



**IAMCR
Lyon 23**



**IAMCR
OCP 23**



Media, Communication and Sport Section

Abstracts of papers presented at one or both of the 2023 conferences of the
International Association for Media and Communication Research
IAMCR Lyon23 – Lyon, France 9 to 13 July
IAMCR OCP23 – Online 26 June to 12 September

lyon2023.iamcr.org
July 2023

This abstract book includes original abstracts of papers accepted for IAMCR 2023 and included online at OCP23 and/or presented at Lyon23 in France

Version: 27/07/23

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Frisbee Yuan's Glory and Shame: The New Mechanism of Stigma Management Communication in China

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Abstract

Stigmatization has always been an issue faced by human society. With the development of the Internet, the Chinese social media degrade many otherwise positive terms into negative concepts with certain stigmatizing attributes through cultural deconstruction. Examples include "Frisbee Yuan", "egomaniac" and "bossy boots", which are influencing public belief through the deconstruction of mainstream culture.

As a niche sport in the Chinese market, Frisbee started to take off in China since 2022, but the stigma of "Frisbee Yuan" is affecting the subsequent healthy development of the sport. The concept of "Yuan" explored in this paper was originally used as a commendatory term to describe a woman's beautiful deportment and good appearance in the traditional Chinese context. By contrast, "Frisbee Yuan" is a pejorative metaphor referring to the kind of good-looking young women who wear yoga pants and full makeup in order to pose for photos while playing Frisbee. The reason for their stigmatization is not due to the differences in their bodies, characters, or races, but because of the inconformity of their behaviors to the cultural values held by a certain group of people who believe that these women are trying to gain some type of unethical social capital through their bodies

This study adopted an empirical approach on the base of online data collection and qualitative content analysis. Starting with the keyword "Frisbee Yuan", the article records 1530 relevant posts on Weibo, the largest social media platform in China, before compiling the corresponding coding list based on Maisenbach's stigma management communication model (SMC). The last step is to make the content analysis of these posts. This study aims to (1) understand the applicability of the SMC model to Chinese cultural stigma management, and (2) look into the cultural roots and realistic reasons for the extended application of the SMC model in China's stigma management mechanisms.

The results of the study found that the stigma management of Frisbee Yuan in the Chinese social media context (a) Confirm SMC theory: Which features logical fallacies, the attack on condemners, transcendence of value, and refocusing paths in theory; (b) Extend SMC theory: Not only are "the stigmatized" the subject of stigma management, but their supporters as well; (c) Beyond SMC theory: Two approaches to stigma management in the Chinese context have emerged, which are

called “Commendation Transfer” and “Acknowledgement Denial”. This study then delves into the practical reasons and cultural factors for the expansion of the SMC theory of stigma management mechanisms in the Chinese social media environment, namely, the issue of user empowerment and online revelry on Chinese social media, and the high contextual cultural characteristics of China.

The research not only confirms Meisenbach's stigma management communication model and finds new features beyond the theory based on the Chinese context, but it is also helpful to understand the complexity of stigma management in the Chinese cultural context, thereby providing an operable reference for rational expression in cyberspace and promoting the popularization and development of Frisbee in China.

Key Words

Frisbee; Stigma management; social media; Culture

The dawn of a regional Olympics: Brisbane 2032, Atlanta 1996 and the race for a sustainable legacy

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Abstract

The Brisbane 2032 Summer Olympics and Paralympics signal a shift from mega-city hosts to a more regional and sustainable approach to staging the Games. Brisbane will be the smallest host city since Helsinki in 1952, and the first outside a major world city since Atlanta in 1996. Uniquely in a Summer Olympic bid contest, Brisbane's application was based on the hosts being from the broader Australian region of south-east Queensland.

In appointing Brisbane, IOC President Thomas Bach outlined the importance of sustainability and economic responsibility, and recognised the long-term regional and national strategies around development in Australia. As Bach (Olympics.com 2021) said: "This new approach is lighter, more collaborative, more compact, and has a positive impact." In this changing global sports ecosystem, this paper examines the legacies of previous smaller-scale Olympics, with a focus on Atlanta 1996. Evaluation of the legacies of previous hosts, including Atlanta 1996, provides valuable reflections on past Olympics and guidelines for the Brisbane 2032 organisers.

The overarching research question for this project is: How can the hosting of previous Olympics in smaller cities provide lessons for Brisbane 2032? To examine and evaluate legacies of the Atlanta Olympics in a regional context, a combination of discourse analysis and content analysis will be employed. This methodology allows for detailed quantitative and qualitative elements of media coverage, as well as broader public commentary and industry reports, that outline the benefits and missed opportunities in the two decades after Atlanta 1996.

The data analysis, covering 1996 to 2016, involves four newspaper archives in national, metropolitan and local publications in the United States. These types of newspapers have been selected to provide a range of coverage options on the same event and its legacies. The discourse and content analyses examine the data in response to Scheu and Preuss's (2017) six facets of legacies: urban development; environmental enhancement; policy and governance; skills, knowledge and networks; intellectual property; and beliefs and behaviour. Material related to budgets and costs is also investigated.

This approach provides findings that can fill the gap left by legacy research that has previously focused predominantly on what Scheu and Preuss (2017) describe as conceptual or commentary scholarship. It also follows Scheu and Preuss's (2017) call to examine media articles and legacies over time-frames of at least 10 years after a Games. Understanding these legacy elements is vital

to ensure Brisbane 2032 delivers a regional Olympics that is sustainable for the hosts, and to allow the shift from mega cities to be viable in the long term.

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Key Words

Olympics, Brisbane 2032, Atlanta 1996, Olympic legacy

The Possibility of Transcending Differences: A Transcultural Examination of the International Athletes' TikTok Videos during Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics

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Abstract

The Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics was a significant sporting event internationally especially during the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the digital era, the game has become the most digitally interactive Winter Olympic Games ever. Many TikTok hashtags for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics including #OlympicSpirit, #BeijingOlympics, and #Beijing2022 has exceeded 8.6 billion. The initial goal of Olympism is to place sport at the services of the “harmonious development of mankind,” with a view to promote “a peaceful society” (The Olympic Charter, n. d.). International sport events like Olympic games on social media platforms could inspire nationalism and xenophobia, it could also break down barriers between persons from different cultural backgrounds.

This study situated a transcultural approach in symbolic-cultural communication to explore how international athletes' TikTok videos posted during the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics transcend cultural differences. The transcultural approach centers on mindful interconnectedness, unity between self and other, and transformation through shared struggles (Bishop, 2007; Baker& Sangiamchit, 2019; Epstein, 1995; Ortiz, 1947). Guided by this approach, the authors collected the most viewed short videos posted by international athletes via TikTok platforms (n=259) during the Beijing Winter Olympic Games, February 4th to 20th, 2022. Using a multimodal discourse analysis, the study finds that: 1) cute symbols of the Games mascot like BingDwenDwen could transcend language and gender differences; 2) athletes with multi-ethnic and multicultural background identities represented by Eileen Gu may problematize the singular “nationality”; and 3) symbols of international disputes (e.g., the #boycottXinjiangCotton) may exacerbate political and cultural conflicts. The discussions of the study will map out the shared symbols on digital media that could transcend the differences in identities including gender, race/ethnicity, and nationality in international sports.

Key Words

digital symbols, transcultural approach, TikTok, 2022 Beijing Olympics, sports communication

Research on the Sustainable Development of Social Communication of Local Cultural Tourism Brands after Large-scale Sports Events

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Abstract

Nowadays, various types of large-scale sports events have become an important measure to show the national cultural strength and promote the friendly development between various countries. After many years of development, these large-scale sports events have formed the key words of culture, fairness, peace, friendship, sharing and happiness. The successful holding of large-scale sports events such as the World Cup, the Olympic Games, the Asian Games, the Military Games and the national games held by individual countries, in addition to the wonderful competitions, often leaves the most impressive impression on people is its visual image system, which is also an important way to convey the culture and humanistic ideas of the host city to the world. After the completion of large-scale sports events, the host city should build some landmark infrastructure, and also build its own sustainable development model of local cultural tourism brand in social communication. Through field investigation, case study, literature reading and other methods, the author studies and compares the development status of the host city and other domestic cultural and tourism brands, excavates the cultural and ecological genes of the host city, and pinpoints the development orientation of brand communication. Through ETC (Expectation Theory Confirmation) - QFD-TOPSIS comprehensive innovation method framework, analyze according to the expectations of all groups, solve the needs, and finally verify the results. According to the actual tourism experience of tourists, the sustainable development path of brand visual application scenarios and communication is formulated. It is able to create a distinctive cultural symbol and a young cultural and tourism brand image for the place after the completion of large-scale sports events, which is more in line with the development concept of international development of cultural communication, and can also contribute to the theoretical enrichment of sports visual design. It is also helpful to build the local cultural and tourism brand ecology of the host city by reusing the cultural and visual resources of large-scale sports events, Promote the vigorous development of local cultural communication.

Key Words

Brand Communication, Innovative Methods, Local Cultural Communication, Sustainable Development, Large-scale Sports Events

Research on Media Exposure of national brands of 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games: Theme Mining and Sentiment Analysis based on YouTube comments

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Abstract

Mega international sports events often are heavily covered by the international media, while the media report on these events may have an impact on how these events are received and perceived by the general public both domestic and overseas alike. Media exposure began with the effect study of political communication. The theory initially believed that the content of media exposure did not directly affect people's views during the election process, but that people's weak or insignificant views would be affected and changed after a long and continuous media exposure (Bartels, 1993). According to previous studies, the identity of the host country of the Olympic Games means that a country can show its own culture, values, and power to the people of the world, which is generally considered an opportunity to spread national brands (Heslop, Nadeau & O'reilly, 2010). In this context, this paper attempted to analyze the impact of video exposure on overseas Internet users' perception of China's national brands and their feelings towards China by obtaining comments on videos related to the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games released on the official Olympic channel on YouTube video websites; (2) This study shall address three main research questions: (1) how 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games are covered by the Olympic official channel on YouTube; and (3) how YouTube videos shape and influence the public's perception of the hosting countries, and what is the impact on national brand building. It also examined the impact of video content and genre differences in media exposure on Chinese national brands and public sentiments.

This paper extracted the comments of the Beijing Winter Olympics promotional videos on YouTube Olympics channel through web crawlers. From the posting time of each video to April 20, 2022, we obtained a total of 4,058 comments in the original crawler data. The promotional videos are divided into three types. Using topic analysis and sentiment analysis, this article analyzed the impact of the media exposure of the Beijing Winter Olympics on the national brand and public sentiment.

The research found that the YouTube video media exposure of the Beijing Winter Olympics mainly affected the overseas netizens' understanding of the culture, government, and people in China's national brands. Specifically, firstly, in the media exposure of the Beijing Winter Olympics, the impact on the culture and people in the national brand was positive, and the impact on the government was negative, which has shown that overseas netizens are to some extent affected by Western countries' stigmatization of China and diplomatic boycott. Secondly, there was a slight gap between the publicity and the effect predicted by the official. Only when the theme of the video

was specific that can lead overseas netizens pay attention to and discuss the video content. Thirdly, sentiment analysis showed a trend of slow and positive change. What is more, in social media environment, the effect on overseas public opinion was extremely limited and even counterproductive in the initial stage. Cull (2019) believes that the obsession with national brands distorts the external management model of many countries. The introduction of simple slogans and logos is not a way to shape national brands, but the most basic and harmless way (Kaefer, 2020). This is one of the reasons why the overall media exposure effect of the Olympic Games was limited in this study. Long-term cultivation and development of value-based content and platform is the right way to build a national brand.

Key Words

Beijing Winter Olympics, media exposure, national branding

“SERIOUS” AVATARS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF E-SPORTS PLAYERS FROM A SERIOUS LEISURE PERSPECTIVE

Authors

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Abstract

The digitalization of society and technological transformations have allowed the creation of new ways of entertainment and leisure pursuit. One such activity are e-sports: In 2021, over 500 million participated in China alone, creating an industry worth 176.3 billion RMB (US\$26bn; €24.2bn) (iResearch, 2021). As people rapidly and massively assume online presences, where they develop increasingly complex digital identities, an important question to examine is whether e-sports players can obtain a positive leisure experience from participation in this activity.

The "Serious Leisure Perspective" (SLP; Stebbins, 1982, 1997, 2007, 2014, 2020), as the conceptual and approach root of positive sociology in leisure life, is a theoretical framework that explains the complexities of leisure as an activity and an experience. The theory has been used to study amateurs' leisure participation, in sport, recreation, drama, music and other activities. In this study, we apply them to a digital/virtual environment to examine how humans in e-sports teams construct their identities and whether this activity can produce serious leisure characteristics similar to that of traditional sports.

One of the most popular genres of e-sports are Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) games. Here, players combine into teams and compete against each other on a pre-defined battlefield. Each player controls a character with distinctive abilities, but teammates have to collaborate as part of a team.

In this study, we examined four research questions:

RQ1: What is the identity of players in MOBA e-sport games?

RQ2: What is the relationship between players' individual and team identities in e-sports?

RQ3a: Do e-sports meet the characteristics of serious leisure?

RQ3b: How does team membership and organization influence the conception of e-sports as serious leisure?

To answer these questions, we studied players of League of Legends (LOL), a popular MOBA game played by 180 million players world-wide in 2021 (Riot Games, 2021). Combined with a three-month self-ethnography, we conducted a content analysis and social network analysis (SNA) of

posts published on Baidu Tieba, a “reddit-like” online discussion forum popular in China. The LOL sub-forum of Baidu Tieba has more than 13 million followers (Baidu, 2021). After manual cleaning, we analyzed 1849 forum posts.

Results show that participants construct a triple identity: as player, avatar (i.e., virtual player), and e-sports fan. This triple identity reflects three different types of teams: player teams, virtual teams, and communities (as a broader type of team). All three types of teams are generators of serious leisure characteristics, while specific characteristics vary according to team type. Besides the key identity characteristics, nine other beneficial characteristics emerged, of which self-actualization and feelings of accomplishment are the basic characteristics found in all three team types. Social attraction is more important in player teams, while pleasure is more important in communities.

E-sports co-create previously-inexistent digital selves that influence individual and group identities. They offer what could become unique sites of intercultural dialogue. Studying how players make sense of their gaming experience helps explain a phenomenon bound to influence societies and humanity in the decades to come.

Key Words

SLP, positive leisure, digital identity, avatar, virtual team, video games

Between Super Players and Mega Fans: The Emergence of Data-Led Gaming Environments in Korean Esports

Authors

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Abstract

This paper studies the computational creativity in the South Korean esports. The purpose is to examine innovation that South Korean esports players demonstrate in driving the development of the country's globally popular esports culture. Literature that studies South Korean esports emphasizes on the study of South Korean esports from industrial and historical perspectives. The paper focuses on the development of a player-led innovation model to examine the fan-player dynamics in South Korean esports. It looks into the technological space that super pro-players in South Korean esports teams adopt to build their fame, authority of play and leadership in tournament. The paper examines the ways that computer system enables and cultivates the data-led gaming environment to inspire mega fan communities online in Korea's globally competitive esports culture.

