This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis Group in *European Sport Management Quarterly* on 11 Jan 2021, available online: http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/16184742.2020.1871394.

Abstract

***Research question**:* This paper aims to investigate the ways in which value is disrupted in contemporary football fandom, in a context of increasing commercialisation and marketisation. Focusing on football fans' perceptions of value across platforms, this research explores how negative experiences are compensated to recover value.

***Research methods**:* The study adopts a multi-method triangulation approach, using an online discussion forum and in-depth interviews. The sampling frame consists of football fans (Stage 1 n=20, Stage 2 n=20) and participants engaging in fandom activities across a variety of platforms and spheres.

***Results and findings**:* Perceptions of value among football fans and how it may be disrupted relates to a number of factors, for example, when actors are considered to be "locked out" of physical platforms within joint value co-creation spheres (e.g. stadiums). Fans show that they can compensate to deal with disruptions and recover value for themselves as well as other fan actors on different platforms. Importantly, this study develops an understanding of why fans are not always consistent in their actor role/s.

Implications: From a sport management perspective, understanding football fandom using this lens is important, as it explains not only how customer-to-customer value co-creation can be facilitated, but also how value recovery can be individually and collectively compensated. Ways in which the level of participation in the football market can be managed are proposed, as well as suggestions for how key factors known to compensate experiences can be differentially communicated across a diversified target audience.

Keywords: football fandom, value co-creation, disruption, value co-destruction, value recovery

How Value is Disrupted in Football Fandom, and How Fans Respond

The role and significance of football fandom has been established, not only in relation to the commercial success[1] of the football market[2], but also through how fans co-create and experience value (Uhrich, 2014; Woratschek, Horbel, & Popp, 2014). Conversely, perceived changes to the way in which fans are able to support their team, including: rising ticket prices, inconvenient and irregular kick-off times, as well as "sanitising" match atmospheres (Hill, Canniford, & Millward, 2016; Millward, 2011), can also cause disruption for fans and may lead them to disengage from, or as suggested by Healy & McDonagh (2013) in extreme cases, exit the market. These examples of a disconnect between expectations and experience are examined here by considering how UK football fans respond when value is disrupted.

Consumer perceived value and its influence on consumer behaviour is now a significant focus for sport management research (Uhrich, 2014). Value produced in a football context can be created through numerous dimensions including team success, player performance, camaraderie but importantly this value can similarly be created on different platforms e.g. stadium, in pubs (Weed, 2008) or on fan forums (Healy & McDonagh, 2013). Uhrich (2014) differentiates between different types of platforms and observes that co-creation of value can take place, in the stadium (a physical and joint platform), at home with friends (a physical and customer platform), reading an official online forum (a virtual and joint platform) and engaging on an independent

[1] In the last decade, the total market revenue for European professional football has increased from 13.6 billion euros in 2006 to 28.4 billion euros in 2018 (Statista, 2019).

[2] We define the football market as the space in which commercial exchanges take place between different stakeholders including but not limited to fans, clubs, players, sponsors, media partners and governing bodies

fan forum (a virtual and customer platform).Value co-creation involves multiple stakeholders, directly or indirectly, engaged in processes working together at various stages to create value (Horbel, Popp, Woratschek & Wilson, 2016; Sheth & Uslay, 2007; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). While much existing research on value focuses on value creation that benefits actors, attention has recently turned to how value can be diminished. This has been referred to as value no-creation (Makkonen & Olkkonen, 2017), value diminution (Vafeas, Hughes & Hilton, 2016) as well as value co-destruction (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Plé & Cáceres, 2010; Järvi, Kähkönen & Torvinen, 2018; Prior & Marcos-Cuevas, 2016; Smith, 2013; Stieler, Weismann, & Germelmann, 2014). However, as value is an outcome that is multidimensional, value disruption recognises that value creation consists of positive experiences that can compensate for negative ones.

While attention has been given to value co-creation in football fandom (Uhrich, 2014; Woratschek, Horbel, & Popp, 2014), there has been less focus on disruptive processes that may result in negative value outcomes or value recovery in sport management research. This work recognises that value formation in a variety of contexts is not always an equitable experience for all the actors involved. Such negative value outcomes may risk consumers' reduced engagement from the market (Leo & Zainuddin, 2017), potentially harm well-being (Plé & Cáceres, 2010), as well as damage brands (Lund, Scarles, & Cohen, 2019). As there is a lack of a universally agreed definition of well-being (Mansfield, Daykin & Kay, 2020), we consider well-being as, "the condition of being contented, healthy or successful" (Harpercollins, 2016).

Positive and negative value outcomes are not mutually exclusive and can occur concurrently in the same experience (Carù & Cova, 2015). Compensation of experiences or "trade-offs" can also occur in response to value being disrupted (Prior & Marcos-Cuevas, 2016).

Importantly, while actors can be involved in disruptive practices, they may actually be seeking a positive outcome (Parmentier & Fischer, 2014). Indeed, those engaging in such processes may be appealing to other actors to re-align resources to meet their expectations of a more positive outcome. For example, sports fans who complain about ticket prices may actually be appealing to clubs to reconsider their pricing strategy.

While scholars have focused on understanding value co-creation in sport management (Uhrich, 2014; Woratschek et al., 2014), researchers have not yet explicitly looked at actor perceptions, actor inter-relationships and how fans may compensate if their value is disrupted during their sport fandom experience. Actors in a football context include owners, directors, governing bodies, commercial partners, coaches, players, community partners and fans who all contribute to the co-creation of value. The roles performed by these actors are asymmetric; stakeholders have different motivations and complex relationships with each other which means that they may engage with, experience and perceive value and how it is created, in different ways.

Therefore, research to help understand value processes and outcomes is strategically important, as this is key to building and maintaining relationships with those engaging in a co-creation process, and can ultimately lead to the long-term success or decline of an (sporting) organisation. The study aims to answer the following research questions using a two stage qualitative study among football fans of teams in the English Premier League (EPL) and Scottish Premiership (SP):

(RQ1) How and in what ways do football fans perceive value disruption as an outcome of value co-creation processes across different platforms?

