

Evaluation of Sport Sponsorship as an Element of Sport Marketing Mix

¹M.H. Seyed Ameri and ²M. Bashiri

¹Urmia University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport Sciences

²Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch, Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences

Abstract: Companies' sponsorship has been increasing as an element of marketing mix communication and has become a major source of funding for special and non-going (common) sporting events. However sponsors may have been doubted regarding their investment in such events. Due to the present study investigates the main objectives of the sponsoring companies in sport and compares views of company and sport managers. The data collection instrument was a tailor-made questionnaire which was accepted by experts group ($r=0.84$). The statistical population of this study was all managers of factories and private companies, club manager and sport headquarters in East Azerbaijan. Data was analyzed through the descriptive and inferential statistics (U Mann Whitney) in significant level $P<0.05$. Results indicated significant difference among managers views regarding: development public awareness, facilitate of sales, better relationship with the government, gaining more profit, suitable way for advertising, obtaining tax-exemptions due to economic advertising in sports and close relation of the company product to sport type ($P<0.05$). while there was no significant difference among the groups in terms of the other goals related to product, sales objectives, general objectives and the criteria to select group sports ($P>0.05$). Finally sport authorities should make appropriate decision for attracting more sports sponsorships. Due to attract more financial supporters, appropriate plans can be designed and this can help to promote private companies attention to sport so that they can benefit from their sponsorship.

Key words: Product and sale objectives % Criteria to select sports type % Private companies % Sport sponsorship % Sport marketing mix

INTRODUCTION

In the past, sales marketing of products and services was very simple. The world included low population with limited goods and products. After years of increasing population and thriving economy, markets were also thriving as more diverse and attractive products and goods were represented with a higher quantity in the market. Several factories were built with a variety of products due to new job occurred. This time when competition occurred between companies attempt to attract more customers for buying goods and services. Thus, the developments of the field of marketing science were provided by providing customer satisfaction and achieving companies' profit [1].

Today, sport is one of the big and important industries in the world and people are busy in many occupations around the world. Due to famous companies and factories attempted investment in sport and in this way to pay marketing [2]. Sport marketing realize a

planning process and an idea, pricing, advertising and distribution of products and services or opinions and ideas of sport to create the commutative (exchange) so that individual and organizational goals is satisfied by this exchange. Consumers generally think advertising as a selfish activity and believe that the advertising company of brand cannot increase their interest to the company and brand. So sport sponsorship has many advantages as an element of sport marketing mix and it is more effective. Sport sponsorship is one of the most important mean (source) of incoming in common sport [2-4]. Today, commercial companies and different industries have received sponsorship can be regarded as a powerful promotional tool acts for them. In fact, one of the most important elements that leads to link sporting events and the economy financial sport as a method of advertising for companies' supporter [2, 5-9]. The role of effective advertising and sponsorships is very important introducing of sport goods and products in sport events and competitions. This subject also benefits the owners

of goods and services and helps to sport development directly and indirectly. In today's world companies prefer to use sport sponsorship as an international language. Especially in the popular sports which have world audience, so that sport sponsorship act as a unique and developing factor to provide a comprehensive message and advertising by sports sponsors are very attractive and reaches the customer in more slowly environment [2, 7, 10]. Sport is one of the phenomena that have attracted many private companies and factories as sport supporters. One way to provide sufficient funding to perform sport activities, especially championship activities, is the use of sponsorship of private enterprises and factories [2, 11]. There isn't a comprehensive and coordinate definition of sponsorship what in sports and other fields. But sponsorship is defined as the provision of sexual (in kind) and financial aid to an activity by a commercial organization with the aim of acquiring commercial purposes [12].

