

Relationships between Participating Specialization and Spectating Motivation

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Previous research has examined the relationship between the motives of sport participation and the motives of sport spectatorship (e.g., Shamir & Ruskin, 1984; Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999). However, there are not any studies that have examined whether people with various levels of specialization in participating sports are driven by different types of motives to watch sports. 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 motives (Al-Thibiti, 2004; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). These previous works, however, did not answer whether different types of spectating motives were related to various intensity of involvement among sports participants. The current research attempts to clarify the relationship.

According to attitude consistency (Eagly & Chaiken, 1992), halo effects, and balance theory (Lutz, 1991), active participants in a sport might be more likely to form positive attitudes toward the sport and to be motivated to appreciate the sport. Consequently, it is hypothesized that people characterized with a high level of specialization in a sport have stronger motivation to watch the sport than people with a low level of specialization. Although Shamir and Ruskin (1984) found that the extent of involvement in physical activity and the level of spectatorship were almost uncorrelated, they did not use a specific sport to examine the disconnection between participation and spectatorship. The current research argues that the relationship between participation and spectatorship in the same sport is likely to be positive. In addition, because more specialized participants in a sport have more knowledge, experiences and equipments than less specialized participants in the sport, more specialized participants are more capable to understand the sport and more likely to have vicarious achievements through watching the sport than less specialized participants. Therefore, it was hypothesized that compared to people with low specialization, people characterized with a high level of specialization in a sport were more likely to be motivated by Knowledge and Self-esteem to watch the sport than by Entertainment and Sociability. That is, compared to people with high specialization, people characterized with a low level of specialization in a sport were more likely to be motivated by Entertainment and Sociability to watch the sport than by Knowledge and Self-esteem.

The current research used basketball as an example to examine the relationships between participating specialization and spectating motivation. A questionnaire was distributed, which included a measure of level of specialization (Bryan, 1977; Kuentzel & Heberlein, 1992; Little, 1976; McIntyre & Pigram, 1992; Virden & Schreyer, 1988; Wellman, Reggenbuck, & Smith, 1982) in playing basketball using five-point Likert scales and measures of the four motives for spectator sports scales (Gau, 2008; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995) using five-point Likert. One hundred and fifty-one participants who had ever watched basketball games in person, on TV or on the Internet were recruited in a public train station (n=121) and in a university class (n=30). The sample was consisted of 92 females (63%) and 55 males (37%). Forty percent of participants (n=60) were between 16 and 18 years old, and 28% (n=43) were between 19 and 24 years old. The majority of participants (n=146, 97%) had at least a senior high school education. Ninety-five participants (64%) were students. The reliabilities of the four subscales of motives were between 0.891 and 0.943.

Participants were divided into two groups by using cluster analysis in terms of specialization in basketball participation: the high-specialization group (n=79) with a mean of 3.27 (SD=0.537) and the low-specialization group (n=69) with a mean of 1.58 (SD =0.447) (missing data=3). Comparing the two groups, the results showed that individuals characterized by a high level of specialization in playing basketball (Knowledge: M=3.52, SD=0.65; Self-esteem: M=3.35, SD=0.80; Entertainment: M=3.48, SD=0.72; Sociability: M=3.17, SD=0.89) were more strongly motivated to watch basketball games than those characterized by a low level of specialization (Knowledge: M=2.29, SD=0.79; Self-esteem: M=2.48, SD=1.30; Entertainment: M=2.42, SD=1.03; Sociability: M=2.42, SD=1.14).

Further, 39 participants in the high-specialization group rated the motive of Knowledge, 38 participants rated Entertainment, and 26 participants rated Sociability higher than 3.5, whereas 1 participant in the low-specialization group rated the motive of Knowledge, 9 participants rated Entertainment, and 13 rated Sociability higher than 3.5. Using nonparametric analysis, Chi square tests showed that compared to less specialized participants, more specialized participants were more likely to be motivated by Knowledge than Entertainment (Chi square (1, n = 87) = 5.89, p=0.015) and Sociability (Chi square (1, n = 79) = 12.88, p<0.001) to watch sports. That is, compared to more specialized participants, less specialized participants were more likely to be motivated by Entertainment and Sociability than Knowledge to watch sports. The hypothesis that compared to less

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specialized participants, more specialized participants were more Knowledge-motivated than Entertainment- and Sociability-motivated to watch sports was supported. However, 38 participants in the high-specialization group rated Entertainment, 36 rated Self-esteem, and 26 rated Sociability higher than 3.5, whereas 9 participants in the low-specialization group rated the motive of Entertainment, 14 rated Self-esteem, and 13 rated Sociability higher than 3.5. When the two groups were compared, no significant preference to any of the three motives was found. The hypothesis that compared to less specialized participants, more specialized participants were more Self-esteem-motivated than Entertainment-motivated (Chi square (1, n = 97) = 1.05, $p=0.306$) and Sociability-motivated (Chi square (1, n = 89) = 0.29, $p=0.590$) to watch sports was not supported.

People with a low level of specialization might have a high level of team identification or player identification, support their favored teams and players, and enhance their self-esteem through the psychological connection with the organizations and players. Further research is required to examine the moderating effects of team/player identification on the relationship between participating specialization and Self-esteem-motivated spectatorship in a same sport. Based on the results, sport managers may use Sociability and Entertainment rather than Knowledge as themes in marketing activities to attract people with a low level of participating specialization in a sport.