(RQ2) How do football fans respond to and compensate when value is disrupted?

The remainder of this article is structured as follows. Extant literature on value, sport and football fandom is reviewed in the next two sections. This is followed by the methods employed to address the research questions. The findings illustrate football fans' varying perceptions of value, factors relating to how value may be disrupted, how they compensate negative experiences and why fans are not always consistent in their actor roles. Finally, theoretical and managerial implications are discussed and suggestions for further research are provided.

Value in sport management

Woratschek et al., (2014) recognise that sport organisations cannot create value independently and suggest that because sport is unique in its value proposition it requires specific attention. In conceptualising a Sports Value Framework (SVF), Woratschek et al. (2014) indicate that to understand value propositions there ought to be a consideration of the intra level (e.g., issues within a group), the micro level (e.g., relationships between actors) as well as the meso level (e.g., the entire network of actors involved in in value co-creation). However, they note that focusing on the intra and/or micro level can help gain "a profound understanding of value co-creation processes from a particular actor's perspective" (p. 15), and acknowledge that the influence of consumers on the value co-creation of sport events requires further investigation. While Uhrich (2014) offers a typology of customer-to-customer value co-creation platforms in team sports, which takes account of internal and external resources as well as distinguishing between physical and virtual platforms, he also calls for further research to understand how team sports consumers influence each other's value perceptions. As Horbel et al. (2016) note, value co-creation is "heavily dependent on the context in which spectators experience the sport event" (p. 511) and existing studies have selected specific contexts and platforms to explore value (Popp

et al., 2016; Stieler et al., 2014). However, it is unlikely that fans will build their expectations and experiences in only one context or on one platform.

Different value processes and outcomes have been tentatively explored in sport management. For example, Stieler et al. (2014) examined the concept of value co-destruction produced by spectators in silent protest against security measures at live football matches. Highlighting the "negative deviation from the expected enhancement of well-being", Stieler et al. (2014, p. 72) illustrate the impact of actors not performing their supporting role by cheering at football games, therefore demonstrating how the football experience changes without the atmosphere fans create in a stadium. Identifying five different types of spectators, Stieler et al. (2014) observe that the creation of value for one actor can destroy value for another. However, their study considered only value relating to stadium atmosphere, and because fans are not a homogenous group, they call for further research to consider value as an interactional and multi-dimensional construct. That is, it is likely that other factors may influence value for sports fans, such as camaraderie. However, this remains largely unexplored.

How value can be disrupted in football fandom

Scholars are increasingly focusing on negative value processes and outcomes. Work in this area considers how in a variety of contexts that expectations, resources, services or experiences are misaligned, misused, or misappropriated, and the ways in which consumers and other stakeholders may experience devaluation through the consumption process (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Plé & Cáceres, 2010; Zainuddin & Gordon, 2020). Studies in this area have focused on a range of contexts including public transport (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011), advertising agencies (Vafeas et al., 2016), leisure (Carù & Cova, 2015), and the aerospace industry (Prior & Marcos-Cuevas, 2016). These studies have offered useful insight into different

types of resource loss (Smith, 2013) as well as demonstrating varying degrees of ways in which value can be diminished, or destroyed (Makkonen & Olkkonen, 2017; Plé & Cáceres, 2010; Vafeas et al., 2016). Such phenomena are considered to be an interactional process, but one in which the well-being of an actor(s) is diminished.

Negative value outcomes can be related to procedures, expectations, understandings and engagement with practices (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011). This can be as a result of actors using different principles to interpret or articulate information, displaying disappointment regarding information given by other actors, or when societal/normative codes are not followed by actors. Difficulties in managing negative value processes and outcomes have been observed, and it has been noted that consumers do not exhibit predictable behaviour in their actor role/s (Prior & Marcos-Cuevas, 2016). This is important as processes and experiences of value that lead to negative outcomes can cause consumers to disengage in varying degrees from the market, harm well-being, and damage brands (Leo & Zainuddin, 2017; Lund et al., 2019; Plé & Cáceres, 2010).

Football is a sport in which actors are likely to engage in value co-creation activities. Extant studies have illustrated the social and experiential nature of fandom as well as the social integration, social actualisation and social coherence of being a fan (Wann, Tucker, & Schrader, 1996; Wann & Weaver, 2009). These social connections are known to facilitate well-being. The co-creation of such experiences, however, could be negatively impacted by the perception of unmet fan expectations (Hill et al., 2016), potentially leading to value being disrupted. Furthermore, while one group of fans could perceive value processes and outcomes in a positive way, other fans may have negative perceptions. One example is increasing fan tourism which prices out local fans but creates value for overseas fans travelling to games (Taylor, 2015).

Another example relates to sponsorship. In 2019 Derby County FC signed Wayne Rooney and issued him with the squad number 32, representative of gambling firm 32Red, which is the club's major sponsor. It transpired that 32Red had co-funded the signing and Rooney's wages in return for the sponsorship opportunity. Some Derby fans were positive about signing such a well-known player, while others including fans, MPs, and even the Church of England, protested in the press and on social media the questionable ethics of the deal (Sigsworth, 2019). This illustrates that perceptions of whether value is disrupted, and to what extent this occurs, may differ for football fans. Consequently, this study focuses on: football fans' experiences and perceptions of value, how value may be disrupted across different physical and virtual platforms, as well as the ways in which football fans can compensate negative experiences to recover value.

