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### **Examining the Psychological Commitment and Motivation for Attending a Non-Ticketed Event: A Case Study of ESPN's College GameDay**

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*The primary purpose of this study was to understand the relationship between excitement motivation and psychological commitment to a sport-related non-ticketed event on a college campus. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design and a convenience sample consisting of persons attending ESPN's College GameDay broadcast on the campus of James Madison University. Findings from the study suggest that the higher commitment level of participants connected to higher levels of motives. In addition, the results from the study suggested that spectator motivations might differ across ticketed and non-ticketed events. The dimension of "community" primarily explained attendance at the football game, while "amusement" was the primary motivator for attending the ESPN GameDay broadcast. Practical implications are discussed as to how intercollegiate sport administrators can leverage the finding that "amusement" was the main motivator to attend this non-ticketed event.*

*Keywords: ESPN College GameDay, excitement motivation, consumer behavior, non-ticketed sport event, psychological commitment*

Increasingly, sport organizations are elevating their levels of commitment to bolstering profitability. This is best exemplified in intercollegiate athletics where universities are making substantial investments into increasing the visibility of their athletic programs for purposes of enhancing their stature among peer universities (Nite, Hutchinson, Melton, & Bouchet, 2015). Many college administrators acknowledge the importance that athletics plays on their campus as a business venture (Alexander & Kern, 2010). Martin (2013) noted two primary benefits that accrue to colleges and universities occur with “big time” football programs through the elements of campus excitement and enhanced national attention. However, many sport-related events (e.g., Midnight Madness, Olympic events) are non-ticketed activities on campus that generate considerable excitement without generating any revenue.

Within the literature, scholars have focused on understanding the motives of sport consumers, with particular focus on revenue generating ticketed events (e.g., FBS football, basketball). However, the “motives for sport event attendance are dynamic, multifaceted, and have been examined through a number of different frameworks” (Funk, Filo, Beaton, & Pritchard, 2009, p. 127). In addition, the unique characteristics of intercollegiate athletics (e.g., a diverse fan base, high levels of spectator involvement, and intense market competition) make it a significant market segment within the sport industry (Choi, Martin, Park, & Yoh, 2009; Fink, Trail, & Anderson, 2002).

Scholars have attempted to understand the interrelationships between motives and specific behavior along with a comprehensive list of motivational forces that shape behavior in sport (Mahony, Madrigal, & Howard, 2000). Motivational factors influencing spectators in sport have been examined in terms of type of sport (James & Ridinger, 2002; Robinson & Trail, 2005), within the context of disability sport (Cottingham, et al., 2014), points of attachment (Robinson, Trail, & Kwon, 2004; Trail, Robinson, Dick, & Gillentine, 2003), behavioral variables like identification, expectancies, affective state, and self-esteem (Trail, Anderson & Fink, 2000; Trail, Fink, & Anderson, 2003) and individual difference factors (Funk, Mahony, & Ridinger, 2002). Other studies attempted to develop scales for measuring spectator motivation (McDonald, Milne, & Hong, 2002; Trail & James, 2001).

Understanding spectator motivations is important because college athletic departments are increasingly trying to increase the level of spectator involvement through marketing activities since one of the biggest revenue sources for many college athletic departments is gate receipts (Choi, et al., 2009; Wann, Grieve, Zapalac, & Pease, 2008). Generally speaking, the majority of consumer behavior studies in intercollegiate sport focused on the motivations of consumers without taking into account whether the sporting event was ticketed or non-ticketed (Bernthal & Graham, 2003; James & Ridinger, 2002; James & Ross, 2004; Keaton, Watanabe, & Gearhart, 2015). However, there is a paucity of studies examining the motivation for students and alumni to attend non-ticketed events on college campuses. Most of the research germane to non-ticketed events focused on economics related to estimating and counting attendance at various events (Burgan & Mules, 2000; Hara, Severt, & Shapoval, 2016; Wood, 2012).

To fill the need for this gap within the literature, this study examined how motivation influenced psychological commitment related to an exciting on-campus non-ticketed activity. In particular, the study sought to better understand the level of excitement generated during a visit by ESPN’s College GameDay live television show to James Madison University (JMU), a non-

traditional football powerhouse school participating in the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS). In addition, we sought to understand if the excitement of having a non-ticketed event (i.e., College GameDay) on campus impacted attending a ticketed event (i.e., the football game).

