

The Role of Major-Sport Event Cricket With Respect To Consumer Perception and Attitude Towards Ambush Marketing

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ABSTRACT: *sports events like cricket world cup continues to be one of the most popular platforms for marketers in india. The appeal and reach of these events present lucrative opportunities for advertising, sponsorship and branding strategists from around the world. In turn, the marketing value provided by the sports has attracted the interest of multiple sponsors in various categories, leading to competitive hosting bids and ambush marketing. This study examined major-sports event interest as a determinant of sponsorship and ambush marketing attitudes, as well as the purchase intention of affiliated properties during the 2011 world cup. In total, 443 consumer surveys were collected from Bangalore. Results showed that overall consumer interest and purchase intention .irrespective of ambush marketing prominent brand has more influence in purchase decision.*

KEYWORDS: *Ambush Marketing, Purchase intention, Sponsorship*

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive world of marketing and advertising, marketers always look for effective tools and technique to enhance their product visibility so that consumer will consider their product in terms of buying. If we look into the broad horizon of marketing gimmicks and techniques, sponsorship and ambush marketing is one among them to draw consumer attention. The Oxford dictionary defines Ambush as - "**surprise attack by persons lying concealed.**"

Thus, Ambush marketing can be understood as a surprise attack on an event sponsor by its competitor. Ambush marketing takes place when a trader seeks to utilize the publicity value of an event, for instance - a major sports tournament or a concert, to gain a benefit from it despite, not having any involvement or connection with that event and more particularly, having made no financial contribution to entitle him to derive benefit from it. Ambush marketing is a radical concept which involves setting up some activity that makes use of the event and the interest in it, rather than shelling out for direct sponsorship. Therefore, Ambush marketing is a form of marketing that involves promoting its product around an event without payment of a sponsorship fee to the event. At most significant events, one brand pays to associate itself as the official sponsor in a particular category, and it is this exclusivity that pushes other brands to find ways to promote themselves-without paying or breaking any laws.

Ambush marketing refers to a company's attempt to capitalize on the goodwill, reputation, and popularity of a particular event by creating an association with it, without the authorization or consent of the necessary parties. Ambush marketing is the practice whereby another company, often a competitor, intrudes upon public attention surrounding the event, thereby deflecting attention towards itself and away from the sponsor. Often classified as a form of "guerrilla" marketing, the term was coined by Jerry Welsh, the originator of cause-related marketing when he was at the American Express.

Sponsorship has seen a rapid growth in recent years in both the dollars devoted to it and its prominence as a legitimate element of a company's promotional mix. As traditional media have become more expensive and cluttered, sponsorship is viewed as a cost-effective alternative. From a level of about \$500 million in 1982, corporate event sponsorship is expected to approach \$5.4 billion in 1996 according to the International Events Group (Shani and Sandler, 1996). Sports events lead the pack with an estimated 65 per cent of sponsorship spending. This is increasingly a worldwide phenomenon: sponsorship expenditures in the United Kingdom jumped from Pounds 4 million in 1970 to Pounds 400 million in 1993 (Meenaghan, 1994).

As an element of the promotional mix, sponsorship has been a stepchild when it comes to a careful understanding of how it works and its effect on consumers. While the promotional element of advertising has been carefully researched (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989), sponsorship has rarely undergone systematic study. It is usually mentioned as "war stories" of specific examples which worked well for a company. A comprehensive model of sponsorship is not currently available in the literature. It is the aim of the current research to investigate consumer attitude constructs towards sponsorship and develop scales to measure these constructs.

While various forms of ambush marketing have persisted for many decades, it hit its zenith in 1984 when marketers, desperate to gain the perceived advantage of official sponsor, found different ways to create such an association. The idea of such a concept was to push all the boundaries of legality, confusing the public into believing that the ambusher's brand was the official sponsor of a particular event. In the eye of an ambusher, there is no illegal activity, just an attempt to even out the field. With the growth of this practice however, sponsorship investments began to turn into massive losses, with the public confused and the official sponsor's brand negatively perceived. For this reason, heavy restrictions were enforced. Ambush marketing takes a variety of forms, including classic approaches like running simultaneous promotions or such extremes as flying blimps over events with the ambusher's logo emblazoned on the side of the blimp. Over the last 30 years, there have been a number of instances of the ambushers shifting the focus of the customer away from the official event sponsors.