A sponsorship occurs when a "corporation [or other investor] creates a link with an outside issue or event, hoping to influence the audience by the connection" [13]. Characteristically, the 'sponsor' provides cash and/or in-kind products/services to a 'sponsee' in return for opportunities to create links with an event, cause, or organization in the eyes of consumers and potential consumers. A sponsee can be an organization, team, program, or event that requires resources in order to accomplish its objectives. This link created in the minds of consumers between a sponsor and sponsee differentiates sponsorship from advertising and results in image transfer whereby the sponsor and sponsee are associated with each other and benefit from that association [14].

Global investment in sponsorship is estimated to be US\$37 billion for 2007, representing an 11.9% increase from 2006 and a 75-fold increase since 1982 [15]. Traditionally, sponsorship is used most extensively in the sport sector [16] and approximately 54–65% of spending on sponsorship is still in that context. However, as sports sponsorship opportunities saturate, other properties such as causes, entertainment and the arts are receiving more attention from sponsors [15]. Accordingly, a growing number of sponsees are in the not-for-profit or governmental sectors and include organizations that are trying to develop and implement public awareness, educational and social marketing programs [17]. Such organizations range from large national ones, such as the Canadian Institute of Public Health which has sought and obtained sponsorship for the organization itself as well as

for its social marketing programs around Fetal Alcohol Syndrome [18], to smaller locally base groups. Examples of government social marketing sponsorship initiatives are numerous and include approximately 300 public-private sponsorships of Health Canada's programs and Heritage Canada's Anti-Racism social marketing program [19, 20]. While these examples are Canadian based, the literature indicates that social marketing sponsorships have grown in importance in other countries around the world and include such examples as Beyer Health Care and its Aleve Brand's sponsorship of the Arthritis Foundation in the United States as well as numerous Australian examples [16, 19].

Shank (2005) expresses sponsorship the following: investing in sport existence (athlete, team, league or exercise program) to support overall organizational goals, business and advanced strategies [21]. In marketing, sponsorship regarding to financial supporter and communicating organization are considered as a subcategory of personal sales. Sponsorship in non-sport organizations aren't considered as an advertisement but it is considered as a part of a personal sales and an element of marketing mix (Fig. 1) [2].

Sport sponsorship has increased dramatically over the past two decades. For many large non-sport corporations like: Shell, Coca-Cola, Emirates and Vodafone, sponsoring sport organizations and athletes is an important part of their marketing strategies. Many different kinds of sport organizations and individuals may be sponsored, including individual athletes, clubs and teams, events, league, unions, federations, competitions, venues and special causes. Sponsorships are supposed to benefit both parties: usually the sport property services cash, goods, services or expert advice and the sponsor receives benefits such as promotional rights and the marketing advantages of being associated with a particular sport property. Sponsors hope that by investing in a sport property, they will increase consumers' awareness of their brand and consequently build their brand equity [2].

Sponsors importance in world sport income section is rated after TV live watch that the value of their participation in the Olympics like McDonalds, Kodak, Visa, Adidas and Coca-Cola companies is more than 170 million. In Australia, according to Rayan, annual 49.7 million dollars is gratuitous aid by sponsors to the South Australian football. Predications show that sport sponsorship will grow to represent 8.5% of all advertising

