The Effects of Motivation, Constraints, and Attitude on Fantasy Sports Participation

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Fantasy sports are increasingly attracting traditional sports fans who are no longer satisfied with merely viewing or attending sporting events (Cattani, Ko, & Kim, 2009; Dwyer, 2009). The advent and explosive growth of fantasy sports have provided sports fans with increased opportunities for action. Because of the hands-on appeal of fantasy sports, the phenomenon of modern (e.g., Internet) fantasy sports has become an increasingly significant participation trend among many consumers over a short time period (Prescott, 2006). Therefore, sport marketers need to be aware of the various aspects of fantasy sports consumption and be concerned about the future of the fantasy sports industry. In order to attract to and maintain sports fans in the fantasy sports industry, sport marketers need to understand fantasy sports participants’ behavior and psychological factors that might affect their behavior.

In addition to understanding the motivations that drive people to participate in fantasy sports on the Internet, this study will examine constraints that limit people to participate in fantasy sports. If sport marketers use the Internet and their web sites as marketing tools (Brown, 2003), they should endeavor to target the motivations behind fantasy sports participation while at the same time work to diminish some negative dimensions that limit participation in fantasy sports. To identify motivations of fantasy sports participants, the uses and gratifications theory and sport fan motivation scales were used. An examination of previous literature (e.g., Alexandris et al., 2002; Crawford & Godbey, 1987; Crawford, Jackson, & Godbey, 1991) was conducted to identify constraints related to fantasy sports participation.

The primary purpose of this study was to analyze the psychological dimensions such as motivations and constraints associated with online fantasy sports participation. The proposed model was used to measure motivations and constraints of fantasy sports participants. This proposed model associated with motivations and constraints included eight motivation dimensions (i.e., competition, economic, social interaction, escape, fantasy, achievement, knowledge, and pass time) and four constraints dimensions (i.e., time, lack of partner, lack of interest, and lack of knowledge). In addition to the development of the proposed model, this study investigated how these motivations and constraints affected participants’ attitudes toward fantasy sports participation.

This study involved the facilitation of a six-section survey of subjects (N=279) who use the message boards of four fantasy sports websites (i.e., ESPN.com Fantasy Games, Yahoo! Fantasy Sports, FOX Fantasy Sports, and NFL Events: Fantasy Sports). The data and psychometrics of the scale were analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) 17.0 and AMOS 6.0 were utilized to analyze the data and psychometrics of the scale. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were utilized to understand the relationship between motivation, constraints, and attitude toward fantasy sports participation. The goodness-of-fit of the structural model was tested. The overall model fit of the structural model was found to be good (i.e., S–B $\chi^2$/df = 1.679, RMSEA = .049, CFI = .92, SRMR = .081). The results revealed that motivation had a positive and significant effect (.43, p < .05) on attitude. Furthermore, constraints had a negative and significant effect (-.25, p < .05) on attitude. These results showed that both the motivations and constraints of fantasy sports participants have considerable influences on their attitude toward fantasy sports participation. The findings of this study provide unique insight for sport marketing researchers regarding the identification of psychological factors associated with sport consumers in a virtual world. Given these results, theoretical and practical implications for future research will be discussed in this presentation.