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Running head: INTERNATIONAL SPECTATOR MOTIVES

An Analysis of Spectator Motives and Media Consumption Behavior in an
Individual Combat Sport: Cultural Differences between American and South
Korean Mixed Martial Arts Fans

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Abstract

This study compared the motives and media consumption behaviors of Mixed Martial Arts spectators who attended events in the United States ($n = 208$) and South Korea ($n = 229$). Significant cultural differences were noted in sport interest ($p < .01$), vicarious achievement ($p < .01$), aesthetics ($p < .01$), national pride ($p < .01$) and violence ($p < .05$). Backward regression analyses indicated that sport interest ($\beta = .584$), fighter interest ($\beta = .176$), and drama ($\beta = .187$) predicted media consumption at the American event, while sport interest ($\beta = .747$), drama ($\beta = .157$), and adoration ($\beta = -.133$) were significant predictors at the Korean event.

Executive Summary

The sport of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) has shown signs of significant growth in the United States and Korea over the past few years. In the U.S., UFC television events now draw better cable ratings among key demographic groups than National Basketball Association (NBA), National Hockey League (NHL), and Major League Baseball (MLB) games, and recently established the pay-per-view industry's new single season record by generating over \$200 million during 2006 in the United States (Hamilton, 2006; Scelfo, 2006; Trembow, 2007; Wertheim, 2007). Likewise, in South Korea, one of the broadcasting corporations bought the television broadcasting rights from K-1, a MMA provider, for a total of \$30 million over the next three years (Kim, 2007). Considering that the broadcasting rights fees for MLB and the Korean Baseball Organization (KBO) are \$48 million for four years and \$9.5 million per year respectively in Korea, the magnitude of the broadcasting rights purchase for K-1 is quite impressive (Moon, 2007). Given the stated goals of global expansion by MMA providers (Official UFC 75 "Champion vs. Champion" Press Release, 2007), it is very crucial for sport marketers of both American promoters and Asian promoters to understand the cultural differences in terms of fans' motivations to attend and watch MMA events in order to create the most effective marketing plans for a successful drive into a new market. Therefore, the primary goal of the current study was to explore the cultural differences of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fans by comparing the motives and the media consumption behaviors of 437 spectators who attended local MMA events held either in a mid-sized Midwestern city in the United States ($n = 208$) or a major metropolitan city in South Korea ($n = 229$). Spectators at each of these events completed a questionnaire containing items assessing spectator motives and media consumption from previously published studies (Funk, Mahony, & Ridinger, 2002; Kim, Lee, & Andrew, 2007; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). ANOVA results indicated

significant differences between American and Korean participants in the motives of sport interest ($p < .01$), vicarious achievement ($p < .01$), aesthetics ($p < .01$), national pride ($p < .01$) and violence ($p < .05$). In addition, two backward linear regression analyses indicated that sport interest ($\beta = .584$), fighter interest ($\beta = .176$), and drama ($\beta = .187$) were significant predictors of media consumption for spectators at the American event, while sport interest ($\beta = .747$), drama ($\beta = .157$), and adoration ($\beta = -.133$) were significant predictors of media consumption for spectators at the Korean event. Therefore, the findings of the present study suggest cultural differences exist, necessitating a better understanding of each market when promoting MMA events. Furthermore, significant predictors of media consumption in each cultural setting were identified, an important consideration given the sport's particular reliance on the media (e.g., pay-per-view events) to generate exposure and revenue. Future research should be undertaken in other areas where MMA has experienced growth (e.g., Japan, United Kingdom, etc.) as well as areas that have not been exposed to the sport to the same extent (e.g., France, Italy, etc.) to better understand how to expand the sport into new areas.

Introduction

The sport of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), a combat sport in which different martial arts styles or techniques including striking and grappling are permitted, was introduced to the public for the first time when the initial Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) was held in Denver, Colorado, in November, 1993. After experiencing hardships to survive from 1997 to 2001, the sport reemerged in the United States in 2001 with the sale of the UFC franchise to Zuffa, LLC, and the adoption of new rules including five weight classes, rounds, time limits, a list of over 31 fouls, and eight possible ways for the fight to end. The UFC's efforts to provide big championships and rival matches on pay-per-view channels along with the success of "The Ultimate Fighter" reality series on Spike TV have resulted in consistent growth in television ratings. In fact, UFC television events now draw better cable ratings among key demographic groups than National Basketball Association (NBA), National Hockey League (NHL), and Major League Baseball (MLB) games, and recently established the pay-per-view industry's new single season record by generating over \$200 million during 2006 in the United States (Hamilton, 2006; Scelfo, 2006; Trembow, 2007; Wertheim, 2007).

