Volley (indoor) | 12) Volley (Beach) |
| 13) Breakdance | 14) Cycling (BMX Racing) |

4. **Survey:** Using a primary source for this research, we run a survey with the main objective of gathering insights from the fans and validating our hypothesis about music as a trigger of the fan experience. In general, 22% of the respondents attended in person at least one of the Summer Olympic Games Editions, while 78% watched it on TV or streaming platforms. Moreover, the respondents who went to the Olympic Games found Beach Volleyball as their favorite sport in the first place with 22% of the answers, followed by Football with 17% and Synchronized Swimming with 9%. In the controlled group of participants were asked if one would how likely they were to attend an event without music and how likely they were to pay for it. This group gave a 35% likeliness. However, when the uncontrolled was asked if one would how likely they were to attend an event with music and how likely they were to pay for it, this group gave a 55% likeliness.

Solutions

Following this structure allowed to have a holistic view of the opportunities, challenges, and an end-to-end vision for the proposal of different solutions. Having analyzed each section mentioned above, we are presenting proposals that take into consideration all the insights gathered. The proposals are divided in three sections:

Sport presentation in venue

For our solutions, this has been one of the more important aspects. On-venue sports presentation is an area that has been gaining prominence in the last decade to enhance

the fan experience and to bring innovative ways to make the sport more attractive to its consumers. National songs, Live music and art co-creation, Involvement of fans in the music set, Promote local culture, artists, and music are the local activation pieces that we suggest could help enhance this experience. For two sports of emphasis, Skateboarding and Surfing have the grounds to be test subjects for our proposal within Paris 2024.

Broadcasting

Broadcasting is a vital aspect of the modern Olympics and must be considered a major stakeholder for this concept to work. To correctly allocate the resources for the best commercial value, this project suggests targeting three broadcasters in particular for this concept. From its unilateral feed system, the possibility to control and create are plentiful for the IOC and OBS with a more engaging broadcast. A major question that still arises is the legal framework of availability within this proposal. Given the multiple stakeholders involved in the legal framework, this will need to be standardized to be available to a broad audience.

To combat this, two options have been suggested for clearance. First, is the traditional clearance of records streamlined by the IOC through the increase of capacity to accommodate this raise of rights globally. Internal sourcing of popular music to be used by OBS and its partner broadcasters could be an easier and more cost-efficient manner to incorporate this concept. The second option is a more ambitious but intriguing trend seen in sports. An in-house label could be an option for original contemporary music to be used as being used by Esports publishers Riot Games and the NBA Golden State Warriors.

Technological Solutions

As the Olympics audience is getting older, there is an important need to attract younger generations, it shows something new is required, and nowadays, the term “new” is directly proportional with the term “technology”. Examples of these methods include Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs), Fan Tokens, and the effects this can have through the metaverse. What concerns the fungible tokens, the whole world, especially the sports universe, is implementing the fan tokens, which can be exchanged into the team merchandise, memorabilia, match-day, VIP experiences, meet & greet events, and many more obstacles.

Other aspects of improvement including the enhancement of the official app and the incorporation of QR Codes within the program. The app is not user-friendly for different reasons: challenging to navigate, it is not possible to change the time zone to see the schedules, etc. To make the app better, the user should be able to select their time zone, but also, if the app had a reminder feature to send a notification when the user-selected event is about to begin, it would increase the viewership too. The QR code image could appear before the event’s start, and scanning it would show the information about the rules of the sport, the format of the tournament, the athletes participating in it, some interesting facts, etc. In addition, if there is music during the event, the QR code could take the fan to the artist/song/label website, where they can learn more about it or even buy it.

Conclusion

As the Olympic movement continues to take stride into a new era, from its modern beginnings in Athens to the most recent edition in Tokyo, the games have found a way to excite the globe through sport. As it does so, the need for innovation is important to continue its strides. This is especially true in the ever so growing changes that come across our planet. The IOC must be prepared and open to those changes. As Juan Antonio Samaranch led a new Olympic Movement into a new era through the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympic Games with the new commercialization of the games that stabilized the financial viability of the games. A move that while not easy, helped allow sports to see new heights far past one's imagination. We feel that this incorporation of music is on the dawn of a new era within the Olympic Movement as it moves towards new innovative ways to bring sports to the people of the world. Through this method, we believe that the Paris 2024, Los Angeles 2028, and Brisbane 2032 Summer Games will be the most engaging and refreshing trio in the movement's history if it follows three keys. Stay Vigilant, Stay Fresh, and Stay Dangerous.

No impact at home? Understanding how West African football academies could be more than instruments for European club success



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Abstract

Latest analyses of the origins of expatriate players in 135 men's professional leagues indicate that West Africa is the largest "exporter" of football talent in Africa, with Senegal taking 10th place globally when it comes to the number of athletes playing in Europe's top five leagues.

