Journalists as Event Consumers: Effects of Media Service Quality on Journalists’ Behavioral Intention

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The positive impact of service quality on sport consumer behavior, such as event satisfaction and behavioral intention, has been well identified in the service marketing literature (e.g., Murry & Howat, 2002; Olorunniwo, Hsu, & Udo, 2006; Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008). However, much of the research has focused on the experience of event participants or spectators, largely overlooking the group of media personnel, who are both event producers and important consumers. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationships between media service quality, journalists’ satisfaction, destination image, and behavioral intention during the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

Global media have paid significant amount of attention on host event’s logistics during their reporting of mega-events (Giffard & Rivenburgh, 2000). Reporters’ jobs are directly impacted by their working environment and conditions, which include traffic jams, weather, security checks, internet connection, staff and volunteers, available translators among others (Rivenburgh, 2002). Rivenburgh (2002) also noted the media are likely to have negative coverage on the host city if they were unable to efficiently do their job. Thus, media service quality is not only significant to the success of the event, but also may be linked to media coverage about the host community.

As the result of literature review, a theoretical framework was developed, including the following elements: (1) media service quality will positively impact on journalists’ satisfaction; (2) journalists’ satisfaction will positively impact their intention of future visit, positive media coverage, and WOM; and (3) destination image will positively impact journalists’ intention of future visit, positive media coverage, and WOM.

Snowball sampling technique was used in this study since it is an efficient method to reach the target population with minimal time and cost (Li, Stokowski, Dittmore, & Scott, 2016). The researchers contacted 20 sports journalists who covered the World Cup and they agreed to forward the survey to their colleagues who covered the World Cup.

The survey instrument included five sections: (1) demographic information, (2) media service quality, (3) satisfaction, (4) destination image, and (5) behavioral intention. Thirteen items from previous literature (Ko, Zhang, Cattani, Pastore, 2011; Theodorakis at al., 2001) were used to examine service quality, three items from Yoshida and James (2010)’s study were adapted to examine satisfaction. Regarding destination’s image, four items adapted from Kaplanidou (2009). Three items examining revisiting the host nation, positive word of mouth, and intention to positively cover the event were created. Measurement of all items used a 7-point Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree/very unlikely; 7 = strongly agree/very likely).

The first step in the data analysis was to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the measurement properties of aforementioned scales. Next, structural equation modeling (SEM) was performed to assess the relationships specified in the conceptual model. Detailed results will be presented at the NASSM conference in New Orleans.

Results of this study will be beneficial for event organizers to have a better understanding around the importance of media service and to explore the relationship between media service and media coverage on the destination.