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An Examination of the Segmentation Typologies Articulated in the Spectator and Participation Sports Marketing Literature

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ABSTRACT

With the emergence of sports marketing as an important business discipline, a number of segmentation studies have focused on either the spectator sports market or the participation sports market. Regarding spectator sports, most of the previous studies have focused on individual sports entities such as a team, a league, a sport, or an event. The majority of the segmentation studies on participation sports have also assumed a narrow perspective by developing typologies for a specific activity such as golf. The current research assesses the efforts designed to segment the aggregate spectator sports market irrespective of the sport being watched and the aggregate participation market regardless of the participant's chosen activity. The results emanating from samples of over 500 spectators and participants documented the existence of many of those segments identified in previous research. It also identified voids. Consequently, a new typology for each of the aggregate markets has been proposed.

INTRODUCTION

The mass market is dead. Or so it has been proclaimed (Anon., 2004). But this is not an epiphany that recently came to the forefront of marketing thought. Almost 60 years ago, Smith (1956) articulated the idea that *market segmentation* is a superior strategy to one that essentially operates on a one-size-fits-all philosophy. More recently, Pine (1999) put forth the concept of *mass customization*. This oxymoron of sorts brought the concepts of *one-to-one marketing* and *individualized value propositions* to our attention. The reality is that most marketers operate somewhere in between the two extremes. So even though the marketers of sports shoes and sports apparel like Nike and adidas have initiated their own versions of one-to-one marketing, the reality is that most marketing efforts involving spectator sports and participation sports focus on differentiated strategies designed to satisfy an array of identified market segments that have been designated as target markets. Alternatively stated, the marketers of spectator sports and participation sports products seldom engage in either mass marketing or one-to-one marketing.

Now the question becomes one of how well the market segmentation strategies articulated in the literature capture the essence of these two sizable – and heterogeneous – markets. But rather

than looking at a particular spectator sport or participation sport, it will encompass the broad market for each of these two categories of sports products. In other words, it will not look at the characteristics of football fans; rather it will look at the characteristics of sports spectators – irrespective of which sport an individual follows. It will not assess the runner market; it will focus on individuals who are prone to engage in any form of physical activity.

This project involves the examination of the more popular typologies in each of the two sectors – spectator sports and participation sports. The focus of this research is on the relevance of the segments identified in the literature and the extent to which the arrays of segments designated in the typologies identified in the literature are collectively exhaustive.

LITERATURE

What is apparent from the introduction is that market segmentation is not a new phenomenon for marketers in general, or for sports marketers in particular. Many years ago, Major League Baseball used segmentation-based promotions such as ladies day and the business man's special in their efforts to broaden the appeal of the game and to sell more tickets. As with these examples, the vast majority of the sports marketing literature denotes segmentation studies that are very narrowly focused. Within the realm of spectator sports, the segmentation strategies articulated are likely to focus on a single sport, or a league, or even a team. For participation sports, there has been a similar narrow perspective in that most studies have addressed a singular activity. There has been little research that attempted to capture the underlying structure of the spectator sports market and the participation sports market irrespective of what they watch or in which sports activity they engage. Another shortcoming of previous research is that the primary criteria used to segment the two sports markets have been various demographic variables, most notably age and gender. This literature review will highlight some of the efforts that have been undertaken, including the limited research that has incorporated a broader perspective in an effort to segment the aggregate spectator and participation sports markets. Before delving into the literature, it is important to acknowledge earlier research that drew a clear distinction between the spectator and the participation markets thus supporting the decision to assess them as separate entities (Burnett, Menon, and Smart, 1993).

