



Emotional Responses to Televised Sports

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HYPOTHESES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS



H1

If one's preferred NFL team is having success, then the viewer will experience positive emotional effects in terms of mood, self-esteem, and gratification while viewing televised sports. On the contrary, if one's preferred NFL team is experiencing struggle and defeat, the viewer will encounter negative emotional effects towards previously mentioned aspects while viewing their preferred NFL team on television.



RQ1: How would viewing televised sports positively or negatively affect the viewer's emotions if their ideal team is winning or losing?



Abstract

- This study was conducted in order to analyze the emotional responses one has to watching the NFL (National Football League)
- Original Research Study
- Online Study conducted through Qualtrics in which participants over the age of 18 were invited to complete a survey about their favorite team
- This research analyzed fanship, asking who the participant's favorite NFL team was, how much of a fan they consider themselves, and how the outcome of their favorite team performing well/poor affects their emotions.

Key Words: Football, Television, Sports, Emotional Response



Previous Research

- Much research points to the benefits of fanship as therapeutic, with fans placing themselves in a no-lose situation. Fans vicariously share in competition, gaining pleasure by identifying with players and teams. When teams win, fans tend to think “we won” when their team wins but “they lost” when their team loses. (Gantz, W., & Wenner, L. A. (1995).
- Identification with an athlete or team has been linked with self-esteem, mood, generosity, wishful thinking, and aggression (Gantz, W., & Wenner, L. A. (1995).
- In considering the situation of single matches, on average, about only one half of the spectators will be positively affected by the outcome of a match, whereas the other half will be negatively affected by the outcome (Schramm, H., & Knoll, J. (2017).
- Fans are clearly more invested in the viewing experience. Male and female sports fans reacted and responded in almost identical ways, although men generally were an insignificant shade more involved than women (Gantz, W., & Wenner, L. A. (1995).



METHODS

Method



PARTICIPANTS

- 123 participants
- Average age of 44.97
- 73.2% female
- 96.8% White
- 34.7% had some college experience

ONLINE SURVEY

- Online survey in Qualtrics
- 12 question survey
- Fandom Scale

MATERIALS

- NFL games that participants have watched on television
- NFL related programming that people have watched on television



MEASURES



Gantz and Wenner's (1995) Relationship Between Fanship and Pre-Viewing Behaviors

Pre/Post game emotions, nervousness, time spent watching pre-game programming

Gantz and Wenner's (1995) Relationship Between Fanship and Exposure Motivations

Watching televised football to keep up with betting, watching because friends and family are, watching to stay in the loop

Gantz and Wenner's (1995) Relationship Between Fanship and Postviewing Responses and Behaviors

Ignoring family if your team loses, deliberately watching highlights after the game, stay in a good/bad mood after the game has ended



RESULTS



H1:

If one's preferred NFL team is having success, then the viewer will experience positive emotional effects in terms of mood, self-esteem, and gratification while viewing televised sports. On the contrary, if one's preferred NFL team is experiencing struggle and defeat, the viewer will encounter negative emotional effects towards previously mentioned aspects while viewing their preferred NFL team on television.

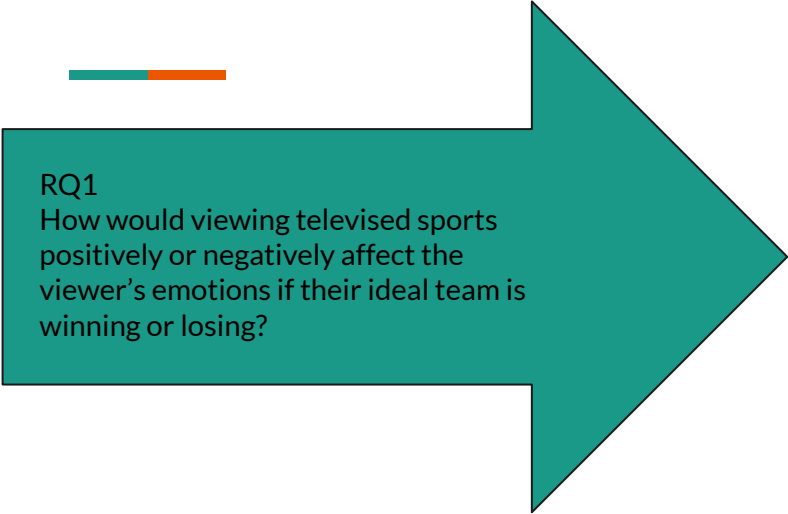
- Indicate how likely it is for you to do each of the following when watching football:
- Yell out loud in response to the action of the game
 - .078
- Feel happy when your favorite player or team performs **well**
 - -.053
- Avoid your family because you need time to recover after the game
 - -.166
- Stay in bed for awhile after your favorite team was defeated
 - -.036
- Stay in a good mood for awhile after your team wins a game
 - -.018
- Stay in a bad mood for awhile after your team faces **defeat**
 - -.068
- Deliberately watch the highlights of the game after it has ended
 - .047
- Feel nervous as the game gets closer to kickoff
 - -.032

