

Identifying Important Spectator Motives for Game Attendance in Taiwanese Professional Baseball Industry

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ABSTRACT

Sport marketers of Taiwanese professional baseball teams are facing the challenge of generating more revenue. One option to consider is to increase ticket sales by developing promotional strategies based on important spectator motives. Researchers suggested fan identification and the psychological commitment to a sport team can be seen as an indicator of spectating behavior. The purpose of the study was to identify the important attending motives across different levels of psychologically committed Taiwanese professional baseball fans. A stratified random sampling method was used and the results indicated fans with a high level of psychological commitment were more motivated by psychological factors; fans with low and medium psychological commitment levels were more motivated by hedonic factors. Promotional strategies could be developed based on the research findings to further increase attendance.

Keywords: Motive, Fan Identification, Internalization, Psychological Commitment, Sport Consumers, Taiwanese Professional Baseball

INTRODUCTION

Sport involvement includes two major forms: direct participation in sport and physical activities; and, the spectatorship and fandom of any sport games, which is widely recognized as one important type of leisure behavior (Shamir & Ruskin, 1984).

Both forms are considered to have major economic, social, and psychological implications (Wann, Melnick, Russell, & Pease, 2001). One such spectator sport, baseball, has always been considered a national sport in Taiwan. While the success of Major League Baseball became a model for Asian countries including Japan, South Korea and Taiwan in developing professional baseball, Taiwanese professional baseball has gone through a number of challenges including sport gambling and game fixing scandals (Lin, 2000) along with financial hardship. Given the relatively short period of development of Taiwanese professional baseball, club owners have been faced with the challenge of generating more revenues. One of the most important factors impacting this hardship is the lack of ticket sales. Some sport marketers have indicated the size of the market was not large enough to support a professional baseball league in Taiwan. Clearly, in order to succeed, Taiwanese professional baseball teams must increase attendance. One way to increase ticket sales is through the development of marketing strategies based on a better understanding of sport consumer motives.

Past research has suggested that the number of fans would increase if they have found enjoyment from spectatorship (Zillman, Bryant, & Sapolsky, 1989). Despite the core product, the game, which cannot be manipulated, marketing strategies have been developed based on short-term factors (e.g. promotions, scheduling of games, discounts on ticket price) to attract sport consumers. Nonetheless, to better understand sport consumption behavior, it is crucial to examine the psychological motivation of sport spectatorship. Researchers have hypothesized various motives for spectator attendance, such as aesthetics, entertainment, drama, escape, social interaction and achievement (Sloan, 1989; Zillmann, et al., 1989; Zillmann & Paulus, 1993; Wann, 1995; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Wann, et al., 2001). Spectating behaviors observed could be due to the entertainment value of the games (Gantz, 1981; Sloan, 1989; Gantz & Wenner, 1995; Krohn, Clarke, Preston, McDonald, & Preston; 1998), or the result of escaping from daily routines (Smith, Patterson, Williams & Hogg, 1981; Smith, 1988; Sloan, 1989; Gantz & Wenner, 1995; Krohn et al., 1998). It could also be based on the psychological commitment with the sport team (Murrell & Dietz, 1992; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; Wakefield, 1995; Wann, Roberts & Tindall, 1999; Funk & James, 2001). Such psychological commitment to a sport team is one of the best indicators of attendance (Kwon & Trail, 2001; Wann, et al., 2001).

Psychological commitment represents the attitude, the tendency of resistance to change, of an individual to a brand (Pritchard, Havitz, & Howard, 1999). In a sport context, psychological commitment can be seen as an individual's attitude toward a

sport team which involves fan identification (Milne & McDonald, 1999), and an internalization process (Kolbe & James, 2003). Motivations of sport spectatorship can vary depending upon the strength of an individual's psychological commitment to a sport team. Research has suggested that when an individual's psychological commitment is weak, he/she is usually motivated by hedonic factors (Milne & McDonald, 1999; Funk & James, 2001, 2004; Kolbe & James, 2003). Conversely, an individual is more likely to be motivated by psychological factors when the psychological association with the team is strong (Funk & James, 2001). Thus, the examination of one's psychological commitment to a sport team can help determine what motives would encourage him/her to attend games.