The tremendous growth of the MMA's popularity has been found not only in the United States, but also in other countries, especially Asian countries like Japan and South Korea. Japanese promoters (e.g., Pride FC, established in 1997, and K-1, introduced in 1993) took advantage of UFC's early struggles in the U.S. by recruiting UFC fighters to provide good matches for their events. As a result, MMA has been successfully and consistently growing in Japan and other Asian countries for more than ten years. For example, Pride FC drew 90,107 fans to Tokyo National Stadium in Japan in August of 2002. Recently, in South Korea, one of the broadcasting corporations bought the television broadcasting rights from K-1 for a total of \$30 million over the next three years (Kim, 2007). Considering that the broadcasting rights fees for MLB and the Korean Baseball Organization (KBO) are \$48

million for four years and \$9.5 million per year respectively in Korea, the magnitude of the broadcasting rights purchase for K-1 is quite impressive (Moon, 2007).

As the sport has become popular throughout the world, each promoter began to find ways to expand their market globally. For instance, K-1, realizing the rapid growth of the MMA market in the United States, has televised their fighting series on cable channels in the United States. In fact, K-1 has also planned to hold several of their live events in 2007 in the United States, Holland, Germany, and South Korea in order to penetrate the world market (K-1, 2007). UFC has not been content with its present position as a leading promoter in the U.S. and also set their goals on conquering European and Asian markets. UFC president Dana White was quoted in a June, 2007, press release saying, "We've done so well over here in the last six years in the U.S., we have this product...it translates all the cultural barriers, language barriers and we know this can work worldwide. We opened an office in London and we will have done three events in the UK this year, and they will all have been successful. Our plan is to move out into Europe and next year go into Italy, Spain, Germany, France, etc." (Official UFC 75 "Champion vs. Champion" Press Release, 2007). In addition, the UFC's purchase of Pride FC, which used to be their most intimidating rival from Japan, illustrated UFC's strong desire to make inroads into the Asian market as well as a means to strengthen its leading position in the United States. However, it will not be effective for Asian promoters or American promoters to market their events to customers in the North America or Asian market in the same manner they have used for their own markets because North American customers or Asian customers may appreciate different aspects of the sport (Genauer, 2006). Therefore, it is very crucial for sport marketers of both American promoters and Asian promoters to understand the cultural differences in terms of fans' motivations to attend and watch MMA events in order to create the most effective marketing plans for a successful drive into a new market.

Sport Motives

For sport marketers, it is important to understand and satisfy sport fans and spectators who attend and watch sporting events. Therefore, identifying different reasons to attend or watch sporting events has been the most critical assignment for sport marketers and researchers because each fan or spectator may appreciate different aspects of sporting events. When sport marketers are able to provide what fans want to get from the events, fans will revisit or continue to watch the events. Researchers have identified key motivation factors in past research and have developed scales to measure the motives of sport consumers (Funk, Mahony, & Ridinger, 2002; Kahle, Kambara, & Rose, 1996; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Sloan, 1989; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995).

In this line of research, Bilyeau and Wann (2002), James and Ridinger (2002), and Funk *et al.* (2002) each suggested that different motives may be appreciated for different sports and for different consumer segments. Even though previous researchers have provided a general idea about the motives of sport consumers, the effort to identify and measure these motivations in specific sports is still lacking (James & Ross, 2004). The motives of sport consumers can be different regarding the type of sports such as artistic sports (e.g., gymnastics and synchronized swimming) or combative sports (e.g., wrestling, football and boxing); therefore, individual motives should be rationalized for each sport (Funk *et al.*, 2002; Mahony *et al.*, 2002). Based on this suggestion, Lee, Kim, Greenwell, Andrew, and Mahony (2006) proposed ten potential motivations of Mixed Martial Arts Fans. Among the ten proposed motives, eight motives (sport interest, eustress, escape, economic factor, aesthetics, vicarious achievement, national pride, and socializing) were identified based on existing sport fan motivation instruments (Funk *et al.*, 2002, Milne & McDonald, 1999; Sloan, 1989; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995), and two additional motives (adoration and violence) were proposed based on suggestions in prior research that heroism (Stevens,

Lathrop, & Bradish, 2003) and violence (Coakley, 2006).may be factors which increase interest in sports.

