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Andrea Keane
St. John Fisher College

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Fantasy Sports: What is the Appeal?

Abstract

This research aimed to find the motivations and appeal of fantasy sports in today's society. Research has found that there are various types of motivations that lead a person to participate in a fantasy sports league. The more frequent motivations are for intrinsic, or internal, purposes. Past research has looked at males, but this study will use a survey to look at both males and females within the Saint John Fisher College undergraduate population. The results further clarified the reasons for participation in fantasy sports. Males showed that they had more reasons why they participate in fantasy sports, while females routinely showed one reason or two at most. Regardless of gender, the most frequently cited reason for participation was for the friends/sense of community component.

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Fantasy Sports: What is the Appeal?

Andrea Keane

St. John Fisher College

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Fantasy Sports: What is the Appeal?

In 1999, a survey showed that 29.6 million people age 18 and over participated in fantasy sports (Zillgitt, 2000). Fantasy sports are continuing to grow as a new way to consume whatever sport holds a person's interest. As of June 10, 2011, 32 million people in the United States and Canada participate in fantasy sports (Fantasy Sports Trade Association [FSTA], 2011). As of 2011, twenty percent of fantasy sport participants are women (Ruggieri, 2011). In 2008, the big business of fantasy sports generated around \$1.9 billion (Schouten, 2011). Fantasy sports are defined as, "A game where participants act as owners to build a team that competes against other fantasy owners based on the statistics generated by the real individual players or teams of a professional sport" (Fantasy Sports Trade Association [FSTA], 2011). Fantasy sports allow a fan to act as the owner of a team and give them the power to cut (drop), sign (draft), and trade the players of their choosing. Points and standings are given based on an athlete's true performance in games. In some cases, it is a virtual reality for aspiring owners and simply fanatics. In others, it is about the regular people who enjoy competition and the strategy that is involved. This form of sport consumption (and internet consumption) has grown rapidly since the concept of fantasy sports began fifty years ago (Van Riper, 2011). The main internet sites for sport consumption are Yahoo Sports, ESPN, Fox Sports, Sports Illustrated, and CBS Sports (Ozanian, 2011). On days of preparation, statistics are printed and constantly updated, giving the most accurate information.

However, what is the appeal? Is it to simply feel ownership for a team and the control or is it something more? Aside from the scores gained from player performance, the psychological aspect is very intriguing and present within fantasy sports and understanding this link is the main focus of this paper. Being able to recognize why people behave the way they do is an important

skill to have, no matter what industry. The main area of psychology that is essential to this research is motivation and how it affects participants of fantasy sports.

Literature Review

There are many aspects of motivation that relate to fantasy sports. Such motivations include a sense of community, intrinsic motivation, and competition. Research has indicated that there are five primary motives for participation in fantasy sports; surveillance, arousal, entertainment, escape, and social interaction (Dwyer & Kim, 2011). When governing fantasy sports, there are legal components that must be considered that can impact current and future fantasy sport practices. The future implications found in previous research explore how fantasy sports are beginning to move into other industries.

Motivation

The five motivations previously mentioned are intrinsic, but the Dwyer and Kim also discuss the issue of the extrinsic motivation of gambling and how participants feel they will get more out of the “game” if they put in more time and money (Dwyer & Kim, 2011). However, this is not always the best thing. In Louisiana for example, gaming and gambling are two very different things’ gaming allows an individual to collect prizes while gamblers cannot. In this particular state, fantasy sports are considered a form of gambling and can garner major consequences if rules are violated (Astleford, 2011). Participants need to be aware of the rules and regulations of not only the league (online/in person, sport specific) they are in. Most leagues however, CBSSports, Yahoo! Sports, and ESPN are not considered gambling due to simply requiring an entry fee to participate in a league.