### *ESPNs College GameDay Broadcast*

College GameDay is a show broadcast on ESPN that regales audience members and viewers with stories about on-field college football heroics, school rivalries, and long-held college traditions (Lovette, 2007). ESPN's College GameDay broadcasts from the campus of traditional college football powers, although the show has recently chosen to broadcast once a year from the campus of football programs that do not always receive national notoriety (Adams, 2015). The content of the show primarily focuses on top 25 Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) programs and often the atmosphere on campuses hosting the show is described as "bedlam" or "raucous." As noted by Mike Penner, The Ohio State University's director of event services and facilities scheduling, College GameDay brings excitement to a college campus with its "large set, large screens and large speakers to inform (or irritate) the crowds of sleep-deprived students and interested onlookers" (Nagel, 2006, B16).

The setting for the current study was the College GameDay set on the campus of JMU for a regular-season football game. The presence of the College GameDay stage and the excitement leading up to the Saturday broadcast overshadowed the actual game itself. Anecdotal evidence revealed students and community members developed plans to attend the broadcast first, and the game was a secondary priority. Residents of the local community, students, faculty, staff, alumni, local media, university administration, local politicians, homeless individuals, and others attended the broadcast in one common space. In his newsletter leading up to the broadcast, the university's athletic director described the excitement surrounding having College GameDay on campus as "electric." He also encouraged students to reconnect with friends, teammates, and professors, emphasized the game was sold out, and asked spectators to "welcome the team with the roar that will make the hair on the back of your neck stand up."

The actual Saturday broadcast had the feel of a hallmark event. Ritchie (1984) defined a hallmark event as follows:

Major one-time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal, and profitability of a tourism destination in the short and/or long term. Such events rely for their success on the uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest or attract attention (p. 2).

The actual broadcast was on air from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. ET and could be described as a transcendent communal event. The event was transcendent in the sense that it brought a large cross-section of the community (communal) together with the university unlike any other collective efforts in the past.

## **Studies of Motivation in Intercollegiate Athletics**

Motivation has been described as an activated state consisting of drive urges, wishes, and desires that lead to goal-directed behavior (Mowen & Minor, 1998). It has also been defined as a "driving force within individuals that impels them to action" (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004, p. 87). Schiffman and Kanuk (2001) suggested that motivation consists of a process made up of five

states: a) need recognition; b) tension reduction; c) drive state; d) want; and e) goal-directed behavior. While there is a strong body of consumer behavior literature focused on sport motivation (Funk & James, 2001; Keaton et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2008; Mahony et al., 2002; McDonald et al., 2002; Stander & Van Zyl, 2016; Trail & James, 2001; Wann, 1995; Wann et al., 2008), more emphasis needs to be placed on intercollegiate sport.

In their study of three different intercollegiate athletic contests, results from Robinson and Trail (2005) suggested that significant differences exist between types of sport and gender in regard to spectator motives and points of attachment. Bernthal and Graham (2003) contrasted minor league baseball with collegiate baseball fans and found that collegiate fans were more highly motivated to attend a game due to play of the game itself and the communal aspects of attending. James and Ross (2004) proposed that motives influencing a spectator's interests in nonrevenue collegiate sport are largely based upon factors associated with sport in general. In their study of spectators attending Division II men's and women's basketball games, Choi et al. (2009) found that three socio-motivational factors (e.g., fan identification, involvement opportunity, reference group) had a significant impact on overall sport spectator involvement.

### *Excitement as a Motivational Factor*

Excitement is a positive emotion that has been associated with arousal and activation of the autonomic nervous system (Kerr, 1997). Emotional arousal related to the unpredictable nature of sports is a fundamental reason for the popularity of watching sport (Madrigal & Howard, 1995). Loy (1981) submitted the "problematic outcome" in sport leads to excitement and tension in a sporting event (p. 265). Elias and Dunning (1986) suggested that sport moves and stirs emotions "to evoke tensions in the form of a controlled, a well-tempered excitement without the risks and tensions usually connected with excitement in other life-situations" (p. 49). In relation to performance, athletes report experiencing excitement and often perceive it as a facilitator of performance (Jones et al., 2005). Excitement has also been found to predict consumption intentions in women's sport (Mumcu, Lough, & Barnes, 2016).