Researchers have also explored demographic differences within a target market. By far, the most popular demographic analysis has been a comparison of gender differences in motives to attend sporting events (Kahle et al., 1996; Kim, Lee, & Andrew, 2007; Swanson et al., 2003; Zhang et al., 1996). However, the impact of cultural differences on fan motives to attend sporting events has been rarely studied. Kwon and Trail (2001) compared fan motivations to attend intercollegiate sport events between American students and international students. Even though the study examined the cultural differences in fan motives, the study did not examine the impact of cultural differences on fan motivations for a specific sport in different countries because the study was limited to intercollegiate sport events in the United States. Therefore, a need still exists to compare cultural differences in fan motives for similar sporting events contested within each country's respective cultural environment (e.g., a comparison of American fans at an American event with Korean fans at a Korean event in the same sporting context).

Purpose of Study

The surprising and dramatic increase of the interest in the sport of MMA throughout the world over the last ten years has raised several questions for sport managers and researchers. Further, the sport has begun to expand globally, and many MMA organizations are seeking to market their sport to other cultures. Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to examine differences in motivation and media consumption between cultures by examining differences between American and Korean MMA spectators.

Method

Instrument

Fifty items were developed to explore the cultural differences between American and

Korean MMA fans for this study. The questionnaire included items designed to capture demographic information, MMA experiences, MMA preferences, motivation to watch MMA events, and media consumption behavior. To ensure consistency, the original version of the survey questionnaire written in English was translated into Korean by two Korean doctoral students in sport management who had wide knowledge of sport motive literature. Subsequently, the Korean version of the questionnaire was backtranslated into English by another Korean graduate student to confirm that the initial translation was correctly performed.

Fan Motives. The motives scale developed by Kim et al. (2007) for the sport of MMA was adopted for this study. Three items for each motive were assessed with seven point Likert scales anchored by Strongly Disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (7). Cronbach Alphas (α) for the English version of the scale for Kim et al's study ranged from $\alpha = 0.749$ (drama) to $\alpha = 0.926$ (sport interest), and the RMSEA result (0.063) indicated a good fit of the model to the data. In addition, two additional items, fighter interest and organizational interest were added to the original list of ten. A discussion of the twelve possible motivation factors and a rationale for each follows.

(a) Drama (Funk et al., 2002; Sloan, 1989; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). MMA fans are excited by a thrilling event, which happens in a relatively short time period compared to other sports or by a very close match that the fans can not predict a result.

(b) Escape (Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). Sports fans watch or attend sporting events to temporarily forget their problems or to revitalize their life by escaping from their routine life.

(c) Aesthetic qualities (Funk et al., 2002; Milne & McDonald, 1999; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995). Some hard core MMA fans who know fighting techniques well

enjoy dedicated matches between well trained fighters with excellence and mastery more than just bloody fighting between unskilled fighters.

(d) Vicarious achievement (Funk et al., 2002; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995).

While the average MMA fan likely does not participate in fighting often, the sport still attracts them. Watching MMA fighters can provide fans a feeling that they can not achieve from their actual life.

(e) Socializing (Funk et al., 2002; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1994.) Sporting events are widely used for making friends or spending time with friends. MMA clubs have been established for MMA fans who want to socialize with others having similar interests and watching the matches at the events. In local amateur MMA events, it is not hard to found ten or more fans coming to the events in a group to cheer for fighters from their own club.

(f) National pride (Funk et al., 2002). National pride appears to have played a huge role in the success of MMA in the Asian market while it is not relatively emphasized in the United States where individual fighters are more focused rather than their cultural background.

(g) Economic factor (Guttman, 1986; Wann, 1995). Due to the nature of a combat sport like boxing, MMA event have provided its fans the opportunities to wager on anticipated outcomes of MMA matches.

(h) Adoration (Lee et al., 2006). This motive addresses the idea that spectators may be attracted by athletes who are heroic and appear unbeatable.

(i) Violence (Coakley, 2006; Goldstein & Arms, 1972). Since MMA is considered to be more realistic than other combat sports, the associated violence with one-on-one combat may be particularly attractive to fans of the sport.

(j) Sport interest (Funk et al., 2002). As an emerging sport, MMA appears to have

been successful in inspiring sport fans' interest in the sport, and MMA fans are attracted to attend events and watch the match, because they like the sport itself.

(k) Fighter interest was adapted from Funk et al.'s (2002) interest in player scale to address the fact that MMA fighters often fight for different organizations and fans may be attracted to watch specific events to see their favorite fighters.

