

The personal value structures of sport spectators

Authors: Douglas Michele Turco, Serkan Berber

E-mail: douglasmicheleturco@gmail.com

Introduction

Prior to an event, sport spectators hold similar or different expectations based on their personalities, motivations, and experiences. Expectations are typically affected by an event's perceived image, and the motivations for attendance reflect the personal values and preferences of the spectator. This paper studies the brand perceptions of sport event spectators as well as their personal value structures and motivational factors to attend an event, the 2014 Volleyball World Championships.

Background

Porter (1985) first illustrated the idea of value co-creation. Subsequently, this idea has been extended to address the precise needs of different types of organizations with value shops and value networks (Stabell & Fjeldstad, 1998). The special features of sport events, i.e. selling tickets and merchandise directly and via media, elements of drama in the form competition and unexpected end results, and the combination of the motivations and efforts of both volunteers and professionals, are typically not reflected in these models. Only recently has a sport value framework (Woratschek et al., 2014) considered the various ways sport event participants influence the event experience.

Sport event spectators along with the athletes, organization staff, etc. co-create the overall experience for themselves as well as for each other in-situ. Sport event managers would benefit from knowing the different motivators as well as personal values of spectators while the event is co-created. According to the Human Values Theory introduced by Schwartz (Schwartz 1992, 2012), values are the most important guiding principles for people when making decisions and can provide more understanding of attitudes and behavior. They are trans-situational goals that vary in importance. A specific value can be very important to one person, but have no meaning to another.

Research Objectives and Methods

The hypothesis of this study is that participants in an international sport event share some interests and values and yet have different motivational factors to attend the event. In this case, the idea is firstly to identify the event participants' value structures and secondly, examine the motivational factors of attendance. The third objective is to analyse how the respondents find the perceived image of the event in which they participate. When these findings are combined, the event organizer is able to segment the groups according to their values, motivators and perceptions. Study findings generate firstly a value-based profile of an international volleyball fan, secondly a brand image for the sport of volleyball amongst the fans and thirdly comment on the motivational factors of attending the world championship event.

Research Methods

The data for this study were collected during the 2014 Volleyball World Championships in Gdansk and Katowice, Poland, 30 August to 21 September. Spectators were queried

face-to-face by trained interviewers on-site. A questionnaire based on the PVQ (Portrait Values Questionnaire) was administered. The questionnaire consisted of four sets of questions. The first sought respondents' background information including nationality, age, and gender. The second consisted of the evaluation of the perceived brand characteristics of volleyball as sport, and the third part included 13 questions in accordance with PVQ model to assess the personal values of the respondent. The fourth part of the questionnaire was an open ended question to explore the three most motivating reasons to attend the event. Statistical analyses were performed using the Webropol proprietary software program.

Results and Discussion

The number of survey respondents totaled 347; 52 percent male and 48 percent female. Polish and Finns comprised the largest spectator segments by nationality. The average age among respondents was 36 years.

The three highest rated values of all respondents were benevolence, safety and hedonism. The three lowest rated values of volleyball fans were humility, achievement and power. The values most highly rated by Finns were safety followed by universalism, benevolence, and hedonism whereas the highest rated values for Poles were benevolence, safety, hedonism, and universalism. The image of volleyball was investigated through various attributes with the highest scored attributes being international, fun, exciting, ambitious, pleasant, successful, and strong. In terms of motivational factors to attend the event, the sport of volleyball itself, nationalism, and personal reasons were the most common.

The findings are consistent with an earlier study of football fans during the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa. Kuosmanen (2011) discovered attributes international, exciting, fun and colorful to represent football as a sport, and the most important motives for World Cup fans were to meet other people and achieve emotional experiences. It can therefore be concluded that volleyball is seen as successful and ambitious sport that is fun and exciting to watch but also provides a platform for fans to experience togetherness, appreciation and understanding for the welfare of people and the world.

References

- Porter, M. E. (1985). *Competitive advantage*. New York: Free Press.
- Schwartz, S. 1992. Universals in the content and structure of values: theory and empirical tests in 20 countries. In (M. Zanna, ed): *Advances in experimental psychology*, 25; 1-65. New York: Academic Press.
- Schwartz, S. H. et al. (2012). Refining the theory of basic individual values. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 103 (4), 663-688.
- Stabell, C. B., & Fjeldstad, O. D. (1998). Configuring value for competitive advantage: On chains, shops, and networks. *Strategic Management Journal*, 19 (5), 413-437
- Woratschek H, Horbel C. & Popp B. (2014). The sport value framework – a new fundamental logic for analyses in sport management. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 14 (1), 6-24.