In India ambush marketing came into light in 1996 world cup when Pepsi overshadowed and even in the recent Common Wealth Games ambush marketing was reported. Also there is an impression that in other big sporting events lined in India in near future like IPL and ICC world cup 2011 this practice was seen again. But Ambush marketing is not only prevalent in sporting events in India but in other countries like USA, UK, Australia and China as well. In one or the other sporting event like FIFA, Olympics and hockey world cup ambush marketing is rampant. This paper tries to focus on customer perception and attitude towards ambush marketing, and, how their purchase intention gets carried away by organizer or ambusher.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Robert B. Venter and others (2012) "FIFA World Cup 2010: Implications for and effects on the entrepreneurial performance of South Africa's informal sector" The article's objectives were to investigate issues of Ambush Marketing and the manner in which they posed as barriers in catalyzing entrepreneurial activity. Alongside, it sought to examine the potential of events such as FIFA in impacting the informal sector. There were two scales that were used to assess the impact of the world cup on performance in the entrepreneurial domain. These were derived from EPI and PSED. The results demonstrated that while events such as these significantly impacted the informal sector, traders regularly infringed laws related to Ambush Marketing, despite their knowledge of such laws. Steve McKelvey(2012) This study was aimed at understanding the attitude of sports participants towards the concept of Ambush Marketing. A random sampling of runners who participated in the 2005 as well as the 2008 ING New York City Marathons was surveyed. The studies reported that the attitudes towards Ambush Marketing were steadily more negative. This study helps marketers understand the implications of Ambush Marketing and thereby contributes significantly to relevant literature.

Eric MacIntosh and etl. (2012) In their study they conduct a detailed study of interest in mega-sports event as a determinant of ambush marketing as well as sponsorship attitudes, in addition to the intention of purchase of affiliated goods during the Vancouver Olympic Winter Games held in 2010. 619 consumer surveys in total were collected from four different Canadian cities. The study's results proved that overall consumer interest was high, and they also declared that levels of interest were strong determinants in their intention to purchase. Nancy A Miller (2011) moves from the already established notion that Ambush Marketing is not a creative strategy but one that is unfair and unethical. This paper attempts to examine the effectiveness of legislative efforts made to curb such practices. It looks primarily at Ambush Marketing tactics implemented in the 2010 Vancouver Whistler Olympic Games and looks at various methods in which ambush marketing is carried out. In addition to Olympics specific legislations, it explores additional measures that are available to protect the official sponsors. The study concludes by saying that while the legal measures taken aren't very effective in altering the marketing landscape with respect to ambush marketing, the introduction of laws pertaining to the same come as a relief to the sponsors. Teresa Scassa (2011) puts forth the fact that ambush marketing activities over the years, no matter how frustrating, have been written off as perfectly legal. In this paper, the evolution of the legislation prohibiting ambush marketing has been outlined.

The right of association, an emerging right, has been brought under keen observation and eventually criticism. The author argues the need for this right as it has never been established and that it does not reflect an appropriate balance of interests. Looking at the views of the organizers of historic sporting events, such as the International Olympic Committee and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, the right of association has been severely criticized, as it may infringe upon the freedom of expression. Pelanda (2011) discusses the problematic discourse in which scholars and corporate complainants such as the International Olympic Committee have discussed the issue of ambush marketing. He argues that those who persistently complain about ambush marketing have wielded the term far too liberally, and thus a great deal of confusion exists between the generally accepted definition of ambush marketing and the reality of the circumstances surrounding the numerous marketing strategies that the term is commonly used to describe.

Marc Mazodier(2010)The study aimed to clearly define Ambush Marketing as a concept, to identify the elements that give the misconception that the ambusher is the sponsored and to clearly understand effects of ambush marketing on current consumer attitude towards the ambusher. The tools of research used were MANOVA, as an explanatory factor of response. This was used as the three conditions for its application were tested and heteroscedasity was deemed acceptable. Results showed that disclosure of ambush marketing strategies had a negative influence on the attitude of the consumer towards the ambusher's brand. However, brand effect and purchase intention are not affected to a great extent. The only component that Ambush Marketing tarnished was that of perceived integrity. Robert B Venter and Anna Semens (2010) seek to investigate issues of Ambush Marketing and the manner in which they posed as barriers in catalyzing entrepreneurial activity. Alongside, it sought to examine the potential of events such as FIFA in impacting the informal sector. There were two scales that were used to assess the impact of the world cup on performance in the entrepreneurial domain. These were derived from EPI and PSED. The results demonstrated that while events such as these significantly impacted the informal sector, traders regularly infringed laws related to Ambush Marketing, despite their knowledge of such laws.