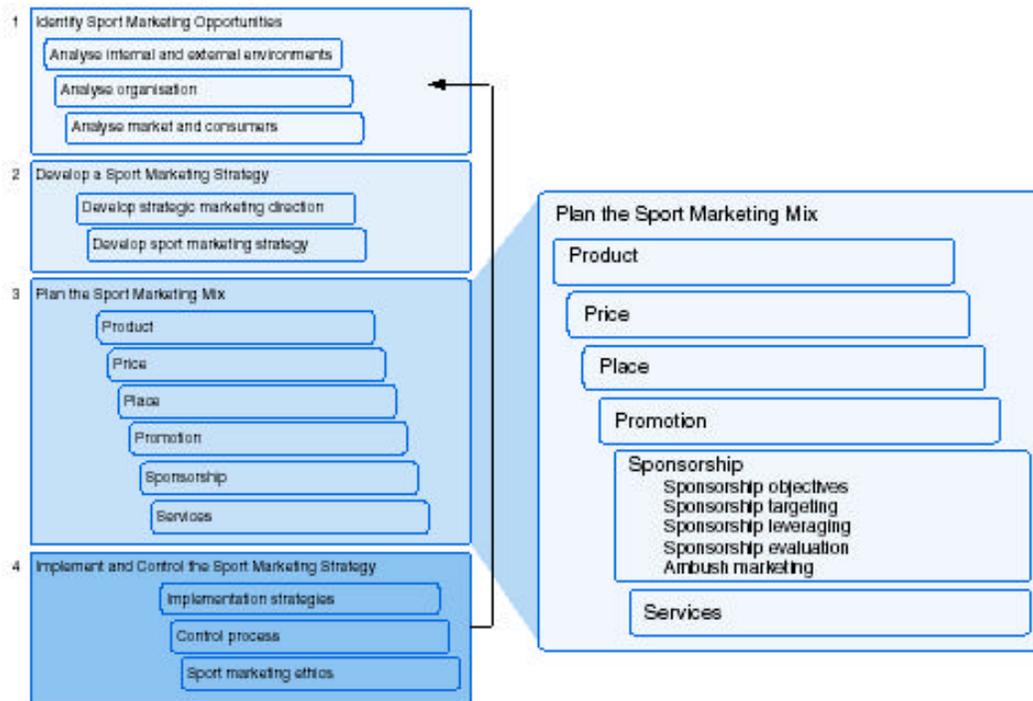


Fig. 1: The sports marketing framework [2]

expenditures by 2010 [22, 23]. In North America sponsorship spending is expected to increase by 8.7% and reach \$11.14 billion [23, 24] and sponsorship costs in 2005 reaches to \$45.2 billion [22].

It is also projected that with as a result of upcoming worldwide events including the Winter Olympics in Torino, Italy (2006) and Vancouver, Canada (2010); the Summer Olympics in Beijing, China (2008) and London, England (2012); the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, Australia (2006) and Delhi, India (2010); and the FIFA World Cup in Germany (2006) and South Africa (2010), the probability of substantial growth in that total is inevitable. The chart below shows the top 15 sport sponsors in the United States, all of whom spend a minimum of \$100 million per year (Table 1) [25].

However, large corporations will be involved with team sponsorship based on the market or the ability to significantly expand awareness. Some of the most prominent team sponsorship deals take place in soccer, especially in Europe. Some of the current examples of team sponsorship deals for corporate names to appear on the front of game uniforms are shown below (in equivalent US dollars in 2006) (Table 2) [25].

Clearly defined, quantifiable sponsorship objectives provide the best guidance to selecting the events or activities to sponsor, enabling the sport marketer to

develop clear selection criteria. Strategies for leveraging of the sponsorship can be developed directly from sponsorship objectives. Clear and measurable sponsorship objectives allow for focusing during implementation and enable effective evaluation of whether sponsorship ‘success’ has been achieved [26].

In this respect, sport sponsors have different criteria for supporting from sport clubs and teams. In this respect, Gi Koo (2004) mentions country economic system conditions as an important factor in attracting sponsors and competitive structure in countries economy knows as a hypo factor in developing sport sponsorship [27].

Huda (2001) and Fan (2001) noted that the primary benefit is the most important factor in attracting investment of sport sponsorship. They concludes that when sponsors convince to invest in sport that they ensure the investment puts in a particular sport will benefit more that other points [28, 29]. Faed (2006) studied strategic evaluation of sport sponsorship as a marketing communication tool in Iran electronic industry and the most important objectives of electronic companies in supporting are to create a positive image, public awareness, increase commercial brand awareness and type of goods, global advertisement (extensive advertisement) and reach the target market [30]. Sparks and Westgate (2002), Ivarsson *et al.* (2004) and

Table 1: The top 15 sport sponsors in the United States (2006) [25]

