

THE CHARACTERISTICS AND MOTIVES OF SPECTATORS OF THE CHINA BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE BEIJING DUCKS

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Abstract keywords

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Aim

With the development of its economic and political development, China has been gaining international attention in all aspects of its social progress. Ever since the 29th Beijing Olympic Games, it has been evident that the Chinese sports market has great potential. The NBA and the Italian Super Cup have already successfully brought their games to China. In addition, many Chinese sports fans watch NBA games and other top professional sports on television or the Internet. Therefore, it is important for sports marketers and managers to better understand the characteristics of Chinese sport spectators.

The China Basketball Association (CBA) is regarded as the best-organized professional sports. However, on the homepage of the CBA, nothing related to tickets and the spectators can be found. Therefore, this study examines the characteristics of spectators of the CBA, in order to understand their motives and to offer some suggestions to managers and marketers who want to explore the Chinese sport markets.

Methodology

In order to accomplish its purposes, this study conducted a questionnaire survey. "Demographic Information," "Past Experience," "Motives," and "Future Attendance" were included in it. The motives scale was developed through a review of previous studies (e.g., Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). The scale was first used to explore the motives of Chinese Super League spectators. Based on the results, some items were changed and an 11-motive scale with 33 items was used.

Data were collected on 23 January 2013 (Beijing Ducks vs. Shanxi Dragons). As mentioned above, the CBA is the best-organized professional sports in China. The Beijing Ducks were the championship team in the 2011/2012 season, while the Shanxi Dragons was one of the top four; therefore, the game on 23 January was one of the most exciting professional contests in China. Moreover, since Beijing is the capital of China, immigrants and spectators from all over the country can be found there. Therefore, this game was chosen for the survey. Eight volunteers, all college students, were asked to distribute questionnaires in the stadium before the game. In order to yield a sample that represents all the spectators, the arena was divided into four blocks, based on the ticket price. Different numbers of volunteers were assigned to different blocks, in accordance with the ratio of seats in each block. Questionnaires were distributed for every five lines and every five rows. Finally, 205 questionnaires were disseminated, 195 (95.1%) of which were collected and 186 (95.4%) were qualified.

Results

IBM SPSS 20 was employed for the data analysis. The results show that 69.4% of the spectators were male and 30.6% female. They ranged from 10 to 58 years of age, with an average of 26.4 years. Most of them (42.1%) had bachelor degrees and a few of (9.8%) master or doctorate degrees. In addition, 38.2% were students without any income; only four were older, retired spectators. Finally, 84.9% of the spectators were fans of the Beijing Ducks, and nearly 80% of them had played basketball.

When referring to the motives scale, most of the Cronbach α values were above .70, except vicarious achievement (.689) and drama (.516). The reason for the unsatisfactory values may be the small sample size. According to the descriptive statistics, vicarious achievement, drama, and sports interest were the top three motives for CBA spectators; their mean scores were 6.14, 6.07, and 5.89, respectively. Further, family, escape, and interest in players, which had mean scores of 5.35, 5.01, and 3.72, respectively, were the least important motives for these spectators. Finally, the fans of Beijing Ducks had a very high sense of team attachment (average score 6.12 on a 7-point Likert scale).

References

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