(l) Organizational interest was also adapted from Funk et al.'s (2002) interest in team scale. In contrast to many traditional main-stream sports where there are few leagues and many teams, the MMA industry consists of over 100 organizations promoting individual events. Therefore, event marketers often focus on building their organizational brand and fans often identify with different organizations. This motive accounts for the possibility that spectators could be fans of the organization promoting the event.

Media Consumption Behavior. Three media consumption items (adapted from Fink, Trail, & Anderson, 2002) were incorporated in the present study. The items for media consumption were measured with seven point Likert scales anchored by Strongly Disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (7) and included "I read about MMA news over the Internet," "I watch MMA events on television," and "I watch MMA reality shows on television."

Demographics. Demographic information including gender, age, marital/household status, and educational level were collected from participants in the present study.

MMA Experience and Preferences. In terms of the MMA experience, two items including, "How did you find out about Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) for the first time?" and "How many MMA events have you attended?" were asked. For the preference of MMA fans, the following two items were included, "Which of the following is your favorite MMA event?" and "Which of the following is your favorite weight class?"

Participants

Given the purpose of this study was to explore potential cultural differences between American fans and South Korean fans regarding motives to attend MMA events and the corresponding media consumption behaviors, the participants of the survey were limited to existing or current fans of MMA who attended a MMA event. To obtain a sample of MMA fans from each country, data were collected from a local event, held in June, 2006, in a mid-sized Midwestern city in the United States and an event held in February, 2007, in a metropolitan city in Korea. With each event organizer's permission, questionnaires were distributed to spectators sitting in randomly selected seats prior to the beginning of the opening ceremony for the each event. In order to participate in this survey, respondents were limited to adults who were at least 18 years old.

Among 570 (America = 270; Korea = 300) distributed questionnaires, 496 questionnaires were returned (87% response rate), and 437 (America = 208; Korea = 229) were usable for the study. For the American event, the crowd at the event was mostly male as the ratio of males ($n = 160$; 76.9%) to females ($n = 48$; 23.1%) was approximately three to one. The youngest age-group (18-24) was most represented with 66 participants (31.7%), followed by the 25-29 years age-group with 59 participants (28.4%). The level of education among study participants was varied as 30.8% had a high school diploma, 35.1% had some college and 31.8% had either an undergraduate or graduate degree. The majority of the crowd was white (87.9%). Similarly, the crowd at the Korean event was mostly male as the ratio of males ($n = 186$; 81.2%) to females ($n = 43$; 18.8%) was approximately four to one. The 25-29 years age-group was most represented with 96 participants (41.9%), followed by the 18-24 years age-group with 51 participants (22.3%). The level of education among study participants was varied as 21.8% had a high school diploma, and 76.4% had either an undergraduate or graduate degree.

Data Analysis

Two sets of a confirmatory factor analyses and Cronbach internal consistency analyses were conducted to evaluate construct validity and inter-item reliability for the respective data from each event since the two questionnaires were written in different languages and collected in differing cultural contexts. Descriptive statistics were calculated to assess overall demographics, MMA experiences, MMA preferences, MMA fan loyalty, and motives to attend and watch MMA events. A correlation analysis of the sport motivation factors was conducted to examine associations among the factors. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to examine cultural differences between American and Korean spectators in MMA fan motivation. Subsequent to the ANOVA, backward regression analyses were performed separately for American and Korean groups to examine the relationship between MMA fan motivations and fan's media consumption behavior. Backward regression analyses sequentially deleted weaker, non-contributing, variables and identified contributing variables of value to each regression equation.

Results

Scale Validity/Reliability

The confirmatory factor analysis results for each fan motive indicated acceptable measures of absolute fit (*American*: RMSEA = .063; *Korean*: RMSEA = .068) and comparative fit (*American*: CFI = .97; NFI = .93; NNFI = .96; RFI = .91; *Korean*: CFI = .96; NFI = .93; NNFI = .96; RFI = .92) according to Steiger (1990) and Kelloway (1998). Factor loadings, standard errors, and average variance explained values for the twelve MMA motives in each cultural setting are reported in Table 1. The range of Cronbach coefficients of the variables for the American event was from $\alpha = 0.749$ (drama) to $\alpha = 0.926$ (sport interest) and the range for the Korean event was from $\alpha = 0.719$ (drama) to $\alpha = 0.908$ (economic factor); therefore, all coefficients exceeded the recommended benchmark of .70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Preferences