Spectator Sports

As noted earlier, there have been numerous attempts to segment the market for particular sports, teams, leagues, and events. A noteworthy effort was one that used geo-demographic and psychographic criteria to segment the soccer (football) market. Among the resultant segments were those labeled as *professional wanderers*, *carefree casuals*, and *repertoire fans* (Tapp and Clowes, 2002). Mullin, Hardy, and Sutton (2000) asserted that segmentation for a football team is best accomplished on the basis of loyalty – that is to say the number of games attended during the course of a season. By identifying segments which were classified as *casual*, *regular*, and *fanatics*, the authors were able to identify differences on the bases of select psychographic and behavioral variables other than attendance. One result of that study was the determination that the casual segment needed to be further divided so as to draw the distinction between *carefree casuals* and *committed casuals* while further delineating a segment that was labeled as *repertoire*

fans. In yet another effort to segment fans of a particular sport, Stewart and Smith (1997) developed a typology for supporters of Australian Rules football. The five segments identified were the *aficionado*, *theatre goer*, *passionate partisan*, *champ follower*, and *reclusive partisan*.

Continuing with the theme of team-based or sport-based segmentation, Kennett, Sneath, and Henson (2001) segmented the fan base of a minor league (ice) hockey team with satisfaction being the primary criterion used to subdivide the market. The authors factor analyzed 29 items that were deemed to influence satisfaction, but those constructs were used to evaluate segments defined on the bases of conventional criteria including level of attendance, type of ticket purchased, and the likelihood of attending future games. Similarly, Garland, McPherson, and Haughey (2004) identified three segments of rugby fans in New Zealand. By measuring the fans' levels of attendance and involvement, three segments were documented. This research was an application of Quick's typology that identified three segments of spectator sports fans. Using the fans' level of involvement, the same three segments were delineated. Specifically, these three segments were the *aficionados (hard-core)*, *fair-weather fans*, and the *theatre-goers* (Quick, 2000). Koo and Hardin (2008) applied the concept of fan attachment to identify the various segments germane to women's college basketball. One interesting point of demarcation that was drawn in this study is the distinction between the fan segment and the spectator segment, the implication being that not everyone in attendance should be characterized as a fan. In a somewhat different direction, Cooper (2009) looked at segmentation of the fans attending a specific sports event, namely the Big Ten Wrestling Championships. Focusing on motivations, this research differed from most segmentation studies in that it defined no segments post hoc; rather the decision was made to explore the differences among the segments comprising fans of five competing universities. In yet another narrowly defined study, Ross (2007) surveyed season ticket holders of an NBA team. His analysis identified two distinct clusters for which significant differences based on demographic makeup and on their perceptions of the "sports brand" were documented. However, no overarching terminology was applied to describe the two segments. Furthermore, clearly there are meaningful NBA fans beyond those who purchase season tickets. While the narrowly focused studies such as those discussed in this section provide a rationale supporting the need to segment the spectator sports market, they fail to capture the essence of the market from an overall perspective. Attention will now be redirected to studies of that ilk.

One recent broad-based study that looked at fans in general utilized the Orientation toward Sporting Event (OSE) scale to identify three segments. These segments, based on the premise that fans will exhibit affective, cognitive, and social responses, were characterized as *sensation-seeking*, *cognition-seeking*, or *socialization-seeking* fans (Pons, Murali, and Nyeck, 2006). More importantly, from the standpoint of the current study, the authors used cluster analysis to identify four distinct segments. They were the *super fan*, the *social fan*, the *experiential fan*, and the *situational fan* (Pons, Murali, and Nyeck, 2006). An even more recent effort involved the development of a scale that the authors referred to as the Sporting Event Experience Search (SEES) scale. This broad look at the aggregate spectator market extended earlier work by Bourgeon and Bouchet (2001) and delineated four types – or segments – of sporting-event consumers. They were characterized as *aesthete*, *interactive*, *supporter*, and *opportunist* (Bouchet, Bodet, Bernache-Assollant, and Kada, 2011). Of particular note is the effort to apply their scale to both the live audience and the media-based audience. This dichotomy was the