The research reviews works of Brynjolfsson & McAfee (2016) and Gunkel (2018) to set up the main conceptual framework related to system and data-led play environment in the time of computational age. The paper selects three esports fan web sites, including DCINSIDE, FMKOREA and REDDIT to explore how army of esports fans gathers to follow the competitive plays and tournaments of their favored professional players. Focusing on the emergence of data-led gaming environments, this paper explores player-led innovation demonstrated by three stakeholders in Korea's esports ecosystem. Methodology of the paper focuses on big data textual analysis with the support of softwares including Octoparse and Voyant Tools. The paper makes a case of system power that impacts the cultivation of computational creativity in Korean esports. It addresses elite players as the first stakeholder that relies on social media promotion to form fames and connect to their mega fans. A word cloud keyword analysis is applied to study the second stakeholder, fan communities. It analyzes frequently discussed topics from three fan sites to demonstrate the ways that fans gather to share news and gain esports literacy in open online communities. The third stakeholder concerns data analytics companies. The paper explains new skills that game analytics companies adopt from the field of artificial intelligence to succeed in business expansion both locally and globally. It finally discusses the unique form of esports engagement brought by innovative use of automation technology in Korean esports.

Key Words

Esports

Korea

Data

How does media's construction of discourse on nationalism has evolved?: Critical discourse analysis of Korean sports nationalism through the FIFA World Cup

Authors

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Abstract

Drawing on Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA), this study traces the changes in the construction of discourse on sport nationalism by analyzing news stories regarding Korea's football national team playing in the three different World Cups.

As a nation is diversely expressed and experienced, nationalism can be conceptualized in many ways such as Primordialism, Perennialism, ethno-symbolism, modernism, and postmodernism (Fuchs 2020). Despite the different interpretations of nationalism, a rising criticism surrounding nationalism studies is to pay little attention to banal nationalism that may affect people's sense of belonging (Edensor 2002). While nation-ness was increasingly performed and experienced as cultural practice (Lee & Cho 2009), there is only scarce research on how nationalism and citizens' sense of belonging to the nation has changed through popular culture over time. Considering that sport as a cultural form has been historically interconnected with nationalism, and that nationalism has been expressed in the contemporary sports field in recent years, this study traces how nationalism has pervaded in everyday life by examining news articles about the South Korean national football team in three different World Cups (1998, 2006, and 2022).

Korean nationalism in sports has developed in a complex way, as it is a variegated mixture of the military government initiatives of imprinting it through elite sports and the rich culture of the professional league, and the globalization of various players on the global stage. In the South Korean context of a long history of state-driven fostering of nationalism, sports have been closely intertwined with politics in a cultural form experienced in everyday life. This study thus assumes that this framework captures the dynamic of the construction of nationalism on the fact that nationalism has been historically interconnected with elite sports for political aims with a focus on one ethnicity but at the same time, Korea today has a rich culture in professional sports, and many athletes play on the world stage.

Against such a backdrop, this study focuses on Korea's socio-political dynamics regarding nationalism, aiming to provide insight into the change in the construction of nationalism in and through sports. The findings demonstrate that nationalism in sport still does political functions by which "fighting spirit" and "devotion" is discursively constructed as a core national identity, however, it is no longer formed by state-centered initiatives, but rather it embraces a new neoliberal meritocratic culture that prioritizes individual success on the world stage in an era of increasingly globalized and commercialized sports elitism.

Key Words

Sport nationalism, Neoliberal meritocracy, FIFA World Cup, Critical discourse analysis.

Trivialized no more, at least at the Olympics: Little sign of irrelevant and demeaning information in three U.S. newspapers' stories about women athletes at the 2021 Tokyo Games

Authors

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Abstract

Although girls and women participate in more sports each year, they account for less than 10% of sports content on TV and in print during regular daily coverage (Markula, 2009; Cooky et al., 2021). This has resulted in a narrative of women athletes being consistently marginalized and trivialized (Bruce et al., 2010). On the other hand, *the way* female athletes are portrayed has gradually improved since the 1980s, moving away from coverage expressing overt sexism (Cooky et al., 2021). In addition, coverage of women's sports, and therefore attention to women athletes, increases with major events such as the Olympic Games (Lee, 1992; Kinnick, 1998; Tuggle and Owen, 1999; Borcila, 2000; Puijk, 2000; Bernstein, 2002; Billings and Eastman, 2002; Penderson, 2002; Vincent et al., 2002; Shields et al., 2004; Billings, 2007; Billings and Angelini, 2007; King, 2007; Markula, 2009; Bruce et al., 2010; Nunes, 2019).

Through quantitative content analysis, this study investigated the coverage of the 2021 Tokyo Olympics in three major United States' daily newspapers partially replicating the collection of categorical variables employed in previous research of Olympics coverage (Lee, 1992), to try to understand how well representations of women in those outlets reflected the actual participation and achievements of women athletes in the Olympics. We completed a census of the news, features, and opinion pieces about the latest Olympics run by The Dallas Morning News, the Minneapolis Star Tribune, and The Seattle Times over the two weeks of the Games. We collected a total of 561 stories published between July 24 and August 9, 2021.

The most striking finding was that only one of the 561 articles analyzed presented elements of trivialization of athletes—i.e., information not related to the athletic performance of the protagonists such as references to their private lives, physical appearance, and character traits. The story in question mentioned the signature attire of a female athlete. Similarly, only two stories referred to a female athlete by using her first name instead of her last name after the first reference with full name, and only three stories also referred to a female athlete using a nickname. Additionally, the news coverage reflected the substantial equality of gender representation among athletes performing at the Olympics; the American dailies in question actually offered greater coverage of women's sports than they did of men's. Women's sports accounted for almost half of the stories (263 or 47%). Men's sports stories were 157 or 28%. Another fifth of the stories (106 or 19%) covered both men's and women's sports: $\chi^2(6, N = 561) = 21.269, p < .01$. This finding appears to reflect the fact that women were almost two out of three medalists in the 2021 Games.

Overall, the findings refreshingly suggest that the decades long efforts to challenge gender stereotypes in the U.S. news media during large scale international events such as the Olympic Games appear to have borne fruit. More research is needed to compare the coverage of the Olympics and that of women's sports outside of those events.

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Key Words

Women's sports, Tokyo Olympics, content analysis, trivialization, newspapers, gender representations.

The Nordic players framing the WEURO2022 on Instagram

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Abstract

As a result of positive progress and popularity of women's football, the UEFA Women's Euro 2022 can be considered as a sport mega-event. The investment in the television broadcasting with pre- and post-game studios plays a central role in promoting women's game (de Oliveira et al. 2022; Turtiainen 2021). Despite the significance of the mainstream media, the narration and experience of sports events is typically extended by social media (Frandsen et al. 2022). In this paper, our interest is targeted to the *athletes' social media activity* during the one-month long tournament in England. Finland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Iceland qualified for the WEURO 2022, which enabled us to design the data collection covering all the Nordic teams. Our research data consists of Instagram feed posts and ephemeral stories (usually vanishing away in 24 hours) from 18 players collected daily in July 2022. When analyzing the Instagram data, we use former categorizations as a base to our frame analysis which takes into account *Instagram's technological affordances*.

The Nordic perspective is a unique field for exploring gendered aspects of sport and social media since these countries are the most digitized societies, and world leading regarding women's sports participation and welfare state status. Nevertheless, the ordinary days of the Nordic female football players outside the big tournaments aren't that glorious: after the WEURO 2022 only one Finnish sport journalist found the way to the Finland–Sweden pre-match press conference. With this in mind, we ask: How the Nordic players framed the WEURO2022 tournament on their Instagram posts and stories? What type of content did they share when women's football was under the bright (mass) media spotlight?

The social media self-presentations of female athletes have been studied to some extent (see e.g., Geurin-Eagleman & Burch 2016; Toffoletti & Thorpe 2018; Li et al. 2021; Turtiainen 2021) but our aim is to pay attention to the major sport event context in particular. We focus on the players' social media strategies during the tournament and analyze the differences of Instagram contents between match days and non-match days. We point out e.g., how some (but few) of the players utilized the media attention of WEURO2022 for athlete activism (Magrath 2022) when they spoke out for societal and political issues or raised awareness of equality in or outside sports culture (see also Turtiainen 2021). Furthermore, we also pay attention to the comments and reactions of their followers. Therefore, we discuss similarly with the theories of second-/multi-screen viewing (e.g.,

Hutchins 2019; Hutchins & Sanderson 2017) and argue that athletes themselves are participating in a prominent way to the construction of contemporary sport event narration outside the sporting field and via their own social media platforms. In our case, we review the extended Nordic version of the most remarkable women's football event in Europe so far.

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Key Words

Social media, football, gender, self-representation, activism

Sport, Instagram, and Masculinities. Hybrid and hegemonic traits among hockey-playing men in Sweden

Authors

Dr. Daniel Alsarve - Örebro University

Abstract

Background: Men's ice hockey and the representation of ice hockey men and masculinities in the media have long been perceived as patriarchal domains supporting hyper-masculine traits (Allain, 2008, 2019; Macdonald, 2014). Despite this patriarchal gender order, scholars of sport and gender argue that the present norms of men and masculinity are becoming more inclusive and less misogynistic and that contemporary sports are sites for new practices of masculinities (Anderson, 2009; Owen & Riley, 2020). David Beckham is perhaps one of the most known and early examples of the 'metrosexual', male sports star that cared about his look and style; embodying a fashion consumer engaged with practices that previously had been associated with women and femininities (Coad, 2008). Such 'gender-transgressive' embodiment is thus sometimes interpreted as a new and less misogynistic form of masculinity.

Data and methodology: In this presentation, the search for masculine representations is directed towards Instagram posts by ice hockey-playing men in Sweden. More specifically, the data derives from men playing in the same team in the Swedish Hockey League (SHL), with an open Instagram profile. The data include image posts and comments, and the methods combine visual and textual content analysis. This qualitative approach is then infused with the theoretical concepts of hybridity (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014, 2018) and hegemony (Connell, 2005; Hearn, 2004).

Purpose and research questions: The purpose is to identify masculinity traits portrayed by ice hockey-playing men and to discuss them with departure points in the hybridity and hegemony perspective. How are men navigating between 'new' and 'stereotypical' traits of masculinity in their Instagram posting? Are there posts (and comments) that challenge traditional ice hockey masculinity traits pointing towards progression and more inclusive practices of masculinities? At a broader level, what characterises the conditions and possibilities for men to portray a broad repertoire of embodied emotions in social media?

Findings and discussion: Based on previous research and the conceptual framing the posts were sorted into six overall categories: 'Body', 'Changing room', 'Competition and success', 'Party and holiday', 'Family' and 'Other'. Guided by the content analysis method and a strive to identify complexities within each of these categories (except from 'Other' – which was excluded from the analysis), the findings show multiple possibilities for ice hockey-playing men to express (non)hybrid and (counter)hegemonic traits including, for example, care, heteronormativity, love, power, intimacy, success, friendship, sexism, fatherhood, humour, and so on. Comments from followers functioned as policing and enforcing these messages and traits. The discussion centres on how Instagram, as a social media, provides an arena where ice hockey men and masculinities can be

interpreted as progressive and 'new' but also as conservative and 'old'. The findings are then set in a broader context, and sports as an arena for new practices of masculinities, are critically reflected upon.

Key Words

social media, gender, ice-hockey, masculinity, Instagram

Media (Re)Presentation of a Black Woman Esports Player: The Case of Chiquita Evans in the NBA 2K League

Authors

Dr. Egil Trasti Rogstad - Nord University

Abstract

Alongside the general growth of esports, traditional sport video game titles have become increasingly popular and integrated into traditional sports organizations. However, low representation of women has been a significant concern with the merging of gaming and traditional sports. In 2019, Chiquita Evans became the first woman to be drafted to the NBA 2K League, the esports equivalent of the North American basketball league (NBA). Based on a Foucauldian discourse analysis of the media coverage related to Evans' participation in the league, the aim of this article is to critically examine how the media constructed Evans according to the dominant gender stereotypes and power dynamics in esports. More specifically, the article examines the following research question: How was Chiquita Evans constructed in the media in relation to the established gendered stereotypes and power dynamics in esports during her participation in the 2019 NBA 2K League season?

Feminist poststructuralist theory is used as a theoretical framework to examine the media texts, which are analysed using Foucauldian discourse analysis. The data material is based on media texts (written texts, images, videos, streams and podcasts) relating to Evans' participation. The sample consisted of 26 media texts published across a variety of English-speaking media outlets, including newspaper articles, videos, streams and podcasts. The media texts were analysed following Willig's (2013) stepwise approach to Foucauldian discourse analysis. The analysis of the media texts was twofold. First, the discursive constructions of Evans in the media coverage were analysed, before moving on to an analysis of the different discourses, subject positions and identity negotiations contained in them. Overall, the analysis revealed that the media's construction of Evans remained embedded in traditional gendered stereotypes and power dynamics that necessitated the negotiation of femininity. Even though several media texts assert that gender has no influence on esports performance, esports' strong association with an implicit male discourse suggests that competitive participation is intrinsically gendered. Although the media's portrayal of Evans worked to increase the respect and acceptance of women players, it also perpetuated gendered stereotypes and power dynamics concerning physiology and sports that disparage (ordinary) women. As a result, this article argues that an increased female representation does not mean that existing power relations will be challenged, or that alternative and oppositional discourses that challenge the established male dominance in sporting contexts will emerge.

Key Words

esport, gender, feminism, race, discourse analysis

The role of the media and journalists in the work against sexual harassment in Finnish sports

Authors

Dr. Veera Ehrlén - University of Jyväskylä

Abstract

In this study, I examine the work of the news media in promoting gender equity and addressing sexual harassment in Finnish sports. The research traces back to publications made by the Finnish Center for Integrity in Sports in 2018–2022. These publications have revealed the widespread nature of sexual harassment across the sports field. According to the reports, sexual and gender-based harassment are closely linked to power structures and the culture of hegemonic masculinity in sports. Arguably, investigations leading to the reports may not have taken place without the media's active role in reporting on individual cases of harassment and pointing out how they reflect a larger problem in sports. Increasing media coverage has put pressure on political figures to react and opened up demands for sports policy measures. Yet the role of the media and individual journalists in this context has remained unrecognised both in research and in sports policy debates.

In this study, I analyse how Finnish sports journalists understand their own role and the role of the media they represent in promoting gender equity and combating sexual harassment in relation to their audiences and political actors in sports.

Research data will be collected using expert interviews. I will interview 10–15 Finnish sport journalists and ask them about how they see their role and responsibilities as changemakers and how they perceive reporting on topics outside of the usual sports news which might evoke strong emotions and stances, even stigma. I will analyse the data using the method of applied thematic analysis. The results are expected to be available in June 2023.