A study by Mehus (2005) sought to compare motives of spectators attending different entertainment sport events, and the findings indicated that spectators of soccer scored significantly higher on excitement motives in comparison to ski jump spectators. Spectators for both soccer and ski jumping also rated excitement motivation to be much more important than social motives. Spectators can also gain a level of excitement by watching their favorite team compete against a rival (Havard, 2014). Rivalry is "a fluctuating adversarial relationship existing between two teams, players, or groups of fans, gaining significance through on-field competition, on-field or off-field incidences, proximity, demographic makeup, and/or historical occurrence(s)" (Havard et al., 2013, p. 51).

### *Psychological Commitment*

Psychological commitment is descriptive of the attitudinal component of loyalty (Park & Kim, 2000) and predictive of consumer or behavioral loyalty (Fullerton, 2003; Iwasaki & Havitz, 2004). Crosby and Taylor (1983) defined psychological commitment as "a tendency to resist change in preference in response to conflicting information or experience" (p. 414). This resistance to change is an attitudinal outcome of psychological commitment (Bee & Havitz, 2010). Scholars have suggested that psychological commitment also refers to an individual's: a)

attitude strength; and b) attachment to an object that results in recurring behavior and the rejection of alternate behaviors (Dwyer, 2011). Pritchard, Havitz, and Howard (1999) proposed that information, identification, and volition serve as antecedent processes of commitment that facilitate this resistance to change.

Within the context of sport, Alexandris, Zahariadis, Tsorbatzoudis, and Grouios (2004) found consumer satisfaction to be antecedent of psychological commitment. Bee and Havitz (2010) proposed that psychological commitment mediates the effect of involvement and fan attraction on resistance to change. Mahony et al. (2000) extended the work of Pritchard et al. (1999) by developing the Psychological Commitment to Team (PCT) scale as a way to assess the strength of an individual's commitment to sport teams. The scale measured attitudinal loyalty and was to be used as a basis for segmenting sport consumers.

## Method

### *Procedure and Sample*

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design. The advantages for using a cross-sectional design include the low cost, short-time span, low drop-out rate, and short-term administration and cooperation between staff and participants (Salkind, 2000). The target population for this study were attendees of a non-ticketed activity on a college campus, including students, alumni, faculty, community members, and others. Convenience sampling was used and the sample was comprised of persons over the age of 18 in attendance during ESPN's College GameDay broadcast. The campus of JMU is located in Harrisonburg, Virginia, and is classified as a master's level mid-sized university in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Subjects for the study were recruited using a street intercept method, which provides access to people on the street engaged in a wide variety of activities such as sitting on steps, walking, running, preparing to use public transportation and so forth (Miller, Wilder, Stillman, & Becker, 1997). Researchers distributed questionnaires at various access points around the College GameDay broadcast set.

### *Instrumentation*

A 32-item instrument was developed for paper and pencil distribution. Section I of the instrument measured psychological commitment in sport, loyalty, and intent to attend. These items (numbered 1-14) were modified based on Mahony et al.'s (2000) Psychological Commitment to Team (PCT) scale that measured attitudinal and behavioral loyalty of sport consumers. Also included was a filter question, "Will you be attending the football game" at the end of this section. Section II was comprised of nine items that measured motivation to attend the ticketed football game. These items were adapted from Mehus' (2005) motivation scale. Section III also included nine items adapted from Mehus that measured a subject's motivation to attend the non-ticketed College GameDay broadcast. The final section (i.e., Section IV) asked subjects to respond to specific demographic questions such as gender, age, and residence. This section also asked the subjects to designate if they could be classified as a student, alumni, or season ticket holder. Subjects were also asked to indicate which football games they attended during the season and if the ESPN College GameDay broadcast factored into their decision to attend the football game.

## Results

Out of 177 quantitative surveys, 176 surveys remained for data analysis after deleting one incomplete response. Almost equal numbers of male ( $n=83$ , 47.2%) and female ( $n=86$ , 48.9%) completed the survey and the respondents' mean age was 23.15 ( $SD=8.50$ ). Out of 176 respondents, 79.0% of respondents were either current students ( $n=119$ , 67.6%) or alumni ( $n=20$ , 11.4%).