focal point of another study that developed a typology predicated upon the fans' level of consumption of the spectator sports product as members of these two forms of audiences. The four segments identified were the *sports-immersed fans*, the *venue-based enthusiasts*, the *media-based enthusiasts*, and the *sports contrarians* (Author, 2012). While the authors examined an array of sports-related psychographics, the segments were defined solely on the basis of consumption, so it really falls outside of the purview of the current study. Yet another study simply identified a dichotomy – *old-school* versus *new-school* – as a way to distinguish among sports fans. One assertion was that some sports may well appeal to one segment, but not the other (Aiken and Sukhdial, 2004). This research was later applied in a recent assessment of a single sport, namely Arena Football. In addition to the attitudinal differences on issues such as attitudes towards winning, materialism, and the embracing of athletes as role models, there were also noteworthy demographic differences, the most notable of which was gender (Aiken, Campbell, and Sukhdial, 2010). The results of another study essentially mirror the old-school versus new-school dichotomy, albeit in an assessment of a single sport rather than the aggregate market. In his treatise on English football, King (1998) identified two segments that were labeled *lads* and '*new consumer*' fans. What this shows is that efforts to segment the aggregate fan market are also pertinent and can contribute to the efforts to develop a segmentation strategy for the fans of a particular sport.

In their comprehensive study of the general sports fan market, Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw (1999) developed a classification of sports fans that ostensibly identified five unique segments: *temporary*, *local*, *devoted*, *fanatical*, and *dysfunctional*. They justified the need for research of the type undertaken in this current study by stating that the “need exists to identify the different types of fans due to the inadequacies of past theories to explain the totality of fan behavior” (p. 439). Another early study focused on frequency of attendance. The three segments identified were *low*, *moderate*, and *high* (Burnett, Menon, and Smart, 1993). The final broad-based typology to be discussed is one that has found its way into recent editions of some sports marketing textbooks. The authors incorporated six key drivers for consumption in building a foundation for their six-segment typology. By assessing the fans' level of involvement, level of participation, social needs, level of identification, appreciation of talent, and sex appeal, the authors' typology was comprised of *players*, *patriots*, *appreciators*, *socialites*, *friends*, and *voyeurs* (Watson and Rich, 2000).

Participation Sports

While the literature review germane to segmentation within the spectator sports sector documented a meaningful number of past studies, the review regarding participation sports was not as fruitful. Of those studies identified in the search process, the primary focal points were demographic considerations, primarily age and gender. Regarding age, there was an inordinate focus on the senior – or gray – market segments (Carrigan, 1998). Even religion came under scrutiny; in this regard, an early essay by Hirschman (1982) delineated her belief that a key factor influencing one's choice of a particular leisure activity is the participants' ethnicity. For instance, she concluded that Jewish consumers are more prone to engage in team sports and other activities that satisfy a need for excitement whereas Catholic and Protestant consumers prefer activities that tend to be more individualistic – such as jogging, biking, and swimming. Ethnicity

was also the key construct when an effort was made to examine the Hispanic market. In essence, the authors correctly stated that it is short-sighted to simply designate all consumers of Latin American origin as a single homogeneous Hispanic segment (Kesler, 1986). One of the segmentation studies that went beyond demographics and incorporated psychographic dimensions and overt behavior as well as their self-reported skill level examined the market comprising those who participate in the sport of golf. The authors found and labeled five distinct segments including *players*, *competitors*, *sociables*, *aspirers*, and *casuals* (Author, 1995). A subsequent study of the golfer market likewise looked at experience and the number of courses played as the bases for identifying six segments. Those designated were: the *infrequents*; *loyal-infrequents*; *collectors*; *locals*; *visitors*; and *veterans* (Petrick, Backman, Bixler, and Norman, 2001). The snow skier market in Texas was segmented on the basis of the level of spending specific to the sport. The only real distinction drawn was that of *heavy spenders* versus *light spenders*, a distinction which was inextricably tied to household income (Mills, Couturier, and Snepenger, 1986). Along a similar vein, another study sought to segment the market of snowmobilers in Wyoming. Based on a litany of psychological dimensions, five clusters – or segments – were identified. Based on the psychographic profile of each, these segments were labeled *nature lovers who want to be alone*; *those who want to experience it all*; *those who want to be alone but not get too excited*; *nature lovers who don't want to get too excited*; and *nature lovers who want to be with family and friends* (May, Bastian, Taylor, and Whipple, 2001). Another study looked at the various motives that influence one's decision regarding water sports. Interestingly, two commonly applied terms were used to label the two segments that resulted from the cluster analysis – *casual* and *committed* (Hallmann, Feller, and Brewer, 2012).