Method and Data Collection

We adopted a qualitative multi-method approach, enabling us to triangulate data to address our research questions, as this increases the credibility of data through testing consistency in responses from multiple sources (Patton, 2015). Using an online forum (active across a week) and in-depth interviews, we were able, (i) to develop an understanding of fandom experiences by considering what factors contributed to perceptions of value across different platforms and, (ii) to explore if "trade-offs" between positive and negative experiences influence perceived value. Themes identified in the discussion forum were then used to support the development of the interview questions. While each of our methods has limitations, together they can offer greater insight (Barker, Nancarrow, & Spackman, 2001). A narrative analysis was adopted here to gain comprehensive insight into the experiences and perceptions of football fans.

Stage 1: discussion forum

Twenty football fans from across the UK were recruited using a market research agency to generate a purposive sample (see Table 1). Using the Hunt, Bristol, and Bashaw (1999, p. 440) definition of a sports fan as an "enthusiastic devotee of some particular sports consumptive object" and the Hirt, Zillmann, Erickson, and Kennedy (1992, p. 725) definition of fandom as "an affiliation in which a great deal of emotional significance and value are derived from group membership," we ensured the participants were fans as opposed to spectators. The online discussion was active across a week with new topics introduced daily to maintain interest. Topics included: "The Times they are a Changing: Positive and Negative Aspects of Modern Sports," "What Aspects of Modern Football do you Dislike?" "Football Fandom as an Emotional Experience," "Football Fandom as a Community Event," and "Bonding and Belonging." Respondents could use private messaging to avoid publicly discussing personal or sensitive issues. In total (including private messaging) there were over 300 posts. While the topic generated sufficient interest in order that football fans could discuss/agree/contradict one another, the discussion was guided by the researchers in a similar way to a focus group discussion (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014) to facilitate in-depth responses from all participants.

[Table 1 near here]

Stage 2: in-depth interviews

Stage two was designed to further explore actor experiences and perceptions and to assess the consistency of the earlier phase of data collection. This involved 20 in-depth narrative interviews with football fans (see Table 2) from two teams (Liverpool and Everton) in the EPL both based in the city of Liverpool, and two teams (Celtic and Rangers) in the SP both based in the city of Glasgow. These teams were chosen as they are clubs with long histories and established traditions, and are also known for their rivalry meaning that fan discussion of their

teams regarding value would be more likely to reference the opposition fans, teams, owners, managers and players. In this way, the data collected would be integrated and cohesive. The participants were resident across the UK and Ireland and a snowballing technique, previously used in sport research (Beedie, 2007), was employed to generate a purposive sample. We similarly ensured the interviewees were football fans as opposed to spectators using the definitions outlined above. Interviews were conducted using face-to-face online technology and were recorded with permission of the participants. All data was subsequently transcribed.

[Table 2 near here]

The in-depth interviews were semi structured and in three parts. Building on the themes idenitifed in the discussion forum, firstly, participants were asked to chart how they became a football fan, how they expressed their fandom behaviour, the platforms (physical and virtual) where their fandom activities took place, as well as individual and collective benefits/drawbacks of being a football fan of their particular team. Secondly, participants were encouraged to reflect on how they felt about “modern” football generally and how football and related expectations and experiences had changed during the time they had been a football fan. Finally, actors with a potential role in process and outcomes where value may be disrupted were considered in turn by the interviewees. This is because it was anticipated that the different actors, including club owners, players, managers, local community, fans of the same football team as well as fans of opposing teams would influence perceptions of value. Participants were also offered the opportunity to add anything to the discussion that they felt was relevant but had not been covered during the interview. The average length of the interviews was 55 minutes and data collection was sufficient to ensure saturation (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

Participants were informed that they could withdraw from each study at any time. The respondents were given a monetary voucher to recompense them for their time and contribution. This was based on the approaches identified by Dickert and Grady (1999) and reflected what seemed reasonable as well as the demands on the participant.

Data analysis

Using the methods outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1990), open, axial and selective coding was manually employed: (i) to examine the similarities and differences in the responses using the constant comparison method to question the phenomena reflected in the data, (ii) to give special attention to the context and interactions among actors on singular attributes and, (iii) to select the main story underlying the analysis. Each researcher independently coded the data which was both deductive (based on theory) and inductive (seeking emerging themes). Following Smith and McGannon (2019), a critical friend approach was adopted to encourage reflexivity on "the multiple and alternative explanations and interpretations as they emerged in relation to the data and writing" (p. 113).

Further, the authors brought different perspectives to the analysis and interpretation, and each independently looked for commonality in interpretation through discussion. We consider qualitative research as a holistic process and the methods employed here are considered to be interrelated. As such, data from the mixed methods are integrated with a thorough consideration of the potentially diverse interpretations (Patton, 2015). The data has been interpreted to establish how and in what ways football fans experience and perceive value and how trade-offs influence fans' perceptions of value processes and outcomes. This interpretation was developed as a result of the relationship between emerging insights and prior assumptions (Spiggle, 1994).

Findings

The findings are explored here in two parts. Firstly, factors that influence football fans' perceptions of value, and what causes individual and collective perceptions of value to be disrupted, are considered. Secondly, the ways in which participants compensate negative experiences to recover value are identified. This is followed by an exploration of self-conflict associated with perceptions of value disruption, which offers an explanation of why there is difficulty in managing consumer perceptions of value. Exemplar quotes are presented in Table 3 with illustrative excerpts from participants included throughout the findings.

[Table 3 near here]

Factors relating to how value may be disrupted

Fan perceptions of how value may be disrupted primarily reflect the following factors: brand logos (sponsor), financial management, commercialisation, team success, access to players, off-field player behaviour, rivalry, match outcome and reciprocity among actors (see Table 3). As expected, fans varied in their fandom activities (Uhrich, 2014) and their engagement on and across platforms differed in intensity. For example, while Nigel (Everton FC Fan, Interview) reveals, "I purposely moved house in order to be closer to Goodison Park," Scott comments that, "[Being a fan] barely takes up any of my time to be honest, when there's a game on I'll listen to it, but outside of that I'm not super involved" (Scott, Celtic FC Fan, Interview). Further, the platform on which fandom was experienced could be temporal as explained by Laura:

> I probably feel more involved now, for a number of different reasons. I moved away from home for a while, so that was hard, but I still was actively supporting Celtic, watching games and wearing my shirts. I think now [having moved back to Glasgow] I can put a bit more time and invest more money into actually going to games.