Descriptive statistics were calculated for American and Korean spectators' MMA experiences, MMA preferences and motives to attend and watch MMA events. In terms of American MMA fans, word of mouth was important as 33.5% of attendees were exposed to the sport of MMA for the first time by their friends or colleagues. 34 participants (17.8%) indicated that Spike's television series "The Ultimate Fighter" had provided their introduction to the sport, followed by watching matches through pay-per-view ($n = 32$; 16.8%). However, 131 Korean spectators (60.7%) reported that they watched their first MMA event on television, and 39 participants (17%) were introduced to the sport by their friends. Regarding the favorite MMA promoters from both groups, American participants (81%) overwhelmingly indicated UFC as their favorite MMA event while Korean participants indicated K-1 (62.4%) as their favorite MMA promoter, followed by Pride FC (31%).

Motives

. For the Korean sample, drama ($M = 5.30$) was the most important factor followed by vicarious achievement ($M = 5.24$), fighter interest ($M = 4.97$), and sport interest ($M = 4.56$). For the American sample, sport interest ($M = 5.53$) was the most important factor followed by drama ($M = 5.52$), aesthetics ($M = 5.11$), and fighter interest ($M = 4.71$). To explore the cultural differences in MMA fan motivation between the respondents in the United States and Korea, a one-way ANOVA was calculated, and significant cultural differences were found in sport interest, [$F(1, 435) = 37.05, p < .01$], vicarious achievement, [$F(1, 435) = 36.40, p < .01$], aesthetic quality, [$F(1, 435) = 27.00, p < .01$], national pride, [$F(1, 435) = 9.99, p < .01$], and violence, [$F(1, 435) = 31.87, p < .05$]. Among the five motivations showing significant differences between two groups, the Korean spectators rated vicarious achievement, and national pride higher than American spectators. American spectators rated sport interest, aesthetic quality and violence higher than the spectators in

Korea. Table 2 shows a complete list of the means and standard deviations for motivations by cultural background.

Since the results of ANOVA indicated significant motive differences in the two groups, separate equations regressing spectator motives on media consumption were calculated for each country to provide more specific information to sport marketers regarding the relevant motives for each cultural background (Table 3). The overall model for the American event was significant, [$F(11, 196) = 18.323, p < .001, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .479$]. Through backward regression to remove non-contributing variables, fighter interest, sport interest and drama remained as significant predictors of media consumption. The model reflecting the remaining variables was significant [$F(3, 204) = 67.254, p < .001, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .490$], indicating that 49% of the variance in media consumption was explained by fighter interest, sport interest and drama motives. The Standardized Coefficient (β) indicated that sport interest ($\beta = .530$) explained the most variance, followed by fighter interest ($\beta = .176$) and drama ($\beta = .140$).

The overall model for the Korean sample was also significant [$F(12, 216) = 29.424, p < .01, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .556$]. Through backward regression to remove non-contributing variables, sport interest, drama, and adoration remained as significant predictors of media consumption. The model reflecting the remaining variables was significant, [$F(3, 225) = 97.221, p < .001, \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .559$]. The Standardized Coefficient (β) indicated that sport interest ($\beta = .747$) explained the most variance, followed by drama ($\beta = .157$) and adoration ($\beta = -.133$). The result of the Korean model indicated that 56% of the variance in media consumption was explained by sport interest, drama, and adoration motives.

Discussion

As the popularity of MMA has rapidly increased throughout the world over the last few years, leading MMA promoters such as UFC, Pride FC, and K-1 have attempted to

expand their business in the United States or East Asian countries. However, there are concerns whether the promoters have appropriate marketing strategies to penetrate new markets successfully because North American customers and Asian customers respectively appreciate different aspects of the sport (Genauer, 2006). The findings of the present study suggest cultural differences exist, necessitating a better understanding of each market when promoting MMA events.

Several differences in motivations emerged from the analysis suggesting differences in why Americans and Koreans are attracted to attending MMA events. Primarily, Americans rated sport interest as the most important factor. This finding exemplifies the shift in the way MMA has been promoted in the United States. In the beginning, it was promoted as a spectacle with initial spectators being attracted to the novelty of the sport. It now appears that American spectators attending MMA events have begun to embrace the MMA as a legitimate sport, and many see themselves as fans of the sport. Similarly, Americans rated aesthetics as much more important than Koreans suggesting American consumers are attracted to the technical aspects of the sport and appreciate the artistry of well-executed performances. Given Americans have much less experience watching or participating in various martial arts, a well-executed take down or submission maneuver may seem very impressive. Koreans, on the other hand, have much more experience watching or participating in various martial arts because traditionally, martial arts have been considered an important tool for cultivation of the mind and character building in many Asian countries while other sports have played those roles in western countries (Ko, 2002). Therefore, Koreans naturally exposed to Korean Taekwondo, Japanese Judo, and Chinese Kungfu from their early ages may have seen these moves many times before, making them less impressive. Based on these findings, promoters in the United States should focus on fostering identification with the sport and should continue their efforts to legitimize the sport by educating spectators about the skills and