In regard to the aggregate participation market, prior research on the segmentation task is scarce. One of the earlier studies did not appear in academic journals per se; rather it was in *American Demographics*. In her study, Bryant (1987) identified five distinct participation segments: *excitement-seeking competitors*; *getaway actives*; *fitness-driven*; *health-conscious sociables*; and the *unstressed and unmotivated*. In drawing distinctions across the five segments, demographic and psychographic considerations both entered the discussion. While the segments were defined on the basis of one's lifestyle, differences in gender, age, education, and marital status were also documented. A second study that looked at the aggregate participation market focused on frequency of participation in a variety of sports activities. The resulting typology was the simple designation of *low*, *moderate*, and *high* segments (Burnett, Menon, and Smart, 1993). These are the same three segments that were identified in reference to the spectator sports market by these same authors. In a related study, Laesser (2011) looked at sports activities as they related to the motivation for "health travel." In essence, that study provided credence to the premise that individuals engage in activities in order to address health concerns. This premise, by virtue of the travel component, seems to support the presence of a getaway actives segment as delineated by Bryant (1987). In an interesting application, Shores and Scott (2007) used cluster analysis essentially to validate earlier research on the relationship between one's "time perspective," as measured by the Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory, and the individual's propensity to engage in certain activities. The presumption was that the chosen activities were greatly influenced by the sought benefits that are partially a function of the aforementioned time perspective. The five segments identified in that study were the *present-hedonistic*, *present fatalistic*, *future*, *past-positive*, and *past-negative* consumers.

Whether looking at the spectator sports market or the participation market, it is evident that the bulk of the research has been narrowly designed and executed. And while there is certainly benefit to be gained by developing a better understanding of the rugby fan market or the golfer market, there is a need to take a more detailed look at the aggregate markets of spectators and participants. As such, this literature review has provided the impetus for a more detailed look at segmentation within these two key domains of the sports marketing environment.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

From a broad perspective, the initial objective is that of identifying the various segments that have been delineated in previous research on the spectator sports consumer and the sports participant markets. Then the second objective is to empirically determine which of the segments identified in the literature are in evidence among consumers comprising both markets. The third objective is one of ascertaining the segments that do not appear in the literature and subsequently developing updated and more comprehensive typologies for sports fans and for those individuals who engage in one or more participation sports. The final objective is one of determining the relative importance of each of the segments surviving and/or emerging from the quantitative assessments of the stated motivations for attending a sports event or for participating in a specific sports activity.

METHODOLOGY

This project incorporates a qualitative assessment with an empirical analysis. The initial step involved the scrutiny of previous research on the two markets. In completing this phase of the research, the various segments that have been identified in those studies can be enumerated. While a number of studies that utilized demographic variables as the bases for segmentation were documented in the literature, a decision was made to focus on motivations. Not so much who attends, but why do they attend? Not who participates, but why do they choose to engage in participation sports in general? Particular attention was paid to segments which appeared in multiple studies and to different studies that appeared to use different nomenclature to essentially refer to the same segment. For instance, for the spectator sports market, the *aesthete* as described by Bourgeon, Bodet, Bernache-Assollant, and Kada (2011) and the *appreciator* as delineated by Watson and Rich (2000) are couched in very similar terms. Likewise, the *social fan* (Pons, Murali, and Nyeck, 2006), the *opportunist* (Bourgeon and Bouchet, 2001), and the *socialite* (Watson and Rich, 2000) all refer to segments that make decisions to attend in response to a similar set of motivations.