This study aims at identifying structural changes that would address harassment and gender equity issues in sports. These include, for example, the barriers that different gendered sports journalists may face when approaching politicians and sports actors in their work. This study will make visible the work of sports journalists and the cultural and structural constraints associated with it and broaden our understanding of the ways in which sport culture can be changed in a more egalitarian direction

Key Words

sports journalistic role, gender, sexual harassment, equity

Negotiating professional principles and roles: The role of Nordic professional bodies

Authors

Prof. Kirsten Frandsen - Aarhus University

Abstract

This paper explores the transforming role of the Nordic associations of sports journalists in the profession's discussions of gender and activism and about how to secure freedom of speech and strengthen independency from economic and political interests in and around sports and big sports events. The Nordic associations of sports journalists are in these years changing identity. Some of them have a particular focus on inclusion of more women in the profession and since 2016 they have collaborated more closely in order to gain a unified, critical voice as members in the International Sports Press Association (AIPS). This international organization has for many years mainly been concerned with securing sports journalists' working conditions in connection with big events like the FIFA World and the Olympic Games. In doing this, they have recently been criticized for becoming too closely related to these organizations and their political and economic partners. Following a conflict in spring/summer 2022 between Norwegian journalists and the AIPS regarding the hosting of a media award show in Doha, Qatar, the board in the Danish Association of Sports journalists was unsuccessful in convincing enough members to leave the AIPS. Other Nordic associations have responded in different ways, and engaged with a range of other North European bodies in putting pressure on the AIPS.

The paper asks how this current process of professionalization of the Nordic governing bodies of sports journalists is unfolding. What kind of controversies, dilemmas, challenges and strategies and alliances are involved in this process of transformation, and do they take different directions from nation to nation? The method is a comparative analysis of qualitative interviews with chairs of four national associations, combined with document analysis of various documents and organizational websites, which document the articulated values, aims and practices of the different associations. The theoretical framework for the analysis is media systemic theories and theories about the roles of sports journalists. This includes the concept of the 'Media Welfare State', which has a particular focus on Nordic media systems in the digital era (Syvertsen et. al, 2014; Enli & Syvertsen 2020), and more foundational conceptualizations of western and global media systemic differences (Hallin & Mancini 2004; 2017). Besides different notions about transformations of (sports) journalistic roles in the digital age (Kammer 2013; Hutchins & Boyle 2017; English 2018) including also gender perspectives (Schoch & Ohl 2021; Boczek et. al 2022) and research reports on politics in sports media (Butterworth et. al 2022) will be used in the analysis.

Key Words

sports journalism, gender, politics, media welfare system, journalistic role

Performing Olympic Sustainability on the Global Stage: Media Representations of Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics in International Media

Authors

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Ms. Zijun Tang - Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University United International College

Mr. Liming Liu - Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University United International College

Abstract

UN issued the 2030 Agenda and tried to achieve environmental sustainability development with global participation (United Nations [UN], 2015). Since sport is regarded as an important element that can contribute to the goal of sustainable development, IOC drew up a sustainable strategy (International Olympic Committee [IOC], 2017). After the remarkable success of Beijing 2008, China has established a new image on the world stage with the fast-paced development of the economy and remarkable hosting abilities to the world (Gries et al., 2010). For Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, China actively makes efforts and commitment to hosting a “Green Olympics”, which coordinates with IOC’s sustainable goals. During the 14-year period, an increasing number of media organizations pay attention to China, and they sometimes report Chinese problems on a wide range of frameworks, revealing the negative international image of China. Concerning the sustainable Olympics in China, previous studies mainly have emphasized the strategy, measures, techniques, and effectiveness of running the Game in a green way, limited studies shed light on the sustainable images in international media coverage.

This study aims to investigate how Beijing 2022 as a “Green Olympics” is represented and how China’s Olympic sustainable image is framed for audiences in the international media. To answer these two questions, this study collected 20 pieces of news about Beijing 2022 released by the international mainstream press. Afterward, Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is employed to uncover how the international media represents and frames China’s sustainable image in the Olympics in the context of the COVID- 19 pandemic. The findings illustrate the complex dynamics of the Beijing 2022 Olympics within its environmental-oriented strategy, showing how sustainable strategy is inherited and developed and the controversial efforts in carbon emissions reduction, artificial snow use as well as skiing center construction. Meanwhile, the politicized trend is revealed through the representation of “greenwashing” in the media coverage, indicating the purpose of the sustainable strategies in Beijing 2022 is out of political consideration about branding the country in a sustainable and environmentally friendly image rather than making an effective and long-term efforts in sustainable development. This study further discusses the framed sustainable image that places China in a “threatening role” to the world with anti-China ideology and negative sentiment in the news release.

Key Words

Beijing 2022, sustainability, international media representation, politicized trend

The Impact of Cultural Differences on National Image Construction in the Communication of Sports Events: An Empirical Study Based on the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics

Authors

Ms. Tingxuan Li - Communication University of China

Abstract

With the popularity of ICTS, online viewing of sports events has become possible globally, and audiences worldwide adjust their overall perceptions, emotions, and evaluations of the host country and other participating countries (Boulding, 1959). Technology empowers online viewing, but the interpretation of sports communication varies in different regions, affecting the overall perception of the same country by the global audiences watching the same event. This leads to the following research questions for this study:

RQ1: What factors of cultural differences influence the audience's perception of the national image in sports events ?

RQ2: How do these factors affect the audience's perception?

To explore those questions, we carried out questionnaires and focus group interviews. Referring to the concept of "cultural area" (Wissler, 1923), the research object is the online audience of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics from the five cultural areas of Europe, North America, North Africa-West Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Firstly, we conducted a web crawling on Twitter for the text of user comments posted from 0:00 on February 4, 2022, to 24:00 on February 20, 2022, about the six keywords: "Winter Olympics", "Winter Olympic", "Winter Olympic Games", "Beijing 2022" and "2022 Beijing Olympics". Then, based on 219846 comments in total, we output a sentiment scale from -1 (extremely negative) to 1 (extremely positive) and analyze its correlation with the audience's cultural areas to determine whether cultural differences are correlated with the audience's overall perception of a country in the sports event. Next, a research questionnaire was sent online by snowball sampling, and 1098 questionnaires were collected, including 1045 valid questionnaires, to distinguish which factors of the cultural context had an impact on the audience's interpretation of the event. Finally, to find out how these factors affected the audience's perception, focus group interviews were conducted with 50 participants from five different cultural areas.

This study illustrates that audiences from different cultural areas had significantly diverse emotional dispositions towards the event and its host country. In other words, cultural differences had an impact on the overall perception of the host country's image by the audience. This is due to the fact that different cultural areas lead the audience to be influenced in their interpretations by the power distance, individualism/collective, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term/short-term, and self-indulgence/restraint. The power distance, masculinity /femininity,

and individualism/collective have a more substantial impact on the audience's interpretation than other factors. In particular, the power distance influences the framing of political stance interpretation, masculinity/femininity influences the audience's aesthetic understanding, and individualism/collectivism affects viewing behavior, such as collective/individual attention and mutual/independent viewing patterns. In contrast, other factors affect the audience's interpretation of specific event details. These influences function effectively a systematic perception and evaluation of the country's image by audiences from different cultural areas.

Based on the initial research of the global audiences of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, this study aims to further understand further the factors of cultural differences that influence the communication effects of sports events and the construction of the national image, as well as puts forward some suggestions for optimized strategies of intercultural communication and national image construction.

Key Words

sports events, 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, cultural differences, national image

The Strategies and Barriers for Chinese Female Football Fans to Integrate into Online Football Community: A Study Through the Lens of Co-cultural Theory and Dominant Group Theory

Authors

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Ms. Yiting Dong - School of Journalism and Communication, Tsinghua University

Dr. Hongfeng Qiu - School of Journalism and Communication, Xiamen University

Abstract

Nearly a third of China's 200 million football fans are women. However, as a typical masculine sport, football has always marginalized women. It's urged to change, for it running counter to the principle of gender equality in sports. DongQiuDi is a commercial e-community for football fans in China, which has gathered about 40 million football fans. This study analyzes the self-presentation of women fans and the comments from men fans in the "Female Fans Interview" column of DongQiuDi through the lens of Co-cultural Theory (CT) and Dominant Group Theory (DGT).

CT, and its theoretical extension DGT, focus on how marginalized and dominant groups communicate. Both of them conceptualize a 3 (communication approaches: consist of nonassertive, assertive, and aggressive approaches for both theories)×3 (preferred outcomes: consist of assimilation, accommodation, and separation for CT, and dismantling, impediment and reinforcement for DGT) framework, and develop their nine kinds of communication orientations. Each communication orientation consists of several communication strategies. This study innovatively integrates CT and DGT into one comprehensive framework to research the holistic interaction between co-cultural and dominant groups.

Many studies have shown that women in sports may meet various kinds of gender oppression in football. Hence women fans are the co-cultural group, while men fans are the dominant group. This study aims to explore to what extent women fans use which kinds of CT communication orientations (RQ1), what DGT communication orientations are applied by men fans when responding to women fans in the comment section (RQ2), and how men fans use sex/sexuality-related discourses in their response comments (RQ3), considering that sport has always been a "sexual battlefield."

By gaining 71 reports from the column, we apply a comprehensive method that mixed qualitative thematic analysis and a quantitative statistic approach to first discover what and how many communication orientations are used by both female and male fans, then to examine whether female fans "use more," "use less" or "no use" a CT communication orientation would lead to different types of extents of DGT communication orientations.

Results found that 6 and 14 kinds of co-cultural orientations and communication strategies are identified in women fans' interviews, among which "assertive accommodation" is taken most. In

male fans' comments, 3 orientations and 5 strategies of dominant-group communication are recognized, while "aggressive reinforcing" is taken most. In addition, "sexualization" is a newly identified strategy of "aggressive reinforcement" of DGT, frequently used by male fans in the current study. Besides, three significant differences were revealed. Women fans who apply "assertive accommodation" more would get more responses of aggressive-impediment-oriented and aggressive-reinforcing-oriented responses. Using "aggressive accommodation" would bring more "assertive dismantling" responses than no use.

This research identifies "sexualization" as a new DGT strategy, integrates CT and its extension theory DGT, and applies it in the context of China to reveal gender inequality in the football e-community. Due to the unequal gender regime that the results have represented in football, this study suggests an inner "dismantling" of the institutional center of the sport. Making football a more inclusive and diverse field still has a long way to go.

Key Words

Co-cultural theory; Dominant group theory; Gender equality; Sport; Football fan

Body Shaming of Male Athletes: Twitter Framing of the "Overweight" Brazilian Soccer Players

Authors

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Dr. Veronika Mackova - Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Abstract

Body shaming and its specific area called fat shaming, that discusses and describes people's weight in a negative way, are nowadays classified as a serious forms of emotional abuse in sport (Wilson & Kerr, 2022). Although relatively robust research has already been conducted on the body and fat shaming of female athletes only (e.g., Burns-Ardolino, 2019; Willson & Kerr, 2022) or comparing shaming of both genders (e.g., Kavanagh et al., 2020), there is still a lack of research covering body shaming addressed to male athletes in certain sport disciplines, especially in the context of social media portrayals.

Our study focuses on social media discussions related to the medialized weight issues of three famous Brazilian soccer players – Ronaldo, Ronaldinho and Neymar. Their selection arose from various factors. While soccer is one of the most popular sports disciplines in the world, only Brazil is called "the soccer country" (Gastaldo, 2014). Despite those Brazilian players becoming famous due to their unique sports skills, they have had to face many comments on their body weight and shape during their careers. This research aims to map and analyze the fat shaming of those three soccer stars and identify possible frames circulating in the social media environment during their active soccer career.

We selected Twitter as a platform for the analysis because it is traditionally used in soccer and media environment (Price et al., 2013). We extracted all English-written tweets and comments that mentioned the name of the player and contained the words "overweight", "obese" or "fat" which were identified as fat shaming labels by former studies, and examined the one-year period in the career of each player when the issue of weight was intensely publicly discussed. We applied a mixed methods approach, specifically quantitative content analysis for a general overview and qualitative framing method to obtain in-depth insight into the material.

Due to our results, we can partially agree with the previous research that the difference in the way online public framing and shaming of professional athletes highly relies on gender. The soccer players were somewhat presented as successful and powerful athletes on Twitter, although they were (concurrently) labeled overweight or fat. Especially in Neymar's case, the player and the other users intensely sought to disprove the fact that he had a few extra kilograms. The defensive framing also appeared in statements related to Ronaldo and Ronaldinho; hence, their fitness and weight were excused by the problems with contracts or injuries. Contrary, the offensive, insulting,

mocking, and even humiliating frames revealed by former studies were still present. Despite the character of commenting on selected male athletes' weight differed from the findings presented by the previous studies aimed mostly on female athletes, there was still a non-negligible number of negatively framed responses.

To conclude, this study implies that body and fat shaming is a serious threat for sportsmen too, especially in the current social media era. The focus on these phenomena can also help to cultivate the environment within the specific sports discipline and/or society.

Key Words

Body Shaming; Fat Shaming; Soccer; Social Media; Twitter; Mixed Methods

Branding a City through Sport Events News: The Example of Beijing's Two Olympic Games

Authors

Ms. Mingjun Zhao - Tsinghua University

Mr. Yongliang Liu - Tsinghua University

Abstract

Background. Beijing, the first city in the world to have hosted both the summer and winter Olympic Games, branded itself through these two Olympics. *People's Daily* is the largest state-owned newspaper in China, which has a long history of authority and has always been the most powerful tool of the Chinese Communist Party in guiding public opinion. Exploring *People's Daily's* urban brand building of Beijing during the two Olympic Games is worth studying.

Method. This paper selected 1599 reports with titles containing both "Beijing" and "Olympics" from the database of the *People's Daily*. 280 reports were during the 2022 Olympics and 1319 reports during the 2008 Olympics. Taking reference to the existing city brand evaluation methods such as City Brands Index, the Saffron European City Brand Barometer and Global Cities Index, this paper coded reports into the following 10 categories: politics, economy, ethics, environment, prerequisites, culture, science, education, globalization, and irrelevant reports (Anholt, 2006; Hildreth, 2008; Kearney, 2012). Half of the coding results were then extracted for the inter-coder reliability test and the output of Cohen's kappa result was over 0.8 which met the requirements.