According to Gagné and Deci, motivation, in general, is made up of three aspects: valence, expectancy, and instrumentality (2005). Valence is the value that is placed on

anticipated rewards; expectancy is the belief that our efforts will reflect in changed performance; and instrumentality is the belief that our performance will be rewarded. There are two main types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is “people doing an activity because they find it interesting and derive spontaneous satisfaction from the activity itself” (Gagné&Deci, 2005, p.331). This type of motivation is internal and individual from person to person. Extrinsic motivation is being defined as, “instrumentality between the activity and some separable consequences such as tangible or verbal rewards, so satisfaction comes not from the activity itself but rather from the extrinsic consequences to which the activity lead” (Gagné&Deci, 2005, p.331); these motivations are situated in the environment surrounding an individual.

When organizations understand these two types of motivation, they can be used to create marketing techniques and other business strategies. Knowing why people do what they do can have a great significance of others in business. An article featured in the Wall Street Journal entitled, “The Yanks Lost? Sell! Sell! Sell!” is a great example of fantasy sports ideals being transferred to non-sport organizations. The article discussed how SportsGunner is a fantasy-type game that involves sports and stocks; it is fantasy sports for businessmen. Participants receive credits to buy into shares of various sports teams. Instead of focusing on players and wins/losses, the focus is team investments (O’Neil, 2011). Participants of SportsGunner build a portfolio of teams, and there is the added component of looking at the team’s stocks. This shows the magnitude and scope that fantasy sports has grown to and has reached because it is crossing over into ‘suit and tie’ business world.

Background information about sport psychology and intrinsic motivation are critical to understanding why individuals participate in fantasy sports. Lavalley, Kremer, Moran, and

Williams (2004) explain that intrinsic motivation is based upon self-determination and is focused on knowledge, accomplishment, and experiencing stimulation. This type of motivation is truly based on the individual and fantasy sports are very individualistic. Having the ability to accomplish something based on personal knowledge and how it makes you feel is a special thing to experience. Similarly, these authors touch on the Perceived Competence Theory from Lavalle et al. (2004). This theory states that a person is motivated so that they can demonstrate their mastery over the situation. This theory and motivational background information is a good basis for why people may participate in fantasy sport leagues. From Lavalle et al. (2004), a need to feel involved for personal satisfaction as well as to show others how great you may be in a career such as owning a team makes a lot of sense in this context. Another area researched in this reading was the sense of competition. Knowing that there is a consequence and/or a reward brings out a different side to people. Having something to gain or lose will make people more likely to act in a competitive way.

Goal Orientation and Competitive Orientation are two different theories that help to explain this type of motivation. Goal orientation “influences the intention to participate through perceived competence” (Lavalle et al., 2004). This means that if you have the skill necessary to do well and reach a set goal, there is an increased likelihood of participation. This makes sense in a fantasy sport context as well. If a person knows about sports and player statistics, they are more likely to make smarter roster decisions that will affect the outcome of their team within the league. Someone without the knowledge or necessary skill would be less inclined to participate in an activity where there is no foreseeable benefit for them. Competitive orientation is sport specific. It looks at the views of competition as enjoyment, interpersonal winning comparisons, and personal performance standards (Lavalle et al., 2004, p. 74). These measures correlate with

fantasy sports very well. Past research shows that some people participate simply because they enjoy it while some do it for some type of benefit. This benefit can be in the form of winning a prize or reaching a personal set goal. All of this is important to understanding the motivations and appeal of fantasy sports.

Hill and Robinson (1991) discuss their Model of Fanatic Consumption Experience. This model says that fanatic consumption consists of intrinsic motivation, resulting behaviors, and affective consequences. According to these authors, a fanatic is someone who forgets oneself and become totally involved in the activity at hand (1991). The intrinsic motivation is described as the need to feel and come across as competent in their surroundings; in this case it is feeling competent in fantasy sports. The resulting behaviors refer to the focused actions to the exclusion of alternate pursuits. This can be explained as relocating to amoving to a new area that provides greater access to resources needed to engage in desired fantasy sport pursuits. For example, a man or woman may live in Chicago but have a majority of fantasy players from the Miami Dolphins. This person may move to Miami so that he or she can have greater access to the live games and news stories. These behaviors are critical to continue his or her fanatical consumption. Lastly, affective consequences are related to leisure pursuits that one partakes in. This is described by negative outcomes as well as positive outcomes (healthy versus healthy options) (Hill & Robinson, 1991). Unhealthy options related to fantasy sports would consist of not sleeping due to intense research of player statistics or skipping meals for the same reason. These issues may lead to family alienation or loss of a work life. The motivation relating to a sense of community seems to get lost when issues such as these arise.