The second step involved the completion of a simple questionnaire comprising four open-ended questions. A sample of approximately 600 individuals who had either attended a sports event as a member of the live audience and/or recently participated in a sports activity provided their input regarding specific behavior and the primary reason for that behavior. Specifically, the respondents were asked:

- What is the last spectator sports event that you attended in person?

- What is the single most important reason that led you to attend that event?
- In which sports activity do you engage on a regular basis; if none, what was the last sports activity in which you remember engaging?
- What is the single most important reason for your decision to participate in that activity?

Step three involved the coding of the data to facilitate the listing of activities and the associated motives. This required careful consideration of the wording of the open-ended responses so as to insure that the recorded answers reflected the respondents' intentions. Simple frequencies and percentage distributions were used to determine the relative importance of each of the identified actions and, more succinctly, the motivations for those actions as they related to attending a sports event or engaging in a sports activity.

Step four involved the assignment of each of the documented motivations to one of the market segments identified in step one. Those motives which did not fit within one of the designated segments were noted for further consideration in the fifth and final step of the research.

Step five concluded the research by identifying those relevant segments which were documented in the previous research on the aggregate markets. Furthermore, the motivations for the consumers' behavior that did not fall into any of the identified segments were further evaluated in an effort to identify previously undefined segments in the two markets.

RESULTS

The initial objective was a simple one, namely to identify those segments in the literature that comprise the two markets. As earlier noted, the emphasis for this research is on segments defined on the basis of motivations. Rather than addressing the two markets in a single discussion, the objectives will be addressed in the order stated, but in separate discussions. It begins with a look at the spectator sports market. In that regard, scrutiny will be placed both on sports fans and those spectators who exhibit a nominal level of fandom but still decide to attend a sports event.

Spectator Sports Market

The initial step in this qualitative phase of the research on spectators was to evaluate the various aggregate segmentation studies in order to determine their relevance to a study focusing on motivation. This resulted in the elimination of studies that focused their attention on spending behavior, the level of consumption of spectator sports products as members of the live and media-based audiences, and two studies that drew a distinction predicated upon what is best characterized as an old-school/new-school dichotomy.

Three of the remaining four studies exhibited considerable overlap. Of these, the Watson and Rich (2000) study was selected for the baseline. The six segments provided what was determined to be the most comprehensive typology, one for which the segments were mutually exclusive, and one which featured a meaningful array of motivations germane to the decision to attend a sports event. As noted earlier, these six segments are the players, patriots, appreciators,

socialites, friends, and voyeurs. Three of the four segments identified in the study by Bourgeon, et al (2011) exhibited a great deal of similarity with three segments from the Watson and Rich study. The aesthete is comparable to the appreciator; the supporter has characteristics similar to the patriots; and the opportunist can be compared to the socialites. The interactive segment is the only segment for which significant overlap was not in evidence. The study by Pons, Mourali and Nyeck (2006) included four segments. Again, there was redundancy noted. Their socialite segment overlapped with Watson and Rich’s socialites, and their experiential fans were deemed to be comparable to Watson and Rich’s players. Their study also included a super fan segment and the situational fans. The final study under scrutiny that sought to segment the aggregate fan market was one that looked specifically at one’s level of “fandom” (Hunt, Bristol, and Bashaw, 1999). While it looked primarily at consumption and overt behavior, it put forth the idea that an individual whose self-image is that of being a fan may comprise a meaningful segment. This premise is further supported by research on individual sports where segments such as fanatics (Mullin, Hardy, and Sutton, 2000), fair-weather fans (Quick, 2000), and partisans (Stewart and Smith, 1997) were identified. Therefore, for the quantitative phase of the research, a decision was made to include a general category of fans and spectators who simply view a sports event as an alternative form of leisure. Accordingly, this segment was assigned the label of *entertainment-seeking fan*. While these spectators may exhibit some elements of fandom in that they understand the game and the players, they do not live and die sports the way that an avid fan does. In this regard, sports face discretionary competition from a variety of alternative leisure activities including participation sports and the arts. Thus these entertainment-seeking fans may have a litany of nonsports options that will satisfy their need for entertainment.