Results. The number of reports on the political topic had the highest percentage during both Olympics. *People's Daily* branded Beijing as a united city dominated by the government during the 2008 Olympics while describing Beijing as a political center with responsibility during the 2022 Olympics. The topic of globalization ranked second in coverage during the 2008 Olympics when Beijing was pictured as a cosmopolitan city and fourth during the 2022 Olympics when *People's Daily* portrayed Beijing as the expected host city for the Winter Olympics with global influence. The number of reports on ethical topics ranked third during both Olympics. *People's Daily* emphasized the improvement of public morality in Beijing during the 2008 Olympics and worked on propagating the impact of the Winter Olympics spirit on citizens during the 2022 Olympics. Prerequisites were the second most important topic during the 2022 Olympics when *People's Daily* wrote that Beijing was well-constructed and maximized the legacy of the previous Olympics. The coverage of the 2008 Olympics under this topic highlighted Beijing's infrastructure capabilities. In addition, during the 2008 Olympics, Beijing's rapid economic development and deeply integrated culture also became the focus of the *People's Daily's* branding of Beijing. However, during the 2022 Olympic Games, the two aforementioned themes were no longer prominent and green Beijing became a crucial agenda.

Discussion. The number, main topics of coverage, and the proportion of each topic all differed during the two Olympics. The emphasis on ideological and political work during the Xi Jinping era

was attributed to a marked increase in the percentage of politically themed reports during the 2022 Olympics. This paper also believes different national leadership, stages of economic development, guiding philosophies of the two Olympic Games, the underlying national conditions, and the characteristics of media in different eras could explain those differences.

Key Words

City branding, Olympic Games, content analysis, People's Daily, central media

Playing at home: The FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 on Al-Jazeera

Authors

Dr. Christopher Tulloch - Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Abstract

The 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar has been under critical fire from Western journalism outlets from the day it was announced it would be holding the world's premier sports event back in 2010. A decade of news reports condemning the hosts' human rights record, working conditions and the rights of the LGBT community amongst other causes dominated media discourse up until -and including the first days of- the competition.

Simultaneously, since 1996 Qatar is also home to one of the major counter-hegemonic global news platforms -Al Jazeera ("the peninsula")- which broadcasts from Doha not only to the diasporic muslim *umma* -in itself a geo-linguistic community of more than 310 million consumers- but also through its English language channel -launched back in 2006- to the rest of the world as well. Latest official data show that Doha aside, Al-Jazeera has news production centres in London and Kuala Lumpur, a staff rota of 3000 employees of diverse nationalities and has more than 50 foreign correspondent bureaux in the world. Operating in Arabic, English and since 2018 in Mandarin Chinese, it is widely considered the "Dean" of audio-visual news platforms in the Global South.

So with these considerable resources in mind, this paper analyses the coverage by Al-Jazeera of an event which took place in its own soft power backyard. To do it compiles the coverage by Aljazeera.com over a 60-day period from the weeks prior to the event, throughout the competition itself and during the aftermath of the final to see how the news channel covered the event. Aside from strict match reporting, what were the other stories on the Al-Jazeera agenda? How was the World Cup framed for an international audience? Given that the channel is government funded, how was the news presented from a Qatari "official" perspective? Who produced the news?

Through the deployment of a structured content coding sheet, the paper presents both a quantitative theme-based study (agenda, focus, protagonists) as well as aiming to offer some qualitative commentary -time and space permitting- on themes such as the development of a distinctive narrative as host media to the most controversial of World Cups to date.

Key Words

World Cup, Al Jazeera, Qatar

Weibo as a Second Screen: A Study of Public Discussion about the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics on Social Media

Authors

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Abstract

Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games (Beijing 2022) were held in both Beijing and Zhangjiakou, China, from February 4 to 20, 2022. The Olympic Games are widely perceived as one of the most significant media events in the world. Despite Winter Olympics lesser influence relative to the Summer Olympics, the rapid development of digital technology and social media has propelled the Winter Olympics into a global sports event (Ramon et al., 2020). Up until the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, the Winter Olympic Games reached over two billion viewers around the world (IOC, 2022a). Communication scholars pointed out that audiences of sports mega events are increasingly using two or more media simultaneously or are alternating between different media on separate screens (Tang & Cooper, 2018b; Voorveld et al., 2014). Social media most often represents the second screen viewing, especially in the media consumption of the Olympic Games. Weibo is the only vibrant micro-blogging platform in China, with more than 553 million users in the Chinese world (Guancha Syndicate, 2021). As the most influential platform in China for public opinion (Huang & Sun, 2014; Rauchfleisch & Schäfer, 2015), Weibo offers great visibility and extensive news coverage and public discussion about hot issues.

To understand how viewers use social media as a second screen to frame the sports mega-event, this study analyses public discussions of sports fans on Weibo while viewing Beijing 2022. Specifically, we selected the three games with the highest viewing ratings during the Beijing 2022, namely the opening ceremony, the Short Track Speed Skating Men's 1000m final (most viewed ice game), and the freestyle-skiing Women's Freeski Big Air final (most viewed snow game). We employed a web crawler to capture the keywords related to these three games for data mining from two hours before the game to two hours after the game. The keywords include "the opening ceremony", "the men's 1000m short track speed skating final", "the women's freestyle big air final", "China national team", "Wu Dajing", "Ankai", "Gu Ailing" and other words related to the games. In analysing the data, we employed thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method that involves reading through a data set, and identifying patterns in meaning across the data to derive themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012). I followed a six-step process to conduct thematic analysis: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up.

This research is important for better understanding how audiences engage with major international sporting events through second screens and how they frame the game through social media text.

Key Words

Second screen, social media, Winter Olympic Games, thematic analysis

The Construction of the Agenda-setting of the East Asian Winter Olympic Games and the Analysis of the Audience's Emotional Evolution on YouTube under the Background of Sports Media

Authors

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Abstract

Under the wave of sports mediatization, online agenda-setting shows the characteristics of audience cognitive network structuring, and the rise of emotionality brings a new way for people to narrate on social media. The relationship between online agenda-setting and audience in mainstream media is worth exploring, and the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics and 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, as the two closest Winter Olympics before and after the COVID-19 pandemic, are concrete manifestations of deep sports mediatization, and the two countries have certain geopolitical and cultural proximity. In order to explore the evolution of online agenda-setting and audience emotion change, this paper uses CGTN and ARITRANG NEWS's video issues and public comments about their respective Winter Olympics on YouTube as text data collection objects and analyzes them through Python data crawling, data processing, LDA thematic analysis, and Textblob sentiment analysis. we analyze the narrative patterns of sports foreign communication reports and media behaviors with reference to audience emotions. To find practical countermeasures on how to tell Chinese sports stories and present a good image of China in the post-Winter Olympics era and answer the proposition of creating a favorable international public opinion environment for the construction of a community of human destiny.

1. Analysis of network agenda-setting reported by mainstream media

The study found that ARITRANG NEW's coverage of the PyeongChang Winter Olympics included three topics: "news of sports events", "successful preparations for the event", and "international exchanges and cooperation".

CGTN reports five topics, including "international relations and politics", "news of sports events", "successful preparation of events", "science and technology, green and economy", and "epidemic prevention and event services", forming a rich media network agenda.

2. Analysis of audience emotion evolution

The audience feedback curve of the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games report on ARIRANG NEWS shows that the wave crest distribution is relatively forward, showing a state of "heating first and then cooling".

For Beijing Olympic game, there are many peaks and dense distribution, which is also related to the richness of topics. The distribution of wave peaks is relatively backward, showing a state of "cooling before heating".

3. Agenda-setting construction and audience emotion evolution analysis

(1) The Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Game

The network agenda of the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games and the emotional analysis of the audience show that topic 1 of sports event news and audience feedback are negatively correlated.

On the topic of successful preparation for the event, audience feedback showed a positive correlation during the event and a negative correlation before and after the event.

(2) The Beijing Winter Olympics

The topic reports on international relations and political topics, sports events, science, and technology green and economic topics show a positive correlation from high to low, while the topic reports on the most successful preparation of the event show a negative correlation.

On the same point, the inspiration for the agenda-setting of China's mainstream media sports external coverage, regardless of nationality, regional culture, peace, economy, culture, security, environment, and other media agendas, it helps stimulate people's positive feelings.

Key Words

sports mediatization, East Asia Winter Olympics, agenda building, emotional analysis

Cross-cultural impact of network agenda-setting: a bilingual empirical study in football

Authors

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Dr. Luleiya HUANG - Beijing Sport University

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Abstract

Global football has a unique importance in sociology and cultural studies (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2012). The multiple stakeholders and the complexity they represent make connectivity even more important in global football. Starting from transnational broadcasting, the development of media make spectator sports break through the regional restrictions and changes the way clubs establish relationships with global fans (Kuzma et al., 2014), and the way fans support and talk about football greatly (Millward, 2011): In China, Manchester City's Weibo account has over 9 million followers.

Agenda setting has been widely used to study the issue of gender, athletes and so on during mega-events in sports (Billings et al., 2008; Frederick et al., 2015). However, there is little to no cross-culture research based on different languages. In this study, we apply the network agenda-setting theory (Guo & McCombs, 2011), used to test the third level of media effects, to examine the relationship between media agenda and fan agenda in cross-cultural Chinese and English football world.

Two studies were conducted.

Study 1: In sport competitive events, are there similarities in network agendas across cultures ? (Study 2 conducted in sport social issues with same 2 hypotheses.)

H1: The network agenda similarity among the club's local media, the British media and the Chinese media is significant.

H2: The similarity between the network agendas of the two countries' media and those of Chinese fans is significant.

"Manchester City crowned 2020-21 Premier League champions" was selected as competitive event, while "Manchester City's Champions League ban and the overturned" as social issue. Mixed methods including social network analysis based on word co-occurrence matrix, computational and qualitative content analysis were applied. Through bilingual keywords, Python was utilized to get data. The final samples consisted of 305 English news articles from one club's local media and three British official media websites, 289 Chinese news articles in WiseNews Database from three Chinese media, 2185 fans' posts from Baidu Tieba, a popular Chinese forum.

The results demonstrated that, in both studies, the QAP correlation test revealed a significant difference between the network agenda in the British media and Chinese media ($p < .05$, H1abc& H3abc), and the associated network agenda path of the media is the same (club's local media \leftrightarrow British media \leftrightarrow Chinese media). In sport competitive events, the QAP correlation between the network agenda in the British/Chinese media and the Chinese fans is significant ($p < .05$, H2ab); However, in sport social issues, the similarity of is only found between Chinese media and Chinese fans ($p < .05$, H4a), and no similarity of network agenda is found between British media and Chinese fans ($p > .05$, H4b).

The power of football as a "world language" may explain the similarity of network agenda among transnational media and cross-cultural fans. The Internet plays an important role in communication, while it's also related to the professional operation of sports news and sports editors. Concerning sports social issues, fan agenda is closely linked with local culture, thus highlighting regional differences, which provides more understanding of the diversity of sports culture.

Key Words

network agenda-setting, global football, cross-cultural, Manchester City, bilingual, QAP

Extinguishing or Fueling the Fire : an Controversy Analysis on Twitter Before and After Video Assistant Referee was Introduced into Short Track Speed Skating Events

Authors

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Abstract

If fairness and openness have always been the relentless pursuit of sportsmanship, accuracy and clarity of objective facts are always the goal of media presentation and mediated experience, especially in the context of the intense commodification, commercialisation, mediatisation, globalisation, and digitalisation of sport(Stoney & Fletcher, 2021). With this came the introduction of Decision-Aid Technologies and Sport (DAT) such as Hawk-eye, Video Assistant Referee(VAR), etc. being introduced to sports events. The combination of"media manifold" comprises epistemic technologies and social media with its knowledgeable and emotionally invested audience limits the "black-boxing" of a refereeing technology(d'Andréa, & Stauff, 2022). Decision-Aiding Technology is highly expected to play a role in explaining controversial penalty to the public and making the results more convincing to stop supporters on both sides from attacking each other, but is that really the case?

Controversy analysis is a methodology developed in the interdisciplinary field of STS for the study of public disputes about science and technology, and the interaction between science, innovation, and society more broadly(Merton, 1957). Marres & Moats(2015) propose the significance of the Web as a site of controversy derived from the proliferation of new digital, networked practices for the conduct of controversy across social and public life. It's applicable to observe sports controversies in the online arena.

Short track speed skating is a controversial sport. As the International Skating Union(ISU, 2019)says, "Athletes are close together and it's packed with action. There were several controversies ...". One of the landmark years was 2019, when ISU introduced a new video reviewing process in the face of excessive controversy, which allowed for broader media and spectators participation. We select two games before and after this time point: the men's 1000m preliminaries/semi-finals at the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics and the men's 1000m final at the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. Both games were contested by the South Korean and Chinese teams, who have a "long history" of controversy over their results in the sport, which has long been a national concern. The difference is that the hosts of the games have switched and the scale and impact of the discussion on Twitter has been different. This research attempts to answer the following questions:

1.What role does DAT play in controversial events in competitive sports, and can it live up to the expectations of bridging the controversy?

2.From a mediated perspective, what is the impact of technology's involvement in sports events on audience media participation and national consciousness in competitive sports?

Based on 1,863 tweets posted on Twitter during these two matches and combining statistical data with text analysis and sentiment analysis. We compare and analyze the opinion dynamics generated on Twitter for these two matches before and after VAR was put into use, and explore whether decision-aid technology represented by VAR can promote consensus or amplify its impact when controversies in sports are presented through more comprehensive media.

Our findings show that:VAR can not establish a unified standard for bridging the controversy to reach a consensus, but rather stimulates the visual activities of fans to provide material for 'forensic fandom' behavior, it entangles visual affordances(Hagen & Stauff, 2022). When VAR is used as the technical path of mediatisation and social media is used as the context of mediatisation, the judging panel changes from a few people on the field to over tens of thousands of people online. People have a more direct and strong mediatisation experience of fairness, and the form of expression and interaction is also more active, the media production become richer (including short videos and meme). Both "true"and"false"epistemic content unfolds in social and epistemic, political, and technical dimensions all at once, they render visible "heterogeneous entanglements" between different types of entities (Marres & Moats, 2015), technology assumes the role of check and balance, amplification and acceleration in it. The values of technological self-confidence, technological neutrality, national self-esteem, and national unity were constructed under the influence of the sense of technological self-confidence in the Chinese national framework and the statements of the Korean politicians in social media.

Key Words

short track speed skating, video assistant referee(VAR),controversy analysis, and mediatisation.

The Construction of Intercultural Media Identity in VUCA world: The Case of Ethnic Chinese Athletes in the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics

Authors

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Abstract

In VUCA world, under the influence of the counter-globalization wave, populism revival, and ideological fragmentation, value content and cultural salience are unipolar in cross-cultural identity, and it is difficult for individuals with cross-cultural identities to maintain a balance between host-country and home-country. And the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics are in the context of the most divisive, internationally tense and transnational mobility-controlled era in history. Thus, Ethnic Chinese athletes with China as their host-country and the United States as their home-country have become the focus of political and public attention. Especially three athletes, Beverly Zhu, Nathan Chen, and Eileen Gu, displayed themselves distinctly and were treated by the media very differently. This study aims to explore how cross-cultural athletes negotiate their identities.

RQ1 : How do the construction of cross-cultural identities differ for athletes who adopt different identity negotiation strategies?

RQ2 : What is the difference between self-presentation and media-identification?