2006 Rank	Company	Amount (millions)
1	Anheuser-Busch Cos.	\$330-\$335
2	PepsiCo, Inc	\$305-\$310
3	General Motors Corp	\$230-\$235
4	The Coca-Cola Corp	\$225-\$230
5	Nike, Inc.	\$225-\$230
6	Miller Brewing Co.	\$175-\$180
7	DaimlerChrysler Corp.	\$150-\$155
8	Ford Motor Co.	\$140-\$145
9	Sprint Nextel Corp.	\$135-\$140
10	Visa	\$120-\$125
11	McDonald's Corp.	\$115-\$120
12	MasterCard Int'l, Inc.	\$110-\$115
13	The Proctor and Gamble Co.	\$110-\$115
14	FedEx Corp.	\$105-\$110
15	Bank of America Corp.	\$100-\$105

Table 2: The corporate names to appear on the front of game uniforms (2006) [25]

Team	Sponsor	Sponsorship Agreement (per year)
AC Milan (Italy)	Opel (car company)	\$10.72 million
Arsenal (England)	O2 (mobile phone company)	\$17.25 million
Bayern Munich (Germany)	T-Mobile (mobile company)	\$19.68 million
Chelsea (England)	Samsung (electronics/mobile)	\$17.25 million
Juventus (Italy)	Tamoil (oil company)	\$26.20 million
Manchester United (England)	Vodafone (mobile)	\$15.53 million
Real Madrid (Spain)	Siemens (mobile)	\$16.67 million

Mansourpour (2007) mentioned sport sponsorship companies follow different objectives that public awareness increasing, the effect on company prestige, influence on young people and company image increasing, create satisfaction and to obtain media coverage have been identified as the most important corporate objectives [22, 31, 32, 33]. Crompton (2004), Shank (2005), Vale (2009) and Ehsani (2007) in their study concluded that sales increasing are one of the several marketing target for accepting support and companies have a tendency towards sport field that be useful in selecting appropriate company image and knowledge of company image is achieved after supporting [21, 32, 34, 35].

However reviews of research shows that some researchers have searched sport sponsorship development strategies in the countries economic system and conditions [27,28] and have been emphasized some other factors such extensive TV show [3,4], effective management marketing [36] and Top logos credit or sport support [5] in attracting sponsorship. Since sponsoring is an increasingly important marketing communication medium, it is important for managers to know whether

their sponsorships are giving a good financial return relative to other communication alternatives [16]. Sport and factories managers and officials should be aware of these companies' goals and criteria to provide favorable areas in order to lead to attract these companies and factories sport sponsorship. In understanding this point of what is the company goals to sponsor and what are effective factors in attracting sponsors, how is sport sponsorship management in East Azarbaijan province and how decide in this field? The researcher had to study sport sponsorship as an elements of sport marketing mix so that have found supporters reason and goals and provide appropriate strategies for increasing sport sponsorship which provincial and national sport officials benefit of this study results and introduce effective strategies and factors in attracting sponsors. Using the results of this study, sport management can be aligned and move with the companies and factories goals of sport sponsors and create conditions to enable them to contribute in the sport to reach its goals which in turn causes sponsors more and better presence in sport clubs and they can be used of the sponsors.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study objectives, research methodology was type of descriptive-measurable research and caching formation and was made by using survey questionnaire. Builds research questionnaire have been used for gathering the data. Therefore there were the questionnaires in this field that study and using them was prepared builds research questionnaire and were confirmed by the several professors of management and sport management. Preliminary study was conducted for testing reliability (validity) questionnaire and questionnaire reliability coefficient acquired by using the alpha Cronbach statistically method $\alpha=0.842$ which is showing of the validity questionnaire. The statistical population study included all managers of factories and private companies, managers of sports clubs and sports authorities in East Azerbaijan province. To factories and companies managers is company or factory managing director and marketing manager. To clubs managers, manager, clubs supervisor and sport authorities is sport president or secretary. Finally, 100 (factories and private companies managing director), 75 (clubs managers) and 75 (sport headquarters) randomly selected as a statistical sample and were distributed their questionnaires in East Azerbaijan province by eight Ms Students that already they were fully explained about questionnaire. After collecting the questionnaires, some questionnaire were excluded because of being incomplete and lack of cooperation of managers and officials which in final 158 complete questionnaire [70 (company and factory managing director), 88 (club director and sport president)] were used as an study sample. For analyzing information which obtained from descriptive methods (mean or average and standard deviation and percent and frequency ...) and inferential (Mann-Whitney-U nonparametric statistics for comparing selected manager's attitudes) were used. Also the analysis of data were in significant level $p<0.05$ by using software SPSS 16.

