

Motivation of college students to attend intercollegiate sports

Yin-Feng Chen, Texas Woman's University

David Rylander, Texas Woman's University

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**Poster
Abstract 261**

Sports attendance has become one of the most popular forms of entertainment in the United States. Several studies have examined the various motivational factors affecting why spectators attend sporting events. Wann, Schrader, & Wilson used eight different motivates (Eustress, Self-Esteem, Escape, Entertainment, Economic, Aesthetic, Group Affiliation, and Family) to examine sport fan motivation (1999). McDonald, Milne, & Hong developed twelve motivational constructs (Risk Taking, Stress Reduction, Aggression, Affiliation, Social Facilitation, Self-Esteem, Competition, Achievement, Skill Mastery, Aesthetics, Value Development, and Self-Actualization) to evaluate sport spectators (2002). Zhang, Pease, Lam, Bellerive, Pham, Williamson, & Lee developed the Scale of Attendance Motivation (SAM) to measure five socio-motivational factors (Stress and Entertainment, Achievement Seeking, Catharsis and Aggression, Salubrious Effects, and Community Image) affecting spectator attendance at Minor League Hockey Games (2001). Pease and Zhang utilized the Spectator Motivation Scale (SMS) to explore the four factors (Fan Identification, Team Image, Salubrious Attraction, and Entertainment Value) influencing spectator attendance at professional basketball games (2001).

Game attendance is a primary goal for both professional and intercollegiate sports programs. Understanding the motivational factors that drive spectator attendance is a continual pursuit. Knowledge of significant predictors of sport fans' motives is a key to developing effective marketing strategies that will maximize attendance and profits. While many studies have focused on professional sports, the motives for college sport attendance are less understood. This study will focus on motivational factors that drive students to attend intercollegiate sporting events.

The three purposes of the study are: (a) to identify the significant predictors of sport fans' motives to attend intercollegiate sporting events, (b) to compare motivational factors among different demographic groups (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, educational level, marital status, and yearly household income), and (c) to compare motivational factors at a predominantly women's university with those at a more traditional university.

The sample for this study will be selected from students of two different U.S. universities in the same city. One university is predominantly a women's university (with only women's sports), and the other is a large traditional university with a full spectrum of sports. Both universities are state schools. An established motivational scale will be used to examine motivational factors for attending intercollegiate sports. The survey will be conducted online.

Analysis will include an assessment of key motivational factors that drive intercollegiate sports attendance and ANOVA as a way to detect motivational differences based on demographics and the type of university. Constraints will also be examined in terms of what prevents college students from attending intercollegiate sports (Ridinger & Funk, 2007). The discussion will highlight relevant findings that can help college sports administrators improve their understanding of attendance motivators, thus helping them devise more productive marketing strategies. In addition, results will indicate whether there are significant motivational differences in types of college students and types of universities.

References:

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