Based on this initial assessment of the literature, nine segments were designated for quantitative scrutiny. These segments for the spectator sports market are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Identified Fan Segments Retained for Analysis

Segment	Source
Players	Watson and Rich (2000)
Patriots	Watson and Rich (2000)
Appreciators	Watson and Rich (2000)
Socialites	Watson and Rich (2000)
Friends	Watson and Rich (2000)
Voyeurs	Watson and Rich (2000)
Super (Avid) Fan	Pons, Mourali & Nyeck (2006)
Situational Fan	Pons, Mourali & Nyeck (2006)
Entertainment-seeking Fan (adapted)	Hunt, Bristol, and Bashaw (1999)

With the segments identified, the task turned towards addressing the third research objective, specifically that of documenting their relevance based on a survey designed to determine the respondents’ motivations for attending a sports event. A sample of 548 attendees of a recent sports event provided information regarding their primary motivation for attending that particular event. Each of the motives expressed was assigned to the segment which was most closely

aligned with the description of the segment as put forth in the literature. For example, the 141 respondents who indicated their primary motivation was based on social considerations were placed in the “socialite” segment. Similarly, those 36 who were motivated to attend an event in order to watch friends or family who were competing were placed in the “friends” segment, and the nine who said they admire the skill were classified as “appreciators.” One adjustment involved the re-labeling of the super fan. Specifically, super fan label was changed to read *avid fan*; this segment seems to complement the situational fan and the entertainment-seeking fan categories without creating too many segments which are likely to lack the degree of category exclusivity sought in research of this ilk. Finally, in an effort to identify segments that were unaccounted for upon entering this phase of the research, those motives which failed to coincide with any of the nine segments shown in Table 1 were placed into an “unclassified” category. Those in the unclassified category were then used to identify distinct segments that had not been delineated in previous research.

A total of 10.2 percent of the respondents indicated motives that did not fit neatly into any of the nine segments retained for this step of the analysis. By grouping them into homogeneous subsets of respondents, two potential additional segments have been identified. Specifically, these segments have been assigned descriptive names of *novelty-seeking fans* and *reluctant spectators*.

It has been stated in the segmentation literature that one key consideration for any segment is that it be of sufficient size to be economically viable. Based on this premise, a decision was made that for a group to be deemed a segment, it had to include at least one percent of the respondents. While smaller groups are relevant, they were deemed to be niches that can be effectively approached via an appropriate marketing strategy. It was also determined that these niches could be logically associated with one of the surviving segments. For example, the voyeur segment identified by Watson and Rich (2000) was originally identified as one where sex appeal is the most important attribute. This is most assuredly relevant for some fans who watch beach volleyball, lingerie football, or Anna Kournikova on the tennis court. But the reality is that this niche attracted less than one percent of the sample members and was determined to fit within the set of motives germane to one of the other segments that was supported by the analysis.

As a result of the quantitative assessment, eight of the nine previously identified segments listed in Table 1 were validated, and two new segments were identified. The result is a modified ten-segment typology that is more collectively exhaustive and mutually exclusive than were any of the previous efforts. Table 2 provides an overview of the modified typology. As measures of their relative importance, the number of individuals and the corresponding percentage of respondents falling into each segment are also provided. The segments are listed in order of their relative importance based solely upon the number of fans assigned to each segment in the modified typology for the spectator market. Using this criterion to measure importance, it can be seen that the most important segments are the socialites and the avid fans. Conversely, the least important – again based solely on its size – are the players. It may be important to clarify the primary criterion used to identify members of the players segment. This relatively small segment comprises those fans who have in the past played or who currently play the sport for which they were a spectator. In this regard, for example, we know that people who play tennis are more likely to be tennis fans, thus more likely to attend a tennis match.