Reysen, et al. discuss the idea of 'community' a step further with an article about sport fans. In the article, fandom is defined as, "That part of an individual's self-concept which derives

from his knowledge of his membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Reysen, et al., 2010, p. 177). Knowing that you are associated with a group because of similar interests creates a strong personal and social identity for that person. These groups do not have to be close knit; not every fan of the Buffalo Bills (for example) knows each other.

“Fans rated their fan community higher on dimensions of belongingness, emotional connection, identification, shared values, influence, and overall sense of a community compared to when their neighborhood was the referent. The findings suggest that although fans may not know each other personally, they still view fellow fans as a community or group” (Reysen, et al., 2010).

All of these elements are what create a strong bond among sport fans and are very consistent with the intrinsic motivations that Dwyer and Kim previously researched. This study by Reysen also found that sport fans are similar to non-sport fans in the way they perceive the relationship among themselves and those with the same interests.

Virtual worlds can bring together people from all over and engage a sense of community among them. This community can also emerge in a culture outside of the game (Pearce, 2009). Research in *Communities of Play: Emergent Cultures in Multiplayer Games and Virtual Worlds*, the author shows that virtual/fantasy worlds provide much more than extra time doing something that interests you (Pearce, 2009). There is a sense of belonging that people may not find in the other areas of their lives. The author uses the concept of “community play” to relate this sense of belonging. This concept describes tiring of a game but continuing it because a person enjoys the people they are playing with; this is a strong sense of community (Pearce, 2009). Similarly, Gottdiener (2000) discusses the growing emphasis on lifestyles and personal interests as a way to connect with others. He calls this a culture of consumption. This culture is characterized by social groups that consume similar things. Within these cultures, people

interact with one another in society and find some sort of meaning in their lives. Gottdiener goes on to further explain that people do not form bonds over their career, they find lifestyle choices more important (2000). This can explain one reason why people who relate to fantasy sports are likely to connect with one another on a different, closer knit level (Pearce, 2009). This research also uncovers behaviors that emerge from these worlds; she calls them “world rules.” Because certain rules have to be followed in order to succeed and stay in the game, great attention to detail is present and protocol is followed exactly (Pearce, 2009). Because every league has rules that vary, it is important to recognize what your league is doing, otherwise you will be unsuccessful. This discussion will undoubtedly save time and aggravation later on in the season (Simmons, 2011).

Further research shows that the way people consume a product is very different now than it was in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Gottdiener (2000) discusses the views of consumption through the beliefs of Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, and Thorstein Veblen. Marx believed that people consumed as to not be alienated from society. Weber and Marx both shared ideas about how people consume to show their social class; in their time economic status was everything. Durkheim held interest in “social bonds.” This describes the normal values and ideas that were shared by society. He was fascinated by the social ties that people can create over their behaviors. Lastly, Veblen agreed with both Marx and Weber about social class and what it stood for in society. Solidifying status does not only apply to the social class of earlier generations, but to the way fantasy sport participants show their dominance and knowledge of the subject as well as to secure a sense of community among peers. These ideas, although from the past, can be understood and evident in today’s consumer society.

