Means-end Chain of Spectator Sport Consumption

Hung-Lin Liau, Asia University, Taiwan
Li-Shiue Gau (Advisor), Asia University, Taiwan

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The current research attempts to apply means-end chain model to spectator sport consumption. Gutman (1982) proposed a means-end chain model which explains the major consumption processes that link values to consumption behavior. Means are consumption activities in which people engage; ends are the achievement of value states. Based on the attributes a product possesses, people consider whether to consume the product. If one or some of the attributes can produce desired consequences, people may decide to engage in consumption activities with the product. The specific product in the current research is spectator sports. Literature review, interviews and focus groups (Gau, 2007) identified 20 attributes of sport spectating, 27 consequences of spectator sport consumption, and 30 values fulfilled through spectator sport consumption. A questionnaire was then developed, which included these attributes, consequences, and values. The data were analyzed by exploratory factor analysis and a hierarchical value map of spectator sports was constructed.

The questionnaire was distributed to full-time and part-time students enrolled in a university in the middle of Taiwan and their friends. Two hundred and fifty-three participants were recruited. The sample was consisted of 56% males. The majority of participants (86%) were between 19 and 44 years old. The overwhelming majority of respondents (93%) had received at least some college education. Hence, the participants had enough knowledge to complete the survey.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed using Maximum Likelihood for the extraction and Varimax with Kaiser Normalization for the rotation. The 20 attributes loaded on four factors with Eigenvalues higher than 1. The four attributes were labeled: game drama, skills and spirits, fashion and crowd, the team background and records. The number of individual attributes per factor ranged from three to seven. The loadings ranged between 0.31 and 0.84. According to Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (1998), an item loading over 0.30 is the minimum level of practical significance. Further, the 27 consequences loaded on six factors with Eigenvalues higher than 0.96. They were labeled: skill and knowledge, social sharing, supporting a team, educational experience, fun and excitement, fashion and expression. The number of individual consequences per factor ranged from three to six. The loadings ranged between 0.37 and 0.88. The 30 values loaded on six factors with Eigenvalues higher than 1 and the seventh factor with Eigenvalue 0.74. The seven factors were labeled: sociability, achievement, intrinsic (epistemic, aesthetic and ritual values) values, enjoyment, collective identity, moral, harmony and spiritual life. The number of individual values per factor ranged from two to seven. The loadings ranged between 0.45 and 0.79.

For constructing a hierarchical value map, correlation coefficients were calculated among attributes, consequences, and values. The relational coefficients between the four attribute factors and the six consequence factors were all significant (p<.05) between 0.13 and 0.66. The relational coefficients between the six consequence factors and the seven value factors were all significant (p<.05) between 0.16 and 0.60. A means-end chain model of spectator sport consumption is supported. The hierarchical value map of spectator sport consumption provided a theoretical model to understand the process of spectator sport consumption and provided useful information for sport managers to understand sport consumers’ decision making process. Sport managers can base on the differences of correlations among attributes, consequences and values to design marketing activities. Future research can use means-end chain model to investigate how sport spectatorship fits into leisure consumption.