With the assessment of the spectator sports market complete, the focus now shifts to the participation market. An identical set of research objectives using the same methodology that resulted in the delineation of the relevant segments for the spectator market will direct this phase of the research.

Table 2
Modified Typology of Segments for Spectator Sports

Segment	Frequency	Percentage
Socialites	146	26.6%
Avid Fan	86	15.7%
Situational Fan	75	13.7%
Entertainment-seeking Fan	73	13.3%
Patriots	47	8.6%
Friends	36	6.6%
Reluctant Spectators	32	5.8%
Novelty Fans	26	4.8%
Appreciators	20	3.6%
Players	7	1.3%

Participation Sports Market

As noted in the literature review, the body of literature germane to segmentation of the aggregate sports participant market is sparse in comparison to that for the spectator market. The typologies that have been delineated tend to either look at a particular sport such as golf or use demographic differences such as age to either define or otherwise describe the composition of a particular segment. While there is not a total void in the literature on the aggregate market, there is little prior research that uses one's motivation for participating as the primary consideration when identifying the relevant segments.

Essentially, there are three studies that purportedly segment the aggregate participation market, irrespective of their chosen activity. One early study looked primarily at how frequently one participates in sports activities (Burnett, Menon, and Smart, 1993). This approach is not uncommon for individual sports. For example, the National Golf Foundation puts golfers into one of three segments – occasional, moderate, and avid – based solely on how frequently they play (NGF, 2012). For instance, an avid golfer is one who plays 25 or more rounds of golf per year. While this is certainly important, it does not consider one's motivation for playing, and it looks at a single sport. Thus, it adds little to the effort to segment the aggregate participation market. A second, more recent study specifically addressed the propensity to engage in health-related travel (Laesser, 2010). Another effort utilized the Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory and the individual's propensity to engage in certain activities to define the segments. It focused on anticipated benefits and one's perception of their future. So while it addressed motives from a rudimentary level, the defined segments were not relevant for a study designed to segment the

aggregate participant market. This leaves the early study by Bryant (1987). Although it is relatively dated, it does focus on motives for engaging in sports activities. Consequently, it will serve as the benchmark for assessing the segments comprising the population of sports participants. While stating that motives were a primary point of interest, it should also be noted that much of the description of each of the five identified segments was more of a demographic profile. A brief overview of the typology articulated by Bryant is presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Identified Participation Segments Retained for Analysis

Segment	Primary Motives
Excitement-seeking Competitors	Risk-taker; thrill
Getaway Actives	Vacation; leisure; family
Fitness-driven	Personal improvement
Health-conscious Sociables	Good health; socialization
Unstressed and Unmotivated	Inactivity; complacency

As with the spectator market, the delineation of the segments extracted from previous research paved the way for the quantitative assessment in an effort to validate the existence of the segments shown in Table 3 – and to identify any previously undefined segments that should be included in any new typology emanating from this analysis. These objectives were achieved by classifying the stated motives of 597 individuals who had recently participated in some activity that they deemed to be a participation sport. Where there was a logical fit, the various motives were assigned to one of the five segments identified in Table 3. Those motives that did not mesh with one of the five segments extracted from the literature review were placed in a category labeled as unclassified. Then those motives were categorized so as to isolate new homogeneous segments that had not been previously identified in the literature. The quantitative assessment documented the existence of four of the five segments delineated by Bryant (1987). However, it is evident that the 25-year-old typology does not capture the essence of the participation market in 2012. Furthermore, deletion of the “unstressed and unmotivated” segment was considered; however, there were a small number of participants who engaged in activities which require little exertion of energy and did so for reasons not germane to themselves per se. For example, there were respondents who indicated they went for a walk to take their dog out for the well-being of the dog. At best, these motives can be characterized as secondary. So while it may seem counterintuitive to include a segment characterized as “uncommitted and unmotivated” when the objective of the research was to develop a typology predicated upon motivations to participate, the decision was made to retain it for the modified typology.