Correlations Between Gender of Sports Television Viewing Experiences

- How big of a fan are you of [Favorite NFL Team]? - Not a fan - Super fan
 - Male: 0.684
 - Female: 0.863
- I watch my favorite NFL team on television because I don't want to miss a thing
 - Male: 0.589
 - Female: 0.641
- I watch my favorite NFL team on television because it gives me a chance to learn more about the players and the sport
 - Male: 0.456
 - Female: 0.523
- I watch my favorite NFL team on television because I like the announcers
 - Male: 0.322
 - Female: 0.219
- I watch my favorite NFL team on television in order to see how my team performs
 - Male: 0.497
 - Female: 0.605
- I watch my favorite NFL team on television because it's what my friends and family are watching
 - Male: -0.172
 - Female: 0.114

Correlations Between Gender of Sports Television Viewing Experiences

- 
- I watch my favorite NFL team on television in order to follow my bets
 - Male: 0.102
 - Female: 0.158
 - Watching football is something to do with friends and family
 - Male: 0.347
 - Female: 0.399
 - Watching football gives me something to talk about
 - Male: 0.303
 - Female: 0.462
 - Watching football gets me psyched up
 - Male: 0.450
 - Female: 0.540
 - Watching football is a good way to let off steam
 - Male: 0.667
 - Female: 0.388
 - Watching football helps me to relax and unwind
 - Male: 0.696
 - Female: 0.454
 - I like the tension and drama involved when watching football
 - Male: 0.282
 - Female: 0.400
 - Watching football is something to do when nothing else going on
 - Male: 0.699
 - Female: 0.080
 - I watch football when there is nothing else to watch on television
 - Male: 0.112
 - Female: 0.045



RQ1

How would viewing televised sports positively or negatively affect the viewer's emotions if their ideal team is winning or losing?

- Indicate how likely it is for you to do each of the following when watching football. - Stay in a bad mood for awhile after your team faces defeat
 - -0.068
- Indicate how likely it is for you to do each of the following when watching football. - Stay in a good mood for awhile after your team wins a game
 - -0.018

Although both defeat and victory portrayed a negative correlation between emotional responses and televised sports, there was a stronger correlation between staying in a good mood for a while after a participant's favorite NFL team had a winning performance.



DISCUSSION

Key Findings



- The correlations between positive and negative emotional responses were similar
 - My hypothesis was that if a team is experiencing success, there would be more positive emotional responses than negative
 - This hypothesis would be rejected
 - The correlations proved that there wasn't a sound connection between positive and negative emotional responses. Participants had both positive and negative emotional responses.
- 24.2% of participants reported watching 3 hours of NFL related programming on Sundays
 - This correlates to about the length of one game, most likely of their favorite team
- Women reported being more of a superfan of their team than men
- 55.6% of participants preferred to watch the television broadcast rather than attend the game in-person
- Previous research stated that male and female sports fans reacted and responded in almost identical ways, although men generally were an insignificant shade more involved than women
 - My research supports that male and female sports fans reacted and responded in almost identical ways, however women were generally involved than men



Practical Implications

1. If this study looked at the NFL, results may be similarly reflected in other professional sports (NBA, MLB, NHL, etc.)
2. Considering this research was conducted about all 32 NFL teams, results summarizing one specific team may propose similar results



Limitations

- 91.1% of participants were Green Bay Packer fans
 - The Green Bay Packers are a successful team
 - Considering the success of the Packers, more fans will be correlated to having positive emotional effects to their team on television
- 73.2% of participants were female
 - There wasn't an equal representation of gender
- 96.8% of participants were white
- This study only analyzed NFL Football, emotional responses may differ between professional sports
- Due to incomplete responses, the survey went from 135 to 123 valid responses

Future Research

- Look at other professional sports and research if emotional responses are similar/different
- Consider a pre-test fandom scale, then have participants take the questions about emotional response after watching a game
- Test fans of a specific NFL team to see the differences in emotional responses of teams who are performing well versus teams who are performing poorly



CONCLUSIO N

This research project supported the idea that people have both positive and negative emotional responses to televised sports. The results of this survey prove that there are different reactions to different outcomes of professional football games, affecting the ways in which people cope with a win or loss from their favorite football team. This study also supported the idea that being a fan of a successful professional football team correlates to how much success that team is having, and the more a team is successful, more of a fan the respondent will be, and more time will be spent watching programming related to their team.

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