strategies involved. Conversely, education may have little effect on Korean spectators, more easily accepting MMA as a legitimate sport and being already familiar with the various martial arts' techniques from their cultural background.

Another area that American spectators rated more highly than Korean spectators was violence. American spectators rated violence as the fifth highest reason to attend events indicating they are attracted, to an extent, to the aggressive, dangerous nature of the sport. Korean spectators had dramatically different ideas as they rated violence as eleventh out of twelve motives. This finding may be also explained by differences in participation in martial arts. Korean spectators with high levels of the knowledge of the finer aspects of the various martial arts such as discipline, focus, and athleticism, may not associate the actions during matches with violence while American spectators may perceive relatively higher level of violence from the same MMA actions. When the sport first started in the United States, promoters needed something to get customers' attention, focusing on the violent aspects of the sport. Although this approach created several problems for early promoters of the sport, it did initially draw attention (Walter, 2003; Wertheim, 2007). However, as MMA has evolved with rules and regulations designed to correct some of the negative images around the sport and its fans have been educated regarding MMA skills and strategies, MMA fans have begun to appreciate other aspects beyond its violent nature. Therefore, despite being a combat sport, results from this study suggest violence may not be the best marketing strategy for either Koreans or Americans.

Korean spectators placed a greater emphasis on vicarious achievement than American spectators. Koreans have been watching and practicing various martial arts for thousands of years, making it is reasonable to believe they would have a better ability to see themselves in their favorite fighters. Unlike other Asians, every Korean male has to serve in the military for two years. During their period of service, they are trained to achieve a certain

competency level in Taekwondo or other martial arts as a part of their training. Most Americans, on the other hand, are just now being introduced to the sport and may not have as much knowledge of traditional martial arts to form a basis for their appreciation of the sport. Without the history and knowledge of martial arts, American spectators may put much more emphasis on other factors. This is an interesting finding for marketers, as many American sports teams use vicarious achievement as a marketing tool by emphasizing team success and the ability for fans to “be a part of the team’s success”. Results from this study suggest those strategies may not be as effective for marketing MMA to American consumers, but may have a strong effect on Korean consumers.

Korean spectators also rated national pride as a much more important factor than their American counterparts. In part, this reflects the way the sport has been presented by the major MMA organizations. Asian organizations such as Pride and K-1 have placed a greater emphasis on national rivalries when promoting fights. For example, Pride often matches Japanese fighters versus American fighters and promotes the national pride angle as the key selling point for the fight. UFC, the dominant American organization, has rarely used that angle to promote fights, choosing to focus primarily on the skills and achievements of the individual fighters.

The primary similarities between the groups were in terms of drama and fighter interest. Both were highly rated for each group, suggesting, regardless of where the sport is marketed, promoters should continue to emphasize the drama associated with close fights and the qualities of the individual fighters. Considering drama is important, promoters should avoid mismatches and seek to promote fights where the outcome is uncertain. Further, this factor was much higher rated than adoration, suggesting MMA fans would much rather see close fights than seeing fights featuring a dominant, seemingly unbeatable fighter. UFC has been successful with this approach as exemplified by the number of upsets and title changes

in 2006 and 2007. This discussion also extends to fighter interest. American and Korean customers both are motivated to watch MMA to see their favorite fighters. However, the aforementioned discussion suggests MMA fans would rather their favorite fighters fight the best opponents than build lofty won-loss records against lesser opponents. Therefore, MMA promoters should seek additional ways to build interest in fighters such as educating spectators about fighters' backgrounds, history, fighting styles, and strengths. Developing interest in fighters by building their records against lesser opponents may create interest in fighters, but the drama associated with the sport would suffer. Boxing has often been criticized for this practice, and based on the results of this study, MMA should avoid this practice.