The resultant typology includes eight segments. Four of these segments were originally identified by Bryant (1987). The original segment identified as “get-away actives” was deleted. The primary problem regarding this segment as it was characterized by Bryant is that it essentially incorporates two dimensions that are not necessarily inextricably tied to each other – the desire to get away from home and the intention to engage in some leisure activity tied to sports. In addition to this shortcoming, both of these motives were found to be closely aligned

with other segments identified in the analysis. In general, those individuals were placed in the newly designated *leisure & enjoyment seeker* segment.

The two segments comprising the *leisure and enjoyment seekers* and *the excitement-seeking competitors* made up almost 52 percent of the total sample. And while all of the segments exceeded the stated minimum of one percent, it is evident that this was barely true for three of the segments. However, the motives associated with these smaller segments tended to be distinctive, thus not aligned with any of the other five segments. So the decision was made to retain them for the modified typology. Table 4 provides an overview of the eight segments surviving the analysis as well as the frequency and percentage distributions that provide measures of the relative importance of each of the segments comprising this modified typology of the sports participant market.

Table 4
Modified Typology of Segments for Sports Participants

Segment	Frequency	Percentage
Leisure & Enjoyment Seekers	170	28.5%
Excitement-seeking Competitors	138	23.1%
Fitness-driven Individuals	129	21.6%
Health-conscious Sociables	91	15.2%
Stress & Mental Relief Seekers	37	6.2%
Convenience-oriented Participants	10	1.7%
Occupational Goal Achievers	8	1.3%
Unstressed and Unmotivated	7	1.2%

Overview

The literature review coupled with the quantitative assessments of the two markets provided the bases for achieving all of the specified research objectives. The assessment of the spectator sports market resulted in the identification of ten relevant market segments. For the participation sports market, eight relevant segments were identified. It is essential to recall that these typologies represent the delineation of the segments comprising the two aggregate markets. But they should provide a foundation for any marketer of a specific spectator sport property or a participation sport with a foundation that can be built upon using a more narrow perspective. This is especially true when those marketers' objectives are predicated upon the desire to segment their respective markets on the basis of motives for the consumption of their sports products. Though the development of these typologies was based solely on consumption motives, marketers can further divide their target markets into smaller, even more homogeneous market segments by using other commonly used segmentation criteria. For example, marketers of a spectator sport such as football would likely find it advantageous to further break down the segment of socialites on the basis of gender, age, income, lifestyle, or frequency of attendance.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As stated by Ross (2007, p. 22), “all sport fans are not the same.” Neither are all sports participants. This reality provides the overarching rationale as to why it is essential to convert the underlying theoretical constructs germane to segmentation into a set of strategic initiatives designed to better satisfy the various target markets identified in an assessment of the heterogeneous aggregate markets. Interestingly, for both the spectator and participant markets, there appears to be a disconnect between the efforts to segment at the more narrow level, say a sport, team, golfer, or runner and the broader efforts designed to identify segments in the aggregate markets. The current project was designed to develop a comprehensive segmentation typology at the aggregate level for each market. That having been accomplished, we can now classify spectators and participants into relevant market segments. Furthermore, sports marketers may find that the theoretical frameworks that have been established for the aggregate markets are applicable at the more narrow levels too. Then the marketers can examine the segments for noteworthy geo-demographic and psychographic differences. The result will be greater consistency across all segmentation efforts within the realm of sports marketing, greater synergy emanating from a more standardized approach, and more actionable information that will assist the marketers in their efforts to convert information into action. The final result should be more effective and more efficient sports marketing. As stated earlier, *the mass market is dead* (Anon., 2004).

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