

## The Fanclubs' Exposed and Attitudes towards Facebook of the J.W. Rangsit Football Club

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### Abstract

This study aims to investigate the behaviors and attitudes displayed by a collection of fanclubs towards the Facebook page of the J.W. Rangsit Football Club of Rangsit University, Pathum Thani in Thailand. Employing a quantitative methodology, the research conducted questionnaires as its primary means of data collection from a sample of 200 followers of the J.W. Rangsit Football Club on Facebook. Data analysis involved the utilization of frequency, percentage, and mean measures, while hypothesis testing incorporated t-test, One-way ANOVA, and Pearson Correlation statistics. The study's findings have contributed significantly to the comprehension of fanclub dynamics and interactions within the realm of social media platforms. Specifically, the study illuminated noteworthy differences in demographic characteristics and displayed behaviors among the fanclubs on the J.W. Rangsit Football Club's Facebook page, reaching statistical significance at the 0.01 level. This insight offers valuable information for club management and social media administrators to tailor content and engagement strategies according to distinct fanclub profiles. Moreover, the study unearthed a robust correlation between the fanclubs' exhibited behaviors and their attitudes towards the J.W. Rangsit Football Club's Facebook presence, once again at a significance level of 0.01. This finding underscores the interplay between online behaviors and attitudes, providing insights into how these elements impact fan engagement and loyalty. It is recommended to explore the possibility of conducting a qualitative study in future research endeavors, as this approach can offer deeper insights and more comprehensive results.

**Keywords:** *Exposed Media, Behaviors, Attitudes, Facebook, Fanclub, JW Rangsit Football Club*

### Introduction

To assert that sports can generate revenue for the country is probably not untrue. Many people's attention has been drawn to the sports industry as a result of sports events, sports equipment consumption, and watching sports games via live broadcasts (Vale & Fernandes, 2018; Wang & Lv, 2019). The professional football competition in Thailand began gaining popularity, with an increasing number of people attending football matches in stadiums. Compensation for football players rose, and the management of each football club became more efficient. Thai football clubs experienced gradual improvement, prompting professional players who had previously joined foreign clubs to return and play for clubs in Thailand. This trend was due to the relatively comparable compensation. The Thai football competition underwent rapid development within a mere span of two years. The public redirected their focus to football clubs in their respective provinces, generating substantial interest. Football clubs proliferated across different provinces, igniting local enthusiasm. This phenomenon laid the groundwork for the establishment of various football clubs throughout the country (Khiewpan & Wongmontha, 2019; Untarabutr & Jaremsiripornkul, 2022).

As reported by J.W. Football Club (2015), for J.W. Rangsit FC, its inception emerged from a collaborative effort between Rangsit University Football Club and Donmuang Samphan Football Club. This partnership was established in the year 2010, bearing the name "Rangsit University FC - J.W. FC". This initiative was endorsed by the Vice President for Student Affairs of Rangsit University, who also held the position of Deputy President overseeing the football club. In conjunction with Mr. Wisit Kowarakul, Chairman of J.W. Real Estate Company Limited, was designated to participate in the Thai League Division 2, Bangkok and Vicinity Zone. The goal was to bolster and develop the football skills of Rangsit University students and J.W. Real Estate Company Limited employees. Remarkably, they achieved promotion to Thai League Division 1 in the year 2011. In the subsequent year, 2011, the club underwent a renaming, transitioning from "Rangsit University FC - J.W. FC" to "J.W. Rangsit FC". This adjustment was made due to J.W. Rangsit FC being primarily recognized within the small community of Rangsit University and having relatively few spectators. In response, J.W. Rangsit FC created a Facebook page on February 10, 2011, with the following dual objectives: 1) disseminating information, news, and updates related to J.W. Rangsit FC; and 2) serving as a channel to address the demands of fan club members concerning information, news, and developments associated with J.W. Rangsit FC.



**Figure 1:** J.W. Rangsit FC's Logo (JW Football Club, 2015)

According to Lee et al. (2012) and Limna et al. (2023), the rise of social media has brought about substantial changes in the approaches that companies employ to communicate with their customers. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, offer diverse types of content generated by consumers, including videos, photos, ideas, opinions, interests, and news, disseminated through channels like blogs, podcasts, and social networking sites. Social networking sites serve as platforms for active communication between companies and users, fostering interactions among the users themselves. For example, when an organization introduces a new event or promotion on its designated Facebook event page, online enthusiasts (potentially future consumers) can directly engage with the organization and fellow fans before participating in the event. However, the underlying mechanism by which consumers come to perceive social media as credible tools in the marketing realm remains relatively unclear. Of particular interest in this study is the role of users' emotional states (both arousal and valence) as demonstrated on social networking sites, particularly in relation to the process of acceptance. Scholars highlight that emotions like surprise, joy, and anger can exert significant influence over users' perception of information, sharing behaviors, and intentions to adopt products. In essence, a satisfying social media encounter might lead to positive subsequent intentions and behaviors towards a given subject, be it a product, service, or event. This positivity could manifest in forms such as admiration, recommendations, and even purchases of the mentioned offerings. Hence, when organizers of special events promote their occasions and festivals via a Facebook event page, the emotions experienced by event fans while using Facebook are anticipated to affect event attendance.