Milne and McDonald (1999) defined fan identification as "the personal commitment and emotional involvement customers have with a sport organization" (p. 13), and can be categorized into three levels, low, medium, and high. They suggested that fans with low identification are not emotionally attached to a sport team. That is, low identified fans enjoy the overall quality of the sport event rather than the outcome of a particular sport game. Fans displaying a medium level of identification are attracted by team-related elements (e.g. fad, skills, and personalities of players) (Milne & McDonald, 1999). Comparing to low-level identified fans, this group of fans tend to have more personal and financial investments in the team. A common behavior among fans with medium level of identification is wearing team apparel. High-level identified fans, or vested fans, are those who perceive themselves as having the emotional ownership of the teams. They have more loyalty and stronger emotional attachment to the teams they support than other groups of fans. Highly identified fans generally support a sport team despite its performance. Research has found that highly identified fans do not cut-off-reflected-failure (CORFing) (Sloan, 1989), and have better experience in enjoying the game even if the team loses (Wann & Branscombe, 1990).

Internalization reflects the degree to which an individual psychologically connects to a sport team. In the sport context, Kolbe and James (2003) suggested that there are three stages of the internalization process, which are the initial stage, the identification stage and the optimal internalization stage. The internalization continuum is much like the Psychological Continuum Model proposed by Funk and James (2001), where an individual is likely to be motivated by hedonic factors when he/she is at the lowest level, and influenced by psychological factors when he/she is getting higher level—i.e. more internalized with a sport team. At the initial stage of the internalization process, an individual's behavior is primarily influenced by the external forces made by others. Funk and James (2004) suggested that "a defining

characteristic of the identification stage is the formation of a distinct and exclusive preference for a sport team” (p. 10). This is the stage where both extrinsic and intrinsic factors exist. The intrinsic factors meet the basic psychological need for an individual, such as affiliation, so that the psychological connection between the person and the team begins to emerge. People at the optimal internalization stage not only see the team they support as their own team, but also view themselves as the members of the team (Funk & James, 2004). The optimal internalization stage is the result of complete internalization. When certain attributes of a team meet some core aspects of an individual, such as value, self-concepts, and attitudes, the team is a representative of a part of one’s self.

Numerous studies have been conducted regarding the spectator motives and fan identification (Kwon & Trail, 2001; James & Ross, 2002, 2004). Some results indicated respondents were more encouraged by sport-related motives, such as entertainment, skill, team effort, and drama, than motives related to self-definition and personal benefits, such as achievement, empathy, team affiliation, family, and social interaction (James & Ross, 2004), and others concluded that eustress was the primary motive (Kwon & Trail, 2001). In addition, James and Ross (2002) suggested that minor league consumers were more likely to be motivated by entertainment and social interaction motives. Major League Baseball consumers on the other hand were more likely to be motivated by team-related experiences, such as skills and drama. The results also indicated that Major League Baseball fans have a stronger psychological connection to the teams.

Although there have been studies regarding fan motives and fan identification levels of American professional sport spectatorship and fandom (Hansen & Gauthier, 1989; Baade & Tiehan, 1990; Zhang, Pease, Hui & Michaud, 1995; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Kolbe & James, 2000; James & Ross, 2002), no research was found dealing with the relationship between motives and the internalization process among Taiwanese professional baseball fans. Past research (Hsu, 2003) has, however, examined spectator motives and psychological commitment separately among Taiwanese professional baseball fans suggesting that supporting a sport team/player, entertainment, and group affiliation (social interaction) are the primary motives of Taiwanese professional baseball fans. Hsu (2003) applied personal investment theory (Maehr & Braskamp, 1986) to explore Taiwanese professional baseball attendance motives and fan identity among college students in Taipei. The findings indicated

entertainment and eustress were the most commonly found motives among college students in Taipei, and economic (betting) was the least important motive for attendance. As such, the purpose of this study was to identify the important spectator motives across different levels of psychological commitment to the teams. Specific research questions were generated as follows: 1) What are the strongest motives for individuals to attend a Taiwanese professional baseball game? 2) What are the motives for Taiwanese professional baseball fans across different levels of psychological commitment?