Consumerism

Switching over to contemporary ideas of consumerism, the chapter from Gottdiener's book, *New Forms of Consumption: Consumers, Culture, and Commodification*, provides insight into the new virtual ways to satisfy desires. These desires are grouped by sports, vacations, music, films, shopping, and restaurants. Most of these "needs" can now be met through technological means (cell phones, computers, etc.). With the new advances in technology, ways to consume media have come a very long way (Gottdiener, 2000). Wireless technology is one of the major advances beginning in the year 2000 up until the present time of 2011. Instant updates directly to phones or the computer keep sports fans in the loop at all times. Ignite Sports Media integrated their National Football League (NFL) information to their wireless setting. Fans could now receive "instantaneous team information and each team's home page have a link to directions that explain how to access team information" (Gellatly & Lambtom, 2001, p. 48). This type of unlimited and immediate access is beneficial to fantasy sport participants because they want to know how their players are doing and what steps need to be taken next in order to succeed. Similarly, Major League Baseball (MLB) and SportsLine.com launched Baseball Live, a wireless delivery format of MLB games. This system allows fans to receive scores, player statistics, and other "up to the minute" information (Gellatly & Lambtom, 2001). This type of instantaneous action can even be seen as making the game more addicting that some already find it. "My, uh, passion for fantasy football has been what I would call "facilitated" (others might term it "enabled") by upgrading to a smartphone and downloading a few sports apps to keep track of stats and make last-minute player changes if I'm away from my laptop" (Ruggieri, 2011). Having information constantly at your fingertips may or may not ultimately affect the lifestyle a person was used to living (positive and/or negative leisure pursuits).

One of the other main concepts discussed throughout Gottdiener's chapter was the concept of simulation. The chapter defines simulation as, "to feign to have what one hasn't" (Gottdiener, 2000, p.19). Although fantasy sports bring about a sense of belonging among people, the act itself can be taken too far; participants are not real managers. This belief supports Gottdiener's idea of representational positioning. Representational positioning implies that "we are who we appear to be" (Gottdiener, 2000, p.19). When fantasy sport participants play the role of a manager, this idea implies that they truly believe they are a manager; fantasy is just as important as reality. However, this is not the case in the eyes of the athletes. Arian Foster, an NFL running back, expressed his frustrations via Twitter over fantasy football. He tweeted that "4 those sincerely concerned, I'm doing ok & plan 2 B back by opening day. 4 those worried abt your fantasy team, u ppl are sick." This type of attitude may be more extreme than others, but it does prove a point. Fantasy sport participants need to remember that their players are real people with real issues and unexpected moments. A Yahoo! representative wrote back, "Nobody sincerely cares about *you*, they care about your performance. It's not like cheering for a fantasy team is much different than cheering for a real team. They're both fairly irrational things adults do as diversions from real life" (Roth, 2011). This quote supports escape as a motivation for participation. Participants need to be able to recognize the difference and not become emerged too deeply within the fantasy.

Even with this emphasis put on fantasy sports and the new technology available, research shows that fantasy football participants are more likely to attend an NFL game live (Nesbit & King, 2010). With fantasy football being the most popular of the fantasy leagues, it makes sense that participants would be so invested that they would want to consume live games as well. A survey from iMedia Connection found that "55% of those surveyed say that they watch more

sports on television because of their involvement in fantasy sports leagues, and they are much more likely to go to professional sports games than the average American” (Nesbit & King, 2010, p. 97). This relates back to the intrinsic motivation of competence as well as surveillance.

Obtaining this knowledge and going to professional football games are ways to achieve the ultimate success within fantasy sport leagues. This research from Nesbit and King also shows that fantasy football participants are more dedicated to the sport as a whole rather than obtaining possible monetary goals. These monetary goals can lead to issues with legal complications that may produce negative consequences.

Legalities

With fantasy sports there are legal implications that are in place. Some individuals and groups believe that fantasy sports are a form of gambling while others think that it is simply a form of entertainment and escape. In order to keep fantasy sports out of the “political arena,” the Fantasy Sports Trade Association has hired federal lobbyists to create a campaign for lawmakers. The article further stated that in most instances, fantasy players do not bet; they pay an entry fee to join the league of their choice (Schouten, 2011). The Fantasy Sports Trade Association, at the time of the article, was looking into guarding against more changes to federal law pertaining to the growing fantasy sports industry. Some states currently have laws that their residents cannot collect winnings from online fantasy games. The FSTA would like to keep these states to a minimum. Laws like this question the legality of these online games, even though they are completely legal because players do not typically bet in standard fantasy leagues (Schouten, 2011).

