

Exploring the Relationships Among Schadenfreude, Collective Narcissism, Team Identification, and Behavioral Loyalty: Evidence from Türkiye

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Abstract:

Fan behavior—one of the most extensively investigated topics in sport marketing, particularly team identification and loyalty—has been associated with a wide range of psychosocial constructs; however, despite the substantial body of research on team identification and loyalty, empirical studies examining these constructs in relation to collective narcissism and schadenfreude as social dynamics remain remarkably limited. Accordingly, the primary objective of the present study is to test a proposed model that investigates the effect of the relationships among schadenfreude, collective narcissism, and team identification on fans' behavioral loyalty in terms of match viewing, while a secondary objective is to examine the mediating roles of collective narcissism and team identification in the relationship between schadenfreude and loyalty. The sample consists of 657 football fans in Turkey, recruited through a combined convenience and snowball sampling strategy. Data were collected via a structured online questionnaire administered through Google Forms. The measurement instrument comprised scales of schadenfreude, collective narcissism, team identification, and loyalty adapted from prior literature, all measured using five-point Likert-type items. To evaluate the psychometric properties of the measurement model, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) were employed, and the model demonstrated acceptable fit to the data in both CFA and SEM based on established threshold values ($\chi^2/df < 5$; RMSEA and SRMR < 0.08 ; CFI, NFI, and NNFI > 0.90). The results indicate that schadenfreude has a positive effect on collective narcissism ($\beta = .57, p < .01$) and team identification ($\beta = .30, p < .01$), while team identification exerts a strong positive effect on loyalty ($\beta = .94, p < .01$); in contrast, the direct effect of collective narcissism on loyalty is not statistically significant ($\beta = -.02, p > .05$), although the mediating effects of collective narcissism and team identification are statistically significant ($p < .01$). Overall, the findings underscore the existence of meaningful relationships among team identification, collective narcissism, and schadenfreude, and demonstrate that these relationships have a significant impact on behavioral match-viewing loyalty, thereby yielding important theoretical and practical implications.

Keywords:

Schadenfreude, collective narcissism, team identification, fan behavior, behavioral loyalty.