The first part of measuring respondents' psychological commitment scale was adapted from Mahony et al.'s (2000) PCT scale. To test construct reliability, Cronbach's alpha test was conducted, and the result ( $\alpha = .88$ ) showed that it met the minimum requirement level of .70 recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). However, inter-item correlation matrix showed that item No. 9 ("I have been a fan of JMU football since I began watching college football") showed weak correlations with other items ranging from  $-.003$  (with item number 14) to  $.40$  (with item number 11). More importantly, only item No. 9 had item to total correlation of less than  $.30$  ( $r=.298$ ). Therefore, item No. 9 was deleted, which resulted in a slightly improved Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = .89$ ). The total sum of respondent's PCT score was 68.50 for 13 items with a seven-point Likert-type scale.

The second part of the survey measured the participants' motivation to 1) attend the game, and 2) attend ESPN GameDay using Mehus' (2005) motivation scale, which has two dimensions of *excitement* and *sociability*. Furthermore, the items "Because ESPN College GameDay is in town" to attend the football game and "To have a once-in-a-lifetime College GameDay experience" to attend ESPN's College GameDay were added respectively as an additional motivation to attend. According to Mehus (2005), the excitement dimension included side with favorite team, interested in this particular sport, experience excitement, and entertainment; while the social dimension included being with friends, experience companionship, being with family, and supporting local sport.

First, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was conducted with the nine items of motivation to attend the JMU football game. The data were examined for its suitability for factor analysis and the correlation matrix revealed that most of the coefficient was above  $.3$  showing that items are at least moderately correlated. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was  $.85$ , which exceeds the recommended value of  $.6$  and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant ( $p=.00$ ). Principal Component Analysis (PCA) revealed that there are two components whose eigenvalues are over 1, and a scree plot also confirmed the two valid factors. Direct Oblimin rotation was performed and the two factors explained 65.11% of variance (Community: 52.72%, Amusement: 12.39%). The results of the PCA were not consistent with the Mehus (2005) study. The first component included, interested in football, support local sport, side with favorite team/athletes, feel companionship, and be with family, which was labeled as Community. The second component included entertainment, "Because ESPN College GameDay is in town," be with friends, and experience excitement, which was labeled as Amusement. The Cronbach's alpha for the motivation scale to attend JMU football game was  $.86$ .

Second, PCA was conducted with the nine items of motivation to attend ESPN College GameDay. Similar to the first analysis, the correlation matrix showed that the data were appropriate for factor analysis: the correlation was above  $.30$ , KMO value was  $.82$ , and the Bartlett's test was  $p=.00$ . The results of principal component analyses showed that two components explained 65.24% of variance. (Amusement: 50.56%, Community: 14.69%). The first component included entertainment, "Because ESPN College GameDay is in town," be with

friends, experience excitement, plus feel companionship. The second component included interested in football, support local sport, side with favorite team/athletes, and be with family (See Table 1). While there was not much change in the composition of the two motivations, it was interesting that “community” was the main factor (52.72%) explaining attending the school’s football game, and “amusement” was the primary motivation factor (50.56%) for attending the ESPN GameDay broadcast.

Table 1

*Direct Oblimin Rotation of Two Factor Solution*

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Amusement</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Alpha if deleted</b>
Motive to attend football game	Interested in football		.82	.85
	Support local sport		.82	.84
	Side with favorite team/athlete		.74	.84
	Feel companionship		.58	.84
	Be with family		.55	.88
	Entertainment	.84		.84
	Because ESPN College GameDay is in town	.79		.87
	Be with friends	.70	.44	.84
Experience excitement	.67	.53	.84	
	Eigen Value	4.75	1.12	
	% of variance explained	52.73	12.39	
Motive to attend ESPN GameDay	Be with friends	.87		.84
	Experience excitement	.86		.84
	Entertainment	.71		.84
	Feel companionship	.71		.84
	To have a once-in-a-lifetime College GameDay experience	.69		.85
	Interested in football		.83	.84
	Side with favorite team/athlete		.82	.83
	Support local sport		.72	.84
	Be with family		.69	.87
	Eigen Value	4.56	1.32	
	% of variance explained	50.56	14.69	

Note. Only loadings above .4 are displayed

While “experience the excitement” was the highest ( $M=6.38$ ) motive to attend the JMU football game, “to have a once-in-a-lifetime College GameDay experience” was scored highest ( $M=6.56$ ) for the motive to attend College GameDay. The motive of “be with family” was scored lowest ( $M=5.05$  and  $4.62$  respectively) for attending the JMU football game as well as College

GameDay (see Table 2). However, whether ESPN College GameDay was a deciding factor to attend games or not was not clear: 84 (47.7%) respondents answered that it was the factor for their decision to attend the game while 77 respondents (43.8%) said it was not the factor.

