In recent years we have witnessed a phenomenal growth of professional organized video game competitions, which is also known as “electronic sports” (esports). Esports refers to organized multiplayer video game competitions such as the League of Legends, Starcraft, and Counter Strike. Taylor (2013) indicated that esports “represents the configuration of competitive video gaming as spectatorial and professionalized sport” (p. 1). Despite the contested definition on its own, esports is now experiencing a rapid “sportization” process (Elias & Dunning, 1986) and has grown into a sensational global business. A recent report by research agency Newzoo estimates that there are 116 million esports enthusiasts in 2015 globally and the projected revenue of the global esports industry will reach $765 million by the year of 2018 (Newzoo, 2015). Beyond massive participation, esports is drawing tremendous viewership and is now evolved into a spectator event. Besides watching the esports games on TV or Internet, throngs of fans are lining up for live-gaming tournaments that are held in sport venues. Last year, the sold-out final for the League of Legends World Championship hosted in Seoul’s World Cup Stadium recorded 40,000 attendees. Despite the increasing popularity of esports spectatorship worldwide, little is known about the motivational factors that affect spectators attending the esports events.

In this study we attempt to develop an Esports Spectator Motivation Scale (ESMS) to measure the motives affecting attendance at an esports event. There have been extensive studies on the motivational factors affecting why spectators attend sporting events (McDonald, Milne, & Hong, 2002; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999). Previous studies have suggested that for different sports, spectators are often driven by different motives (James & Ross, 2004; Wann, Melnick, Russell, & Pease, 2001). Funk, Ridinger & Moorman (2003) in their study on the motivations of attending women's professional sports indicated that continued efforts were needed to develop core motives for all sports as well as contextual motives specific to a sporting event. Esports as an emerging spectator sport possesses many distinguishing features compared to other traditional sports. Essentially a mediated form of sporting competition configured with digital gaming technologies, the emergence of esports blurs and problematizes the boundaries between sports and media consumption. Kim and Ross (2006) in their study on the motives of sport video game participation adopted the Uses and Gratification (U&G) theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974) from the media study perspective to investigate the individual’s psychological needs (i.e. excitement, social interaction, competition, achievement, escape, knowledge application, identification with sport, and fantasy) when participating in sport video games. However, their framework is without referencing sport motivation theories. In this project we perceive esports spectatorship as a hybrid activity featuring characteristics of both sports consumption and media consumption. Overall, the purposes of this study are threefold: (a) to identify the significant motives to attend esports events, (b) to compare the motives of esports spectatorship with other forms of sports spectatorship, (c) to compare motivational factors among different demographic groups.

Based on extensive review of motivation literature on both sport and media consumption (Kim & Ross, 2006; Trail & James, 2001; Wann et al., 2001) and the input from a panel of esports spectators, we developed an initial ESMS scale with 28 items. Each item was phrased into a 7-point liker scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). The sample of this project was collected from a 4-day major international esports tournament hosted in the basketball stadium of an American public university. The data collection ended up with 266 participants consisted of 219 males (82%) and 47 females (18%). The sample of respondents represented a relatively young population with an average age of 22-year old. In order to determine the number of motivational factors, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using principal axis factoring and promax rotation was performed with SPSS 21. Five motivational factors consist of 24 items were eventually generated – Diversion (M=6.01), Fantasy (M=4.85), Esports Fan Bonding (M=5.90), Celebrity Attraction (M=5.94), and Novelty (M=6.32). The model displayed a good model fit and Cronbach's alpha...
of the variance ranged from .82 to .91. Regarding the motivational factors differences among different demographic groups, MANOVA test revealed that the spectator motivation factors was significantly different between genders where male spectators were higher in Celebrity, Esports Fan Bonding and Diversion, and females scored higher in Novelty and Fantasy.

In conclusion, from the ESMS we found both core motives for sport spectatorship as well as contextual motives specific to attending the esports event (Funk et al., 2003). The study also supported our initial assumption that the esports spectatorship was composed of motivations for both sport and media consumptions, and, therefore, such a distinctive market would require a new perspective for a better understanding of consumers. The development of the ESMS is one of the first studies on the topic of esports spectatorship. It extends previous scholarship on motivations in sport consumption to an emerging, while rapidly growing field, as well as postulates empirical evidences that provide insights into the marketing strategies of esports spectatorship.