Laura, Celtic FC Fan, Interview

This supports previous research (Tinson, Sinclair, & Kolyperas, 2017), which shows the role of the fan as an actor in the football market is not fixed and is often dependent on life stage transitions affecting consumer behaviour. However, when access to a physical platform is not possible, there was evidence that fans attempted to create links between platforms at an intra-level and create value for other actors (Uhrich, 2014). For example, for fans like William (Rangers FC Fan, Interview), who are sometimes physically unable to attend games, technology offers a solution to co-create value with those fans not in the stadium: "I've got a WhatsApp group with my pals, you know what's happening, they're at the game." In this way, value was shared beyond the platform on which it was principally experienced, and an effort was made by other fans to include those who temporarily could not be present in the stadium.

Fans perceive that value can be disrupted when there is lack of access to stadiums, which are a physical platform within a joint value co-creation sphere. Maureen (Wolverhampton Wanderers FC Fan, Online Forum) considers her fandom options to be limited to online, "It's too expensive for me [to attend games] never mind the kids. Smartphones come into their own for following the scores. That's what's available to me!" However, such perceptions could also affect the well-being of those who have season tickets and attend games in the stadium. Gordon considers football to be passed down through "family inheritance" (Dionísio, Leal, & Moutinho, 2008) and perceives his value is compromised as families cannot afford to attend games, and he worries that rising ticket prices will have a negative impact on football fandom:

> It was started as a game which 3 or 4 generations of families went to, now it is so expensive that it is beyond what most families can afford…It's important that

> [children] should go as part of a family as they are the future of the club and the next generation of support. It's like an insurance policy.
>
> Gordon, Chelsea FC Fan, Online Forum

Compensating negative experiences

While fans perceive a variety of ways in which their experiences are diminished across different platforms as illustrated in the examples above, it is important to note that there were no fans in our sample who had entirely exited the market. Although fans reduced their nature and level of participation in the market, they were reluctant to disassociate completely from their team. This supports the notion that fans are able to compensate perceptions of value being disrupted by trading-off negative experiences with ones that allow value to be recovered. This compensation is reflective of the economic approach to value, whereby value is seen as an outcome of a cost-benefit analysis (Payne & Holt, 1999). In these situations, for fans it appears that positive experiences can outweigh negative ones. Table 3 illustrates various factors that cause perceptions of value being disrupted, and these can be grouped into actor categories: management, players, and (rival) fans. Interestingly, perceptions of value being negatively affected by club management are often compensated through value created by other actors in the market.

For example, financial mismanagement can impact well-being and cause fans to describe club owners as "shameless liars" who "do not have the interests of the club at heart" (Norman, Rangers FC Fan, Interview), leading to a loss of trust and negative value (Järvi et al., 2018). However, in response, social belonging is co-created among fans who also experienced reduced well-being, "you form your closest bonds with the folk that support the same team as you" (see George, Rangers FC Fan, Interview, Table 3). In other cases, actors were able to mitigate value

being negatively affected by the club, by refusing to buy the merchandise that promoted the club sponsor. Fans bought “extra-large children’s tops” which do not carry the sponsor’s brand when the sponsor was considered to be inappropriate i.e., an alcohol or betting company, and when fans did not want to be advertising on behalf of these organisations (Laura, Celtic FC Fan, Interview, Table 3). This illustrates how football fans often adapt, and reposition the value propositions of football clubs (Kolyperas et al., 2019).

It is, however, important to note that fans were individually conflicted with regard to their perceptions of how value may be disrupted. Here, factors such as commercialisation and team success in Europe can represent both negative and positive influences on value for the *same individual* (see Patrick, Chelsea FC Fan Online Forum and Lee, Celtic FC Fan, Interview Table 3). Although it is widely recognised that commercialisation of football is perceived to have a negative impact on value co-creation (e.g., Hill et al., 2016), Patrick acknowledges that while “the money…it’s too much,” he “laps up…the drama” and he is “hungry” for the media attention associated with football. Similarly, fans can be seen to be conflicted in whether fan tourism has a positive or negative impact on value. While fan tourism is acknowledged as “distracting” (Sean, Liverpool FC Fan, Interview) and “killing the [stadium] atmosphere” (Amanda, Manchester United FC Fan, Online Forum), fans recognise that this has both positive and negative aspects to it. There are benefits not only for individual actors, “I’ve done it…gone to Brussels and Madrid to watch games,” (Ross, Rangers FC Fan, Interview, Table 3) but also for actors collectively e.g., promotion of their club worldwide.

Further, while fans want their team to play in European competitions as there is a financial benefit for their club, anxiety about poor team performance means they are conflicted about whether they want their team to play outside the domestic league as Lee suggests the team,

"will just get a pasting [beaten badly]." Value is disrupted as Lee blames "ineffective" managers for lacking in experience "I'm not sure if tactically [the manager] gets it right on the big stage…I wonder if he's a bit tactically naïve." As such, certain situations can lead to both positive and negative value perceptions for fans, creating self-conflict. This idea of self-conflict develops an understanding of why actors are not always consistent in their behaviour (Prior & Marcos-Cuevas, 2016) and is perhaps reflective of how fans "ultimately view themselves" in their fandom role as in tension with the team of which they are a fan (Hyatt & Foster, 2015).

