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# The Impact of Attendance at Major Sport Events on the Intention to Watch Televised Sports: Evidence from the FIFA Women's World Cup 2011

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## Abstract

Aim of abstract/paper – research question

In economic demand analysis of team sports, attendance is always analysed in terms of ex-post aggregated figures whereas the ex-ante (individual) demand or rather demand potential remains neglected. Yet, this is a crucial issue for sport management and policy. There are much more team sports that suffer from a lack of demand than highly demanded ones. Thus, there is a need for strategic advice on how to effectively stimulate demand in practice. The downside of this research challenge, however, is that such studies require costly survey designs to measure the individual consumption behaviour ex ante to deduce strategically fruitful target groups. This is done in this paper on a large survey (N=11,230) of visitors at the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup (WWC) in Germany. A focus is set on the question how the experience of attending this major event affects the intention to watch more televised women's football in the future.

Literature review

Attendance demand for league matches is likely to be the most researched topic in empirical sport economics. Partly for data, partly for methodical reasons, the larger demand for televised sport received substantially less attention. Forrest, Simmons and Buraimo (2005) were one of the first to investigate the broadcasting demand for league football in more detail. They focused on the uncertainty of outcome construct. Lately further studies were published. Alavy, Gaskell, Leach, and Szymanski (2010) looked also at outcome uncertainty of league football, but on the basis of minute-by-minute television viewership. Feddersen and Rott (2011) analysed televised matches of the German national team in football. The impact of major sport events on the demand for televised sport has not yet been studied.

### Methodology, research design and data analysis

The mentioned survey on the WWC had been conducted following a multi-step cluster sampling which is an approximation of a representative sample. Using a modified version of the four-page questionnaire of Kurscheidt, Preuß and Schütte (2008) (paper-pencil, assisted self-administered), local clusters in the surroundings of the stadia and on the so-called “Fanfests” (fan sites with large screens) were randomly interviewed. The overall sample appears to be the largest sport event visitors’ survey to date. The key question for this paper in the questionnaire is the following: “Due to Women’s World Cup, I will in the future... watch more women’s football on TV.” Answers are measured in 5-point Likert-scales. It operationalizes the construct of intention to buy (ITB), a valid predictor for individual demand potential (e.g., Bemmaor, 1995). The ITB here measures the extent to which the experience of attending the WWC stimulates the intention to watch (ITW) (more) televised women’s football. Ordered-probit models are regressed on the ordinal ITW values. For the explanatory variables in this data analysis, 10 constructs for random effects as well as diverse dummies for fixed effects on the event design and regional influences are tested. Random versus fixed models and alternative logit models serve as robustness checks.

### Results, discussion and implications/conclusions

Overall, the evidence basically shows that the impact of attending the WWC on the ITW for women’s football in the future is rather a “reviving effect”. This means that the habit to watch (women’s) football has to be given before or in the past (in all models the strongest predictor) and will be thus stimulated. The observation interestingly even holds for males. Far behind these predictors, preferences for (women’s) football and, in the case of males, income play a minor role in explaining the variance in the ITW. Thus, such a major event will not bring a large uninterested group to their TV sets when women’s football is televised without accompanying strategic programs. Yet, the insights are fruitful to design effective strategies to stimulate broadcasting demand. Already, the simple finding that gender, *ceteris paribus*, is less important for the ITW for women’s football than often argued in public debates turns out to be crucial for strategic advice to decision-makers.

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