In the legal dispute, *Humphrey’s v. Viacom (CBS Sports)*, the dilemma of what is and is not gambling or a wager was addressed. Humphrey stated that he should receive his entry fee

due to losses while participating in a fantasy sports league. However, this was ruled against due to standard fantasy league rules and regulations. The league defendants stated that the entry fee that participants must pay covers the costs for joining the league and receiving statistical player and team updates from the league provider (Moorman, 2008). This entry fee did not constitute gambling because it was seen as a “contractual agreement” between the participant and league provider. The State of New Jersey backed this decision and stated that taking an entry fee and offering a prize for the league winner is not considered gambling and that it would be “patently absurd” if that was true. The courts compared it to golf tournaments, spelling bees, and beauty contests, just to name a few. If all sponsored prizes combined with entry fees were considered gambling, “contest participants and sponsors could all be subject to criminal liability” (Moorman, 2008, p. 233).

While this study did not look at participant’s legal implications, this research examined both males and females who do or do not participate in fantasy sports as well as why. The reasons found included various motivational aspects within psychology. Two research questions that were addressed in this study were:

1. What is the appeal of fantasy sports?
2. What are the motivational components that lead a person to participate in fantasy sports leagues?

Method

Sample Population

This paper aimed to see how many students partake in fantasy sports at St. John Fisher College. Previous research failed to examine female fantasy sport participants, so both males

and females were included in this sample. The research has aimed to look at results from the student survey and find whether or not students do not participate in fantasy sports because it reminds them of the particular class they were enrolled in. In the end, the data was comprised from the undergraduate male and female population at Saint John Fisher College. The final results came from 325 individual. 66 % of survey participants were females and 34% were males.

In addition to this, it was helpful to reach out to a person who used fantasy sports for reasons other than leisure. There is a professor on campus that incorporates fantasy sports into the class for a large project; it was beneficial to look at this as well. There may be varying motivational differences among these findings. The questionnaire that was given to that professor has revealed motivations of why fantasy sports are useful in the classroom and that the students find it beneficial to their learning (see Appendix A).

Operational Definitions

To be considered a fantasy sport participant in this study, an individual needed to have participated in two or more leagues. This may not eliminate those that simply did it for a class or because someone asked them to; the survey aimed to ask questions in regards to why a person specifically joined. Finding out why people do participate led to motivational answers. In this research, motivation is being defined as, “a process that links effort to performance to reward satisfaction, with the strength of motivation determined by the product of valence, expectancy, and instrumentality” (Lavalley, et al, 2004, pp. 87-89).

The options given on the survey as to why someone participates are money (economic factors/gambling), friends/sense of community (also intertwined with entertainment), social status (more knowledge is equivalent to more control in a group), escape, surveillance, and other.

Escape is being defined as using fantasy sports “mentally getting away from daily rituals such as work, school, or any other environment” (Farquhar & Meeds, 2007,p. 1212). Surveillance will mean “information gathering, working with statistics, and staying in touch with real-world sports” (Farquhar &Meeds, 2007,p. 1212).

Survey

The survey was made using Qualtrics and sent out to all students on campus via email (see Appendices Band C). The questions went into information about fantasy sports. For example, these questions got at if the student is a participant and if so, how many hours a week is spent on fantasy sport preparation and execution. Preparation included researching players and attending drafts to make teams. It was important for those that answered that they did not participate in fantasy sports were not simply released from the survey. There was a question asking why they do not participate. It was just as relevant to know ‘why not’ as it was to know ‘why they do.’ By asking questions like this, the answers helped to determine motivations among college students and what that means in terms of fantasy sport participation. It ended by asking the participant’s gender and current year of college.

The survey touched on various aspects of fantasy sports. What was gained from the survey was a better understanding to the appeal of these leagues. Are participant motives purely monetary, for leisure, or for some other reason(s). Research shows that virtual worlds have a greater affect on people than winning or losing; this may also apply to fantasy sports. This primary data with the secondary data helped to have a strong understanding about the appeal and role of fantasy sports.