RESULTS

According to the obtained information, the most popular sports of province football, footstall, wrestling, volleyball, taekwondo, cycling, chess, karate, basketball and swimming have attracted the most sponsors in the province level. In relation to sponsorship, director of private companies through the installation costs in

advertising posters in match location and media coverage (37.1%), supply athletic teams costs in participating in Ramadan cup (34.3%), supply sport team costs in province league (30%), supply sports clothing costs by registration logo and company name (21.4%) and supply team costs in league (7.1%) called as sport sponsorship. While clubs managers were called to supply sport team costs in the province league (35.2%), supply team costing high league (22.5%), supply sport clothing costs by registration logo and company name (20.5%) and supply sport team costs providing participation in Ramadan Cup (20.5%) and pay the salary for player and supply league costs (12%). According to Nonparametric Mann-Whitney test, in related to compare viewpoints of companies operating managers, heads of faculty and sport club managers regarding with sponsorship goals determined that there is significant difference between public awareness development and variables of study samples ($Z=-3.884$, $P=0.0001$), a better relationship with the government ($Z=-5.099$, $P=0.0001$) and facilitate the sales and discover new forces ($Z=-2.137$, $P=0.033$) and using the advantages tax exemptions due to sport advertising ($Z=-4.063$, $P=0.0001$) (Table 3). According to the table and the Mann-Whitney test, in relation with comparing viewpoints in companies managers, heads of faculty and sport club managers in selecting sport type was found (identified) that there is significant difference between the studied group which is related to company products with sport type ($Z=-2.235$, $P=0.026$) (Table 4).

DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study is to evaluate sponsorship element of marketing mix elements. For this purpose, private company's manager's insights and clubs managers and sport headquarters were compared with sport sponsors goals. The results showed that sport sponsorship can help to private company's products goals. So there is no significant difference between the two groups objectives related to product (expanding sales market, reinforcing vision of the companies' products or services, increase public awareness of the company brand).

Both managers expressed that expanding sales market, reinforcing vision of the companies' product or services, knowledge of increasing the companies brand with sport sponsorship. In this respect, the findings of the present study complies with the findings of Irwin and

Table 3: Attitudes of companies' managers, head quarters and sport clubs manager regarding sport sponsorship objectives

Subject		n	mean	sd	z	p
Promoting corporate image	companies' managers	70	3.93	1.068	-0.397	0.691
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.87	1.033		
To Facilitate sales	companies' managers	70	3.14	1.011	-2.137	0.033*
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.49	0.889		
Increase public awareness of the company mark	companies' managers	70	4.27	0.900	-3.884	0.0001*
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.69	0.896		
Strengthen relationships with government	companies' managers	70	2.40	1.290	-5.099	0.0001*
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.48	1.040		
Create suitable image	companies' managers	70	4.23	0.951	-1.420	0.156
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	4.02	0.987		
Compete with other companies for gaining more benefit	companies' managers	70	3.62	0.939	-1.853	0.064
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.94	1.004		
Gain competitive advantage through exclusivity	companies' managers	70	3.64	0.964	-0.037	0.971
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.66	0.954		
Strengthen relationships with previous customers	companies' managers	70	3.26	1.125	-1.689	0.091
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.58	0.857		
Gain new customers	companies' managers	70	3.69	1.057	-0.647	0.518
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.89	0.963		
Strengthen relationships with current customers	companies' managers	70	3.34	1.089	-1.436	0.151
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.60	0.999		
Increase short-run sales	companies' managers	70	3.61	1.277	-0.453	0.651
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.59	1.096		
Increase long-run sales	companies' managers	70	3.36	0.964	-1.728	0.084
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.58	1.049		
Gain more benefit	companies' managers	70	3.76	1.133	-2.227	0.026*
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.31	1.246		
Product sales during event	companies' managers	70	2.86	1.289	-0.409	0.683
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	2.99	1.174		
Use of Tax-exempt	companies' managers	70	2.24	1.197	-4.063	0.0001*
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.31	1.269		
Opportunity for sport owners	companies' managers	70	3.03	1.289	-0.604	0.546
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.23	1.193		
Media coverage	companies' managers	70	3.64	1.494	-0.778	0.436
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.59	1.279		
Suitable way for advertising	companies' managers	70	3.64	0.781	-2.804	0.005*
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.59	0.930		

