

# The influence of club leadership in the behavioral and attitudes of soccer club supporters

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## **Abstract**

This study focuses on the influence of leadership on supporters' behavioral and attitudinal outcomes. That is, the influence that sports leaders exert on supporters' non-transactional behavior (word-of-mouth and club support), loyalty and resistance to negative information. In this study we propose a model to test the relationships among the following constructs: leader image, supporter trust in the leader; governance of the soccer club, supporter attitude towards the soccer club; Word of mouth towards the club; support for the club; loyalty and supporter resistance to negative information about the club. We developed a quantitative study among supporters of the Premier League Soccer clubs in Portugal. Based on a sample of 1833 respondents our findings confirm that the leader's image and governance in the club affect trust in the leader, the trust in the leader impacts on supporter's attitude and, in turn, the supporter's attitude has an effect on non-transactional behaviors (word-of-mouth and support for the club), loyalty and resistance of the supporter to negative information in relation to the club. The paper presents theoretical and practical implications.

**Keywords:** *supporter attitudes; leadership; soccer*

**Track:** Relationship Marketing