

## Examining Moderating Mechanisms of Alignment Practice and Community Response through the Self-Construal Perspective

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**Abstract :** Two of the biggest challenges companies involved in sports and exercise information services face are how to strengthen participation in virtual sports/exercise communities and how to increase the ongoing participatoriness of those communities. In the past, relatively little research has explored mechanisms for strengthening alignment practice and community response from the perspective of self-construal, and as such this study seeks to explore the self-construal of virtual sports/exercise communities, the role it plays in the emotional commitment of forming communities, and the factor that can strengthen alignment practice. Moreover, which factor of the emotional commitment of forming virtual communities have the effect of strengthening interference in the process of transforming customer citizenship behaviors? This study collected 625 responses from the two leading websites in terms of fan numbers in the provision of information on road race and marathon events in Taiwan, with model testing conducted through linear structural equation modelling and the bootstrapping technique to test the proposed hypotheses. The results proved independent construal had a stronger positive direct effect on affective commitment to fellow customers than did interdependent construal, and the influences of affective commitment to fellow customers in enhancing customer citizenship behavior. Public self-consciousness moderates the relationships among independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal on effective commitment to fellow customers. Perceived playfulness moderates the relationships between effective commitment to fellow customers and customer citizenship behavior. The findings of this study provide significant insights for the researchers and related organizations. From the theoretical perspective, this is empirical research that investigated the self-construal theory and responses (i.e., affective commitment to fellow customers, customer citizenship behavior) in virtual sports/exercise communities. We further explore how to govern virtual sports/exercise community participants' heterogeneity through public self-consciousness mechanism to align participants' affective commitment. Moreover, perceived playfulness has the effect of strengthening effective commitment to fellow customers with customer citizenship behaviors. The results of this study can provide a foundation for the construction of future theories and can be provided to related organizations for reference in their planning of virtual communities.

**Keywords :** self-construal theory, public self-consciousness, affective commitment, customer citizenship behavior

**Conference Title :** ICVTTTA 2020 : International Conference on Virtual Tourism and Travel Technology Applications

**Conference Location :** Paris, France

**Conference Dates :** January 23-24, 2020