Our research is based on Stella Ting-Toomey's identity negotiation, identity construction, and culture hybridity theories, using textual analysis and case study analysis. After screening, a total of 314 US mainstream media reports, 508 Chinese mainstream media reports, and the content of the three athletes' social media accounts related to the Winter Olympics in China and abroad were selected.

The study that identity negotiation strategies of cross-cultural athletes were divided into three models: the DS (diaspora-transformation) model represented by Beverly Zhu, the FR (fixation-resistance) model represented by Nathan Chen, and the IT (integration-transcendence) model represented by Eileen Gu. Beverly Zhu embodies a crisis of identity with the United States and crosses the ideological divide to emphasize her Chinese political and cultural identity. The pronounced approach of the DS model is to use social media interaction and narrative strategies to locate individuals' social networks in China for facilitating the audience to orient quickly, thus avoiding becoming marginalized. Nathan Chen is mainly reflected in the fixation of the American political and cultural identity and the resistance to the Chinese identity. The name-calling approach is mainly used to highlight the chosen political position of the individual by emphasizing his political identity in the FR model. Eileen Gu is about integrating her Chinese and American identities and becoming a "global citizen" and a "third-culture person" in a way that transcends national boundaries.

Through comparison, we find that the construction of cross-cultural identities by individual social media and mass media reflects the opposition between platform cosmopolitanism and national ethnocentrism. Moreover, individuals adopt a cultural prominent framework in their narratives, while the mass media adopt a political competition framework.

The media identity construction of cross-cultural athletes faces a double crisis: firstly, cultural identity is forcibly bound to political identity, and the identity of the host and the home country is completely severed. Secondly, under the influence of anti-globalization and ultra-nationalism, "sportsmanship" runs counter to "nationalism". Individuals and the media should weaken the emphasis on purely national identity and move toward bridging the national divide and building consensus in sports meetings.

Key Words

media identity; identity negotiation; Olympic games; cross-cultural athletes; identity construction

Sports News in Five Arab Countries: A Comparative Study of Platforms, Sources, and Journalistic Role Performances

Authors

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Abstract

This study focuses on the notion of accountability in sports journalism through an examination of journalistic roles that sports media in the Arab region play and the extent to which these role performances indicate where their allegiances lie. Historically, Western approaches to the relationship between government and the media have accepted the watchdog role of the latter to be the norm. Media systems in the Global South, however, differ from those in the West, providing evidence of the variations in role performances across the globe (Mellado, 2021). The Arab region, especially, has traditionally carried the label of authoritarianism, which is reflected in the loyalist role the media play. Notwithstanding the similarities that characterize the countries in the vast Arab region, this image does not apply uniformly to all countries (Kozman, 2021; Richter & Kozman, 2021; Rugh, 2004). Although recent scholarship has started to scrutinize the journalistic role performances in relation to the countries Arab media represent, these studies have undertaken this assessment through a wide lens, most often than not focusing on politics and public affairs, while ignoring other newsbeats, such as sports. Considering the increasingly important space sports continue to occupy in society, embodied in the concept of soft power, an example of which is the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, it is crucial to include sports news in any analysis of the relationship between media and governing powers in a country. This study is a comparative analysis of six journalistic role performances – interventionist, loyal, watchdog, service, civic, and infotainment (for an overview, see Mellado, 2015; 2021) – in five Arab countries from the Gulf, the Levant, and North Africa, and their relationship with media platforms and sources. Through a content analysis of sports news from print, broadcast, and online media, the study hypothesizes that journalistic role performances in sports news – which fall under the three areas of power relations, audience approach, and journalistic voice – vary across countries, platforms, and sources. Specifically, the diversity of source types and the diversity of source viewpoints are examined as predictive agents of role performances. Preliminary results of regression analysis point to significant effects of country and source diversity in some role performances but not all. The sample of 1077 news stories comes from 45 news outlets, collected in 2020 following a constructed, two-week stratified-systematic sampling strategy across all five countries.

Key Words

Arab media, media systems, sources, sports, journalistic role performances

Audience Engagement by a Professional Sports League: Examining Social Media Content of NFL's Game in Germany

Authors

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Prof. Thomas Horky - Macromedia University

Abstract

The National Football League (NFL) is the largest professional sports league in the world (Trivedi et al., 2021). American Football is the second most popular TV sport in Germany, and the second largest market for the NFL behind the U.S. (Fillinger, 2022a; Gardt, 2022). In 2022, the NFL expanded to Germany with a first-ever regular season game played on November 13. This game also marked the beginning of a partnership between the NFL and the Bundesliga (DFL, 2022), organized by the German Football League (DFL). This commitment is part of a larger NFL marketing strategy to anchor the sport of American Football in Germany (Fillinger, 2022b).

The NFL's marketing strategy is based on diverse Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and on factors like broadcasting, merchandising, sponsoring, ticketing, the NFL International Series, and fostering of American Football as a new type of sport in Germany (Fillinger, 2022b). Sontag (2012) introduces specific KPIs for implementing a new sport league into a market. In this vein, the NFL acts as a new brand entering Germany's sport market (Ifeany, 2017) by using several elements of team and league branding (Yang et al., 2009). An essential part of marketing is audience engagement. Cassilo (2021) describes various strategies of audience engagement on social networks.

RQ1: How did NFL and DFL organize audience engagement on social networks during the first NFL game in Germany?

RQ2: How was the new partnership marketed by the NFL and DFL?

RQ3: How did fans perceive the game as shown by their social media engagement?

To answer the questions, a content analysis (Krippendorf, 2018) of various social networks was carried out in Germany and the U.S. In Germany, seven different accounts from NFL and DFL were analyzed quantitatively on three networks over 15 days. In addition, *Spinklr* software was used for the extensive qualitatively social media sentiment analysis by different keywords in the U.S.

The results show, on the NFL Germany Twitter account 61% of the posts dealt with the game, but only 8% for the main NFL account. Overall, NFL Germany was able to gain 16,241 new followers across platforms, 7,126 of them on the day of the game alone. The German Bundesliga also gained 73,849 new followers on Instagram, 4,923 of them on gameday. Even the DFL, which did not publish any posts on gameday, was able to gain 390 new followers across platforms. *Spinklr* analyzed 15,785 mentions on Twitter, Reddit, Facebook, and online news reports from Nov. 1 – Dec.

3, using a variety of NFL and DFL social media handles, along with the keywords “German or Munich or Deutschland”. The sentiment was 87.4% positive, and 12.6% negative. On Twitter, the largest audience engagement was generated by tweets from @NFL.

Overall, the social media analysis of the first-ever regular-season NFL game in Germany shows significant market potential, including a growing presence with mostly positive social media sentiment. In addition, the hype about the game resulted in a spillover effect for the German Bundesliga

Key Words

American Football, Social Media, Marketing Strategy, Content Analysis, Sentiment Analysis

Examining the Role of Engagement in Sports Events Second Screen Usage: An Analysis of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar 2020 as a Media Event

Authors

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Abstract

The use of second screens during televised sports events has become increasingly popular in recent years, as more and more people are using their smartphones and other devices to engage with content related to the event they are watching on television. This phenomenon, known as "dual screening" or "second screen usage," has the potential to significantly enhance the viewing experience and increase engagement with the event.

Sports events are a popular form of entertainment that is watched by millions of people around the world. These events are often televised and can be viewed on various devices, including TVs, laptops, and smartphones. With the increasing use of mobile devices and the rise of second-screen usage, it is important to understand how people engage with televised sports events and how second-screen usage may be related to engagement and other factors. In this study, we aimed to examine the viewing behavior of individuals who watched the FIFA World Cup in Qatar in 2022 and to understand how second-screen usage may be related to engagement and other factors. The sample (N = 515) represented the Israeli population's distribution. Respondents were aged 18 to 86 years, with a mean of 42.84 (SD = 15.79). Four hypotheses were tested using Pearson correlation and the Hayes process model.

The main findings of this research suggest that engagement, transportation, enjoyment, and media event perception are positively correlated with game-related second-screen usage and negatively correlated with game-unrelated second-screen usage during a sports event. Moreover, one of the most notable findings of this study was the mediating role of engagement in the relationship between the independent variables and game-related and game-unrelated second-screen usage. This suggests that engagement plays a key role in determining an individual's second-screen usage during a sports event and that the other independent variables (transportation, enjoyment, and media event perception) may be indirectly related to second-screen usage through their impact on engagement. These findings are consistent with previous research on media engagement, which has shown that engagement is an important predictor of media use and consumption.

The findings suggest that engagement, transportation, enjoyment, and media event perception are important factors in determining second screen usage during sports events. Furthermore, engagement plays a mediating role in the relationship between these variables and second screen usage. The practical implications of these findings are significant for marketers, advertisers, and

broadcasters seeking to understand and influence second-screen usage during televised sports events. By targeting and increasing engagement, it may be possible to increase the use of second screens for activities related to the sports event, such as interacting with brands or sharing content on social media.

Key Words

Second Screens , Sports Events , Dual Screening, World Cup

Self-identity and Social Construction of Online Sports Users' Bodies: An Investigation of the Online Ethnography of Fitness User Groups Based on the Keep App

Authors

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Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic and the post-epidemic era, more and more people are engaging in online exercise. The Keep App is a platform that provides lightweight online exercise and fitness services. With the rapid development of the Internet, the Keep App has reaped an astounding 41.08 million monthly active users with online user participation as well as social sharing.

This study focuses on users who use the Keep App for online exercise and uses a online ethnography to conduct a 2-year "online fieldwork-based participant observation" of this group. Using participant observation, the researcher personally participated in the online exercise, recorded the bullet subtitles sent by the users in the sports videos and the text messages in the comments area combine with the online community, and randomly selected users for in-depth interviews. This study aims to record the stories of users exercising bodies based on the uniqueness of the research subjects, to present and analyze individual experiences, and thus to provide a new way of thinking for the development of sports communication.

The study found that online sports bodies both send messages about identity and serve as a medium for carrying social meaning. Therefore, the study examined the relationship between online sports bodies and self-identity as well as the social construction, extracted and summarized five different ideal types, and interpreted them in detail, presenting several real and exciting stories of online sports bodies - Middle and high school students who sought group identity, internet celebrities who broke stereotypes and had high self-efficacy, middle-aged people who tried to cross the age gap, elites who deeply influenced by consumerism, single people who being gazed at and disciplined, young women who imagined lovers to motivate herself to participate in bullet screen carnival, etc.

Focusing on the sports communication perspective, the study finds that in the cyber utopia built by the Keep App online community, emerging technologies provide a convenient platform for users to exercise and communicate, and prompt users to publish a large amount of content about exercise, body, and lifestyle in the online sports community, which openly generates extensive discussions and exchanges, constituting a kind of online utopian cyber community. New technologies intervene in body planning, online body movement and body presentation, and the moving body generates interesting new phenomena in the virtual arena through emerging technologies, but a living body is also transformed into a symbol to be commercially exploited. On the other hand, the study also found instances where male gaze and discipline were revolted and deconstructed by women in online sports, and produced gender reversals.

This study systematically reveals the social phenomenon and significance of physical exercise in the middle line of sports communication horizon, lays a foundation for the follow-up research on sports digital healthy life, and provides reliable suggestions for the improvement of digital sports software and hardware.

Key Words

sports communication, online body exercise, online ethnography, self-identity, social construction

Human Rights and the 2022 World Cup: Tensions, evolutions, and postcolonial narratives in Qatari and US news coverage

Authors

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Abstract

The 2022 World Cup held in Qatar was the most expensive in history and both the first World Cup to be held in winter and hosted by an Arab country. While Qatar saw the tournament as an opportunity to establish itself on the world stage, concerns by the West over human rights abuses led to heavy criticism of the Gulf state in Western media. This paper aims to examine the tensions in representations and discourses on human rights in the context of the World Cup between Qatari and US media. Postcolonial theory was applied using a qualitative thematic analysis of two newspapers representing Qatari (the *Gulf Times*) ($n = 49$) and US (*The New York Times*) ($n = 62$) media to identify key themes and places of convergence and divergence across 2022. An initial review indicates significant evolution in themes between early Qatari, early US, late Qatari, and late US coverage. In the lead-up to the tournament, US press emphasized the exotic otherness (culturally and spatially) of Qatar and their supposed inability and illegitimacy to host the tournament, while refuting accusations of holding double standards on human rights. Alternatively, Qatar highlighted US and Western hypocrisy about human rights violations while drawing on Western voices to legitimate their position as hosts, demonstrating a dual desire for recognition and disdain for perceived Western cultural imposition. As the tournament proceeded with US involvement, US media shifted attention away from concerns about migrant labor to the ability of LGBTQ+ people and women to participate in the event and reconstructed the Orientalized other to focus on the human rights issues of Iran, another tournament participant and Muslim, but non-Arab nation. Qatari media celebrated successful inclusion in Western globalized society and attempted to deconstruct us/them dichotomies with a narrative of peaceful hybridity.

Key Words

World Cup, postcolonial, content analysis, newspaper coverage, Qatar

How much is too much? Footballization and agenda diversity in European PSM Twitter accounts during the Qatar 2022 World Cup

Authors

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Abstract

In the current landscape, the prominent relationship between public service media (PSM), sport, and cultural citizenship is undergoing a profound transformation. PSM's ability to enhance cultural citizenship has been complicated by the significant tensions that arise from globalization and commodification (Evens and Smith 2022). However, PSM can utilize its myriad platforms and services to transcend the constraints of linear broadcasting and find alternative ways of advancing cultural citizenship (Hermes 2020). New destinations can help PSM to provide "variation in content" (Morlandstø and Mathisen 2022, 2) and offer a diverse coverage that lends visibility to "traditionally underrepresented sports and protagonists, including sportswomen and athletes with disabilities" (Ramon and Rojas-Torrijos 2022, 919).

Nevertheless, as shown by previous research, these opportunities are not always met. Across countries, PSM agenda on social media is overwhelmingly dominated by football, leaving little space for other disciplines, events, and protagonists to be showcased in the day-to-day coverage (Rojas-Torrijos and Ramon 2021). While the cultural importance and global consumption of football cannot be denied (Petersen-Wagner and Lee Ludvigsen 2022), the increasing 'footballization' of content raises important concerns about "the concentration of symbolic power in the digital age" (Ramon and Rojas-Torrijos 2022, 933).

In this context, further questions come to light: To what extent does the process of 'footballization' intensify during major mega-events such as the World Cup? What are the implications of such football-centrism? Does PSM's coverage on social media engage with key issues of social and political nature, such as the human rights issues surrounding the latest edition of the tournament? Bearing these questions in mind, this paper examines the agenda diversity on Twitter offered during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 by six European PSM companies: RTVE (Spain), France TV (France), ZDF (Germany), RTBF (Belgium), NOS (Netherlands), and TVP (Poland). The tweets published by these PSM companies during the timeframe of the event (20 November 2022 and 18 December 2022) were retrieved using Twitonomy and subsequently examined using the content analysis technique (Clark et al. 2021).