Athlete migration from the region has been taking place for almost a century and the demand for young, elite talent is growing. This creates "supply chain" opportunities for clubs and academies that focus on the identification and refinement of young talent, and consequently we are seeing an increase in the number of academies in the Western African Football Union (WAFU) area.

In a means to deepen our understanding of the role of academies in the WAFU region, this project traces the historical roots of the demand for these players internationally, how the past few decades have affected the number and types of academies in the area, and what impact these academies may be having on their local communities.

We go on to investigate what success looks like for these academies and propose a framework that CAF, the Member Associations (MAs) and the academies themselves could use to create successful business models and strategic plans. Through this work, we also suggest the addition of a new academy typology to be added to the historic categorisation of African academies: The Impact-driven academy.

Methodology

In order to analyse the research question, we investigated four critical sub-topics:

1. The historical and contemporary athlete migration trends from Africa into Europe, unpacking colonial patterns of resource exploitation and migration paths:

We analysed existing literature to develop an understanding of how political and sociological structures have played a role in athlete demand and supply. As trends move from simply "extracting" raw talent from a country, to seeking refined and

professionally prepared players, we explored the opportunities for academies in West Africa to become critical role players in the professional football world.

2. The regulations and legislature that has been developed in order to govern youth development, academy operations, protection of minors, and the migration and transfer of players into professional teams:

We examined how these reforms have affected academy structures and overall athlete migration and where regulation gaps have allowed for *ad-hoc* processes and structures.

3. Public perception of West African academies, interviews with role players from within the academy and federation structures, and researching the success of academies through FIFA's technical reports and the European Club Association's criteria for academy quality.

By developing a body of qualitative and quantitative findings, we shed light on academy business models, challenges within the system and how new academy types differ from their traditional categorisation. We investigate the existing success criteria for academies and, where gaps exist, specifically continental and regional ones, we found an opportunity to redefine what successful WAFU academies could look like.

By approaching the work in this multidisciplinary manner, the project creates a holistic understanding of academies in West Africa. This culminates in a fourth sub-topic, namely defining a new framework for academy types, defining what success criteria they should aspire towards and recommending a success model that academies, federations and associations could use to improve the overall environment.

Key findings

Through a deep review of literature and regulations, combined with interviews and surveys, we have identified eight critical findings:

1. In the journey towards becoming a professional footballer, players are predominantly motivated by the opportunity to improve their quality of life.
2. Migration destinations have diversified over the last decades with high levels of intracontinental transfers and transfers into other confederations.
3. WAFU players tend to struggle with cultural adaptation when transferred internationally, negatively affecting their motivation, performance and long-term career prospect.
4. There is an increase in the number of academies that focus on creating impact beyond refining football talent, namely through focusing on community upliftment and holistic player education.
5. The geographical reach of scouting processes is expanding and academies are increasingly creating decentralised models of operation.

6. The regulatory framework governing academies as practically absent within the WAFU region, and CAF and FIFA's guidelines only provide light-touch suggestions that are not mandatory.
7. There is increasing engagement and partnership between domestic academies, including between larger, more established academies, and *ad hoc* ones
8. Academies are well placed to create broader, holistic impact for players, staff and their broader communities as a centre for creating shared value for communities

These findings have shaped the recommendations that we have developed towards strengthening the WAFU academy ecosystem and towards increasing the body of knowledge in this field.

Recommendations

By mapping academies on a two-by-two matrix, with level of financial sustainability (high to low) versus level of social impact involvement (high to low), we have classified four academy categories:

