

2013 North American Society for Sport Management Conference (NASSM 2013)

Understanding the Impact of Planned Behavior on Donor Intention to Donate to Green Stadium Initiatives: Development of a Theoretical Framework

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Marketing

Friday, May 31, 2013

**20-minute oral presentation
(including questions)
(Room 406)**

Abstract 2013-143

1:40 PM

The earth's resources are consumed at an increasingly unsustainable rate, which contributes to serious environmental issues such as climate change, pollution, and loss of useful land (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007). In recent years, the green building design has increasingly received societal and industrial attentions, and become a mechanism to deal with limited resources and reduce the negative environmental impact. The Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification has also become the nationally and internationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of green buildings.

Green buildings on university campuses have been widely embraced. Currently, there are 676 American higher education institutions that are affiliated the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), among which 76.7% of them have committed to achieving at least LEED Silver certification or its equivalence in all of their new construction and major renovation efforts (ACUPCC, 2012a). Of the buildings on a university campus, few can represent the larger campus community better than sports facilities (Duderstadt, 2000; Shulman & Bowen, 2001; Toma, 2003). Major athletic donors think that college athletic programs serve as an important introduction to the broader mission of the institution (Stinson & Howard, 2010). Consequently, college sports facilities should reflect higher education's support of green building policies, which can help project a better public image and reputation (DuBose, Bosch, & Pearce, 2007).

Many college athletic programs have recognized the significance of green stadium initiatives (GSI) and invested in GSI by retrofitting or building new sustainable stadiums. For instance, the Pennsylvania State University, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Florida have all achieved the LEED certification for one or more of their athletic facilities (Cohen, 2010). Compared to conventional design, the average expense for a LEED building is \$3 to \$5 more per square foot (Kats, 2003). This additional cost is likely significant for a majority of NCAA Division I athletic departments as most of them have struggled to balance revenues and expenses (Fulks, 2003, 2008). Of the generated revenue from college athletic departments' external sources, about 30% is obtained via contributions from alumni, and others [Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics (KCIA), 2009]. For Division I athletic programs, private giving has grown from 5% of the total revenue in 1965 to 24% in 2008 (Fulks, 1994, 2008), which represents the greatest percentage of increase among institutional income sources during the last few decades.

Motives for intercollegiate athletic donations have been frequently studied to gain a better understanding of donor behavior (Stinson & Howard, 2007, 2010; Tucker, 2004). A number of donation motives have been identified in the literature, including but not limited to, ticket priorities, tax deductions, professional and social contacts, special parking, helping student-athletes, affiliation with the university (Gladden, Mahony, & Apostolopoulou, 2005; Stinson & Howard, 2007). However, to date, little research attention has been paid to donor motivations relating to an athletic department's environmental activities. Potentially, as a part of an intercollegiate athletic program's sustainability initiatives, GSI may contribute to additional revenue opportunities through GSI-specific fundraising (McSherry, 2009). Therefore, it is necessary to examine the potential fundraising impact resulting from collegiate athletic department's GSI activities. Through a comprehensive review of literature as the primary methodology of research inquiry, the purpose of this study was to develop a theoretical framework to guide the study on how a donor's planned behavior influence his/her intention to donate to green stadium initiatives.

The theoretical framework for this study was mainly based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985). The TPB assumes that a behavior is predicted by a behavioral intention, which in turn is determined by attitude, subjective norm (SN), and perceived behavior control (PBC) associated with the behavior. Attitude is determined by an individual's beliefs about the outcomes of conducting the behavior (behavioral beliefs). A person's SN is

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determined by his or her normative beliefs, where important referent individuals may approve or disapprove of performing the behavior. PBC, which accounts for factors outside an individual's control that may affect one's intentions and behaviors, is determined by control beliefs concerning the presence or absence of facilitators and barriers to behavioral performance. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) proposed that an individual has three different types of beliefs: descriptive, informational, and inferential beliefs. Descriptive beliefs result from direct observation of the characteristics of a given object. Perception, as Schwartz (2004) stated, is the result of "picking up of information about the world made available to the perceiver by various sorts of physical stimulation" (p. 93). Thus, perception could be helpful in predicting one's descriptive beliefs. Informational beliefs are formed by accepting the information provided by an outside source, such as family, friends, magazines, radio, television and internet (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Therefore, interpersonal relationship and social media would influence one's informational beliefs. Inferential beliefs are formed through a process of inference. They are typically based on prior descriptive beliefs or inferences, concerning attributes that are unobservable. Prior beliefs are organized in memory schemata and are based on prior knowledge about the given object. Hence, knowledge and past experience would impact inferential beliefs.

Based on the aforementioned theories and research findings mentioned above, a theoretical framework is proposed for studying the sequential influences of the identified antecedent factors (i.e., perception, interpersonal relationship, social media, knowledge, and past experience), donors' beliefs (behavior beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs), attitude, social norm and perceived behavior control on donation intentions associated with athletic programs that carry out GSI. This framework suggests that one's beliefs can be influenced by his/her perceptions, interpersonal relationship, social media, knowledge, and past experience. An individual's behavior beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs of donating to an institution with the GSI would respectively have positive influence on that individual's attitude, SN, and PBC toward donating to the institution, and in turn these would influence his/her donating intentions. It is anticipated that the developed theoretical framework is of the potential to be applied to a variety of studies of donation issues in professional and collegiate sport settings that are dealing with environmental issues, challenges, and initiatives.