Player interaction with fans as well as player behaviour on and off the field can also cause negative perceptions of value but these can be assuaged. Although fans such as Keith (West Ham FC Fan, Online Forum, Table 3) lament the lack of physical access to players who would "sign autograph books before matches", accessing specific player details on social media "makes you feel like you know them." Further, there were many instances offered of players' misbehaviour off the field (e.g., charges of drink driving). However, these were compensated by examples of (ex) players such as Steven Gerrard who "set up their own foundations, community foundations in Liverpool to help the local community" (Sean, Liverpool FC Fan, Interview) or, "Steven Naismith, what a top guy, he ended up donating tickets. He used some of his wages to buy tickets and gave them to people who couldn't afford them" (Derek, Everton FC Fan, Interview). Players who were deemed to "…play for their wages rather than the club" (Andrew, Aberdeen FC Fan, Online Forum), were compared with players who created value for fans through their iconic team status. In this instance, compensation of the negative experience is through the same actor role in the market i.e. one player and the way in which they are perceived to disrupt value, can be compensated by another player who is thought to recover value by offering significant benefit/s to the club and fans.

Finally, as identified by Uhrich (2014), fans can create value for one another. Here, this can be observed through creating a positive stadium atmosphere, consoling one another in defeat and recognising the importance of actor reciprocity. Table 3 offers insight into social integration and belonging among fans and between rival fans (see Simon, Bradford FC Fan, Online Forum and George, Rangers FC Fan, Interview). Although there were participants in this study who indicated that the stadium atmosphere, "can be toxic" (Carol, Bournemouth FC Fan, Online Forum), Bill (Everton FC Fan, Interview) observes that each actor has a role to play in value co-creation, "chanting about how the other team is rubbish back and forth." Further, fans can compensate lack of match success through singing "to the very end" with other fans to create value, in what potentially could be considered to be a negative experience (Simon, Bradford FC Fan, Online Forum). There is clearly a trade-off here between negative outcomes through defeat and positive outcomes through a sense of social belonging.

Discussion and Conclusions

Building upon existing research on value in sport (Stieler et al., 2014; Woratschek et al., 2014), this study explores football fans' perceptions of value and how it may be disrupted, as well as how they recover value. The study addresses calls for further research to understand concurrent positive and negative value processes and outcomes from the perspectives of different actors, and across different platforms and spheres. The findings reveal that fans perceive both positive and negative value relating to a variety of factors. Importantly, negative experiences can be compensated with positive ones, although not always by the same actor or relating to the same factors in football. While past studies have attempted to understand positive and negative value relating to specific factors and within a particular context, this paper offers an understanding of actor experiences relating to a multitude of factors.

This study makes three contributions to the literature. Firstly, our research illustrates that while the platform on which fandom is experienced can be temporal, the lack of access to a physical platform within a joint value co-creation sphere can cause fans to perceive there has been a misalignment of resources. However, this is not limited to those who cannot access the physical platform of the stadium. There are also attempts by fans to create value for other fans across platforms using technology to compensate for this, supporting the findings of Uhrich (2014). However, families perceive exclusion from participating on physical platforms and interacting with other fans, resulting in the disruption of value. Consequently, the social cohesion and integration afforded by football fandom is not being embedded in future generations, with potentially far reaching and longer-term strategic consequences for the segmentation, targeting and positioning of the football fan market. These findings also underscore that perceptions of value being disrupted can be collective as well as individual.

Secondly, there are interactional processes evident that fluctuate between positive and negative value creation outcomes. A positive experience can be compensated against a negative experience, although it is important to note that sacrifices can be made in relation to one actor (e.g. club owners) while benefit/s are received by another (e.g. fans). That is, while fans perceived that the financial mismanagement of their club devalued their experience, engaging with other fans and the associated belonging and well-being compensated for the negative aspects in this example. Further, players and their behaviour can also influence fan experiences that may positively or negatively affect value. Fans can also mitigate experiences that will lead to the decline of well-being, such as rejecting merchandise that advertises ‘inappropriate’ sponsors, showing in this case, how value is recovered. This is an important contribution as it demonstrates the relevance of the economic approach to understanding value in a context that is predominantly

framed using the experiential approach. Further, our findings demonstrate how the economic and experiential approaches to value can be meaningfully integrated in order to provide a more complete understanding of consumers' value experiences.

Finally, the findings of this study suggest that the same factors can cause value to be both enhanced and diminished for the same individual. Although it is known that actors are not always predictable in their role/s (Prior & Marcos-Cuevas, 2016), this study furthers an understanding of how and in what circumstances there is self-conflict in relation to value co-creation. It is known that each actor will determine value individually and their experiences will be mediated by their own expectations (Stieler et al., 2014). However, in this study it is revealed that value can be perceived both positively and negatively by the same actor in the same situation and begins to explain why there is difficulty in managing consumer perceptions of value as expectations are not static and differ depending on the context (Järvi et al., 2018).

Managerial implications

From a sport management perspective, it is important to understand what this study contributes to the management processes of planning, organising, leading and controlling. For planning to be effective, it needs to be strategic and long-term in approach. Our study illustrated that there is a risk to clubs in relation to the nature and level of participation in the football market. There is evidence to suggest that lack of family access to the stadium, because of rising ticket prices, causes those attending the game to have their experience diminished. While issues concerning commercialisation of football are not new, there continues to be concern about the "family inheritance" that is being lost as a consequence. If new football fans are like an "insurance policy" as noted by our participants, clubs need to plan ahead to consider different ways of facilitating access for families and\or younger fans as well as adding salient intrinsic

attributes (Zeithaml, 1988) for different types of fans. For example, a ballot system could designed for local fans, where a limited number of means tested family (season) tickets could be offered to those applying (1 per household). The idea would be to reach those from a wide socio-economic background. Those eligible to apply, would be randomly selected and given an opportunity to purchase the ticket. However, if successful fans were unable to accept the offer, the ticket would simply be offered to another ballot applicant. The promotion of such a scheme would have a positive impact on the perceptions of the club by those eligible to apply, as well as those who are concerned about others being able to physically access a 'live' game.