Data Collection Procedure

A cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and asking for participation was attached to the email as well that was distributed to all undergraduate students at Saint John Fisher College. Upon completion of the survey, students simply needed to click 'submit' and the results are sent directly to the Qualtrics account the survey was created through; the survey was accessible for one month. Once all of the data was collected, it was analyzed and connections were made. The data gained from the professor questionnaire was looked at as a smaller explanation about other motivations for participation. The data was prepared by grouping similar answers together and deciding what relationships should be looked at. It was then decided that a chi-square analysis was the best way to analyze and uncover the relationships that would make the most sense for the research.

The results that were found fit into the larger understanding in the fields of sport as well as psychology. The sport industry can use research such as this to pinpoint more aspects of this large segment. Fantasy sports, like the sporting industry, are relatively new. There is so much to learn about their impact upon society as well an individual impact. This same impact can be translated and studied into a greater understanding of psychology. Meshing a new field with one that has an extensive history will be beneficial for both areas of study.

Results

After receiving 325 completed responses, there were many results that have been gained from completing this research. Out of the 56% of respondents that currently participate in fantasy sports, 71% of them were student athletes. What was fascinating was that out of those participants, 55% were not in a fantasy league that matched the current sport they are a part of. When asked about why they have participated, 83% of survey takers responded with "friends/sense of community," and the second highest response, money, was answered by 52%

or survey takers (see Table 1). Looking at the opposite side, the main reason why survey takers did not participate in fantasy sports was because they simply have no interest; this made up 65% of responses (see Table 2).

There were also various relationships that presented themselves throughout this research process using Chi-Square analysis and Spearman correlation. There was a difference between gender and the reasons for participation and a significant correlation between gender and reasons against participation ($\chi^2(\text{degrees freedom}) = 43.35, p < .001$). Similarly, there was also a significant Chi-Square between the number of reasons one participates and the amount of time one spends a week preparing ($r = .037, p < .05$; see Table 4). The significance was .037 (see Table 4). The final significant finding was that quantity of reasons for fantasy sport participation is different for males and females ($\chi^2(\text{degrees freedom}) = 10.904, p < .05$; see Table 5).

Discussion

The results of this experiment show the various relationships that fantasy sport participation bring to the surface. Gender, preparation time, and reasons why/why not were all important factors in the research. The ultimate goal of this research was to find the appeal of fantasy sports as well as the motivational components that lead a person (male or female) to participate in a fantasy sport league.

The research questions were answered through the help of the previous research. After running various tests for correlations and other relationships, it was found that the appeal of fantasy sports lies within the need and/or want to fit in with friends or experience a sense of community. This supports the idea that many of the motivations for participation are intrinsic: one feels the personal need to feel like they are a part of something bigger and more meaningful. There is a sense of personal satisfaction that is a large part of this intrinsic motivation.

The friends/sense of community motivational component was the number one reason as to why males and females participate in fantasy sports. The second reason from males was for monetary purposes while females responded with escape. This may be because individuals want to leave the reality of schoolwork and tests and live out a fantasy that they have had. On top of the designated responses, the survey allowed for participants to choose 'Other' and write-in a reason as to why they personally participate. The main reasons given were for fun, floor bonding, friendly competition, to watch sports, and to win a championship. For research purposes, floor bonding and friendly competition can be categorized with friends/sense of community. Similarly, to win championships can be placed under escape. This conveys that individuals participate for mainly the same reasons, they just use various semantics. There were also write-in responses for the question asking why people do not participate in fantasy sports. They included, not interested in sports, their fantasy season is over, NCAA regulations, money is an issue, group of friends was not participating this year, don't want to ruin watching sports, and afraid to get too obsessed with it. These answers did not really match any of the one's designated in the survey, which was the goal of the 'Other' option. I found the "afraid to get too obsessed with it" answer very intriguing. The answer goes along very well with the Model of Fanatic Consumption Experience. If an individual were to get so involved with fantasy sports that they change everything about their current lifestyle, there could be definite repercussions. This answer solidified that this model has a true place in fantasy sports and is a completely valid concern.