The comparative analysis of N=5,777 tweets revealed the extensive attention devoted by European PSM to this major event. In the aggregate, 87.97% (n=5,082) of the messages focused on the World Cup. Content on Qatar 2022 exceeded 90% of the output published by *@deportes_rtve* and

@sport_tvppl. In other accounts such as *@francetvsport*, *@NOSsport*, *@sportstudio*, and *@RTBFsport*, this content ranged between 69.44% and 88.13%. Despite the continuous stream of information, human rights issues around Qatar 2022 (Al Thani 2021; Samuel-Azran et al. 2022) were largely overlooked in PSM timelines. For nearly one month, the overabundance of football-related content came at the expense of other high-profile and minority sports, competitions, and protagonists, who indeed became media ‘blind spots’ (Morlandstø and Mathisen 2022) as they did not receive the wider visibility that social networking sites can easily afford. The results have clear implications for media practice, signaling the need for PSM to reimagine its social media strategies to provide a more balanced coverage that adequately contributes to enhancing cultural citizenship in the digital age.

Key Words

PSM; Sport; Cultural Citizenship; Agenda; Diversity; Footballization; Qatar 2022; Twitter

Playing on Multiple Fields: Captured Sports Media in Mexico and Greece

Authors

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Abstract

Media capture is broadly understood as the interference of influential actors and “created interests in the news media, who act on their benefit, for private purposes, and to the detriment of the public interest and the democratic functions of journalism and the autonomy of journalists” (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2013: 40-41). A range of actors, including the state, corporations, and private entities, seek to influence news content or attain media ownership to advance their business or political interests. Consequently, capture can affect the entire news ecosystem, including the ownership structures of media organizations, relations with sponsors, editorial/journalistic guidelines, and media content. Outcomes of capture can include political influence, censorship, preferential access to information, content bias, and the blurring between advertisement and content.

While the concept has been primarily used in the context of political journalism, it can be even more evident in sports journalism, which is not always protected by the profession’s normative standards. Based on document analysis and interviews with selected experts, this paper will focus on two preeminent professional football teams in Mexico and Greece: America F.C. and Olympiacos. We argue that both teams enjoy considerable advantages due to their ownership. Both clubs are connected to powerful media groups—Mexico’s Televisa and Greece’s Alter Ego—who promote their team’s and owners’ interests and provide preferential access to their own journalists.

In Mexico, Televisa wields significant influence in the decision-making of the national team via the presence of its executives on the board of Mexico’s football federation. Televisa, now in partnership with Univision in the U.S., also owns Azteca Stadium, home to America F.C. and the national team, possessing considerable control of the coverage for both, and of the broadcast rights for most Mexican football matches. Apart from dominating the U.S. Hispanic market, Televisa is also the primary beneficiary of government advertising in Mexico, affording it considerable political influence.

In Greece, Olympiacos’ owner/president, shipping magnate Vaggelis Marinakis, owns Alter Ego, which operates numerous prominent media outlets which receive significant government subsidies. Olympiacos directly influences several sports-oriented publications, while Marinakis indirectly influences other outlets whilst not appearing as their owner/publisher. Sponsorships and advertising are often shared across these platforms and the team. Olympiacos’ home ground, Karaiskaki Stadium, is under the team’s control via a long-term lease with the State, and hosts the

national team's matches. Team officials dominate Piraeus' city council, where Olympiacos is based—indeed, Marinakis himself holds a seat.

In turn, Olympiacos' sports-oriented media are politically influential toward a demographic less inclined to read the politics-oriented press, while the endorsement or opposition of the team's organized fans is politically consequential. Greece's Super League and football federation, in turn, are political battlegrounds, with Marinakis and the oligarchs who own Greece's other major clubs (and major media outlets) vying for influence.

This study introduces the concept of captured sports media via the comparison cases of Mexico and Greece. By extension, the concept of a sports-oriented 'iron triangle' between sports team ownership, non-sports media, and political influence, will be developed.

Key Words

captured media, sports media, Greece, Mexico, captured sports media, Televisa

Sport Mega-Event Medi[t]ations: From the Pacific to Paris

Authors

Prof. David Rowe - Western Sydney University

Abstract

Two contrasting mega-sport events are coming into view. The first is the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, which is being held for the first time in Oceania and hosted by Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. The second is the 2024 Paris Olympics and Paralympics, a return to the city and country that, after the Athens 1896 revival of the modern Olympics, was in 1900 the first in northern Europe to host the event. Apart from their physical scale and geographic scope, both are also major media events, attracting conventional sport coverage and wide-ranging discussion of social, political, cultural, economic and environmental matters. Analysing these events in consort enables a deeper understanding of the significance of sport mega-events in which communication and mediation play a pivotal role.

The 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup is a single sport event that foregrounds gender more than most sporting occasions and, in this instance, focuses attention on a region that generally receives little attention in the so-called 'world game'. It is also taking place in two settler-colonial nations that are still coming to terms with their histories of Indigenous dispossession in a region that has recently become a global geopolitical 'hotspot' in a contest between China, the rising power of Asia and the Pacific, and the still-hegemonic US and its allies, which include Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, France and other countries in Oceania, Asia and Europe. For this reason, sport diplomacy is playing an increasing role in regional relations, although its conceptualisation and practice – at least in the public sphere – is now sometimes overshadowed by the often imprecise but pejorative term 'sportswashing'. While the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup has a Sustainability Strategy with priorities concerning gender equality and equity; human/workers' rights and anti-discrimination; safeguarding and protection of players and spectators; accessibility of venues; reduced impact on climate and the environment, and so on, like any sport mega-event it is open to critique on all these grounds. These are both general in nature, like the disputed choice of sponsors and the exclusion of teams on political grounds, and specific to the host locations, such as the treatment of Indigenous peoples and the differential causes and impacts of anthropomorphic climate change.

The 2024 Paris Olympics and Paralympics, a multi-sport event in the 'Old World', similarly faces common and distinct issues being played out via contending mediated discourses. These rhetorical engagements with material implications include responses to a current war in continental Europe and the consequences of the host's historical imperialism and colonialism in Africa and, indeed, in the Pacific region where the FIFA Women's World Cup took place in the previous year. In critically reflecting on the communicative and media dynamics of both mega-events, this presentation will illuminate both the ineluctable connectivity that attends the phenomenon of globalisation and the contextual variability that marks out each, like sport itself, as a structured contest with contingent characteristics and outcomes.

Key Words

mega-events, sport diplomacy, sportswashing, gender, region, environment, colonialism, mediated rhetorics

The media coverage of the Paralympic Games from the perspective of their participants

Authors

Dr. Ondrej Trunecka - Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague

Abstract

This study deals with the media coverage of the parasports, it focuses mainly on the Paralympic Games as the global sports event, playing the key role in the expansion of the parasports. The oncoming Games 2024 in Paris will be again groundbreaking, at least with the special Opening Ceremony outside the stadium leading more than 4000 participants from 186 delegations through the legendary and iconic monuments as "Avenue des Champs-Élysées" or "Place de la Concorde". This unprecedented vision will emphasize the values of equality or courage as this Parisian square symbolises. And what about the media presentation of Paralympic Games, are there as well some milestones? How did it change during the previous decades?

While the another studies often compare, for example, the media coverage of the Olympic and Paralympic Games or the presentation of athletes with and without disabilities on social media, the aim of this research is different. It will offer a distinct point of view, rarely used: the perspective of those who are the objects of media attention, the perspective of the Paralympic athletes. They should express if they perceive the parasports still as marginal topic, as it certainly was before, or feel now real advance; or do they agree with actual form of the media presentation of parasports and related competitions - which are the main research questions.

To let them answer, this study is based on the series of interviews as standard method in qualitative research in the media studies. The sample, at the moment drawing up, will include at least ten successful Paralympic athletes from France, Great Britain and the other European countries. All chosen respondents started at least at three Paralympic Games and won there at least one golden medal. These two conditions will secure relevant comparison and required experiences. British athletes Sarah Storey (cycling and swimming; 17 golden medals from the Paralympic Games), David Lee Pearson (equestrian; 14 golden medals) or French representative Marie-Amélie Le Fur (athletics; 3 golden medals) were already contacted to this propose.

Key Words

Parasport, Paralympic Games, Media Coverage, and Perspective of Athletes

Sports Twitter frames the Olympic Loss! Analysing discourse on Top Indian Female Athletes defeat at Tokyo Olympics 2020

Authors

Dr. Kulveen Trehan - Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University

Abstract

India was among the top five countries in social media engagement of Tokyo Olympics 2020 with the spotlight on sports women. Sports consists of “real-time events with undetermined outcomes and passionate followers,” making it “singularly well-suited for social media” (Coche 2017; Wertheim, 2011). Since global audiences could not travel to the host country due to Covid-19 and Tokyo was positioned as the gender balanced Olympics, it becomes a valid site of inquiry on social media and gender discourse. Indian contingent had sent 53 female athletes including several potential medal winners. Amidst high engagement and expectations when three leading medal hopes -Shooter Manu Bhaker, Table Tennis Player Manika Batra and Boxer Mary Kom lost at the Tokyo Olympics 2020, it sparked widespread reactions on twitter and YouTube in India. Sports Twitter in particular was abuzz with news, narratives and noise building a discourse on the individual athlete's loss and women sports in general. Within social media, sports twitter has emerged as a powerful entity due to the volume and velocity of engagement. Besides tweeting /posting on their unexpected exits/ performances, several sports journalists reacted sharply to the commentary on twitter pertaining to these sports women. Such gendered activities of sports twitter provoke an academic probe into framing of the Olympic losses of the three female athletes by social media users. It became important to know the kind of discourse being generated on social media w.r.t Indian sports women. A burst analysis of twitter on the day sportswomen lost a medal could be hugely revealing.

In mainstream media, inadequate coverage Indian sports women even during Olympics despite superlative performances has been well documented (Banerjee, & Kakade, 2016) similar to underrepresentation of women in sports across the globe (Alexander, 1994; Bernstein, 2002; Duncan and Messner, 1998; Kane and Greendorfer, 1994; King, 2007; Lee, 1992; Pedersen, 2002). Explorations reveal that Olympic coverage of women athletes in news media focus on physical appearance rather than sports skill (Bernstein, 2002; Capranica and Aversa, 2002; Eastman and Billings, 1999) and Sexualisation of sports women is a common occurrence in TV and print media, (Pappous, Marcellini, & Leseleuc, 2011). Analysis of sports blog post comments on framing women coaches by digital media shows frames like marginalization and apathy towards women much like mainstream media (Elaine 2019). Contrastingly, it is also argued that social media has the potential to empower women sportswomen to change the gendered narratives around women sports (Toffoletti & Thorpe, 2018).

This study attempts to analyse how sports twitter framed the loss of the three leading female athletes (Manu Baker, Manika Batra and Mary Kom) using Schmidt's adaptation of Gramsci

hegemonic masculinity theory (2016) and masculinity in sports , mediating misogyny by Ever Bach (2018) . In order to identify the frames used in the twitter discourse following the Olympic defeats, Social Media Critical Discourse Analysis (SMCDA) of tweets and comments on the two leading sports journalist posts after the loss and purposive sample of tweets post defeat under the hashtags #TeamIndia, #IndiaAtTokyoOlympics and #Cheer4India guided by Van Dijk's use of Fairclough's 3- dimensional framework was done. The qualitative data was submitted to NodeXL & QDA for visualization, coding, sentiment analysis and descriptive output .

This study is new and relevant as it examines data obtained from the official hashtags of Indian Olympics officials and handles of sports journalists in the context of women sports persons by adopting pathbreaking methodological intervention that combines established construct ' framing' with Social Media Critical Discourse Analysis discourse (SMCDA) on Indian sportswomen in context of a mega sporting event, Tokyo Olympics .

Key Words

Indian sportswomen ,hegemonic masculinity ,social media ,Tokyo Olympics, discourse analysis

Women journalists working in Spanish sports press: an analysis throughout FIFA Men's World Cups

Authors

Mr. Nahuel Faedo - University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia

Dr. Xavier Ginesta - University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia

Dr. Montse Corrius - University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia

Abstract

Since its inception, sports journalism has been configured as a place reserved for men in which they constantly affirm and reaffirm their masculinity (Grubb & Billiot, 2010; Pedraza Bucio, 2010). While it is true that the number of women working in sports journalism has increased, they continue to be underrepresented in almost all spheres (Abisaid & Li, 2020; Antunovic & Whiteside, 2018). Sports media maintain a certain safeguard to incorporate them into their jobs (Bernstein & Kian, 2013). As Hardin and Shain explain, women are “outsiders” under their gender, but “insiders” under their adherence to journalistic norms and values (Hardin & Shain, 2006).

In Spain, the working conditions in which women have been incorporated into the journalistic profession advise caution when referring to feminization processes that point to changes in media content (Cantón, Díez & Soriano, 2005). The environment of Spanish sports journalism is especially difficult for women to develop professionally (Ramón Vegas et al., 2020; Sainz de Baranda Andújar, 2013). In addition to the fact that there are not so many women who enter the labour field of sports journalism, those who do find themselves in a space dominated by men, which translates into perpetuating the existing imbalances in society (Gallego, 2002; Gómez Colell, 2015; Ramón Vegas et al., 2020; Salido Fernández, 2021).

The main objective of this article is to identify the longitudinal evolution (2010-2022) of the roles developed by women journalists in the Spanish sports press. To conduct our research, we performed a quantitative content analysis, specifically studying sports information published in *Marca* and *Mundo Deportivo* during the second week of June 2010, 2014 and 2018, and the third week of November 2022, all years in which the FIFA Men's World Cup was played. The selected weeks are those in which said tournament began. We decided to analyse these newspapers because they are the two oldest sports newspapers currently published in Spain: while *Mundo Deportivo* was founded in 1906, *Marca* did so in 1938. The methodology applied facilitated the identification of, for example, the frequency of women as authors, the journalistic genres of their information coverage, the number of articles published by women on the front page of newspapers, and the types of sports in which they work. We also compared the four periods studied to gain in-depth understanding on how the situation of women journalists has changed over the time analysed. The results indicate, among other things, a) women journalists have an almost invisible role as authors of articles and they suffered a regression in developing this role, b) they basically participate in information articles, and rarely in opinion articles, c) the vast majority

of front-page articles are written by male journalists, and d) articles about women's sports competitions represent a higher percentage in female journalists than in male journalists.

Key Words

sports journalism, women journalists, sports press, *Mundo Deportivo*, *Marca*, Spain

Challenging the Patriarchal Discourse in Sports Media: An Analysis of Israeli Journalists' Twitter Use

Authors

Dr. Alina Bernstein - School of Media Studies, College of Management Academic Studies (COMAS)

Dr. Haim Hagay - Kinneret College

Abstract

One consistent finding in sport media studies refers to the different coverage women's sport is given. Women are offered less coverage, and what coverage is given foregrounds their femininity over their professionalism. The rise of female journalists in the previously all-male sports section 'boys club' had little impact on any inequalities since female sports journalists adopt the thought patterns of their male peers. Despite the transformative potential digital media provide for challenging male hegemony in sports media, most of the research that exists to date does not look promising.

