

Session: **Factors Affecting the Market Demand of High School state Basketball Tournament**  
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**An investigation into the consumer profile of a state basketball tournament:  
Sociodemographic segmentation**

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Sociodemographic segmentation provides a baseline understanding of consumer profiles of specific sport event. When paired with such concepts as market demand and event operations, in-depth information can be obtained about consumer behavior of specific segment, enhancing the effectiveness of differential marketing strategies. In this third part of the symposium, we assessed sociodemographic characteristics for a high school basketball sectionals tournament with both boys and girls teams, which was held in a major southeastern city. The “sectionals” tournament was an event in which teams advance to the state championship via single elimination system. The tournament events were held over a four-day period in a large multi-purpose arena with over 75,000 seats. For the high school basketball tournament, the facility was set up with six basketball courts, and games were held simultaneously during an afternoon session and also an evening session. A nominal admission was charged.

Based on a comprehensive review of literature (e.g., Green, 1995; Hansen & Gauthier, 1989; Kasky, 1994; Lu, 2002; Pitts, Lu, Ayers, & Lucas, 2004; Schofield, 1983; Zhang, Pease, Hui, & Michaud, 1995), a questionnaire was developed. The sociodemographic variable section included the following variables: gender, ethnicity, age, role of attendance, education level, occupation, marital status, number of children, household income, companion(s) to the event. A convenience sampling method (i.e., mall intercept technique) was employed in this study by positioning survey stations in major entrance and hallway areas of the arena. Trained research assistants helped with collecting the data. Of the four event days, survey administration was conducted at two randomly selected tournament days. Following the institutional review board’s guidelines for the use of human subjects, participation in this study was voluntary. A total of 617 event attendees responded to the survey.

Of the respondents, 56.2% were male and 43.8% were female. Ethnic backgrounds of attendees included 43.7% African American, 53.8% Caucasian, 1.2% Asian, 0.7% Hispanic, and 0.7 mixed or other. Respondents ranged in age from 13-18 years old (22.7%), 19-24 years old (10.0%), 25-35 years old (15.8%), 36-55 years old (43.6%), and 56 years or older (7.9%). The age characteristics generally correspond well with the status of event attendance, where 22.3% were athletic participants of the event, 72.1% were spectators, 0.5% were exhibitors or salesperson, 0.7% were work for a media outlet, and 4.4% were of other functions at the event. In terms of education level of the attendees, 1.5% graduated from elementary school and 8.2% graduated from middle school, 30.1% graduated from high school, 29.9% had a bachelor’s degree, 27.3% had a graduate degree, and 3.0 were unspecified. The attendees represented a wide range of occupations, such as education (24.9%), profession (23.1), technical (7.9%), skilled worker

(6.8%), and clerical (4.3%). Over a half of the attendees were married (51.5%) and the remaining were single (38.6%), Divorced (5.0%), or other (5.0%). Corresponding to the marital status, 35.4% attendees had no child, 23.9% had one child, 23.1% had two children, 15.8% had three or four children, and 1.7% had five or more children. They were from households with an annual income of \$100,000 or higher (25.6%), \$75,000-99,999 (10.8%), \$50,000-74,999 (23.9%), \$30,000-49,999 (25.2%), \$15,000-29,999 (6.9%), and below \$15,000 (7.8%). Of the respondents, 9.8% attended the event alone, 66.0% attended with family members, 20.3% attended with friends, 0.8% attended with business associates, and 3.1% were unspecified.

Cross tabulations of these sociodemographic characteristics revealed that core consumers of the state high school basketball tournament were male and female Caucasians and African Americans, who were either school students or young to middle age adults with children and middle to high income levels. Based on these sociodemographic characteristics, it is suggested that event promotional activities should target on event participants (e.g., athletes, cheerleaders, coaches, and administrators) and their families, friends, and affiliated schools, residential areas, and athletic conference, as well as young to middle aged Caucasian and African American families with children and mid- to high- income levels. These socio-demographics can be used by the local high schools and high school organizing bodies to leverage sponsorships and better promote the event to the local community.