

**CULTURAL RUNS BATTED IN: CONSUMPTION ACCULTURATION BETWEEN
BRAZILIAN MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL FANS**

BRUNO MELO MOURA

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE PERNAMBUCO (UFPE)

ANDRÉ LUIZ MARANHÃO DE SOUZA-LEÃO

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE PERNAMBUCO (UFPE)

FERNANDO SACIC CARNEIRO LEÃO

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE PERNAMBUCO (UFPE)

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Introdução

The singularities involving fan prosumption have been highlighted as an emerging theme in consumer research. Among the possibilities for carrying out such investigations, it is worth dwelling on the consumer acculturation process that occurs when fans reframe values of local and global culture through virtual interactions about sports products and brands. One of the sports leagues associated with consumer acculturation is Major League Baseball (MLB), a representative media product of the U.S. culture that has interest in Brazil as a promising market for expanding its audience

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

The present research aims to understanding how virtual interactions of Brazilian MLB fans lead to forms of consumption acculturation? The research aim derives from the interest in expanding discussions about the influence of massively mediated products and brands in consumer acculturation. Its originality lies in exploring a sports league closely related to global culture - i.e., the U.S. - through interactions and appropriations exercised by fans of a local culture unfamiliar with the singularities of the sport they consume.

Fundamentação Teórica

The concept of fans has been gaining prominence in the marketing research due to their productive capacity. They are the most emblematic members of the participatory culture, Thus, fan consumption permeates the existence of a "hyperculture" in which a symbiotic relationship between different cultures is established. They are capable of consuming new cultures and introducing them to those who do not have the opportunity. In this way, they disseminate acculturation by playing a productive role during consumption.

Metodologia

The methodological approach of the present study is Netnography, an adaptation of the ethnographic model to investigate consumer tribes and subcultures through their virtual interactions, Data collection was carried out between 2018 and 2022 based on messages published by Brazilian MLB fans on Twitter.

Análise dos Resultados

Three forms of consumer acculturation were identified: assimilation, integration, and marginalization. Each indicates Brazilian fans' interest and effort in prioritizing U.S. cultural signs and values in the MLB. However, the fans' prosumption roles on the acculturation process represent the positioning of cultural identities via consumption when they recognize their relationship with cultures and others through market relations.

Conclusão

The consumers' acculturation inherent in fan interactions prioritizes the propagation of experiences and relationships between fandom members and the cultural products they consume. In this perspective, fans combine and highlight forms of acculturation that interest them, characterizing the ethos of consumption in which they gather as a pluricultural social space. However, when dealing with multiple cultures and taking a stand in front of their signs, they manifest identity projects that, despite alluding to their consumption practices, are wider than this.

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