Different actors can compensate for factors associated with perceptions of disruption; football fans have shown how they create and recover value for themselves and other fans across platforms. Understanding the key compensation factors associated with perceptions of disruption i.e. those most likely to facilitate recovery for different segments, and how these can be captured and communicated, would allow managers to tailor marketing messages and content more effectively. Such an approach could facilitate compensation via different actor roles. For example, when there is negative media reporting of a current player or players, content reinforcing iconic club players that reflect the preferred values of the club should be released. Further, where practices are created by fans to co-create value with fans on other platforms, clubs should explore if these could be facilitated and enhanced by management actors. For example, these practices could involve a greater number of fans in a participatory capacity as they could be asked to offer their opinion on the strategic direction of the club. This would extend data capture beyond 'official' fan groups.

Further the study shows there is opportunity for football clubs to demonstrate leadership. For example, more socially responsible and acceptable sponsors could be identified, or access for

local fans could be managed through affordable ticket pricing as identified above. This approach would support linking value (Carù & Cova, 2015) as well as affording diversification of football fans' in the market. Similarly, the recent devastation caused by the bankruptcy of Bury FC in the UK (see Goldblatt, 2019) has seen calls for caps to player wages to ensure club owners seeking promotion do not risk the future of their club by incurring insurmountable debt. From a management viewpoint, a balance is required between (potential) success and the associated ticket prices for the fan base as the consequences could be the loss of a youth market and related customer lifetime value.

Finally, evaluating varying degrees of disruption and the extent to which these can be individually or collectively compensated, could generate insight into football fans' market-related behaviour. For example, by identifying factors associated with disruption for latent football fans (attitudinally positive, limited behavioural engagement) as well as spurious football fans (attitudinally negative, significant behavioural engagement), both positive attitudinal and behavioural commitment could be addressed (Dick & Basu, 1994). This could be achieved through tailored advertising messages, the introduction of a tiered loyalty scheme or promotional incentives to encourage a greater degree of engagement.

Limitations and further research

While our study focused on the micro and intra levels in the network of actors, the meso and macro levels are under-researched in this context. All participants in this research were relatively dismissive of those in positions of power in football e.g., FIFA, and either described the system as "corrupt" or "a boy's club" and felt that its organisation and decisions had a negative impact on football generally. Further research on football authorities could generate a more holistic understanding of value in this regard. The study was also conducted with a focus

on the EPL and SP. Alternative experiences and perceptions may be revealed in other sporting contexts or cultures globally. Our study also illustrated various approaches to compensating negative value experiences. However, there may be circumstances in which value cannot be compensated and there is a ‘tipping point’ in which the negative outweighs the positive (see Leo & Zainuddin, 2017). Further research, which can better understand the implications therein, as well as the circumstances in which self-conflict in relation to value in football fandom is likely to occur is required.

References

Barker, A., Nancarrow, C., & Spackman, N. (2001). Informed eclecticism: A research paradigm for the twenty-first century. *International Journal of Market Research*, *43*(1), 1–21.

Beedie, C. J. (2007). Placebo effects in competitive sport: Qualitative data. *Journal of Sports Science & Medicine*, *6*(1), 21–28.

Carù, A., & Cova, B. (2015). Co-creating the collective service experience. *Journal of Service Management*, *26*(2), 276–294.

Dick, A. S., & Basu, K. (1994). Customer loyalty: toward an integrated conceptual framework. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *22*(2), 99-113.

Dickert, N., & Grady, C. (1999). What's the price of a research subject? Approaches to payment for research participation. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, *341*(3), 198–203.

Dionísio, P., Leal, C., & Moutinho, L. (2008). Fandom affiliation and tribal behaviour: a sports marketing application. *Qualitative Market Research*, *11*(1), 17–39.

Echeverri, P., & Skålén, P. (2011). Co-creation and co-destruction: A practice-theory based study of interactive value formation. *Marketing Theory*, *11*(3), 351–373.

Goldblatt, D. (2019) Tiny Bury was a victim of the global forces draining the life out of football Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/aug/31/death-of-bury-fc-not-only-thing-rotten-in-game-of-football

Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, *18*(1), 59–82.

Harpercollins. (2016). *Collins English dictionary & thesaurus*. Retrieved from https: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english

Healy, J. C., & McDonagh, P. (2013). Consumer roles in brand culture and value co-creation in virtual communities. *Journal of Business Research, 66*(9), 1528–1540.

Hill, T., Canniford, R., & Millward, P. (2016). Against modern football: Mobilising protest movements in social media. *Sociology, 52*(4), 688–708.

Hirt, E. R., Zillmann, D., Erickson, G. A., & Kennedy, C. (1992). Costs and benefits of allegiance: Changes in fans' self-ascribed competencies after team victory versus defeat. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 63*(5), 724–738.

Horbel, C., Popp, B., Woratschek, H., & Wilson, B. (2016). How context shapes value co-creation: Spectator experience of sport events. *The Service Industries Journal, 36*(11–12), 510–531.

Hunt, K. A., Bristol, T., & Bashaw, R. E. (1999). A conceptual approach to classifying sports fans. *Journal of Services Marketing, 13*(6), 439–452.

Hyatt, C. G., & Foster, W. M. (2015). Using identity work theory to understand the de-escalation of fandom: A study of former fans of national hockey league teams. *Journal of Sport Management, 29*(4), 443–460.

Järvi, H., Kähkönen, A. K., & Torvinen, H. (2018). When value co-creation fails: Reasons that lead to value co-destruction. *Scandinavian Journal of Management, 34*(1), 63-77.

Kolyperas, D., Maglaras, G., & Sparks, L. (2019). Sport fans' roles in value co-creation. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 19*(2), 201-220.

Leo, C., & Zainuddin, N. (2017), Exploring value destruction in social marketing services. *Journal of Social Marketing, 7*(4), 405-422.

Lund, N. F., Scarles, C., & Cohen, S. A. (2019). The Brand Value Continuum: Countering Co-destruction of Destination Branding in Social Media through Storytelling. *Journal of Travel Research*, 0047287519887234.

