Beyond The Game: Dimensions of Esports Online Spectator Demand

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This study explored the dimensions and consequences of esports online spectator demand. Preliminary dimensions of esports online spectator demand were identified based on semi-structured interviews of esports spectators, an online open-ended survey of esports fans, and a comprehensive review of literature. The resulted qualitative findings were adopted as the foundation to develop the Scale for Esports Spectator Demand (SESD). To validate the SESD and assess the impact of its factors on consumers’ cognitive and behavioral outcomes, a sample of esports online spectators (N = 1,309) responded to a survey containing the SESD. A total of 32-items under eight SESD factors were identified. While demand factors including Commentary Attractiveness, Player Attractiveness, Event Attractiveness, and Schedule Convenience had been found in traditional sport contexts, Chat Room, Streamer Attractiveness, Stream Quality, and Virtual Rewards appeared to be unique in esports. All eight SESD factors, excluding Schedule Convenience, were found to be significantly (p < .05) predictive of one or more of the outcomes associated with esports consumption.