Holger Preuss, Kai Gemeinder and Benoit Seguin (2008) provides an insight into the use of ambush marketing on China's public television network by studying in detail the commercials that are circulated by companies during the 2004 Olympics held in Athens. In order to fulfill the objectives set, data was collected from TV commercial recordings during the games, TV commercials from nine other countries and qualitative data pertaining to the sponsorship situation in China at the time of the 2004 Olympics. The results show that concerns related to the practice of ambush marketing in China must be addressed seriously. Aubery Kent and Richard M Campbell (2007) district level ambush marketing as "freeloading", as companies do not pay for advertising space, yet they are benefited. In this paper, the main objectives are to discuss the existence of this type of ambush marketing, the effect of this practice on sponsors and its consequences with respect to athletic department marketers in colleges. Data is collected from three different college campuses and the study concludes by saying that ambush marketing is prevalent in college and university levels and that there is no force that stops ambushers, thus severely damaging the efforts of paying sponsors.

Edward Vassallo, Kristin Blemaster and Patricia Werner (2005) discuss a varied history of the practice of "parasitic advertising", or ambush marketing. They present a series of such incidents across eight international landscapes as well as related legal aspects. Although it cannot be termed as a complete global survey, it does present an attempt to deal with this much debated practice. In addition to discussing legal matters, creative strategies to combat ambush marketing are explored. The article concludes by debating whether or not ambush marketing is unethical and by saying that it is necessary to devote attention to this particular practice on an international scale.

Mizerski, Richard and others (1999) study aims at understanding the impact of Ambush Marketing with respect to casual marketing appeals. For this, a field experiment was conducted in order to directly test the effect on Ambush Marketing as against CRM efforts by marketers. The method of conducting the experiment was primarily that of interviews and the results showed that CRM was no more effective than that of Ambush Marketing in achieving results related to sales promotions. David Shani and Dennis M Sandler (1998) focus the attention on the role of event organizers in the conflict that occurs due to this practice. It puts forth the argument that event organizers are to blame, partially, for the rise of ambush marketing and to the indifference in the attitudes of the consumers. For this paper, data is collected from a random sample of about 1500 consumers and the results reveal that consumers are not clear regarding the official sponsors and their rights, the commitment that the sponsors have to the event and the various levels of sponsorship involved.

The study concludes by demonstrating the consumers' lack of knowledge and their indifference to the use of ambush marketing, and by suggesting that marketers work towards improving consumer awareness in order for them to have an increased opinion against ambushers. Tony Meenaghan (1996) the paper sought to understand whether or not the practice of Ambush Marketing was legal and ethical. It also sought to understand how a legitimate sponsor could counter such effects. It outlines various ambush strategies and elaborates on its effectiveness as well as the manner in which it poses a threat to corporate sponsorship. It concludes by providing various ethical perspectives of Ambush Marketing and providing strategies to combat the impact of ambushers. A thorough analysis of the related literature reveals the fact that there is a dearth of studies specific to the emerging markets. Most of the studies were focusing on developed countries. There is a need for more studies with a focus on the Indian scenario.

III. METHODOLOGY

Objectives Based on Review of Literature.

1. To understand the sports enthusiast attitude towards the practice of ambush marketing.
2. To analyze whether ambush advertisements have a positive effect on sports enthusiast minds and on their purchase decisions

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: For sports enthusiast all advertisements have same effect on purchase decisions.

Population of the Study

The present study is restricted to the area of Bangalore City only.

Data Collection

The sources of data used here are primary and secondary. Primary Data has been collected through questionnaires and the Secondary data has been collected through various journals, articles, research papers etc. Primary data were collected through the people who have watched the world cup match. Before undertaking the survey, a pilot survey was undertaken with 30 respondents. Their views were incorporated in the final questionnaire. The survey was carried out in Bangalore city during November-August 2012. The study employed convenience sampling. 443 People who have watched world cup 2011. The analysis of data was carried out using Statistical Package (SPSS) 16.0 .A closed-ended questionnaires was used for the purpose of data collection.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The survey was conducted during the ICC world cup 2011. The survey questionnaire was sent by email and respondents were given two weeks to reply. There was 443 reply of the survey.

The Reliability Statistics of the data is 0.613. It shows the trend is reliable.