One of the most interesting pieces of information gathered was the fact that more than half of the student-athletes that participated in fantasy sports were not in a league which matched the sport they physically play. It can be inferred that these athletes are using fantasy sports as an

escape from their reality of everyday life or games and practices. Maybe they failed to make the cut for their fantasy sport, but can excel in it via technology; all are plausible reasons for this finding.

The results from the Professor Questionnaire gave me a baseline about why fantasy sports are incorporated into various aspects of life. The professor I sent the questions to believed that mixing fantasy sports with classroom learning brings to focus real life experiences (he has had this within the course since the fall of 2003). This makes the class content much more believable, relatable, and much easier for students to learn. He also explained how age is definitely a factor when it comes to participating in fantasy sports. Twenty years ago he was a commissioner for a league, but once he got married and started a family, the time needed to devote to the league was nonexistent and he chose to give it up. A.F.Pogroszewski (personal communication, February 8, 2012).

Conclusion

While conducting this research, there were many areas of significance that presented themselves. The gender differences had not truly been addressed in past research because a strong portion of past research focused on the motivations of men; women were not distinguished in studies. Similarly, many of the theories that were previously discussed in the Literature Review were supported with this new research. The Competitive Orientation theory was very well supported within the qualitative responses from the survey. When asked why they participated in fantasy sports, many respondents wrote in with “competition.” Along the same lines, when asked why they do not participate, many respondents answered because they were unknowledgeable. This finding supports the Perceived Competence Theory. Because they are unknowledgeable, they feel they will be unsuccessful in this endeavor and therefore choose not

to engage in it. This can lead to the loss of the social aspect that so many participants enjoy by playing fantasy sports.

With this research came limitations as well. The population size was very small compared to what was anticipated. If this research were to continue, there are a variety of directions that one should take. First, future research should conduct the research at a much larger university. This would allow for a more diverse group of respondents and therefore a more diverse data set to analyze. I would also advise an implementation of NCAA regulations. This can be done by asking questions about whether or not NCAA regulations impact whether or not they participate in fantasy sports. This was also a limitation of this research because it was a topic which was neglected completely. With this addition, the research would hopefully reveal something about student-athletes and fantasy sport participation (or lack thereof) that has not been known before.

The results that were found fit into the larger understanding in the fields of sport as well as psychology. The sport industry can use research such as this to pinpoint more aspects of this large segment. Fantasy sports, like the sporting industry, are relatively new. There is so much to learn about their impact upon society as well as an individual impact. This same impact can be translated and studied into a greater understanding of psychology. Meshing a new field with one that has an extensive history will be beneficial for both areas of study.

The previous research and findings provides those interested with an insight into the appeal of fantasy sports on a small, private school. It has shown that there are in fact gender differences that others may not have seen before and it goes far beyond just reasons for participation. With the knowledge that has been gained from this research, more researchers will

be able to look at their preferred sample population and be able to compare their results. This will allow for more specific and accurate findings within this continually increasing industry.

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Appendix A

Professor Questionnaire

1. What is your overall perception of fantasy sports?
2. Have you ever participated in a fantasy sport league? Why or why not?
3. How long have you been incorporating fantasy sports into your finance class?
4. What is your thought process behind the use of fantasy sports within your class content?
How do you think it benefits your students?
5. How do you see fantasy sports advancing in the future and how do you see it potentially changing the course of your class?

Appendix B

Introductory E-Mail

My name is Andrea Keane and I am a senior Sport Management major. I am currently completing my senior thesis and am researching the appeal and motivations of participating in fantasy sports. I am sending out the following survey to examine the reasons why students on the Fisher campus do or do not partake in fantasy sports. The survey is completely anonymous and will take less than ten minutes.

