

Motives and Value-based Attitudes in Spectator Sports

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**Marketing
Abstract 2009-023**

**May 28, 2009
11:15 AM**

**25 minute oral
(Richland C)**

A stream of studies have investigated motives for sports spectating (e.g., Funk, Mahony, & Ridinger, 2002; Gantz, 1981; James & Ross, 2004; Zhang, Pease, Lam, Bellerive, Pham, Williamson, Lee, & Wall, 2001) and developed scales to measure motives for spectator sport consumption (Al-Thibiti, 2004; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). However, motives might not be a good variable to predict spectator sport consumption behavior particularly in a place, for example in Taiwan, where spectator sports are not as popular as in the US. In the study conducted by the researchers in Taiwan, no significant relationship (correlation coefficient = -0.026, $p=0.799$, $n=101$) was found between an overarching motive and spectator sport consumption behavior (including watching sports on TV, on the Internet, and reading about sports in newspapers or magazines).

Maslow (1970) wrote that 'motivation is...never ending, fluctuating, and complex' (p. 24). It seems that motivations are situational and vary in different use situations. For example, because his or her friend was asking, a person could be motivated to watch sports to enjoy friendship. It is quite true for this person that 'wanting to spend time with friends is the reason why I watch sports' (an item measuring a sociability motive) (c.f. James & Ross, 2004; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). However, this does not necessarily mean the person associates the value of sociability with spectator sports. A value-based attitude toward spectator sports may be different from a motivation for watching sports. The current research attempted to examine the differences between value-based attitudes toward and motives for sport spectating.

The research design is to compare the motives for watching sports and value-based attitudes toward sport spectating. The current research used baseball as an example, which is the most popular spectator sport in Taiwan. The survey was conducted when the 2008 IBAF (International Baseball Federation) Final Olympic Qualifying Tournament was held in Taiwan. Measures of the motives for spectator sports (c.f. James & Ross, 2004; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995) using seven-point Likert scales included three motives: entertainment, sociability, and self-esteem.

Measures of value-based attitudes toward spectator sports were created (c.f. Eagly & Chaiken, 1992; Funk, Haugtvedt, & Howard, 2000) using seven-point Likert scales. The value-based attitudes were extended from values associated with spectator sports (Gau, 2007). For the value of Entertainment associated with spectator sports, the items measuring the value-based attitude were: 1. Compared to other activities, watching baseball games is one of the best entertaining activities; 2. When I am thinking of an entertaining activity, I would think of watching baseball games; 3. Watching baseball games is one of my important entertaining activities. For the value of Sociability associated with spectator sports, the items measuring the value-based attitude were: 1. Compared to other activities, watching baseball games is one of the best activities to be with friends; 2. When I am thinking of an activity to be with friends, I would think of watching baseball games; 3. Watching baseball games is one of my important activities to be with friends. For the value of Self-esteem associated with spectator sports, the items measuring the value-based attitude were: 1. Compared to other activities, watching baseball games is one of the best activities for me to satisfy achievement; 2. When I feel frustrated, I would think of watching baseball games to release the frustration; 3. Watching baseball games is one of my important activities to enhance my confidence.

One hundred and sixty-two participants were recruited when they prepared to attend a game of Final Olympic Qualifying Tournament, and 237 participants were recruited in the middle of Taiwan. The sample was consisted of 193 males (49%) and 202 females (51%). The majority of participants ($n=238$, 60%) were between 18 and 25 years old. The subjects had a mean age of 25.70 years ($SD = 7.10$). Ninety-eight percent of participants ($n=390$) had at least a senior high school education. The reliabilities of the three subscales of motives were between 0.830 and 0.863; the reliabilities of the three subscales of value-based attitudes were between 0.936 and 0.943.

The results of one sample t-test showed that the differences between the scores of motives and the scores of value-based attitudes were significant (Entertainment: 0.77, $SD=1.23$, $p<.001$, motive > attitude; Sociability: 0.51, $SD=1.59$, $p<.001$, motive > attitude; Self-esteem: 1.08, $SD=1.24$, $p<.001$, motive > attitude). Correlations between motives and behavior attending baseball games in person (Entertainment: 0.299, Sociability: 0.214, Self-esteem: 0.232) were lower than correlations between value-based attitudes and behavior attending baseball games in person (Entertainment: 0.395, Sociability: 0.358, Self-esteem: 0.314). In particular, using the Fisher r-to-z transformation, the difference between the motive of Sociability and behavior and the value-based attitude of Sociability and behavior was significant ($p=.042$). This reveals that the value-based attitude of Sociability might be a better indicator predicting behavior attending sports in person than the motive of Sociability in Taiwan.

2009 North American Society for Sport Management Conference (NASSM 2009)

Because the mean score of the value-based attitude of Sociability is significantly lower than that of the motive of Sociability, it seems that residents in Taiwan might be Sociability-motivated to watch sports in person occasionally but might not associate Sociability with attending sports in general. They might go shopping or go restaurants rather than go attending sports to satisfy Sociability. Further, for the group who had at least attended one game during the Final Olympic Qualifying Tournament (n=190, 48%), the correlations between motives and behavior were not significant whereas the correlations between value-based attitudes and behavior were significant (Entertainment: 0.237, Sociability: 0.207, Self-esteem: 0.234). This also indicated that the value-based attitudes might be better predicting behavior attending sports than motives in Taiwan.

Further research is required to compare motives and value-based attitudes in other types of spectator sports such as watching sports on TV, on the Internet, reading about sports, and talking about sports. Future research may develop a model examining relationships between personal values, value-based attitudes, motives, and spectator sport consumption behavior. Key words: Entertainment, Sociability, Self-esteem, Value-based attitudes, Motive