Winning, Spectator Mood, and Unplanned Buying of Sport-team Licensed Apparel: A Dual Information Processing Perspective

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This study examined unplanned buying behavior of sport team licensed merchandise using the dual information processing system (heuristic and systematic) of Chaiken and colleagues (Chaiken, Giner-Sorolla, & Chen, 1996). Sport consumers are expected to experience positive or negative moods after they watch their team play. Participants (36 males and 24 females) were randomly assigned to three groups (positive outcome, control, and negative outcome) and positive and negative moods were induced with video clips of the games of the university football team. The results indicated that the participants in a positive mood state were able to recall less information about the licensed merchandise presented and were more likely to engage in unplanned buying behavior than ones in a negative mood state. Possible marketing implications and suggestions for future study were also discussed.
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Consumption behavior of sport team licensed merchandise has not been studied extensively even though the sales of licensed merchandise has comprised a significant portion of revenues for many sport organizations at the collegiate and professional levels. Retail sales of licensed merchandise in the United States and Canada reached $73.75 billion in 2000 and sport team licensed merchandise comprised 16% of the total retail sales at $11.45 billion (The Licensing Letter, 2001).

A lack of literature can be found in terms of regular buying of sport team licensed merchandise. In addition to regular buying, impulse buys compose a significant portion of the total transactions in sport team licensed merchandise (Kwon, 2002). Yet, little research has been done specific in this area as well. Kwon (2002) and Kwon and Armstrong (2002) identified factors that influenced impulse buying of sport team licensed merchandise among college students. They found that sport consumers’ identification with the sport team was the key determinant for impulse buying of sport team licensed merchandise. However, additional factors may contribute to impulse buying, such as information processing and mood. Previous research did not determine whether the mood of the consumers had any influence on merchandise consumption, even though moods have been known to influence purchasing decisions. Research has indicated that consumer moods are related to selection of an information processing system (Forgas, 1992; Mackie & Worth, 1991; Wegener, et. al. 1995), reactions to advertisement (Goldberg & Gorn, 1987), and consumption behaviors in general (Gardner, 1985). Thus, a theoretical framework is needed to further explain impulse buying. This study attempts to explain the influence of mood on consumers’ information processing systems relevant to impulse buying of sport team licensed merchandise.

Mood

There is no clear definition of mood and the distinction between mood and similar terms is often confusing. ‘Mood’ has been used interchangeably with other terms such as emotion, affect, and feeling.