The fact that female journalists can have unmediated interactions with sports consumers online, has given rise to a new discursive sphere that has the potential to challenge the patriarchal hegemonic discourse dominating the sport. Previous studies (Hagay & Bernstein, 2021) looked at the different ways in which male and female journalists use Twitter. The findings indicated that despite the potential for alternative discourse, female journalists had fewer interactions with fans, were tweeting more about their personal lives, did not maintain the ethos of objectivity and provided less professional commentary than their male peers.

In this research, we used Twitter API with Academic Research Access to collect all the tweets and replies posted between 2008 and 2022 by 12 male (N=544299) and 12 female Israeli journalists (N=153177). The sample was pre-processed following standard data cleaning practices: tokenization, removing punctuations, numbers, URLs, and stop-words (Segev, 2022). The data was analyzed using R 4.2.1.

From our findings, it appeared that in the Israeli context, there are two distinctly different types of tweeters – Male and Female journalists. While the first tweet focuses on mainstream male sports and politics, the latter tweet more about female sports and ignores politics.

Hull (2017) claimed that local news broadcasters use Twitter as an extension of the stories they publish in the media. It seems that in the Israeli context this claim is relevant to individual male journalists as well - they tweet predominantly about male sports and ignore women's sports even at times of media events like the FIFA Women's World Cup. Female journalists, on the other hand, use Twitter as a tool to disseminate news about women's sports which is largely ignored by mainstream media. Our findings suggest that female journalists use Twitter to challenge the patriarchal discourse dominating sports.

Various studies have argued that online political discussions are a "gendered" environment dominated by men (Koc-Michalska et al., 2019). These claims are supported by our findings, which indicate that female journalists refrain from posting political tweets even during the week of the election.

This paper is a work in progress. By the time of the conference, we intend to study the use of emotional language, test subsamples that focus on the age and media outlet of the journalists and conduct topic analysis of national events and scandals.

Key Words

Sports Media, Journalists, Gender, Twitter

Qatar vs. Germany. An analysis of Qatari reactions to German media's discursive othering during the World Cup 2022

Authors

Prof. Carola Richter - Freie Universität Berlin

Prof. Abdulrahman Al Shami - Qatar University

Abstract

Huge sport events always create international attention. Yet, for attention-seeking countries, this is a double-edged sword as it is difficult to remain in control of the images produced by foreign journalism. Qatar is eager to boost its image and influence as a soft power internationally and hosting the Football World Cup 2022 was supposed to be a major step in this comprehensive strategy. It faced, however, strong allegations and criticism from Western countries – in particular Germany – in the run-up to and during the World Cup. Taking a postcolonial lens, we will first discuss the global negotiation of images as an asymmetrical process shaped by processes of differentiation and demarcation, by which a line is drawn between “us” and “them”. We will highlight mechanisms that shape cultural othering of a seemingly superior “West” to the “Rest” as described by Stuart Hall

Against this background of attempted strategic image enhancement and cultural othering, the aim of this paper is to 1) reconstruct the image of Qatar created in German media and public discourse and embed it into a postcolonial reading and to 2) reconstruct the perception of and reaction to these portrayals in Qatari media through a postcolonial lens.

We expected that the nature of the reactions might differ depending on the targeted publics. Therefore, we included three sets of media reaction samples: 1) media targeting mainly Qatari and Arab expatriates in Qatar (a national newspaper), 2) media targeting pan-Arab publics (Al-Jazeera Net Arabic) and 3) media targeting a Western non-Arab public (Al-Jazeera English website). We consider all three media outlets public diplomacy tools of Qatar, following Samuel-Azran's notion of a hybrid model of state broadcasting (2013, p. 1294). We analyzed opinion articles from November 1 to December 31, 2022. We used a qualitative content analysis to detect major discursive strands and lines of argumentation pertaining to an image creation of “us” vs. “them” or “ours” vs. “theirs”. We particularly paid attention on how an “us” vs. “them” was created and which kind of language, symbols and arguments were used to do this.

Images of Qatar produced in German media related to 1) its international policies as illegitimate and state constituency as authoritarian, 2) its major role as an ally of an evil FIFA and commercialization of football, 3) its cultural and geographic specifics around the phrase of “desert” and 4) its unruly human rights abuses and moral norms. In Qatari media, these images were countered by allegations of Western hypocrisy and double standards as well as moral imperialism. The paper will detail these findings and highlight the differences with regard to the respective target audiences.

Key Words

Othering, World Cup 2022, public diplomacy, image, Germany, Qatar

Use of Social Networking Platforms: Changing Patterns of Sports Journalism in Bangladesh

Authors

Ms. Tahmina Haque - The University of Queensland

Mr. Md Riasad Azim - Ekattor Media Limited

Abstract

The initial journey of sports journalism in Bangladesh was full of obstacles. Sports news was not given proper treatment in mainstream media in its early stage. But the trends of sports journalism got changed after the remarkable improvement of Cricket was seen in the last two decades. Bangladesh is recognized by the sports world through this game for its great success. The main objective of this study was to understand how the changing patterns of sports journalism are impacting social platforms in Bangladesh. This study attempts to find out the importance of using digital devices in sports journalism as well as the challenges faced by journalists in dealing with recent changes. Social Impact Theory was applied to this study. This research was carried out with mixed method approaches of survey and in-depth interview. 25 sports journalists were selected for the survey method by using random sampling for this research. Five sports journalism professionals and five social media experts were selected for the in-depth interview. The study revealed that in the last few years, social platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok have been very much popular medium for sports journalists to make their targeted groups updated about the ongoing and latest issues. This is mainly happening due to public demand as they are now having easy internet access than at the beginning of this century. This study also found that journalists who have been working in print and electronic media for a long time are now facing trouble coping with digital changes. Moreover, not only the news quality but also rather the number of likes, shares, and views have become the parameter to judge a sports reporter, which is one of the major findings.

Key Words

Social Networking Platforms, Sports Journalism, Digital Devices

The history of the Women's World Cup in its relation to media logic, economization, political instrumentalization and globalization. A comparison to men's soccer

Authors

Dr. Joerg-Uwe Nieland - University of Klagenfurt

Dr. Alexis Mirbach - LMU Munich

Abstract

World Cups are not only a fair of sport, but also mirrors of world history (Goldblatt, 2014). Yet, while there is a plethora of World Cup history publications focused on sport, there has been little research on its systematic-historical relationship to other social subfields such as media, economics, and politics (Bowman, 2019). Mirbach (2023) has used the medialization of World Cups to classify eras, elaborated, orientation and adaptation to media logic (Altheide & Snow, 1979) as well as the interrelationship with other social meta-trends such as economization and globalization.

Accordingly, the phases of the FIFA World Cups in the modern era are:

- 1982-1986 Professionalization
 - 1990-1994 Telegenization
 - 1998-2002 Commercialization
 - 2006-2014 Political-commercialization
 - 2018-2022 Authoritarian (de)globalization
- In proposed lecture, we will contrast the history of men's tournaments with the history of women's world championships and examine the categories that led to the division into the five phases for women's world championships. Continuities, as well as ruptures, become visible:
 - Women's soccer has been on the rise worldwide since the beginning of this century. Beginning in Europe and then the U.S., this triumph symbolises women's empowerment in sports and beyond (Markovits, 2019).
 - Women's soccer's visibility (Nieland, 2020), increasing attention, and popularity with audiences both in stadiums and in the media have led to politicisation. U.S. women players are vocal advocates for diversity, free speech (including against the U.S. president), and equal pay. By contrast, such positioning is becoming rarer in men's soccer.
 - In Germany, we experienced a geostrategic turning point in 2022 and the relationship between women's and men's soccer: For the first time, women achieved higher quotas at the 2022 European Championship than men did at the World Cup in Qatar.

- Another indicator of popularity is that the TV rights have been put out to bidding competition for the first time.
 - Women's soccer is growing into a business model in Europe. The advertising industry is discovering teams and players as testimonials, and the self-promotion of clubs and players is highly professional and generates a lot of attention and follow-up communication. In addition, numerous clubs in the Bundesliga (Germany), Premier League (England), Ligue 1 (France) and La Liga (Spain) have successfully established women's divisions and led women's teams to national and international success.
 - While the phases of men's soccer allow us to observe the challenge of the liberal-democratic world order, we are witnessing, the opposite development in women's soccer. The phase of authoritarian (de) globalisation into which the men's World Cups have entered with the tournaments in Russia and Qatar (Mrbach, 2023) is countered by the increasing interest in and promotion of women's soccer by politicians and civil society groups.
 - Also, the choice of hosts shows that in women's soccer, the traditional soccer continents of Europe and Latin America are much less represented than in men's soccer: 1991 China, 1995 Sweden, 1999 USA, 2003 USA, 2007 China, 2011 Germany, 2015 Canada, 2019 France; 2023 Australia/New Zealand).
 - To that end, women's soccer is a battleground in the showdown of systems. For example, Qatar established a women's national soccer team for its bid, which did not play a match after the award was made, starting in 2014.
 - In men's World Cups, women were first discovered as a business field of Fifa in 1994. From there on, Fifa issues in its technical reports the goal of attracting female audiences to the expansion of soccer. The promotion of women's soccer is also mentioned. Fifa has recognised women's soccer and has invested a billion since the 2019 World Cup in France.
- . Using the categories tested for the historiography of the men's World Cup (Mirbach, 2023), it is possible to determine similarities and differences between the developments of the men's and women's World Cups in terms of adaptations to media logic(s), the impact of economisation, and the extent of politicisation. Our category-based comparison between the development of the Men's World Cup and the Women's World Cup fills a research gap and seems especially necessary considering the importance of the World Cup for sports communication and sports policy

Key Words

Medialogic, Mediatization of Sport, Commercialization, Women's Soccer World Cups, Empowerment

A Comparative Analysis of Athletes' Use of Social Media, Sponsorships Pressure, and Mental Health Outcomes

Authors

Dr. Kim Bissell - the University of Alabama

Abstract

Since the passing of the Name, Image, Likeness law on June 20th, 2020, many eyes have turned to collegiate athletes, their use of social media and how this use could be helpful in creating a brand, marketing themselves, or representing another brand. In the professional arena, SponserUnited reported that sponsorships for female athletes grew by approximately 20% in 2022 while only increasing by 2% for male athletes. While those in the industry note this is optimistic for female athletes moving forward, disparities still exist in opportunities afforded to female vs male athletes as well as the different ways athletes have to represent themselves to garner sponsorship deals. While significant academic literature has noted the differences in mediated representations of male vs female athletes and athletics, significantly less is known about the way athletes choose to self-represent on social media platforms. Several unanswered questions remain regarding the pressure they feel to maintain a social media presence that would make them most marketable for sponsorships and branding deals. One question this study seeks to address is how much, if at all, does athlete self-representation differ between male and female athletes.

Multiple scholars have further noted that sports in general represent a highly gendered space where masculine hegemony prevails (Adams & Tuggle, 2004) and where hypermasculinity and traditional gender norms are often reflected. What remains unknown is how much these gender norms relate to sponsorship deals and how much sponsorships may have changed athletes' social media use behaviors. The other factor that is seemingly overlooked from an empirical perspective is how or if athlete's mental health is threatened by having to maintain the status of athlete while concurrently working to get followers, sponsorships, and likes to their respective social media platforms.

The underlying study questions are: 1) Did social media use change for collegiate athletes after the NIL legislation was passed? 2) How do collegiate and professional athletes represent themselves on social media via the posting of performance and appearance-related photos? 3) Does the type of sport—masculine vs feminine--and athlete gender relate to changes in the way athletes self-represent? 4) Do athletes struggling with mental health reflect that in social media content they post?

The present project is a case study of collegiate and professional athletes in similar sports. Self-representation theory is considered the phenomenal consciousness whereby three types of self are considered: the material self, the social self, and the spiritual self. For the purposes of the present study, the characteristics of the social self will be explored and examined via the analysis of the way athletes choose to self-represent themselves to the public across social media platforms.

An in-depth content analysis of the athletes' Instagram and TikTok posts will be conducted to look at the quantity and quality of the photos/videos/reels and text to identify the attributes relied on the most by gender and by sport. News and popular press articles will be used to identify how much, if at all, athletes disclosed mental health issues via other platforms and channels.

Key Words

athletes, social media, branding, sponsorship, mental health, self-representation

Drawing and redrawing the boundary of Chinese collective: Analyze the idolization of the naturalized athlete Eileen Gu

Authors

Ms. Xiaoyu Zhang - Erasmus university Rotterdam

Dr. Delia Dumitrica - Erasmus University Rotterdam

Prof. Jeroen Jansz - Erasmus university Rotterdam

Abstract

This paper focuses on how the state actors promote nationalism by constructing Eileen Gu, a US-born naturalized athlete who won the gold medals for China during the 2022 Winter Olympics, as a national idol, and how the netizens renegotiate the national identity and redraw the boundary of being Chinese by reinforcing or resisting the idolization of Eileen Gu. With purposive sampling, 1129 hottest posts in total from 36 out of 410 Weibo trending topics (time span: December 2020 to December 2022) and 100 hottest answers in total from the ten hottest topics on Zhihu, a Chinese Q&A platform similar to Quora, are used as the sample for data analysis. After translating the Chinese posts into English and anonymizing the individual users to make posts less traceable, the researcher employs thematic analysis and critical discourse analysis to examine these posts. The research finds that: Firstly, during and after the Winter Olympics, the state actors legitimize the naturalization and idolization of Eileen Gu by celebrating Eileen Gu's excellence in the 2022 Winter Olympics, her popularity among both ordinary people and celebrities, her acculturation of Chinese culture (eg. Chinese food, language, Chinese lifestyle, and Chinese growth background), and her elitist Chinese ancestry. Eileen Gu is constructed as an excellent, well-rounded, nice, and patriotic idol by both state actors and her fans. Secondly, idolization and nationalism are articulated by state discourse and mutually reinforced in this case: Nationalism is deployed to construct Eileen Gu as a national idol; Meanwhile, the idolization of Eileen Gu is instrumental for the state actors to inspire nationalism among Chinese people and brand China to international audiences, as what EG favored and did, especially her acculturation to Chineseness, attracts intensive media exposure. Thirdly, the attitudes towards Eileen Gu change with the social actors involved in the discussion, the time period, and the social media platform. Different social actors also use different forms of nationalism and different mechanisms of discursive legitimation to legitimize or delegitimize the idolization of Eileen Gu. Civic nationalism and ethnocultural forms of nationalism dominate the seemingly playful state discourse regarding the discussion on Eileen Gu. However, netizens also embrace civic nationalism and ethnocultural forms of nationalism to reinforce or resist the idolization of Eileen Gu. Those (mainly from Weibo) who support Eileen Gu emphasize her winning gold medals for China and her inspiring Chinese youth; while those (mainly from Zhihu) who resist the idolization of Eileen Gu emphasize her exotic appearance and foreign ancestry, suspect her dual citizenship and her loyalty to China, criticize her as an opportunist who caters to official nationalism to earn money, and frame her as a privileged who is distant from

ordinary Chinese people. However, both support and criticism towards Eileen Gu are constrained by the socio-political circumstances where anti-US propaganda perpetuates their daily news consumption and anti-US discourse becomes the “politically correct”.

