

The Theory of Planned Behavior and the Intention to Consume Sport through Home Entertainment Technology

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Introduction

Pritchard & Funk (2006) note the escalating consumption of sport through media, a trend that deemphasizes the importance of attendance to sport organizations. Nevertheless, the notion that consumers may prefer to watch sports on television over attending live events represents one of the primary concerns amongst sport industry professionals today (Luker, 2012). Although general publications have recently touched on this topic (Deford, 2011; Maske, 2010), there is a dearth of empirical research on the decision to consume sport via home entertainment technology in lieu of live events. The purpose of this study is to identify the motives for in home sport consumption by way of home entertainment technology and test for saliency. Additionally, it will attempt to use the theory of planned behavior to better understand the motives for consuming sport in home rather than attending live events. Seven motives explaining why people consume sport via home entertainment technology for leisure purposes have been extracted from literature. These factors are attributes, entertainment, information, loyalty, social, time, and money.

Behavioral Attitudes & Home Entertainment Consumption

A review of home entertainment literature (Bellman, Schweda & Varan, 2010; Peronard & Just, 2011; Johnson, 1984; Kim & Lee, 2003; Petersen, Madsen & Arne, 2002; Sultan, 1999) cites attributes, or inherent characteristics (Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2012) as a common factor that draws individuals to consume entertainment technology. The wide-screen and picture clarity were found to motivate the acquisition of high definition televisions (Sultan, 1999). This finding was supported and the attribute of sound was also added as a motive for consumption of leisure through home theater (Kim & Lee, 2003; Petersen, Madsen, & Arne, 2002). Home entertainment technology research also finds entertainment to be a significant motive for home entertainment technology (Bellman, Schweda, & Varan, 2010; Peronard & Just, 2011), a finding substantiated by sport consumer research (Fairley & Tyler, 2012; Gantz & Wenner, 1995). Literature on interactive television technology (Bellman, Schweda & Varan, 2010) and fantasy sport (Dwyer & Drayer, 2010) has highlighted the emergence of information in the form of ads, content, and statistics as a motive for consuming sport via entertainment technology. Finally, a review of sport consumer research has shown that loyalty and the antecedent items of identification, vicarious achievement, and trust as a motive for various forms of sport consumption (Shih-Hao, Ching-Yi Daphne, & Chung-Chieh, 2010).

Subjective Norms

Ajzen (1985, 1991) explains that subjective norms, or social expectations placed on an individual by "significant others," have a part in determining a person's intention to perform a behavior. Cunningham & Kwon (2003) note the substantiality of significant others in influencing an individual's decision whether or not to attend an event. Moreover, Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton (2007) note how seldom spectators attend events alone, indicating a social norm that may serve to constrain event attendance, but motivate an individual to consume sport in home. Additionally, the recent development of interactive TV (Bellman, Schweda & Varan, 2010) and fantasy sport (Drayer et al, 2010; Dwyer & Drayer, 2010; Farquhar & Meeds, 2007), has been shown to foster a 21st century virtual social component to sport consumption in the home via entertainment technology. Thus, subjective or social norms can serve as either a constraint or a motive for consumption of sport via home entertainment technology and represent a critical component in behavioral outcome.

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Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioral control is influenced by resources (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). Cunningham & Kwon (2003) found that two factors, time and money, emerge as impactful constraints to attending sporting events. Due to the trade-off between time and money (Glorieux et al, 2010), these two factors are reasonable predictors of perceived behavioral control for sport consumer decisions. Adding further support to this notion is Kim & Lee's (2003) point on the present day affordability of home theater technology. When considered in conjunction with the convenience and low-complexity desired by sport consumers in studies by Gantz & Wenner (1995) and Fairley & Tyler (2012), the notion that sport consumption by way of home entertainment technology is a favorable option for individuals lacking one or both of these resources is corroborated.

Past Experience

Cunningham & Kwon (2003) included a construct called "past experience" in using the theory of planned behavior to explain sporting event attendance. Additionally, Kanter & Wades (2000) found attendance experience to be impactful in forecasting consumer's intent to purchase tickets to future sporting events. Thus, a negative previous attendance experience may deter future attendance. It can be hypothesized, then, that this would increase the likelihood of consuming sport in an alternative way, such as, in home.

Methods and Expected Findings

Focus groups, stratified by age and gender, and consisting of adult males, young adult males, young adult females, and mixed groups, will be conducted until saturation. The purpose is to confirm existing constructs and add any new common themes that may emerge to explain the motivation to consume sport via home entertainment technology rather than attending live events. A scale will be developed using the measures extracted from the literature listed above. The purpose of the scale is to determine why individuals consume sport through home entertainment technology and it will be tested with a target sample, N=400, and a critical sample, N=210, to determine the saliency of the factors. Additionally, the researchers will be able to find what aspects of Ajzen's (1985, 1991) theory of planned behavior are most impactful in explaining this behavior. Reliability and validity measures will be used as a means of verifying the sufficiency of the items in the model. The proposed model and hypothesized paths will be estimated and evaluated through the use of structural equation modeling. Data will be analyzed with SPSS 19.0 initially whereas the fit of the measurement model and the structural model will be estimated through the utilization of Mplus 6. Data collection is currently in progress and the researchers expect that all constructs (e.g. loyalty, attributes, entertainment, information, social, time, and money) will show a significant relationship with the decision to consume sport in home by way of home entertainment technology in lieu of live event attendance. Furthermore, the researchers expect that Ajzen's (1985, 1991) theory of planned behavior will be an effective model for explaining this consumer behavior.