Table 4: Attitudes of companies' managers, head quarters and sport clubs manager regarding criteria for selecting sports type

Subject		n	mean	sd	z	p
Relating to products and sport	companies' managers	70	2.69	1.339	-2.235	0.026 *
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.64	0.930		
sport interests Quantity	companies' managers	70	4.21	1.203	-1.322	0.186
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	4.10	1.089		
Advertising	companies' managers	70	4.19	1.158	-0.241	0.810
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	4.36	0.878		
Media coverage	companies' managers	70	3.86	1.354	-0.296	0.767
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	4.01	1.153		
Journals and magazine support	companies' managers	70	3.89	1.280	-0.371	0.711
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.84	1.234		
Athletes or teams popularity	companies' managers	70	4.51	0.717	-0.219	0.827
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	4.45	0.859		
Personal interest to sport	companies' managers	70	3.77	1.194	-0.733	0.463
	head quarters and sport clubs manager	88	3.65	1.194		

Asimakopoulos (1992), Wilcox *et al.* (2001), sparks and westGate (2002), Keshock (2004), Cornowell *et al.* (2005), Shank (2005), Mansourpour (2007), Smith (2008) and Faed (2006) [2,5,7,21,30,31,33,37-39] which stated in their research sport sponsorship by companies lead to expanding sales market, reinforcing the company image and increase awareness of company brand.

But the discovered agent in a new market section between the tow groups is significantly different. Private companies' managers suggest that with sport support cannot be discovered new market section, while sport clubs managers and headquarter expressed that private companies can reach a new section of the market. The finding of the present study complies with the results of Shank (2005) and Crompton (2004) [21,32] which expansion of the previous market express as important objectives of sport sponsors and complies with the findings of Jamat *et al.* (2006) [40] which in their research express that there is significant difference between viewpoints of federation heads and companies managers and federation heads expressed that search new market as the highest goal while clubs managers have following its previous market expansion. There are difference ideas between the two groups of manager in related to sales goals with factors in the development of public awareness and to obtain more profit. So that factor of development of public awareness and obtain more profit from the viewpoints of companies managers has been gaining higher mean in comparison with views of sport clubs managers. In this respect Cialdini *et al.* (2000), Sparks and westGate (2000), Slattery and Pitts (2002), Ivarson (2004), Smith (2008), Vale *et al.* (2009), Jamat *et al.* (1386) and Faed (1386)[2, 7, 22, 31, 34, 36, 40, 41] also in their study mentioned the development of public awareness of company products or services as factors of private companies sponsorship so that they can increase knowledge of consumers and improve their imagination to the company. Research of Slattery and Pitts (2002) and Vale *et al.* (2009) [34, 41] shows that sponsors effect on the behavior of consumers, tendencies to commercial companies and to raise public awareness of company. In addition, nowadays companies are considered sponsorship as one of the communication tools and desire to increase knowledge of company's services. Also Huda (2001) [28] expressed that the most important factor in attracting sport sponsor investment is the expected benefits from investment and expressed that sponsors invest in sport section if they ensure they will gain more profits of selecting other options. The finding of the present research doesn't match results Ehsani *et al.* (2007)

