



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI BERGAMO

Department
of Management

Research Seminars Series

A.Y. 2023-2024 2nd Term

May 22, 2024 – 2.30 p.m. (CET)
In room Galeotti, via dei Caniana 2

Presenter: Prof Thilo Kunkel
Temple University

TITLE – “CRACKING THE GLASS CEILING ONE POST AT A TIME: Identifying the Influences of Brand Environment and Teams’ Gendered Branding Practices on Women Athletes’ Social Media Engagement”

ABSTRACT – The women’s football market has experienced significant growth over the past decade. Athletes are leveraging this expanding market to develop their personal brands, utilizing social media as a primary promotional channel. The current research explores the determinants of women football players’ Instagram following and engagement within the athlete brand ecosystem. The research focuses on three levels of influence: the team as a master brand, the media, and the market. Study 1, employing negative binomial regression to model Instagram data, indicates a positive impact of account authentication and the team’s audience size on athlete following and engagement, yet a negative impact of joint branding by clubs (i.e., when men’s and women’s teams are branded on the same Instagram account). Study 2, delves deeper into the dynamics of teams’ branding practices to understand the sources of impact on athletes, employing quantitative content analysis. It uncovers inequitable branding practices exhibited by clubs that brand men’s and women’s teams jointly, which explains the hindering effects of such a practice on the women athletes’ social media popularity. This research contributes to sports brand ecosystem scholarship, while also accounting for gender dynamics in clubs’ branding as a factor impacting athlete brands.

TYPE OF RESEARCH –Empirical

STAGE OF RESEARCH –First draft

For further information please refer to: seminars.dipsa@unibg.it

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