Further, this study sought to understand which motives drove media consumption. This is an important consideration, as relatively few people can attend MMA events, thus creating a need to generate exposure and revenue through media consumption. In both the American and Korean samples, sport interest was the main predictor of media consumption, as spectators with a high interest in the sport are probably more likely to seek further information about the sport through various media outlets. To a much lesser extent, drama predicted media consumption for both groups. The only differences between the two groups were that fighter interest predicted media consumption in the American sample indicating American consumers like to watch close fights featuring their favorite fighters. This is exemplified by the UFC's television series "UFC Unleashed" which is a compilation of the best, most dramatic fights, featuring the most popular fighters. Adoration was negatively correlated with media consumption in the Korean sample. This may indicate Koreans do not want to see unbeatable fighters holding champion titles for a long period. While MMA serves as an excellent setting to determine the efficacy of various contrasting martial arts techniques, the event results seem to indicate that there is no one martial arts style that is effective across

all fighting situations. As a result of the lack of dominance afforded to one particular fighting technique, MMA fans have learned to anticipate the possibility of huge upsets in MMA events. The results of the present study indicate that the outcome uncertainty associated with MMA may influence Korean MMA fans in regards to media consumption.

In conclusion, results from this study indicate differences exist between American and Korean spectators in their motivations to watch the emerging sport of mixed martial arts. From a practical standpoint, these findings suggest marketers must seek to understand different cultures when attempting to globalize the sport. Slight differences in the way the sport is marketed in different countries may have a large impact on the acceptance and growth in those areas. Theoretically, this study advances research into sport fan motivation by providing additional evidence into the efficacy of sport specific motives research as suggested by James and Ross (2004). The majority of sport consumer motivation research has focused on team sports rather than individual sports. In addition, studies examining consumer motivations within individual combat sports are extremely rare, thus making the present study a significant theoretical contribution to the literature. More importantly, this research extends the work of Kwon and Trail (2001) by validating the notion that motivations for sport consumption may vary among different cultures. Since the present study evaluated the motives of consumers in two different cultures within their respective settings, it allows for an accurate comparison of consumer motivation differences between two cultures in the same sport context.

Limitations and Future Research

The primary limitation to this study is that only spectators for American and Korean events were surveyed for the sample. Although this method accomplishes the study's primary goal of understanding whether or not cultural differences influence MMA consumption, there is more detailed information to be learned about spectators in other countries. Research could

be undertaken in other areas where MMA has experienced growth, such as Japan and the United Kingdom, to better understand the MMA phenomenon. While these countries have seen significant exposure to the sport, research could also be expanded to examine areas that have not been exposed to the sport to the same extent, such as France and Italy, to better understand how to expand the sport into new areas.

The current study was also limited in that each fight card in the study contained exclusively domestic fighters. This lack of international match ups may have limited the analysis of national pride as a motive. Contrary to the belief that national pride would play a huge role in Asian MMA markets, it was rated only the sixth highest among ten factors. In practice, promoters outside the United States such as Pride and K-1, under the belief that national pride to attract more Asian MMA fans to the sport, have utilized competitions between fighters who have different background to create interest. Future research into national pride as a motive should take place at events matching fighters of different nationalities to determine the relative importance of this motive.

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Table 1

Factor Loadings (β), Standard Errors (SE), and Average Variance Explained Values (AVE) for the twelve motive scale of Mixed Martial Arts.

Motives and Items	Korea (Sample =229)			America (Sample = 208)		
	β	SE	AVE	β	SE	AVE
Drama/Eustress						
I enjoy the drama of close fights.	1.10	1.62	0.43	1.17	0.86	0.61
I prefer watching a close fight rather than a one-sided fight.	1.23	1.37	0.52	1.24	1.16	0.57
I enjoy fights where the outcome is uncertain.	1.00	1.14	0.47	1.11	2.14	0.36
Vicarious Achievement						
When my favorite fighter wins, I feel a personal sense of achievement.	1.28	0.60	0.73	1.80	1.03	0.76
When my favorite fighter wins, I feel my status as a fan increases.	1.25	0.92	0.63	1.78	1.19	0.73
I feel proud when my favorite fighter does well	1.24	1.38	0.53	1.39	1.74	0.53
Escape						
I attend fights to avoid the hustle and bustle of daily activities	1.40	1.63	0.55	1.49	1.99	0.53
Watching fights offers an opportunity to get away from my everyday routine.	1.56	0.93	0.72	1.55	1.41	0.63
Fights are opportunities to forget about my problems	1.43	1.23	0.62	1.72	1.19	0.71
Economic Factor						
Betting or making bets is the most enjoyable aspect of being a fan.	1.75	0.68	0.82	1.79	0.58	0.85
I like to bet on fights with my friends or colleagues	1.62	0.67	0.80	1.74	0.89	0.77
I like MMA because I can bet on the fights	1.60	1.10	0.70	1.70	1.49	0.66
Aesthetic Quality						
I appreciate the beauty and grace of MMA fights	1.50	0.89	0.72	1.55	1.13	0.68
I like MMA because MMA is a form of art	1.56	0.94	0.72	1.62	1.11	0.70