Numerous comprehensive behavioral theories have been developed to explain how individuals engage in specific actions by identifying the factors that precede behavioral outcomes, and one of them is attitude. Attitude refers to an individual's favorable or unfavorable evaluations of those who demonstrate the behavior. An individual's attitude represents their belief about a particular object, and consequently, their actions align with that belief (Jandawapee et al., 2022; Siripipatthanakul et al., 2023). In a study conducted by Jung et al. (2016), the researchers investigated various factors, such as advertising values and characteristics specific to social networking advertising, that play a role in shaping consumers' attitudes and their behavioral intentions towards three distinct types of social networking advertisements on Facebook. These types included home page ads, social impression ads, and organic impression ads. The results of the study revealed that among the factors studied, peer influence emerged as the most substantial factor affecting both attitude and behavioral intention in relation to all types of social networking advertising. Lee et al. (2012) explored the rapid evolution of social media and its implications for event managers in reshaping conventional marketing approaches. As these technologies have gained prominence, contemporary enthusiasts of special events, often referred to as "fans," have begun embracing and exploring this digital realm in pursuit of potential advantages. This pivotal juncture prompts event managers to question how the process unfolds through which consumers of special events come to accept social media marketing. The research delves into social media marketing literature, the unique traits of event marketing, and emphasizes the emotional dimension inherent in social media applications. The study adopts an extended Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to elucidate the mechanism by which social media marketing shapes attitudes toward Facebook event pages. The authors ascertain that the emotions displayed by users on the Facebook event page do indeed wield a substantial influence over the perception of usefulness, ease of use, and enjoyment associated with such social media marketing endeavors. However, it is noted that only the latter of these factors significantly impacts users' attitudes and intentions concerning an event.

The dissemination of information and news by J.W. Rangsit FC through Facebook has resulted in heightened awareness among the fan club regarding the club's updates. This increased awareness could potentially impact the attitudes held towards the club. As a result, the researchers are keen on delving into the fan club's news consumption behavior and the direction in which their attitudes lean. In the case of a positive orientation, this

could potentially lead to a substantial expansion of the fan base for J.W. Rangsit FC. Given the importance of these aspects, they serve as the foundational pillars of the current study. This study aims to investigate the behaviors and attitudes exhibited by various fan clubs towards the Facebook page of the J.W. Rangsit Football Club.

### **Methodology**

This study employed a quantitative research approach. The data collection for this quantitative study involved the use of online closed-ended questionnaires employing Likert's Rating Scale. The questionnaire items were meticulously crafted using reliable and validated research data. The validity of the measurement instruments was assessed, which refers to the accuracy with which a measurement quantifies the researcher's intended concept (Siripipatthanakul et al., 2023). Following the recommendations of Duangsin et al. (2023) and Shaengchart et al. (2023), data was gathered through an online survey created using Google Forms. This survey was disseminated through various online platforms, including Facebook and Line. The study's target population comprised individuals who were followers of JW Rangsit Football Club's Facebook page. In line with the guidance from Dah et al. (2022) and Limsangpetch et al. (2022), a general guideline suggests having a minimum of five participants per one question item (5:1). Based on this, the researchers determined that a total of 15 question items would require at least 75 participants. Consequently, a sample size of 200 individuals was chosen. Adhering to the recommendations of Siripipatthanakul et al. (2022) and Sitthipon et al. (2022), the researchers provided an explanation of the study's purpose to the respondents and sought their willingness to participate before distributing the online questionnaires.

Data analysis was performed using analytical software, employing statistical methods for examination. Descriptive statistics were utilized to outline general characteristics, including gender, age, educational level, behaviors associated with interacting with Facebook media, and attitudes towards J.W. Rangsit FC within the fan club groups. This information was presented in the form of frequency tables, percentages, and means. Inferential statistics were used to test hypotheses and ascertain relationships between independent and dependent variables, following various assumptions. This was accomplished by utilizing Pearson correlation coefficients.