METHOD

Measures

After reviewing a series of scales (Wann, 1995; Kahle, Kambara & Rose, 1996; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Trail & James, 2001; James & Ross, 2004) measuring spectator motives and psychological commitment used in past research, 11 motives were drawn from three studies (Wann, 1995; Trail & James, 2001; James & Ross, 2004) due to the high frequency of the appearances in the relevant literature, and the cultural differences associated with professional baseball in Taiwan. Motives included in this study were escape, social interaction, drama (competition), achievement, skill (aesthetic), family, entertainment, empathy, team effort, team affiliation, and betting (gambling).

The level of individuals' psychological commitment to a sport team was determined based on the level of fan identification and internalization in this study. The psychological commitment scale contained eight items measuring two psychological commitment constructs, the levels of fan identification and the levels of internalization; adapted from James and Ross' Baseball Survey Form (James & Ross, 2004). Moreover, one self-reported measure was included to determine and to validate the psychological commitment measures during data analysis, by asking participants how much they consider themselves psychologically committed to the team they support. The survey was originally developed in English, but translated to Mandarin by an expert in this field, and translated back from Mandarin to English by another expert to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of the language following the procedure for back translation suggested by Brislin (1986).

Data Collection

A pilot study consisting of 47 participants was conducted before formal data collection in this study. One item of the escape construct was eliminated and some revisions were made on the survey after gathering the feedback from the subjects and post-examination of the results of the initial analysis. A stratified random sampling data collection method was used in this study. The sample was drawn from six stadiums based on different geographical locations in Taiwan. In the stadiums after the second inning, respondents were invited to complete a pencil/paper format survey, which contained 41 seven-point Likert type scale questions ranking from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree).

Data Analysis

Frequency tables were used to describe the sample characteristics. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was computed by using statistical software LISREL 8.52 to test the construct validity of 11 factors of motives. The CFA test was necessary due to the translation from English to Mandarin, and the changes made to the wording of some items. Researchers have suggested using multiple fit indices rather than single fit indices (Kelloway, 1998; Kline, 1998; McDonald & Ho, 2002; Stevens, 2002). In addition to construct validity, convergent validity of the psychological commitment measure was also tested by showing the correlation between the tested constructs and a hypothetical variable (Crano & Brewer, 1986). Cronbach's α was computed to test the instrument reliability. The grand mean of each motive was computed to determine the overall importance of spectator motives. The level of psychological commitment was determined by the grand mean of both fan identification and internalization (James & Ross, 2002), and the percentage breakdown was approximately 33%, 66%, and the rest indicating low, medium and high levels of psychological commitment, of total respondents.

After segmenting survey respondents into three groups based on the psychological commitment levels, a univariate analysis of variance test and a post hoc test were conducted to test the convergent validity level of the psychological commitment measure. Descriptive statistics were used to compare the grand mean of each motive in order to identify what was the most important motive for survey respondents as a whole. A multiple analysis of variance test (MANOVA) was used to compare motives across different levels of psychological commitment by using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS 12.0). Post hoc tests were also performed to examine the significant differences among respondents with different levels of psychological commitment.

RESULTS

Sample Characteristics

A total of 569 individuals from six selected stadiums were invited to take the surveys, 83 of them refused to participate, and 468 were usable with a response rate of 82.22%. A total of 18 surveys were left blank, and therefore deemed void. The percentage of female respondents was slightly higher than male (50.6% and 49.4%, respectively). The majority of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 30 years (63%), and single (85.6%). About 41.6% of respondents attended more than one but less than three games per month, and most respondents (83.4%) purchased tickets on site.

