

Comparing Sport Diversity Attitudes Between USA And Taiwan College Students

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Previous research defined diversity in sports as equal opportunities to access resources of sport participation for people with various cultural, linguistic, or ethnic backgrounds (Taylor & Toohey, 1999). However, this current study defined sport diversity as diverse level of various resources and activities in different sport types for people to participate. Sport diversity attitudes, therefore, imply awareness, perceived importance and rich opportunities of a diverse level of sport types for people to play and watch (Gau, Kim, Bae, Cheng, & Lee, 2014; Lin & Gau, 2016). That is, concerned is not only sport participation in terms of frequency, time, and strength, but also richness in diverse sport types. For individuals, due to the constraints of time and energy, the number or the range of sport types for them to participate may be limited. However, for a society, if more diverse of sport types is available, it is more likely that people can have more choices and enhance higher opportunities to pick up their favorite sports.

The research method adopted a survey both in United States and in Taiwan. Among 5 colleges in Taiwan, 145 college students were recruited with 75 males and 70 females. Among 9 colleges, 142 college students were recruited with 90 males and 51 females (one with missing gender information) to answer the questionnaires. The questionnaire included scales measuring perceived status of sport diversity on respondents' campus, sport diversity attitudes and a level of satisfaction with the sport diversity.

Descriptive analysis showed that college students in United States did workouts more frequently and had longer duration in average than those in Taiwan. Also, college students in United States watched sports more frequently than those in Taiwan.

As for the comparison of perceived status of sport diversity, college students in United States feel more exposed to various types of sport types on campus and perceived higher variety of opportunities to see sports events take place in college than those in Taiwan. However, Taiwanese college students personally feel participating more in a variety of exercise classes in college, feel learning more in a variety of exercise routines in college, and learn more about sports through watching various sports events in college than those in United States, probably because physical education is requisite courses in all colleges in Taiwan.

For the attitudes toward sport participation diversity, college students in United States and Taiwan were similar. However, college students in United States emphasize more importance on the school offering a variety of sports viewing experience than those in Taiwan. Finally, college students in United States were more satisfied that their schools provide a wealth of sports facilities and equipment and that their schools offer a variety of sports watching experiences.

Currently, GDP (gross domestic product) per capita in United States is more than twice of that in Taiwan. In other words, United States is a wealthier country than Taiwan. United States are more capable to afford sports facilities and equipment than Taiwan. Although college students in both countries perceived similar importance in sport participation diversity, college students in United States are more exposed to diverse types of sports and feel more satisfied than those in Taiwan.

On the other hand, traditionally and culturally, college sports in United States are much more popular than those in Taiwan and encourage the market of spectator sports. NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) and four professional sports (baseball, basketball, hockey, and football) occupy part of daily lives of residents in United States. By contrast, Taiwan has only one professional sport (baseball) and most people in Taiwan not very often put spectator sports as one of options in their leisure activities.

Interestingly, sports clubs, the intramurals, and courses in the fitness centers in United States are rich, diverse and welcome, but few colleges in United States require physical education courses. In Taiwan, although very few colleges in Taiwan had multiple functional fitness centers, compulsory sport courses and electives are offered. So, college students reported personally they participated in different sports in College. Probably due to the scarcity of fitness centers, Taiwan government began to build up community fitness centers since 2003. But the fitness centers are limited to some core sports considered most frequently participated in Taiwan such as swimming pool, badminton court, table tennis room, basketball court, weight training room, and dancing classroom. This study contributed to provide useful descriptive information about sport diversity for sport managers', policy makers' and educators' reference.

References

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