Watching a well-executed athletic performance is something I	1.12	2.06	0.38	1.10	1.33	0.48
Adoration/Hero						
When a fighter appears to be unbeatable, he becomes a hero	1.10	2.17	0.36	1.44	1.64	0.56
MMA fighters are my role models because of their highly advanced skill	1.40	1.52	0.56	1.61	1.16	0.69
I watch MMA fights to witness greatness	1.45	1.70	0.55	1.60	0.66	0.79
Violence						
I MMA because it has more violence than other sports	1.65	1.23	0.69	1.67	1.32	0.68
I like the matches more when they get bloody	1.77	0.99	0.76	1.79	0.60	0.84
I enjoy the violence of MMA	1.60	1.07	0.70	1.89	0.64	0.85
National Pride						
I attend MMA matches to support my country's fighter	1.48	1.07	0.67	1.69	1.37	0.68
Patriotism is a big reason why I attend fights	1.50	1.39	0.62	1.78	0.88	0.78
When my country's fighters win, I feel proud to be a citizen	1.24	1.73	0.47	1.69	1.24	0.70
Socializing						
Matches are great opportunities to socialize with other people.	1.43	1.10	0.65	1.58	0.80	0.76
Interacting with other fans is a very important part of being at MMA events.	1.56	0.84	0.74	1.81	0.50	0.87
I am the kind of person who likes to be with other people.	1.03	2.17	0.33	1.20	1.95	0.42
Sport Interest						
I am a huge fan of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) in general	1.72	0.74	0.80	1.44	0.45	0.82
First and foremost, I consider myself a fan of MMA	1.70	1.08	0.73	1.59	0.63	0.80
I care about the sport of MMA.	1.56	1.17	0.67	1.48	0.52	0.81
Fighter Interest						
I tend to follow individual fighters more than MMA organizations	1.51	0.98	0.70	1.34	1.51	0.54
I am more of a fan of individual fighters than a fan of one certain organization	1.56	0.70	0.78	1.57	1.04	0.70

I tend to watch MMA to see my favorite fighters.	1.13	1.57	0.45	1.24	1.75	0.47
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Organizational Interest

I consider myself to be a big fan of [insert promoter name]	1.84	0.63	0.84	1.52	1.10	0.68
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Compared to other organizations, [insert promoter name] is my favorite	1.37	2.59	0.42	1.18	1.17	0.54
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I am loyal to [insert promoter name] even if other MMA organizations are showing more exciting matches	1.31	2.25	0.43	1.33	1.50	0.54
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Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Cronbach Alphas of Motivational Factors by Country

	Korea			U.S.A		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>α</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>α</i>
Adoration	4.31	1.53	.739	4.32	1.67	.860
Aesthetic*	4.35	1.53	.796	5.11	1.55	.823
Drama	5.30	1.29	.719	5.52	1.36	.749
Economic Factor	2.81	1.74	.908	2.68	1.83	.901
Escape	3.81	1.60	.832	3.91	1.73	.825
National Pride*	4.34	1.56	.807	3.82	1.83	.885
Socializing	4.37	1.49	.779	4.63	1.67	.851
Vicarious Achievement*	5.24	1.38	.833	4.32	1.38	.853
Violence*	3.52	1.78	.884	4.50	1.86	.916
Sport Interest*	4.56	1.76	.890	5.53	1.56	.926
Fighter Interest	4.97	1.51	.830	4.71	1.54	.790
Organizational Interest	4.33	1.77	.835	4.07	1.50	.812

*Significant cultural differences at the $p < .05$ level.

Table 3

Impact of Motivations on Media Consumption

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	R^2	<i>Adj. R²</i>	<i>F</i>
Korea				.565	.559	97.221***
Sport Interest	.696	.054	.747***			
Drama	.198	.063	.157***			
Adoration	-.143	.061	-.133*			
U.S.A				.497	.490	67.254***
Sport Interest	.593	.065	.530***			
Fighter Interest	.200	.065	.176**			
Drama	.181	.074	.140***			

Note. *p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.