Table 1 Correlation Matrix of Motives

	ENT	SKI	DRA	EMP	FAM	ACH	AFF	ESC	EFF	SOC	BET
ENT	1.000										
SKI	.699*	1.000									
DRA	.717*	.682*	1.000								
EMP	.311*	.339*	.334*	1.000							
FAM	.249*	.371*	.350*	.286*	1.000						
ACH	.663*	.658*	.623*	.598*	.331*	1.000					
AFF	.610*	.681*	.610*	.524*	.395*	.805*	1.000				
ESC	.625*	.640*	.611*	.422*	.391*	.643*	.685*	1.000			
EFF	.691*	.738*	.661*	.388*	.345*	.735*	.701*	.631*	1.000		
SOC	.328*	.319*	.329*	.230*	.337*	.288*	.408*	.377*	.303*	1.000	
BET	-.302*	-.249*	-.225*	.058	.039	-.222*	-.155*	-.140	-.241*	.020	1.000

Note: (1) ENT = entertainment, SKI = skill, DRA = drama, EMP = empathy, FAM = family, ACH = achievement, AFF = team affiliation, ESC = escape, SOC = social interaction, BET = betting

(2) * Correlation is significant at .01 level (two tailed)

Instrument Validity and Reliability

The correlation matrix (see Table 1) among the constructs indicated positive and moderate to strong correlations between factors. Betting however, had weak significant correlations with other constructs, indicated that it was independent from other variables. The CFA test results of the scale indicated that the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), which is a measure of lack of fit per degree of freedom (MacCallum, 1995), was .069, less than .08, suggesting a reasonable fit of the model. The expected cross validation index (ECVI) (Browne and Cudeck, 1993) value measuring the degree to which a set of parameter estimates in one sample would fit another similar sample (Stevens, 2002) was 5.28, and deemed acceptable. The normal fit index (NFI) is one of the comparative fit indexes (Bentler & Bonnet, 1980), and represents the increment in fit per degree of freedom obtained by using the hypothesized model relative to the fit of the null model (Stevens, 2002). The NFI value of the tested model in this study was .96, which was greater than .9; therefore, was considered a good fit to the data. The comparative fit index (CFI) is a measure based on the chi-square statistics (Kelloway, 1998), indicating whether a model fits the data perfectly (McDonald & Ho, 2002). The CFI value of the tested model in this study was .98, which exceeded .90; therefore, was considered a good fit to the data (Kline, 1998). The root mean squared residual (RMR) is the square root of the mean of the squared discrepancies between the observed and implied covariance matrices. The RMR value of the model included in this study was .06, which was also considered good. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the internal consistency of the factors by using SPSS 12.0. The Cronbach's alphas of the factors ranged from .72 to .87, showing good internal consistency by exceeding the .70 cutoff recommended by Nunnally (1978).

Segmentation of Respondents

In order to segment survey respondents based on their psychological commitment levels, they were first divided into low, medium, and high levels of fan identification, and internalization based on the grand means, and the 33%-66% percentage breakdown. Respondents within a mean score range from 1 to 4.75 were categorized as a low level of fan identification, and mean scores from 5 to 6 were categorized as a medium level. The rest (above 6) were categorized into high level. In addition, respondents with mean scores of 4.25 or less were categorized as low level of internalization; mean scores between 4.5 and 5.33 were categorized as medium level; and, mean scores of 5.50 and above were categorized as a high level of internalization.

After cross-tabulating the results of fan identification and internalization levels, out of 468 survey respondents, 148 (31.62%) were at low level, 158 (33.76%) were at medium level, and 162 (34.62%) were at high level of psychological commitment. A total of 8 out of 468 respondents (0.17%) exhibited a low level of fan identification and high level of internalization, which was very likely attributable to measurement error, supported the relationship between fan identification and internalization. A univariate analysis of variance test with post hoc tests and Pearson's product correlation coefficient test were conducted to test the convergent validity of the psychological commitment measure. The correlation coefficient between psychological commitment segments and the self-reported measure was $r = .569$ ($p < .01$) indicating a positive, medium-to-strong relationship between these two variables. The univariate analysis of variance test result was significant ($F(2, 447) = 120.850, p < .01$) and the post hoc tests results showed significant mean difference ($p < .01$) across low, medium and high levels of psychological commitment. As such, the psychological commitment segments showed good convergent validity in measuring survey respondent's' psychological commitment to a sport team.