Table 2

*Means and Standard Deviations for Motivation items*

Motivation to attend football game	Motivation items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	Support local sport	5.72	1.53
	Be with friends	6.22	1.13
	Experience excitement	6.38	1.07
	Feel companionship	5.90	1.34
	Interested in football	5.80	1.55
	Side with favorite team/athlete	5.87	1.40
	Entertainment	6.22	1.05
	Be with family	5.05	1.97
	Because ESPN college GameDay is in town	5.78	1.68
Motivation to attend ESPN's college GameDay broadcast	Support local sport	5.78	1.48
	Be with friends	6.23	1.13
	Experience excitement	6.44	.97
	Feel companionship	5.80	1.48
	Interested in football	5.78	1.56
	Side with favorite team/athlete	5.73	1.54
	Entertainment	6.33	1.11
	Be with family	4.62	2.20
	To have a once-in-a-lifetime College GameDay Experience	6.56	1.16

To see the relationship between commitment level and motivation to attend the football game and the ESPN College GameDay broadcast, the participants' level of commitment was calculated by averaging the scores from thirteen items except item number nine which was excluded earlier. The mean score was 5.26 ( $SD= 1.08$ ) and median score was 5.31. Based on this, participants were classified as two groups: low to medium commitment group whose score is less than or equal to 5.30 ( $n=87$ ), and high commitment group whose average mean score is above 5.30 ( $n=89$ ). Two multivariate analyses of covariance (MANCOVA) were conducted with two dependent variables of motivation (amusement and community) for 1) attending the target football game and 2) ESPN GameDay broadcast with two covariates of gender and age. The sample size met the requirement by Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, and Lang's (2013) suggestion of a minimum sample size of 42 with two dependent variables to achieve statistical power of .80 with medium effect size. The results of the first MANCOVA showed there was a main effect for commitment level on two motives at .001 level (Wilk's  $\lambda = .79$ ,  $F(2, 123) = 16.25$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .21$ ). A group with high commitment level showed higher motivation in both motives of

*community* [ $F(1, 124) = 31.32, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .20$ ; low to medium commitment  $M = 5.08$ ; high commitment  $M = 6.14$ ) and *experience excitement* [ $F(1, 124) = 6.71, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .05$ ; low to medium commitment  $M = 5.89$ ; high commitment  $M = 6.33$ ] to attend the target football game. The gender [ $F(2, 123) = 3.07, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .08$ ] and age [ $F(2, 123) = 4.97, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .05$ ] of the respondents also had significant effects on motivation.

The results of a second MANCOVA showed that there was a main effect for commitment level on motives at  $\alpha = .001$  level (Wilk's  $\lambda = .84, F(2, 153) = 14.74, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .16$ ). A group with high commitment level showed higher motivation in both motives of community [ $F(1, 154) = 28.22, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .16$ ; low to medium commitment  $M = 4.97$ ; high commitment  $M = 6.03$ ] and experience excitement [ $F(1, 154) = 14.51, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .09$ ; low to medium commitment  $M = 6.01$ ; high commitment  $M = 6.56$ ] to attend the ESPN GameDay broadcast. While age had a significant effect [ $F(2, 153) = 3.55, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .04$ ], gender [ $F(2, 153) = 1.89, p > .05, \eta_p^2 = .02$ ] was not a significant factor.

## Discussion

Findings from the study suggest that the higher commitment level of participants connected to higher level of motives, which is further likely to lead to actual attendance to the ticketed football game and attendance to a non-ticketed activity such as the ESPN GameDay broadcast. This result emphasizes the importance of psychological commitment as an attitudinal component of loyalty (Park & Kim, 2000) and its influence on consumers' behavior as a form of attendance. Then, the question becomes how to nurture consumers' commitment. As Alexandris et al. (2004) mentioned, customer satisfaction could function as an antecedent of commitment. For example, the non-ticketed ESPN GameDay broadcast in this study provided an unusual and unique experience. This shows that spectators may be more likely to attend a regular season football event when the event is tied to an exciting or transcending type of non-ticketed event such as College GameDay.