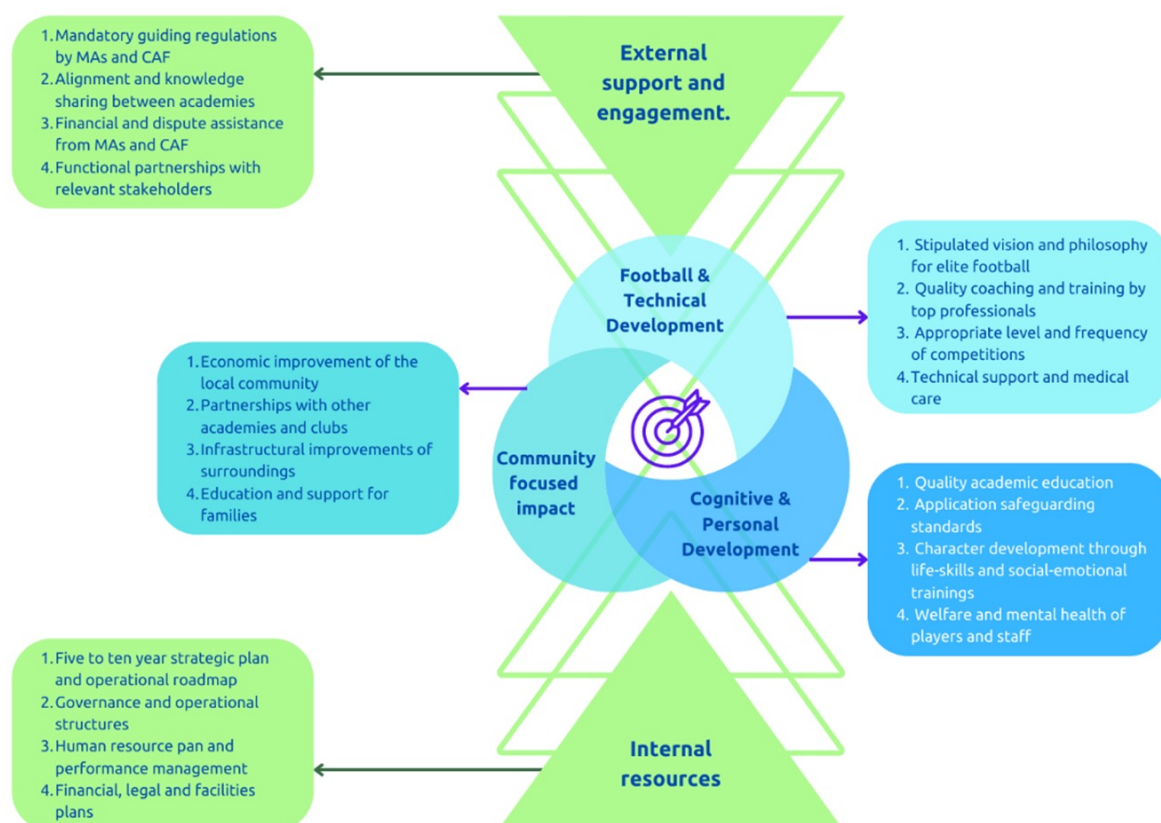
- **Ad hoc academies** (Low financial sustainability; Low social impact)
- **Start-up academies** (Low financial sustainability; High social impact)
- **Inward-facing academies** (High financial sustainability; Low social impact)
- **Holistic academies** (High financial sustainability; High social impact)

We believe that academies should aspire to fall within the **holistic** category and through our work have found that these academies find more success in creating career-ready, resilient players, while maintaining the support and buy-in from their local communities. Financial sustainability paired with a focus on social and player impact create a fertile foundation within which an academy can flourish.

Academies in the upper right quadrant pose the possibility of defining a new category of academy to add to the historically accepted, existing four categories that are described in literature – **Impact driven academies**: An impact-driven academy has a three-fold mission, namely elite football and technical development, cognitive and personal development, and community impact:



Consequently, we propose a success model built around these three pillars together with a healthy balance between adequate internal capacity and effective external support. Each of the five areas have been further elaborated to include four outputs each.



We suggest that these five areas of success be used by CAF and the MAs to regulate, support and monitor West African academies and that the academies in turn, should use this success framework to develop their strategic models and operational roadmaps.

Furthermore, survey results indicate that the local public perception of academies in West Africa is positive and this sentiment should be capitalised on, in order to create further community buy-in and stakeholder support.

Conclusion

Decades of 'muscle exodus' from Africa due to international player demand has grown the development of academy "supply chains" on the continent, especially in West Africa. A combination of these historical migration trends, the easing of sporting migration legalities, increased global demand for young football talent from Africa, and proven examples of sporting success by West African players, has created an attractive environment for academy owners, scouts, agents, players and broader football stakeholders.

With increasing athlete demand, the attraction of refined, elite-trained and emotionally developed players over simple raw talent has created an opportunity for academies to perfect their business models to meet the global requirements of young footballers.

However, we found that the football ecosystem, specifically with regards to youth development, is a fragile one. Although the number of football academies has grown dramatically over the last decades, a lack of guiding regulations, poor alignment between stakeholders, and players motivated to “seek a better life” beyond their borders at all costs, creates a risk of exploitative practices.

In order to strengthen this football environment, we created recommendations that allow academies to focus not solely on player identification, talent refinement and transfers, but also on creating social impact and on the cognitive and psychological development of players. This effective combination can guide the success criteria necessary to bolster the overall resilience, impact and success of football in the WAFU region and beyond.

We believe that by incorporating these success criteria in their strategies, West African academies hold the power to create player- and community-centric football opportunities for the continent, and to develop a global football business that works towards a greater good.



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