OVER ALL IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVES AND MOTIVES ACROSS PSYCHOLOGICAL COMMITMENT

To answer research question one, descriptive statistics were used to compare the means of motives to assess the overall importance of motives. According to the test results, entertainment ($M=6.07$) was the most important motive for overall survey respondents. The second most influential motive was drama, followed closely by skill ($M=5.90, M=5.89$, respectively), with a mean difference of .01. Team effort ($M=5.84$) was found to be the fourth important motive followed by achievement ($M=5.77$), escape ($M=5.56$), team affiliation ($M=5.45$), social interaction ($M=5.02$), empathy ($M=4.88$), and family ($M=4.42$). Betting was found to be the least encouraging motive for respondents as a whole, with a mean score of 1.84.

To answer research question two, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) test was used to examine the difference in motives across the levels of psychological commitment. Results (see Table 2) indicated significant differences across low, medium, and high levels of psychological commitment on motives ($\Lambda = .418, F(2, 475) = 22.248, p < .01$). Levene's homogeneity equal variance test was employed to examine whether the constructs violated the equal variance assumptions. The test results showed 8 out of 11 variables were significant (entertainment, skill, drama, family, achievement, team affiliation, escape, and team effort), indicating only

three variables (empathy, social interaction and betting) were equal variance assumed. The LSD post hoc test was recommended for variables that were equal variance assumed with three levels due to its powerful control over Type I error. Dunnett's C post hoc test was recommended for variables violating the equal variance assumption.

Table 2 Comparison of Motive Means and Standard Deviations across Psychological Commitment Levels

Motives	Psychological Commitment Levels				MS	F-statistic	p-value
	Total	High	Medium	Low			
Entertainment	6.07 (1.04)	6.58 (0.58)	6.14 (0.75)	5.43 (1.34)	50.843	58.427	.000
Drama	5.90 (1.01)	6.39 (0.69)	5.91 (0.78)	5.33 (1.22)	42.994	51.242	.000
Skill	5.88 (1.08)	6.52 (0.62)	5.90 (0.749)	5.17 (1.29)	69.389	79.692	.000
Team Effort	5.83 (1.21)	6.64 (0.58)	5.87 (0.92)	4.92 (1.35)	111.860	114.362	.000
Achievement	5.77 (1.18)	6.60 (0.54)	5.84 (0.83)	4.79 (1.29)	124.470	145.333	.000
Escape	5.56 (1.30)	6.36 (0.82)	5.70 (0.91)	4.55 (1.41)	125.510	109.810	.000
Team Affiliation	5.44 (1.31)	6.56 (0.63)	5.48 (0.82)	4.19 (1.16)	211.355	268.148	.000
Social Interaction	5.01 (1.41)	5.51 (1.34)	5.18 (1.17)	4.28 (1.43)	60.808	35.143	.000
Empathy	4.89 (1.48)	5.66 (1.40)	5.01 (1.19)	3.94 (1.30)	113.305	67.027	.000
Family	4.42 (1.46)	4.95 (1.61)	4.40 (1.16)	3.86 (1.36)	44.552	23.031	.000
Betting	1.84 (1.32)	1.68 (1.21)	1.93 (1.42)	1.92 (1.30)	3.143	1.824	.163

Note: $p < .01$

In examining the motives across levels of psychological commitment, the MANOVA test results indicated that significant differences among respondents across three levels of psychological commitment were found in 10 out of 11 motives

($p < .01$), except betting. Both fans with low and medium levels of psychological commitment, entertainment ($M = 5.43$, $M = 6.14$, respectively), drama ($M = 5.33$, $M = 5.92$, respectively), and skill ($M = 5.17$, $M = 5.90$, respectively) were the most encouraging motives. For respondents with a high level of psychological commitment, team effort ($M = 6.64$) was found to be the most important motive followed by achievement ($M = 6.60$), while both low and medium level groups had team effort as the fourth highest rating ($M = 4.92$ and $M = 5.87$, respectively), and achievement ($M = 4.79$ and $M = 5.84$, respectively) as the fifth. Betting was the least encouraging motive for respondents of all levels with no significant difference across the three levels. Family was observed to be the second lowest rating for all groups (high, $M = 4.95$; medium, $M = 4.40$; low, $M = 3.86$). Post hoc test results showed significant differences across all levels of respondents in 10 motives. Respondents with a high level of psychological commitment had a significantly higher mean score on each motive than other two groups indicating high level fans were more motivated by each motive than others. Respondents with a low level of psychological commitment had a significantly lower mean score on each motive than other groups suggesting they were the least motivated group.

DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Most Taiwanese professional baseball teams are facing financial hardships due to low ticket sales. One way to increase ticket sales is through the development of marketing strategies based on a better understanding of sport consumer motives. The purpose of this paper was to identify the important spectator motives across different levels of psychologically committed Taiwanese professional baseball fans. It is hoped that this study can provide a basis for exploring the motives across different levels of psychological commitment with Taiwanese professional baseball fans. From a managerial point of view, the results of this study could be used to develop marketing strategies to increase ticket sales.

Overall, when considering respondents as a whole, the most important motive was entertainment, followed by drama and skill. Team effort and achievement were the fourth and fifth encouraging motives. After segmenting survey respondents based on their psychological commitment levels into high, medium, and low, high level respondents had greater mean scores on motives, but with little variation compared to the other two groups. Different from respondents with low and medium levels of psychological commitment, high psychologically committed respondents were encouraged to attend games by team effort. Achievement was considered the second

strongest and team affiliation was the fourth strongest motives. Entertainment, which was the strongest motive for the other two groups, was found to be the third strongest for respondents with a high level of psychological commitment. On the other hand, respondents with low and medium levels of psychological commitment are more likely to be motivated by game-related motives (e.g., entertainment, skill, drama).

For any given professional sport league, ticket sale revenue contributes a substantial amount to the overall revenue (Howard & Crompton, 2004). Spectator attendance contributes not only to ticket sales, but also to the sales of concessions and team-related merchandise. The findings suggested that overall survey respondents were attracted by game-related motives. One implication of this finding is that Taiwanese professional baseball teams should develop promotional campaigns emphasizing the hedonic factors of the game, provided most survey respondents were attracted by game-related motives. According to Wann, Melnick, Russell, and Pease (2001), the enjoyable experience of sport spectating is similar to watching television or seeing movies. Although the entertainment motive is generally defined as the acquisition of entertaining value from sport games (James & Ross, 2002), the entertaining value of a game consists of not only the promotional activities (e.g. promotional giveaways, half time show), but also the game itself (e.g. excitement of the games, quality and skills of the players). Most likely, game attributes contribute to the major part of the entertaining value of a game. Funk and James (2001) stated that when the Florida Marlins won the 1997 World Series, there was no shortage of fans; however, when they became one of the worst MLB teams, the number of fans dropped dramatically. This explains how individuals, especially those with medium and low team identification, increase their association with a successful team (BIRGing) and decrease their association when the team does not have good performance (CORFing) (Snyder, Lassegard, & Ford, 1986; Wann & Branscombe, 1990; Wann, Hamlet, Wilson, & Hodges, 1995). Thus, sport managers should mainly focus on increasing the quality of the core product, which is the baseball game itself. By recruiting more skillful players, emphasizing team effort, and promoting the excitement of the game, it may be possible to increase game attendance.

The results also indicated highly committed Taiwanese professional baseball fans were more motivated by psychological factors (e.g. team affiliation and achievement) than low and medium levels of fans. Milne and McDonald (1999) suggested that fans with a high identification are the group that has heavy financial and emotional investments in the teams. Based on this statement, baseball teams are able to generate more revenue if they have more highly identified fans. One implication of these

findings is that promotional strategies could be developed to increase the psychological commitment level of Taiwanese professional baseball fans, and further increase attendance. Milne and McDonald (1999) identified several ways to increase team identification. Fans having access to the team and players is one example, and some commonly seen promotional campaigns based on this access are autograph parties and player appearances. Such promotional activities can increase psychological commitment through regular contact between fans and the teams they support.