Makkonen, H., & Olkkonen, R. (2017). Interactive value formation in interorganizational relationships: dynamic interchange between value co-creation, no-creation, and co-destruction. *Marketing Theory*, *17*(4), 517-535.

Millward, P. (2011). *The global football league: Transnational networks, social movements and sport in the new media age*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Parmentier, M. A., & Fischer, E. (2014). Things fall apart: The dynamics of brand audience dissipation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *41*(5), 1228–1251.

Patton, M. (2015) *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, SA: Sage Publications.

Payne, A., & Holt, S. (1999). A review of the "value" literature and implications for relationship marketing. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, *7*(1), 41-51.

Plé, L., & Cáceres, R. C. (2010). Not always co-creation: Introducing interactional co-destruction of value in service-dominant logic. *Journal of Services Marketing*, *24*(6), 430–437.

Popp, B., Germelmann, C.C. & Jung, B. (2016). We love to hate them! Social media-based anti-brand communities in professional football. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, *17*(4), 349-367.

Prior, D. D., & Marcos-Cuevas, J. (2016). Value co-destruction in interfirm relationships: The impact of actor engagement styles. *Marketing Theory*, *16*(4), 533–552.

Sigsworth, T. (2019) *Wayne Rooney, Derby County and 32Red: An unethical marriage made in FFP Heaven*. Retrieved from https://www.palatinate.org.uk/wayne-rooney-derby-county-and-32red-an-unethical-marriage-made-in-ffp-heaven/

Smith, A. M. (2013). The value co-destruction process: A customer resource perspective. *European Journal of Marketing, 47*(11/12), 1889–1909.

Smith, B., & McGannon, K. R. (2018) Developing rigor in qualitative research: problems and opportunities within sport and exercise psychology. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 11*(1), 101–121.

Spiggle, S. (1994). Analysis and interpretation of qualitative data in consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research, 21*(3), 491–503.

Statista. (2019). *Market size of the European professional football market from 2006/07 to 2017/18 (in billion euros)*. Retrieved from https://www.statista.com/statistics/261223/european-soccer-market-total-revenue/

Stewart, D. W., & Shamdasani, P. N. (2014). *Focus groups: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Stieler, M., Weismann, F., & Germelmann, C. C. (2014). Co-destruction of value by spectators: The case of silent protests. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 14*(1), 72–86.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Taylor, L. (2015) *Number of overseas fans at Premier League games rises to 800,000*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/football/2015/sep/10/overseas-fans-premier-league-games-high-800000

Tinson, J., Sinclair, G., & Kolyperas, D. (2017). Sport fandom and parenthood. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 17*(3), 370–391.

Uhrich, S. (2014). Exploring customer-to-customer value co-creation platforms and practices in team sports. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 14*(1), 25–49.

Vafeas, M., Hughes, T. & Hilton, T. (2016). Antecedents to value diminution: a dyadic perspective. *Marketing Theory*, *16*(4), 469-491.

Wainwright, O. (2017) *Stadiums of the future: A revolution for the fan experience in sport*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2017/jun/15/stadiums-future-holograms-drones-fan-experience

Wann, D. L., & Weaver, S. (2009). Understanding the relationship between sport team identification and dimensions of social well-being. *North American Journal of Psychology, 11*(2), 219–230.

Wann, D. L., Tucker, K. B., & Schrader, M. P. (1996). An exploratory examination of the factors influencing the origination, continuation, and cessation of identification with sports teams. *Perceptual and Motor Skills, 82*(3), 995–1001.

Weed, M. (2008). Exploring the sport spectator experience: Virtual football spectatorship in the pub. *Soccer and Society, 9*, 189-197

Woratschek, H., Horbel, C., & Popp, B. (2014). The sport value framework – A new fundamental logic for analyses in sport management. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 14*(1), 6–24.

Zainuddin, N., & Gordon, R. (2020). Value creation and destruction in social marketing services: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Services Marketing, 34*(1).

Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: a means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing, 52*(3), 2-22.

Table 1

Stage 1: Sample Demographics for Discussion Forum

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Location	Marital status	Team of which participant is a fan	Platforms/Spheres
Amanda	Female	45	Staffordshire	Married	Manchester United	Virtual/Joint
Simon	Male	47	West Yorkshire	Divorced	Bradford City	Physical/Joint
James	Male	40	North Lanarkshire	Married	Rangers	Physical/Joint
Andrew	Male	29	Aberdeenshire	Married	Aberdeen	Physical/Joint
Barbara	Female	55	Cleveland	Married	Middlesbrough FC	Virtual/Customer
Elizabeth	Female	38	Shropshire	Married	Manchester United	Virtual/Joint
Gillian	Female	54	Cheshire	Married	Not disclosed	Virtual/Customer
Keith	Male	45	Monmouthshire	Married	West Ham United	Virtual/Joint
Carol	Female	65+	Dorset	Married	Bournemouth	Physical/Joint
Laura	Female	24	West Sussex	Married	Brighton and Hove Albion	Virtual/Joint
Anna	Female	35	Cumbria	Co-habiting	Burnley FC	Virtual Joint/Physical Joint
Gemma	Female	45	Staffordshire	Married	Fulham	Virtual/Joint
Patrick	Male	45	Northants	Divorced	Chelsea	Physical/Joint
Oliver	Male	50	Greater Manchester	Married	Not disclosed	Virtual/Customer
Gordon	Male	55	East Sussex	Married	Chelsea	Physical/Joint
George	Male	34	Tyne and Weir	Married	Newcastle United	Physical/Joint
Lucy	Female	20	Kent	Co-habiting	Not disclosed	Virtual/Joint
Maureen	Female	35	Hertfordshire	Married	Wolverhampton Wanderers FC	Virtual/Customer
Ralph	Male	35	Essex	Married	Not disclosed	Physical/Joint
Laurence	Male	44	Leicestershire	Married	Leicester City	Physical/Joint