****Survey Link****

It would be greatly appreciated if you would complete the survey by *insert date*. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at aek08265@sjfc.edu. Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Andrea Keane

Appendix C

Survey Instrument

1. Have you ever participated in fantasy sports? Yes or No
 - a. If no, why?
2. Do you currently participate in fantasy sports? Yes or No
3. Are you a student-athlete? Yes or No
4. Does your fantasy team match which sport you play? Yes, No, N/A
5. How many hours do you spend on fantasy sports? Less than 1, 1-3, More than 3
6. Why do you participate in fantasy sports? Money, Friends/Sense of Community, Social Status, Escape, For a Class, Other
7. Please indicate your gender. Male or Female
8. Please indicate your current year at St. John Fisher College. Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

Table 1

Participant Reasons for Participation

| Reasons | Percentages |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Money | 52% |
| Friends/Sense of Community | 83% |
| Social Status | 11% |
| Escape | 36% |
| For a Class | 9% |
| Other | 25% |

Note. This question was arranged so that the participants could select all of the reasons that apply to them.

Table 2

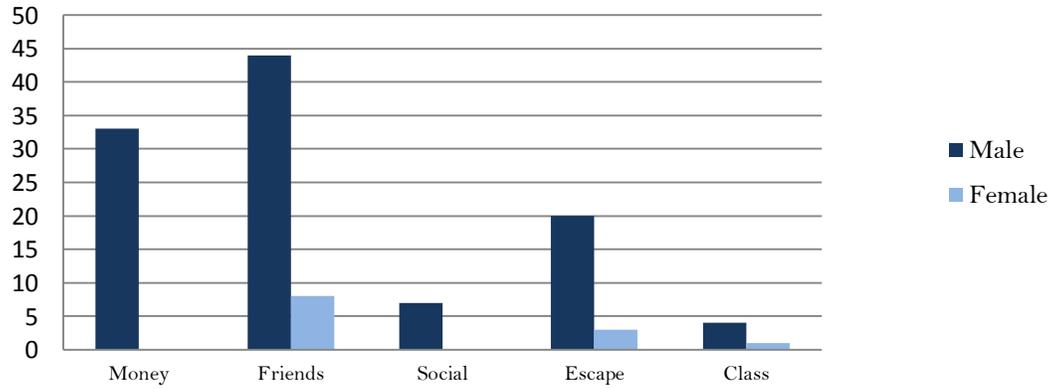
Participant Reasons for Not Participating

| Reasons | Percentages |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| No Interest | 65% |
| Had to do it for a Class | 1% |
| Unknowledgeable | 36% |
| Time | 24% |
| Other | 10% |

Note. This question was arranged so that the participants could select all of the reasons that apply to them.

Figure 1

Gender Differences in Reasons for Participation



Note. This does not include “write-in” responses.

Table 3

Gender Reasons against Participation

| | <u>Male</u> | <u>Female</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------|
| No Interest | 21 | 144 |
| Unknowledgeable | 13 | 76 |
| For a Class | 0 | 2 |
| Time | 19 | 42 |
| Other | 16 | 8 |
| <hr/> | | |
| Total | 53 | 198 |
| <hr/> | | |
| $X^2 = 43.35^*$ | | |
| <hr/> | | |

Note. This was a significant finding. The Pearson Chi-Square calculation showed a significance of 0.00, which is less than the required .05. This table shows that a greater number of females do not participate in fantasy sports.

Table 4

Preparation and Number of Participation Reasons

| | <u>1 Reason</u> | <u>2 Reasons</u> | <u>3 Reasons</u> | <u>4 Reasons</u> |
|------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Less than 1 Hour | 11 | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 – 3 Hours | 5 | 16 | 3 | 1 |
| More than 1 Hour | 18 | 30 | 9 | 4 |

$X^2 = 45.148^*$

Note. This was a significant finding because the Chi-Square calculation showed a significance of .037, which is less than the required .05.

Table 5

Quantity of Reasons for Gender Participation

| | <u>Males</u> | <u>Females</u> |
|-----------|--------------|----------------|
| 1 Reason | 13 | 6 |
| 2 Reasons | 26 | 3 |
| 3 Reasons | 9 | 0 |
| 4 Reasons | 4 | 0 |

 $X^2 = 10.904^*$

Note. This is a significant finding. The Pearson Chi-Square calculation showed a significance of .028, which is less than the required .05.