[35]. Ehsani with study on women sport financial sponsors express that managers of companies have announced that sponsorship of women sport leads to increase little knowledge of company. But there is no significant deference in related to other sales targets (to achieve a unique competitive advantage with other competitors, to create an appropriate image of company in public opinion, to acquire more reputation, strengthen communication with previous customers, to gain new customers, to create strong relationship with general customers, to increase short-term sales, increase long-term sales and entertain customers). So according to the managers comments can mention two groups that sponsorship can lead to gain a unique competitive advantage with other competitors, an appropriate image of company in public opinion, to acquire more reputation, strengthen communication with previous customers, to obtain new customers, to create strong relationships with general customer, increase short-term sales, increase long-term sales and entertain customers. Therefore, the findings of the present study are consistent with the findings Speed (2000), Rosson (2001), Sparks and WestGate (2002), Fan (2002), Gi koo (2004), Crompton (2004), Shank (2005), Seguin (2005), Smith (2008) and Faed (2006) [2, 7, 21, 23, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 42, 43] express that sport sponsorship leads to acquire reputation, create a positive image, increase product sales and compete with other companies and also companies make transplant with the social events due to increase sales. Also familiar with commercial sign a sponsor which leads to increase sales which will root of showing in public placement and awareness of sponsorship. But results Ehsani *et al.* (2007) [35] showed that from the viewpoints of companies managers, the effect of women's professional sports for companies in increasing their sales of goals and services is low and very low which doesn't match with very low of women's professional sport leads to expand sales market. This deference might implicate of athletes gender and some disparities (limitation) of women's sport due to lack of media coverage of games, advertising contracts, sport advertisement, absence of spectators and fans during matches. In general and team goal and extensive media coverage, there are significant differences between the two groups with the government, using tax exemptions advantages due to advertising in sport and economical method of advertising. So that the mentioned factors from the view points of private companies managers contain lower average to view points of sport clubs managers and private companies operating managers announce that with sport sponsorship cannot benefit from the better

relationship with the government, using tax exemptions advantages and also the affordable way isn't for advertising companies product. But there factors general and group goals, media coverage, there is no significant difference (customers presence in sport events, an opportunity for ownership of sports, sharing in the sport teams success and clubs, media coverage) and managers approved these factors by high average and mentioned about private companies objectives for sport sponsorship. In this regard, Berrett and Slack (2001), Ivarson (2004), Seguin (2005), Sterlize (2005), Elahi (2006) and Faed (2006) [3, 4, 22, 23, 30, 44] the role of media coverage and notional advertising in attracting financial supporter are very important and express that television and satellite display of sports match was broader on national and international levels, absorption of financial supporter will be more. Finally, sport sponsorship lends to increase sales marketing and reinforce image of company's product and increase public awareness of brand, development of public awareness, increase short-term sales and increase long-term companies products which private companies can achieve these goals of sport sponsorship and invest in particular sport and sports administrators should have done the necessary cooperation and can prepare conditions and field for companies to reach their goals. Also conditions will provide between government and private companies supportive establish appropriate and better relationship and considered specific conditions for supportive companies and also provide certain conditions and appropriate advantage for athletic supporter companies in terms of tax exemptions. Therefore, in this particular is better to design particular religion by authorities and use it in this case. There is another important issue that should be noticed in selecting sport particular activity which sponsor brings to act. Company can support a sport, a team, athlete or an event. This selection is based on propitiation between company or product and sporting event. Selecting activity type is vital for sport sponsorship because a successful manager tend to develop and improve public opinion of the company. In this regard, in the present study, selection criteria of sport type is based on managers comments of studied groups factors like athletes or teams or sports field popularity, the possibility of more advertisement, quantity desired sports enthusiasts, media coverage, support of press and newspapers and personal interest in desired sport as almost important criteria's in selecting sports field type from private companies. In this regard, there is significant