Table 2

Stage 2: Sample Demographics for In-depth Interviews

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Industry in which participant is employed	Marital status	Team of which participant is a fan	Platforms/Spheres on which Value processes & outcomes principally occur
Alan	Male	37	Emergency services	Co-habiting	Rangers	Physical/Joint & Customer
George	Male	45	Government	Single	Rangers	Physical/Joint
William	Male	29	Emergency services	Single	Rangers	Virtual/Customer & Physical/Joint
Ross	Male	37	Finance	Married	Rangers	Virtual/Customer & Physical/Joint
Norman	Male	47	Media and entertainment	Co-habiting	Rangers	Virtual/Customer
Steven	Male	34	Sales and marketing	Single	Celtic	Virtual/Joint
Lee	Male	38	Leisure	Married	Celtic	Virtual/Customer & Physical/Joint
John	Male	32	Sales	Married	Celtic	Virtual/Joint
Scott	Male	28	Finance	Single	Celtic	Virtual/Customer
Laura	Female	28	Digital marketing	Single	Celtic	Physical/Joint
Sean	Male	34	Telecommunications	Single	Liverpool	Physical/Joint
Sarah	Female	31	Health	Married	Liverpool	Virtual/Joint
Dean	Male	51	Education	Co-habiting	Liverpool	Physical/Joint & Virtual/Customer
Mark	Male	48	Government	Married	Liverpool	Virtual/Joint
Joseph	Male	22	Media and entertainment	Single	Liverpool	Virtual/Joint
Derek	Male	34	Marketing	Married	Everton	Virtual/Joint
Chris	Male	26	Journalism	Single	Everton	Physical/Joint
Bill	Male	49	Construction	Married	Everton	Physical/Joint
Liam	Male	41	Journalism	Married	Everton	Physical/Joint
Nigel	Male	40	Insurance	Single	Everton	Physical/Joint

Table 3

Perceptions of Value and Compensating Negative Experiences

Factors influencing value	Perceptions of value being disrupted	Compensation	Exemplar quote
Brand logos (sponsor)	Sponsorship of replica kit considered inappropriate e.g., sponsor is an alcohol or betting company	Adults purchase large size children's replica tops without sponsor logos	*If you look at sales this season or even in the stands, sponsor-less tops are a lot more popular, people don't want to be advertising sponsors and wearing them. It does have an impact yeah, if people can opt to buy it without a particular sponsor then they probably will choose to do that*. (Laura, Celtic FC Fan, Interview)
Financial management	Problems associated with financial mismanagement resulting in relegation of team	Social interaction, belonging and self-actualisation	*Initially when the club* [Rangers FC] *did go on into administration and go down into the Third Division, I did keep my* [season] *ticket at that point, but then I gave it up for a while but I've been a season ticket holder again for the last few years….you form your closest bonds with the folk that support the same team as you. The bond you create goes on with you for the rest of your life.* (George, Rangers FC Fan, Interview)
Access to players	Physical access to players e.g., getting their autograph before the game	Virtual access to specific player detail offering insight into experiences of different players in the team	*It used to be I'd go to the games early and I'd have my autograph book…you would get autographs, take pictures and speak to players. But now I look at their official pages and loads of fan pages and I follow them on social media. That obviously comes in handy for everyone and it makes you feel like you know them.* (Keith, West Ham FC Fan, Online Forum)
Rivalry	Negative 'banter' from rival fans about the other team can racist, sectarian etc.	Ability to recognise the social benefits of engaging with rival fans	*There's always going to be chanting about how the other team is rubbish and back and forth. But the derby between Everton and Liverpool, you'll always see the fan base mixing, you don't see that anywhere else. There's so many people who are Everton and Liverpool in the same family, it's a unique situation. It's strange to say this about Liverpool, but it is one thing I would say I am quite proud of. Although it's our rivals, it's nice to see*. (Bill, Everton FC Fan, Interview)
Team success (Europe)	Poor results in European competitions as a	Taking part in a variety of competitions e.g., Europe	*I want Celtic to be in the Champions League as they'll make good money out of it, but I also don't really want*

	consequence of manager ineffectiveness		*them to be in it as well as they're just going to get a pasting from one of these teams, and that's depressing.* (Lee, Celtic FC Fan, Interview)
Team success (Domestic)	Relegation and/or lack of success in league	Social interaction, belonging and self-actualisation	*I've supported Bradford City for a long time, through the very low to the premiership, and back down. I hold a season ticket. I went to Wembley, and even at 5:0 down we sang to the very end. Like others I know, I am not a glory supporter, I'm a true supporter.* (Simon, Bradford FC Fan, Online Forum)
Reciprocity amongst actors	Negative associations with fan tourism e.g., scarves that represent both teams playing	Fan tourism is positive for club finances and reputation	*It can be annoying [fan tourism]…those half and half scarves. I must admit, I've done it* [fan tourism] *as well. I've gone to Liverpool to watch football games. I've gone to Brussels and to Madrid and watched football games. It can only be a good thing to promote the club worldwide - and generate revenue in different places.* (Ross, Rangers FC Fan, Interview)
Player behaviour off the field	Players negatively impact the image of the club	Players positively impact the experience of fans	*As far as off the pitch, whether it's gambling or someone like Wayne Rooney being caught drink driving, you don't want to see that, it drags your club's good name through the dirt… Steven Naismith, what a top guy, he ended up donating tickets. He used some of his wages to buy tickets and gave them to people who couldn't afford them.* (Chris, Everton FC Fan, Interview)
Commercialisation	Rising player wages, increased ticket costs, poor player behaviour devalue the fan experience	The celebrity and coverage of such issues feed the need for more football related news	*The money, the drama, the media around it, it's too much. However, I still lap it up, I take all of the media in and I still want to get it, I'm part of the problem! You see all these news articles or stories on Sky Sports, I'm hungry for that information.* (Patrick, Chelsea FC Fan, Online Forum)