Another way for professional teams to enhance the psychological commitment is to increase community ties by establishing a relationship between the team and the community (Milne & McDonald, 1999). According to Milne and McDonald (1999), making community relationship efforts are an important step in building fan identification for professional teams and players. This relationship can be developed by establishing charitable programs, social cause projects, and so on. The psychological commitment of a fan to a team sometimes increases when an individual feels the team is a part of his/her community (Funk & James, 2001). An individual will be internalized and integrate the team into his/her self-concept when the value and beliefs of a team matches an individual's core values (Kolbe & James, 2005). Professional sport teams can help individuals learn the values and beliefs of the team by creating a positive image as a part of the community; however, proactive media exposure related to the community relation efforts is needed to have the maximum impact (Milne & McDonald, 1999). In addition, the availability of season tickets to Taiwanese professional sport consumers should be taken into consideration for sport managers in Taiwan. There is evidence showing that season ticket holders of a WNBA franchise quickly moved from attraction level via attachment and to allegiant level (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman, 2001). Thus, season tickets can be utilized as a fundamental step to establish the psychological commitment for a sport fan to a team.

In sum, sport managers should develop promotional campaigns based on different levels of psychological commitment in order to increase attendance. The results of this study showed that fans with low and medium psychological commitment levels were more motivated by hedonic factors than psychological factors. Past research has suggested that fans with a low psychological connection to the team do not care about the outcome of the game (Milne & McDonald, 1999; Funk & James, 2001). Instead, the pleasure experience of attending the games is more important. Funk and James (2001) suggested that financial incentives for this group of fans, such as discounted ticket prices or promotional giveaways, may increase their likelihood of purchasing more tickets or attending more games. Without these

financial incentives, individuals might search for other alternatives for entertainment. For fans with a high level of psychological commitment, promotional strategies should focus on making the fans feel important. Creating the interpersonal and structural bonding between players and fans can make fans feel unique and important (Funk & James, 2001). Promotional activities involving some interaction between the team and fans, such as dinner with the team, may have a tremendous positive influence on fans' psychological commitment to the team.

It is also worth noting that the family motive was the second least important motive for survey respondents in this study, which was different from past research indicating family as a moderate motive (James & Ross, 2002). In the study conducted by James and Ross (2002), respondents with age under 31 only accounted for 10% of the total sample, and 71% of the total respondents were married. Compared to the same study, most survey respondents in this study were single (85.6%) and under the age of 31 (85.9%). The difference in findings on family motive is probably due to the fact that the majority of Taiwanese professional baseball spectators are single and younger than the MLB spectators. As such, family motive is less encouraging for spectators in Taiwanese professional baseball than in the MLB. One implication to this research finding is certain on-site marketing strategies regarding family-oriented promotional campaign (e.g. family day) should not be directly replicated from the MLB before taking into consideration the demographical attributes of Taiwanese spectators.

As with any empirical study, several limitations should be noted. The research findings are limited to the motives included in the current study. Individuals might attend Taiwanese professional baseball games due to other motivations, and future researchers should consider what other factors might motivate individuals to attend games. Also, residual variables were not included in this study, and some individuals may attend the games due to the convenience of traffic, nice weather, and so on. Future research should take residual variables into consideration to better understand what aspects affects an individual's decision to attend professional baseball games in Taiwan. The data was collected during the last month of the regular baseball season. The results might be altered if data was collected during other periods of the season (e.g. the beginning of the season). A longitudinal perspective should be considered in future studies when making a complete examination of attendance motives and psychological commitment of Taiwanese professional baseball fans and spectators. Finally, the Cronbach's alpha value for the escape motive for the pilot test did not exceed the minimum cutoff of .70 ($\alpha = .69$) recommend by Nunnally (1978), and

therefore, eliminated one item from the construct. This interesting finding was different from the past research (Milne & McDonald, 1999; Trail & James, 2001; James & Ross, 2002). The unreliability of the initial alpha value of escape in this study was probably due to the improper wording of the item. More appropriate wording for the item is needed in future research to better adapt to Taiwanese culture and assess the escape motive for sport consumers.

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