

**Cooperative marketing alliances for new products commercialization as an entrepreneurial strategy: An analytical-comparative study of football industry**

In this paper, researchers focused on the study of the Iranian Football Premier League as a setting for cooperative marketing alliances among football teams and corporate businesses focuses on cooperative marketing alliances as a successful way to commercialization of new products by concentrated about sponsorship in Iran and assesses the effectiveness of this practice in clubs that competed in the Iranian Premier League from 2008 to 2009.

Starting with the issues in the Iranian clubs and purpose of this research paper, Iranian Professional League began in 2001 to 2002, the majority of Iranian clubs rely largely on government funding because they lack significant marketing knowledge to leverage their equity as a football club. This is because almost no Iranian team has a modern marketing department that is knowledgeable of current revenue methods which the only serious interaction between Iranian clubs and market is nothing but players transfer, and sponsorship. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the revenue structures of Iranian teams and see how they might benefit the development of Iranian football.

From the research, as Cherubini (2007) suggested that there is a virtuous cycle (*Figure 1*) that shapes the core of any football club's business model, which is highly reliant on the club's performance in competitions. This success attracts people's interest, both current and potential fans, and creates an outstanding image for the club, increasing the value of its brand and so attracting corporations to exploit the image and penetrate the fan market.

From the Shilbury et al.'s definition, sponsorship is a business partnership between a source of finances, resources, or services and an individual, event, or organization that in exchange for the sponsorship investment delivers rights and affiliation that may be exploited for commercial gain. However, he also thought that return on investment is significantly limited due to a lack of synergy amongst sponsorship partners and Iranian clubs.

To solve the Iranian clubs' marketing problems, researchers wanted to study more about the potential of sponsorship relationships acting as a co-marketing partnership. Therefore, they gave an example of Real Madrid case which Real Madrid, one of the most success Spanish clubs, has developed from a sponsorship strategy, in which partners work as sponsors, to a partnership

model, in which partners provide complementary value to the brand by building synergies between the institutions that help to gain strategic markets. This arrangement included the sponsorship of the soccer team, which features the company's logo on the players' jerseys during games, as well as the combined development of companies, with Siemens supplying the technological know-how and Real Madrid providing the content.

On the other hand, from the paper research, Iranian clubs sign contract with their sponsors for only a little capital that they acquire from partners but nothing further from it. Moreover, most of content relationship between clubs and sponsors are not related which it was hard to do the marketing strategies and can be considered as a lose-lose relationship. Furthermore, financial contracts between alliances were considered as a weird contract because Iranian clubs' expenditure was greater than the supported money that they acquire from their sponsors.

In conclusion, the development of Iranian football to a professional level requires the use of modern football management skills. The most serious issue for Iranian clubs in all levels is money problems. In order to overcome these challenges, clubs may apply marketing skills to maximize their revenue-generating potential and profitability. Discovering a strategy to maximize on the large number of supporters that support various Iranian clubs, as well as the popularity of clubs in their province and community, is crucial for club business. Co-marketing is one of the greatest ways for Iranian clubs to enter synergy with their Sponsors' interactions. The main benefit of co-marketing is a significant entry of the club into the real market by supplying products/services to customers, as well as a competitive advantage for its fans.

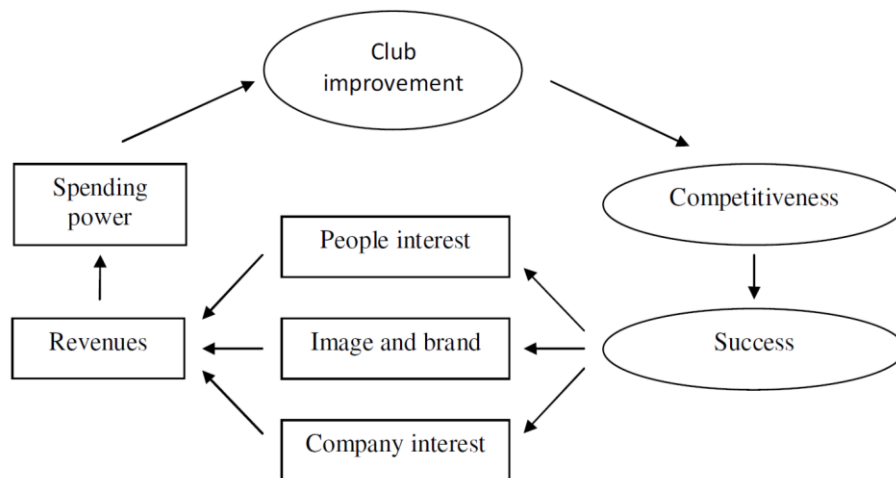


Figure 1: The virtuous circle of the football club (Cherubini, 2007).