Table 1

Type of sponsors	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Sponsor	156	3.42	1.047	2.259	.106
Ambusher	139	3.23	1.002		
Does not matter	148	3.48	1.040		
Total	443	3.38	1.034		

The Anova table1 shows that there is no significance at 0.5% level therefore Null hypothesis (H₀₁) has been accepted in terms of types of sponsors. The descriptive analysis is shown in table 2. The answer of the questions a, 3, 4 and 5 are on Likert scale (1- Highly disagree, 2- Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4- Agree, 5 - Highly agree). For question 1, the respondents were supposed to write the answer. For question 2, 10 answers were given with 8 correct answers.

Table 2

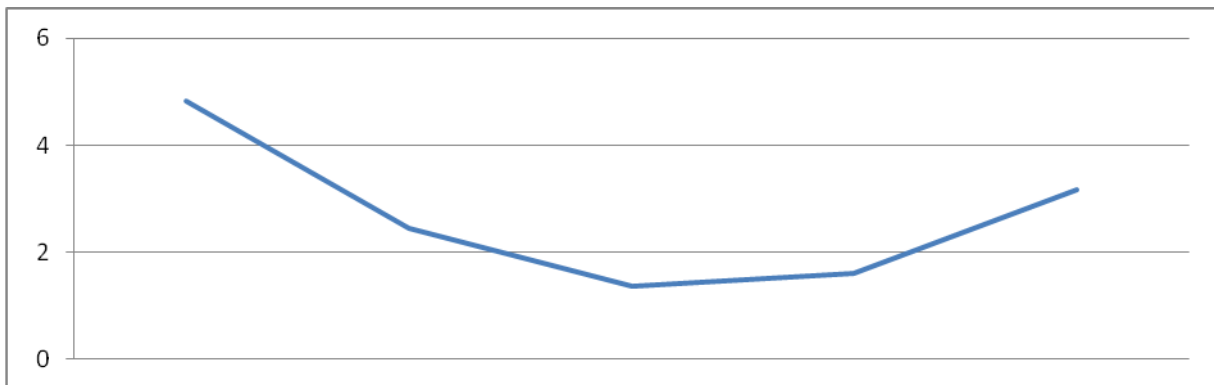
Questions	Mean	SD
A. How sports enthusiast you are	3.38	1.03
B. Gender	1.79	.408
1 Name the companies\brands that you think are sponsors of ICC Cricket World Cup 2011?	2.99	.829
2 Which of the following companies\brands do you think are sponsors of ICC Cricket World Cup 2011?	3.98	.829
3 During the ICC World Cup, sponsors have improved the image of their brands in the minds of consumers through sponsorships.	3.05	.846
4 During the ICC World Cup, sponsors have improved the image of their brands in my mind through sponsorships.	3.76	.924
5 I will consider companies' products for my next purchase.	1.98	.829

It is observed that that maximum (mean of question A is 3.38) people were sports enthusiast. The gender data suggest that 79% were male and 21% female. By looking at questions A (mean 3.38) and question1 (mean 2.99), we can infer that, even though many people were sports enthusiast, they were unable to recall more than 3 sponsors. Similarly question2 (mean 3.98), they were unable to recognize more than 4 sponsors on an average. Many sports enthusiast felt that the sponsorship had neutral impact (question3 mean 3.05) although they agree that they, themselves, were more impacted (question4 mean 3.76. Therefore based on above mention data in table 2, the sponsors have improved their image with sports enthusiasts.

Correlation and Regression

We observed that the purchase decision (Y) and able to recall (X) is related as straight line $Y=0.987*X-0.969$. The purchase decision (Y) and able to recognize (X) is related as straight line $Y =1*X-2$. The purchase decision (Y) and sponsor influence on respondents (X) is related as curve $Y=-4.382*X+0.661*X^2+8.559$ and also shown in figure 1

Figure 1



The above figure shows that respondents who were not influenced by sponsors still consider the sponsor product.

V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

People prefer purchasing popular brands over the unknown ones, irrespective of ambush marketing done by the unknown brands. The people who prefer ambush marketing are mainly the youngsters. Television being an important factor in the purchase, ambush marketers have to focus more on this medium for implementing their ambush marketing strategies. In India the concept of Ambush Marketing is not very prominent among the sports enthusiast. Ambush advertising is undoubtedly a necessary evil for media, business, the economy, consumers and capitalist businessmen. Healthy competition is necessary in a capitalist society, and hence Ambush advertising is welcome. But the way it functions these days, it has been reduced to a dirty game of mockery between brands and hardly affects the informed consumers' choices.

Today, ad agencies, in order to project their clients as the most superior, often parody the commercials of their competitors, leading to virtual wars in the advertising industry. Do people really care about such comparisons? Do such ads help us to make better, more informed choices? Not likely so.

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