difference between attitudes managers about linking companies' product. With sport type and above factor, has been gaining lower mean from manager's views of private companies to sport clubs managers. Club managers believe that company's product is not related with sport type in choosing sponsors. But in other criteria of selecting sport type for sponsorship (quantity of desired sport field teams, personal interest in desired sport) there is no significant difference between the studied groups. Findings of the present finding complies with findings Crompton (2004), Seguin (2005) and Shank (2005) [21, 23, 32] which mentioned possibility of more advertisement and long-term effect on customers as criteria's for selecting sport type. Also complies with the results Faed (2006) and Speed (2000) [30, 42] which the popularity of sports field between the people and personal interest as criteria's of selecting sport in supporting private company. Also Kocabas and Elden (2001) [45] stated that more manufacturing and service companies due to sport general popularity among most people desire to introduce their products with sports attractive scenes and sports heroes. Seguin *et al.* (2005) [23] stated that the use of known athletes in sports teams and extensive media coverage. As reasons are for private companies investments. Therefore, in this research findings are considered that the quantity of desired sport enthusiasts, possibility of more advertisement, media coverage, support the press and newspapers, the popularity of athletes or desired sport field teams and personal interest to desired sport as criteria's of selecting sport type for supporting by companies. Because companies tend to support sport by extensive media coverage of club or team games so the authorities should provide conditions that all the team's games to be covered higher across the provinces and the country.

These findings may also indicate an underlying problem in the sense that sport sponsors set objectives to suit their ability to measure the effectiveness of the sponsorship through media coverage and awareness measurement tools. It is surmised that sponsors are currently unable to really measure the effectiveness of their sponsorships in building relations with various stakeholders (general public relations) or return on investment as represented by an increase in sales volume (marketing). The findings of this study raise the interesting issue that current East Azarbaijan sport sponsorship objectives focus more on particular corporate and marketing public relations objectives than on specific marketing objectives.

Finally, it can be stated that private companies with supporting and investing in sport section can create a good and strong relationship between consumers and themselves, viewers and fans and sport enthusiasts and reach their goals. Fans are considered important proponents in sponsorship. For example, sports consumers are more involved with sport; they are more familiar with brand and product of sponsors. Therefore, in this respect, sport managers should create appropriate conditions and opportunities in sport section so that by the coordination and utilization of media coverage or even take advantage of modern facilities, for advertising logo, brand and product sponsors before, during and after sporting events are held in places that are competition which to help in attracting more spectators and fans in order to invest sport sponsorship with convenience state. In this regard, sport clubs managers and authorities should hire. Sport marketing experts and should act to design plans and the proposed guidelines for sponsorship. Sponsorship proposals should be designed including the role of target market and resource of sponsors and sponsor involves in the sport investment. Sponsorship proposal should cover large. Areas including: describing the audience, objectives, programs of sponsorship, number and period of cooperation, support advantages and revenue (incomes), required investment, strategies to prevent depression, marketing strategy and ..., therefore, by using of such proposals should attract comments of private companies in sport investment and provide solution so that they can benefit sponsorship.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the scope of sport sponsorship objective setting should be widened to aid the effective measurement of sponsorship success.

A general public relations category should be added and further divided into two separate sub-categories, namely corporate public relations and marketing public relations. This entails that practitioners should familiarize themselves with the differences in the definition, scope and domain of these two sub-categories. Objectives such as generating media coverage to aid corporate awareness, enhancing the corporate image and building stakeholder relations through guest hospitality should be included in the corporate public relations sub-category and generating brand publicity and increasing brand awareness should be included in the marketing public relations sub-category.

The implication is that the product/brand/service category could be shrunk or totally excluded from the set of categories because brand sales or service use expansion (e.g. cellular organizations) objectives can be included in the sales-related category.

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