

**Development of a scale measuring the sociological motives of Korean-American Major League Baseball consumers**

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Sport is an important part of many people's lives in the United States. The amount of media coverage allocated to sport in the United States surpasses coverage given to many other areas of society, such as the economy, politics, and education (Coakley, 2004). Considering that sport has such a significant role in American culture, it is important to consider how sport has been located or portrayed to Asian immigrants. Of the sports that have a large professional following in the U.S., baseball also enjoys wide popularity in both Japan and South Korea, as well as in Taiwan. However, baseball is not widely popular in most other Asian countries. Given such factors, it is likely that the cultural meaning of sports in the U.S. differs when compared to that of most Asian countries. Only a few Asian countries, such as Japan, Taiwan and South Korea, have relatively highly developed professional sports leagues.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, about 5 percent (13.1 million) of the total American population is Asian-American, and most Asian-Americans reside in the large metropolitan cities, such as Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco. These major cities where the Asian-American population is concentrated are also where many of America's major professional sports teams are located. In this respect, the significance of the Asian-American population to the sports industry could be more powerful than its proportion of 5 percent of the total U.S. population. However, because there are over 30 Asian ethnic groups in the U.S., each of which have distinct cultures, making generalizations about Asian-Americans as a group can be problematic, especially with respect to sports (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2000).

Even though the aforementioned factors suggest that the Asian-American community is an important niche market in the U.S. sports industry, there has not been enough research focusing on Asian-American sport consumers. While many studies have focused general attention on sports fans in the U.S., no study has paid particular attention to understanding the motives of Asian-American sport consumers who have different cultural and social values compared to American sport consumers. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to develop a scale measuring the sociological motives of Korean-American Major League Baseball (MLB) consumers, particularly recent immigrants who are in process of adapting to U.S. society.

Three core concepts (or constructs) in studies about the adaptation processes of immigrants in the U.S. provide a theoretical guideline for the current study (Berry, 1997; Gordon, 1964; Hurh & Kim, 1984; Potes & Zhou, 1993): ethnic attachment, cultural adaptation, and social adaptation. These three dimensions have been located as major concepts in explaining the adaption patterns of immigrants in the U.S.

Methods: This study consisted of five primary sections. First, we reviewed existing scales used to measure the motivation of sport fans/spectators in their attendance at sporting events (139 items and 56 dimensions). In the second section, we noted several recent instances of professional teams targeting promotions specifically to Asian-American consumers, suggesting that while some sport marketers have begun to recognize the potential of promotions aimed at Asian-American groups, academics have yet to give specific research attention to the topic. Third, we discussed our qualitative research project focused on the cultural meaning and importance of sport to Koreans in the U.S. as well as reviewed some existing research on Asian-American consumers; in so doing, we identified additional dimensions to be added to a scale specifically measuring the motives of Korean-American MLB spectators.

Based on the above steps and a review of the adhesive adaptation model (Hurh & Kim, 1984) and assimilation theories (Berry, 1997; Gordon, 1964; Potes & Zhou, 1993), we developed a 19-item questionnaire including three dimensions: ethnic attachment (EA), cultural adaptation (CA), and social adaptation (SA), to measure the motivation of Korean-American MLB consumers. The responses to each item on the questionnaire were examined using a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree). To test the validity of the instrument, a content validity test was conducted by a panel of 3 experts. In addition, a pilot study involving 10 Korean graduate students and 10 Korean-Americans was conducted to examine the items' relevance, representativeness, and clarity. The preliminary scale was then modified accordingly based on the experts' feedback and results of the pilot study. The questionnaires were administered in the Los Angeles (LA) area using a convenience sampling method.

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Eight hundred questionnaires were distributed in Korean markets and churches in the LA area and 119 questionnaires were returned.

Results for Scale development: A total of 119 (68 men and 51 women) Korean Americans in the LA area participated in this study. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 60 years ( $M=30.23$ ,  $SD=7.0$ ), with a majority (64%) indicating single marital status. In addition, 93.3 percent (111) of research participants were born in Korea and the average length of stay in the U.S. was 7 years ( $SD=7$ ).

Exploratory factor analysis: A principal-components analysis with varimax rotation was conducted on the 19 items. The number of factors retained was determined by the scree test plot and eigenvalues greater than 1.00. The three factors and their respective eigenvalues were EA (9.36), CA (2.40), and SA (1.52). A total of 15 items were retained. Factor 1 accounted for 62.40%, Factor 2 for 16.01 % and Factor 3 for 8.34% of the variance. The following factor loadings were presented: Factor 1. Ethnic attachment (factor loading: .729-.838), Factor 2. Cultural adaptation (factor loading: .821-.895), Factor 3. Social adaptation (.896-.956). Reliability tests showed acceptable Cronbach's alpha scores, ranging from .90 to .98., which was within the range recommended by Nunnally, (1967, 1978).

Confirmatory factor analysis: In order to exam overall model fit, several fit indexes were utilized by using the LISREL program, which include LFI, CFI, NFI, and IFI). The model revealed acceptable model fit ( $\chi^2=335.09$ ,  $df=87$ ,  $N=116$ ,  $NFI=.92$ ,  $CFI=.94$ ,  $NFI=.92$ ,  $IFI=.94$ ). In addition, the tests of discriminant and convergent validity showed acceptable levels as well.

Discussion: The study provides a conceptual explanation of why Korean-American sport consumers are motivated to attend sporting events in the U.S. The results indicate that the current instrument is a reliable and valid analytical tool to measure the unique motivation of Korean-American MLB consumers. The scale was developed through a solid conceptualization and rigorous analyses based on non-student samples. Researchers and practitioners of Korean-American sport consumers may utilize the scale (a) to examine their sociological motives of attending sporting events (MLB), and (b) to learn how Korean-Americans utilize sports to adapt to new society.