Running Passion: Does it Influence Event Satisfaction?

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Facilities/Events - Event Marketing (Amateur Sport)
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Scholars have a strong understanding of the role satisfaction plays in sport event participation (e.g., Theodorakis & Kaplanidou, 2015). Recently, the role of passion has been applied to sport spectators when trying to understand fan avidity and sport consumption (Wakefield, 2015). In sport spectator studies, passion has been explored as mutually exclusive constructs, defined in terms of general passion, harmonious passion, and obsessive passion (Vallerand, 2004; Wakefield, 2015). However, observation of sport event participants seems to imply that passion could be explored via satisfaction to better understand the consumer experience at a sport event (Warner et al., 2011).

Traditionally in the sport event space, the research has utilized a performance-only method of measurement and analysis (e.g., Du et al., 2015). This method departs from the foundational research (e.g., SERVQual, Parasuraman et al., 1985), which suggests that to fully understand performance evaluation, you first must understand what is important to the consumer (Martilla & James, 1977). To do so, Martilla and James (1997) first introduced the importance-performance analysis (IPA) that compared the two sides of the same variable to create a decision matrix. Because of its rudimentary design and lack of rigor, researchers have expanded IPA methodologies including the Gap 1 and 2 analyses, and the three-factor theory approach. The latter is grounded in the Kano Method (1984), which to date, has not been used to explore event satisfaction. Therefore, we used the Kano method to better understand the passion of runners as it relates to their event satisfaction. Building on the methodological work of Kano et al. (1984) and Azzopardi and Nash (2013), we examined runners’ passion and the influence of the passion on satisfaction. Partnering with a marathon event, we collected data via an online questionnaire. The questionnaire items included four components: event attribute importance, overall event satisfaction, passion, and demographic and running characteristics. For event attributes, Du et al., (2015) was utilized to measure both importance and performance of the items. We then measured overall satisfaction with three items. Finally, we measured runners’ perceptions of their level of passion toward running based on five responses to prompts: I like it that way, It must be that way, neutral, I can live with it that way, and I dislike it that way (Kano et al., 1984). Runners completed a web questionnaire that included 18-paired (functional/dysfunctional) elements of passion toward running adapted from Wakefield (2015) and running addiction, adapted from Youngman and Simpson (2014). We are currently collecting data for this project. However, this study will contribute to theory in that it incorporates a new method for examining passion for a sport, which has not yet been explored using this process. Further, we attempt to understand whether the absence or presence of running passion influences the satisfaction of the event experience (Kano, et al., 1984). Given we have not collected all the data, the methodological process and preliminary empirical contributions, and practical implications will be discussed during the presentation.