### **Results**

The online questionnaire was completed by 200 Thai respondents who were followers of the J.W. Rangsit Football Club on Facebook. The majority of participants were male and fell within the age range of 18 to 25 years. Additionally, a substantial portion of the respondents held bachelor's degrees. Table 1 illustrates the quantity and percentage of fan club sample groups categorized based on their behavior of engagement, segregated by their attitudes towards the Facebook presence of J.W. Rangsit FC.

**Table 1:** The quantity and percentage of fan club sample groups categorized based on their behavior of engagement, segregated by their attitudes towards the Facebook presence of J.W. Rangsit FC.

Attitudes towards J.W. Rangsit Football Club's Facebook group	Attitude Level					Mean	Attitude Level
	5 (%)	4 (%)	3 (%)	2 (%)	1 (%)		
1. The J.W. Rangsit Football Club has the potential to encourage increased participation in football among the general public.	51 (25.5)	46 (23)	68 (34)	14 (7)	21 (10.5)	3.46	Neutral
2. The lack of success for J.W. Rangsit Football Club is due to the abilities of the football players within the club.	15 (7.5)	42 (21)	56 (28)	41 (20.5)	46 (23)	2.70	Neutral
3. Enlisting football players to promote the club generates greater interest in J.W. Rangsit Football Club.	49 (24.5)	96 (48)	44 (22)	11 (5.5)	0 (0.0)	3.92	High
4. J.W. Rangsit Football Club is beneficial to society and deserves consistent support.	54 (27)	111 (55.5)	26 (13)	6 (3)	3 (1.5)	3.74	High
5. Focusing on promoting J.W. Rangsit Football Club through financial support leads to sustainable development.	71 (35.5)	79 (39.5)	35 (17.5)	9 (4.5)	6 (3)	3.70	High
6. The success of J.W. Rangsit Football Club is attributed to the genuine commitment of all involved parties.	41 (20.5)	113 (56.5)	40 (20)	5 (2.5)	1 (0.5)	3.94	High
7. J.W. Rangsit Football Club cannot sustain a long-term fan following.	37 (18.5)	42 (21)	105 (52.5)	4 (2)	12 (6)	3.44	Neutral
8. I am interested in attending the matches of J.W. Rangsit Football Club in the future.	41 (20.5)	94 (47)	53 (26.5)	11 (5.5)	1 (0.5)	3.81	High
9. The opinions of fan club groups contribute to the success of J.W. Rangsit Football Club.	22 (11)	78 (39)	79 (39.5)	16 (8)	5 (2.5)	3.48	Neutral
10. The act of sharing on Facebook by J.W. Rangsit Football Club increases the number of fan club members.	112 (56)	71 (35.5)	14 (7)	3 (1.5)	0 (0.0)	4.46	High
11. J.W. Rangsit Football Club should have its own competition field.	132 (66)	46 (23)	10 (5)	7 (3.5)	5 (2.5)	4.47	High
12. Directly contacting football players through J.W. Rangsit Football Club's Facebook page makes you feel more impressed and fond of them.	45 (22.5)	96 (48)	49 (24.5)	8 (4)	2 (1)	3.87	High
13. The fan club groups receive the information and news regarding J.W. Rangsit Football Club's activities are conveyed through Facebook with clarity.	15 (7.5)	65 (32.5)	96 (48)	20 (10)	4 (2)	3.34	Neutral
14. Coaches and football players in the club are not collaborating fully.	41 (20.5)	85 (42.5)	53 (26.5)	11 (5.5)	10 (5)	3.68	High
15. I am satisfied with J.W. Rangsit Football Club.	47 (23.5)	118 (59)	27 (13.5)	7 (3.5)	1 (0.5)	4.01	High
<b>Total</b>						3.76	High

**Note:** 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = not sure, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree

Based on the findings from Table 1, it is evident that among the sampled fan club groups engaging in the behavior of Facebook interactions with J.W. Rangsit Football Club, those exhibiting a positive disposition towards the club's Facebook media are highlighted. The overall average score is 3.76. The topic that received the highest level of agreement among the fan club sample groups is "J.W. Rangsit Football Club should have its own competition field," with an average score of 4.47. This is followed by the statement "The act of sharing on Facebook by J.W. Rangsit Football Club increases the number of fan club members," with an average score of 4.46. In general, there is a satisfactory sentiment towards J.W. Rangsit Football Club, with an average score of 4.01. The success of J.W. Rangsit Football Club is attributed to the genuine commitment demonstrated by all parties involved, achieving an average score of 3.94. The involvement of football players in promoting the club generates increased interest in J.W. Rangsit Football Club, with an average score of 3.92. Directly contacting football players through J.W. Rangsit Football Club's Facebook platform leads to heightened fondness and admiration, reflecting an average score of 3.87. There is an interest in attending future matches of J.W. Rangsit Football Club, with an average score of 3.81. The belief that J.W. Rangsit Football Club is socially beneficial and should receive continuous support and holds an average score of 3.74. The focus on promoting the club's growth through financial support is seen as contributing to sustainable development, with an average score of 3.70. The perception that coaches and football players in the club are not fully collaborating is indicated by an average score of 3.68. The idea that fan club group opinions significantly contribute to the success of J.W. Rangsit Football Club is supported by an average score of 3.48. Moreover, J.W. Rangsit Football Club has the potential to encourage the general public to participate in football, attaining an average score of 3.46. However, there are reservations regarding the club's long-term sustainability in maintaining fan interest, reflected in an average score of 3.44. The effectiveness of conveying information, news, and the dynamics of J.W. Rangsit Football Club through Facebook is evident, with an average score of 3.34. Last but not least, the perceived lack of success for J.W. Rangsit Football Club is often attributed to the capabilities of the football players within the club itself, as evidenced by an average score of 2.70.

### Discussions and Conclusions

The study findings reveal that there is a correlation between the behavior of receiving and the attitude towards the Facebook-mediated publicity, information, news, and dynamics of J.W. Rangsit Football Club among the sampled fan club groups. This is because the sampled groups that follow J.W. Rangsit Football Club's Facebook media are motivated to seek out relevant information and updates exclusively through this channel. This observation aligns with Hase et al. (2022) and dos Santos et al. (2023). Furthermore, Mesapta (2008) examined the reception and attitude towards online advertisements among consumers in Bangkok and found that the openness to websites providing information search services and connecting people had a significant relationship with the attitude towards internet advertisements. In addition, Wang et al. (2021) investigated the effect of information overload on attitude change in the context of social media platforms such as Twitter and Weibo. Shorter reading times (high overload) result in stronger attitude changes in both positive and negative posts, according to the findings. According to the research, there are three stages of attitude change: obedience, resistance, and acceptance. Positive information overload resulted in positive attitudes shifting, whereas negative information overload resulted in biases against the discussed topic. Moreover, Ferreira and Barbosa (2017) conducted a study to explore consumers' attitudes toward Facebook advertising, focusing on the comparison between attitudes toward brand posts and ads, an aspect that previous research had overlooked. The study also examined how these attitudes relate to users' ad avoidance behavior and electronic word-of-mouth communication. The findings revealed that respondents had a more favorable attitude toward brand posts compared to Facebook ads. Additionally, individuals who spent more time on Facebook found ads to be more annoying. These insights provide valuable information about how users interact with ads and brand posts on Facebook, offering potential insights for optimizing social media marketing strategies.

The study's outcomes have significantly enhanced the understanding of fanclub dynamics and interactions in the context of social media platforms. Notably, it revealed substantial differences in demographic characteristics and behaviors among fanclubs on the J.W. Rangsit Football Club's Facebook page, with statistical significance at the 0.01 level. This insight holds practical implications for club management and social media administrators, enabling the customization of content and engagement strategies to align with distinct fanclub profiles. Furthermore, a robust correlation emerged between the exhibited behaviors of fanclubs and their attitudes towards the J.W. Rangsit Football Club's Facebook presence, also significant at the 0.01 level. This underscores



the intricate interplay between online behaviors and attitudes, offering valuable insights into how these factors influence fan engagement and loyalty.

In conclusion, based on the research findings, it has been uncovered that the dissemination of information, news, and updates pertaining to the J.W. Rangsit Football Club's Facebook page correlates with reception behaviors and attitudes towards the club. Hence, individuals tasked with overseeing the club's Facebook media should consistently update a variety of information and news to consistently attract a diverse target audience encompassing different genders and age groups in the future. As a recommendation for future research, it is advised to delve more deeply into other variables. For instance, investigating factors that impact content presentation strategies on the club's Facebook media, encompassing aspects beyond those examined here. Moreover, the exploration of variables that present challenges and obstacles in managing the Facebook media services for the J.W. Rangsit Football Club holds significance. Currently, there is limited research addressing these aforementioned issues. Further studies would expand the research scope in this domain and offer more comprehensive insights. Given that this research relies on survey-based data, individuals seeking more comprehensive insights could consider employing qualitative research methods. For example, employing methodologies such as in-depth interviews with individuals responsible for overseeing the club's Facebook media and conducting focus group interviews with individuals engaged with the content on the J.W. Rangsit Football Club's Facebook page. Such approaches would yield deeper insights.

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