Key Words

Chinese nationalism, digital nationalism, sports, national identity, idolization

Explore the factors influencing e-sports online viewership: the mediating role of attitude and the moderating role of team identification

Authors

Mr. Minlong Shi - Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Abstract

Background

With the expansion of the e-sports market in recent years and the tremendous impact of COVID-19 on offline e-sports event attendance, watching e-sports events online through live streaming platforms has become more and more critical for the development of the entire e-sports and game industry.

Literature Review

Previous research on e-sports viewing intentions has three limitations. To begin with, they greatly neglected the close connection between e-sports research and specific social contexts. The research mainly focused on western society, and little is known about the e-sports game viewers in China. The scholars also failed to reach a consensus on understanding and explaining the mechanisms of how viewing motivations could be transformed into viewing intention. Meanwhile, previous studies have also been limited by specific theoretical frameworks, such as the theory of reasoned action, and therefore ignored the significant influence of some other factors, such as past viewing satisfaction and team identification.

Research Questions

To fill these gaps, this study examines if and how the motivations, subjective norms, attitude, past viewing satisfaction, and team identification are related to viewing intentions based on the theory of reasoned action, especially among Chinese esports event viewers. We also seek to understand the specific mechanisms of attitude and team identification, which should have been examined widely in the context of e-sports events spectatorship. In brief, the research questions are as follows:(1) In China, which motivation could influence e-sports game viewers' online viewing attitude? (2) Under the circumstance of viewing esports games online, how are these factors associated with future viewing intention? Does team identification moderate the relationship between past viewing satisfaction and future viewing intention? Does viewing attitude mediate the relationship between motivations, past viewing satisfaction and future viewing intention respectively?

Hypothesis

The motivations in our research model are based on prior research and take the characteristics of e-sports games into account. It is said that the online viewing motivation of e-sports should be regarded as the combination of traditional sports events consumption motivation and new media

consumption motivation (Seo & Jung, 2016). Qian et al. (2020) developed the Motivation Scale of Esports Spectatorship (MSES) to tackle the idiosyncrasies associated with esports online spectatorship. By integrating the classic Motivation Scale for Sport Consumption (Trail & James, 2001) and MSES, seven motivations are selected from them, which are: (1) Skill improvement, (2) Vicarious achievement, (3) Knowledge, (4) Escapism, (5) Entertainment, (6) Socialization, (7) Friend bonding. We assumed that these motivations, subjective norm, and past viewing satisfaction were positively related to viewing attitude. We also hypothesized that past viewing satisfaction, attitude, subjective norm, and team identification were positively related to viewing intention. The mediating role of attitude and the moderating role of team identification was anticipated.

Results

Through a survey of 452 Chinese online e-sports game viewers, we find that skill improvement, entertainment and friend bonding positively influence viewing attitude, while socialization negatively influence viewing attitude. In addition, viewers' attitude toward watching e-sports games online and past viewing satisfaction positively influence their online viewing intention. Finally, it is found that viewing attitude partially mediates the relationship between past viewing satisfaction and future viewing intentions, while team identification has a significant negative moderating effect on the relationship between past viewing satisfaction and future viewing intentions.

Conclusion

The apparent difference between the Chinese and Western motivations for watching e-sports game online is that a previous related study (Xiao, 2020) has shown a strong link between escapism and viewing attitude, yet this study indicates that there is no significant relationship between escapism and viewing attitudes. Perhaps this is because in recent years, with the improvement of the e-sports industry, esports has also received proper reputation and rational reflection in China, and social perception has shifted from prejudice to acceptance. Online esports game viewers recognize the entertainment value of watching e-sports and its value in maintaining social relationships in reality. However, the significant negative relationship between socialization and viewing attitudes also shows that the imagined friendly social environment has not come true, at least on e-sports game live platforms and chatting rooms, probably due to the prevalence of extreme fan culture within the e-sports games. Last but not least, the negative moderating role of team identification on the relationship between past viewing satisfaction and future viewing intention indicates that those much more loyal fans may prefer supporting their favorite teams by watching the games offline rather than online.

Key Words

e-sports, viewing motivation, viewing attitude, viewing intention, team identification

When 'Steel Roses' are in bloom: A feminist critical discourse analysis of discussion about China women's national football team on Weibo

Authors

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Abstract

Introduction: Football is a powerful masculine expression of national capabilities and potentialities, constituting a symbolic and practical male arena for national pride. In China, the men's national football team always makes their supporters feel shame because of their disappointing performances. On the contrary, Chinese people nicknamed their women's national football team 'Steel Roses' for their glorious achievements. To some extent, women's participation in competitive football has altered gender relations in China. Sportswomen's success has undoubtedly improved their personal gender circumstances and raised expectations of gender equality in still-conservative Chinese society. Therefore, using Weibo discussion on the Chinese women's national team's 2022 Asian Cup championship as a case study, our research is to examine whether gender prejudice and consequent institutionalized discrimination have improved along with the excellent performance of the Chinese women's football team.

Research method: To understand public sentiment about China's women's football team winning the Asia Cup, we conduct a feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA), which uses a feminist paradigm of sociolinguistic inquiry to investigate the (re)production of gender hierarchy in the discursive realm.

Findings: Weibo discussion about women's football in China reflect dominant gender ideologies prevailing in Chinese society. We designate four main themes that emerged through our analysis which are a) pride for the country and its people, b) a part of national achievements, c) satirizing poor performance of China men's national team, and d) the inspiration for women.

Conclusion: To some extent, the success of the Chinese women's football team, as well as 'traditional sports patriotism' and 'contemporary sports pragmatism' in China, have elevated women's status in this sport, but the hegemonic masculinity of football in China has not changed. The satirical discourse on men's football has once again reinforced male dominance in this field. Despite its proud success, Chinese women's football has still not escaped the destiny of the male gaze. Our findings demonstrate that Chinese soccer culture is a space of masculine dominance, where men's visions of asymmetrical gender power relations are discursively negotiated and rationalized.

Key Words

China; Women's football; FCDA; Masculinity

The Othered Othering the Other: Reflections on South African News Media Representing the Qatari World Cup

Authors

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Abstract

Football, the beautiful game, is not only a cause for recreation and entertainment. Football works in intricate ways to mediatize and conscientize publics about pressing issues and topical political melting pots of the day: racism, gender politics, wars, and manifolded molds of discrimination and othering. Conversely, what happens when the purportedly unifying game vehemently bolsters discourses that other, provincialize and marginalize? In 2010, Qatar, the tiny oil-rich Arab nation won the 2022 rights to host the most illustrious sporting competition on earth, much to the disdain and skepticism culminating from the West and the “rest”. Global rejection underscored the country’s non-existent footballing culture, infrastructural non-preparedness, and ecological unsuitability. Closer into its hosting moment multiple reports mushroomed questioning its alleged poor human rights record. Qatar, like South Africa, has endured delegitimization and peripheral framing through Western media representation; often deemed incompetent to host a World Cup worthy of watching. Qatar’s discrediting tethered on issues of value, where it appeared Western values, representationally and existentially, assumed greater humanity than values Islamic. Western-Imperialist news has from time immemorial gazed at Africa and the Arab world from the underside and/or the othered side. The scope of this paper draws its interest into what implications obtain when the othered subject others the other. Towards this end, the paper engages select online sourced newspaper articles, from South African newspaper mediums, to gauge how Qatar has been represented as prospective host and at the aftermath of staging what many commentators pitted to be the World Cup *par excellence*. Through a thematic ideological discourse analysis coupled with a systematic content analysis the paper sifts how South African English media represented Qatar. Evidence shows that Western Imperialistic notions protruding for South African news representations of Qatar, demonstrated that globalized Eurocentric values are glocalised and naturalized. This speaks back to the skewed ownership patterns, often perpetuating self-negation and self-alienation. This then begs the pertinent question: Do we really have African Media, or merely Media in Africa?

Key Words

Othering, Qatar, South Africa, World Cup, Globalisation, African Media

Re-branding a Country? Communication Strategies around Sport Mega-events in KSA and Their Impact on Nation Branding

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Abstract

Background:

Over the past 6 years, massive structural changes in Saudi Arabia ushered in a new leadership and a new political direction with the pronouncement of 'Vision 2030' in early 2016. As part of this, the government sought to challenge and address the negative perceptions of Saudi Arabia internationally; one of the first steps of these nation branding endeavours was the establishment of the Ministry of Sport and focusing on so called 'mega-events' and related communication strategies, which haven't happened in Saudi Arabia before.

Problem:

While the reformative impetus behind these actions is well known, the reach and impact of these mega-events with regards to their efficacy in re-branding the country image of KSA has not been studied so far – nor have the communication strategies around these events been studied, evaluated, and reflected on from a professional and academic perspective.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is two-fold. The first aim is to explore the communication strategies around the mega-events in KSA and thus to follow the professional concepts behind these events to explore how much this specific form of sports communication is also directed towards nation branding. The second aim is to explore if and how (much) mega-sport-events are impacted by or impact similar communication strategies in the areas of investments, tourisms, and culture to explore integrated and holistic forms of strategic communication.

Significance:

This project contributes to the field of strategic sports communication and the body of knowledge around nation branding. Simultaneously, this research carries potential practical implications for policy and strategy development at a governmental level.

Key Concepts:

Nation branding, sport mega-events, strategic communication, public diplomacy and country's image and reputation.

Theoretical framework:

To investigate the relationship between the influence of mega-events and the image of Saudi Arabia, this study will combine multiple theories from different disciplines that all explain the same phenomenon from different perspectives. The primary theories are the four-dimensional (4D) models of a country's image from the communication and public relations perspective (Buhmann & Ingenhoff, 2014), the competitive identity framework from the perspective of nation branding (Anholt, 2007), and the four models of public relations (Grunig and Hunt, 1984) which are complemented by the public diplomacy concept (Grunig, 1993). By integrating these theories, a new and unique framework to explore sports communication in nation branding strategies will be developed to address the research questions.

Method:

A qualitative methodological approach is chosen in order to address the research questions sufficiently. To explore existing communication strategies and evaluate their 'integrative' and 'holistic' character as well their impact, a (1) series of semi-structured expert interviews with communication experts and officials at several Saudi Arabian government entities like the Ministry of Sport in Saudi Arabia (to provide information on existing communication strategies and objectives) will be complemented by a (2) qualitative content analysis of the communication reports on past events. The results from the interviews will be presented at the conference in 2023.

Findings / Outlook:

The first insights from the explorative study show that Mega Spot Events do have the potential to create new associations with a country and thus diversify the nation's image; however, next to diversification there is a second effect that can be observed which has been categorized as paradox - because the more a certain nation image is communicatively constructed through and related to a sport event, the more it is open for critique and the political, cultural and social situation in this country to be questioned. For the conference, these findings will be further supported with additional data and findings.

Key Words

mega-sports event, nation branding, reputation, intercultural communication, strategic communication, campaigning

The sporting mega-event discourse under COVID-19 pandemic: An observation on curation and transmission of values on Weibo before the Opening of the Beijing Winter Olympics

Authors

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Abstract

In keeping with the IAMCR Lyon 23 conference theme of Inhabiting the planet: Challenges for media, communication and beyond, this paper focuses on the generation and transmission process of values on social media around sporting mega-event in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics was chose as a typical case, and the relevant discourse from Chinese social media users also present the special character.

The study tries to draw on social semiotic theoretical resources, taking the social media platform 'Weibo' as a representative. We argue that discourse on social media is treated as a broad social practice through which people can exchange information and services, manifest social structures, confirm status and roles, and generate shared knowledge and value systems. We intend to explore the deep values in users' discourses based on the social semiotics framework including the ideational functions, interpersonal functions and textual function.

The study crawls through the text of Weibo users' posts for the whole year before the opening of the Beijing Winter Olympics and obtains 15,859 valid data and the following LDA topic modeling is performed to detect the mainstream values. We also use Gephi for social network analysis and social semantic network analysis to present the values' transmission processes generated from users including media, political celebrities, stars and fans.

We find that the mainstream values from users represented by 'patriotism' 'family protection' 'obedience' and 'peace' around the Beijing Winter Olympics. These values are widely distributed, long-lasting but also unstable, and show characteristics of being easily transformed with traffic as well as easily hooked up and disconnected. Users' expressions are not entirely positive discourses of expectation, but equally contain story curation of regret and anger. In the process of generation, values tend to go through the stage of 'generating evaluation' 'negotiating purpose' and 'gaining legitimacy', with the communication nodes represented by opinion leaders and celebrity artists playing an obvious role.

Key Words

value, Beijing Winter Olympics, COVID-19 pandemic, social semiotics, sporting mega-event

It Is Mostly About Football And Ice Hockey. Contribution to Discussion of Gender and Newsworthiness in Sports

Authors

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Abstract

While men and women live together on this planet, their representation in media is not the same. There has been an ongoing problem with a gender gap in sports media coverage. The prioritization of male sports has not changed despite recent efforts. Women's sports are underrepresented in media content, including sports news (Antunovic & Hardin, 2013; Bradshaw & Minogue, 2019; Bruce & Hardin, 2016, etc.). The distorted mediated reality further influences the status of women's sports.

Holger Ihle (2022) recently studied this phenomenon from the perspective of news values and newsworthiness. He described how male and female events depicted in the news media do not differ in the news factors; however, the extent and prominence of the coverage of female sports is lower.

Based on a hypothesis that the described situation may differ in various sports, I performed a quantitative news values content analysis of top sports news published in 2021 in a sample of Czech media, including television, online, and print media. Women's sports events were again generally underrepresented in top stories in these media.

A new perspective opens when the news factors are analyzed in more detail and divided for different sports. While for the most prominent Czech sports, football and ice hockey, the news factors are different for male and female sports news in the analyzed sample, for other sports, including tennis or biathlon, as other representatives of popular spectator sports in the Czech Republic, the news values are mostly analogical.

The results show that the severity of gender gap in sports news differs for different sports. The overall low newsworthiness of female sports can be attributed to the specific role of several high-profile sports, especially football and ice hockey. On the other hand, they represent a large majority of news content in Czech sports media.

In the discussion, the inertia in the mediatization of football and ice hockey becomes one of the significant obstacles to equalizing the media representation of male and female sports. At the same time, the game of tennis can be understood as an example of the progress made in the news selection processes, despite still lacking equality in image construction of male and female athletes (Konjer et al., 2019).

Key Words

sports journalism, news values, newsworthiness, gender