The results of the principal component analysis revealed two motives, which were named as amusement and community. Interestingly enough, the amount of variance explained by these two motives for 1) attending the target football game and 2) attending ESPN GameDay were different. Community was the main motive to attend the ticketed football game while amusement was the main motive to attend the non-ticketed ESPN GameDay broadcast. This result implies that different motives become less or more important depending on the context. Considering that the opponent of the football game used in this study was a primary rival of the school, the respondents may have attended the game to support and affiliate with their school, but also for the excitement of the rivalry. The literature supports the idea that rival opponents can create a level of excitement for sport spectators (Havard, 2014). However, for the motivation to attend ESPN GameDay, which is a rare and could be once-in-a life-time opportunity for Division I FCS school it seems natural that the motivation of excitement plays a much bigger role.

The results of principal component analyses also showed that the motivation items adopted from Mehus (2005) did not fall to the exact same component as his study. It is possible that the different contexts (i.e., different sport- soccer and ski jumping vs. American football and ESPN College GameDay; different culture: Norway vs America) of the study could have influenced the results. Future studies with different contexts could help us to better understand the components of these motivations.

## Implications and Future Research

Findings from our study suggest that spectator motivations may differ across ticketed and non-ticketed events. Thus, intercollegiate sport administrators must take into account these differing motivations. For example, results from the study suggest that “community” primarily explained attendance at the football game, while “amusement” was the primary motivator for attending the ESPN GameDay broadcast. Thus, the administrators of college athletics should focus on leveraging the excitement that can be created by hosting such non-ticketed types of events. Furthermore, this excitement can be manifest into a feeling of community for students and alumni as they gather at ticketed events. Both excitement and sense of community are motivational factors found within the sport consumer behavior literature (Mahony, et al. 2002; Mehus, 2005).

Another finding from the study suggests that those individuals attending the College GameDay broadcast were primarily motivated by the fact that attending this non-ticketed event was a “once in a life-time experience” for them. By its very nature, the creation of this type of experience is neither easy to create nor can it be done on a routine basis. However, intercollegiate sport administrators should be in constant contact with other administrators across campus to seek out various types of non-ticketed events that may create excitement on campus. In some cases, these types of events may be cross-promoted with a ticketed sport event. Thus, these non-ticketed events may attract students, alumni and local community members to campus and lead to the consumption of ticketed sport events.

There may be other additional opportunities for intercollegiate sport administrators to create excitement around non-ticketed events, such as developing media buzz around the return of former players who are now playing in the NFL, and inducting former players into a hall of fame. There may be other opportunities to leverage television coverage from the closest large market media outlets with events where they may do a live remote before and after the game. Also, tapping into the largest media outlets where a majority of alumni live may help to boost ratings. It is difficult to create once-in-a-lifetime opportunities on a regular basis, but intercollegiate marketers should seek out one or two special or hallmark type events per year that will resonate with alumni, students, the community, and supporters of the institution. This may help to both promote the institution and elevate its status.

Another implication for intercollegiate sport administrators that can be drawn from our study is to strengthen the social or community support for the athletics program. One way to do so would be to develop initiatives targeted at appealing to a variety of different stakeholder groups. One of the key findings was that having a non-ticketed activity like the College GameDay broadcast on campus brought together many stakeholder groups for one common occasion. In this study, students, alumni, faculty, and numerous citizens (e.g., the homeless, business executives) came together for a transcendent experience. The types of initiatives that could be developed to appeal to these various stakeholder groups will vary based on demographic factors from within both the community and the institution. Previous findings by Wann et al. (2008) suggest the importance of motivational factors such as family and group affiliation within sport consumer behavior.

This study addressed the relationship between sport motivation and psychological commitment for a non-ticketed event on campus (i.e., ESPN’s College GameDay) that was broadcast live to the nation. However, future studies may focus on less prestigious events while considering how motivation influences psychological commitment. While our study focused on

JMU, an institution competing at the FCS level, future research may also focus on motivation and psychological commitment for FBS schools or Division II or III events. An example would be studying how the excitement of playing in the Alonzo Stagg Bowl (i.e., the NCAA Division III national championship game) impacts an institution competing at the Division III level as well as how long the institution's athletics marketing department can leverage the excitement in terms of selling tickets and merchandise. Furthermore, this study shed light on consumer motivations for attending non-ticketed events, which has received a paucity of attention within the scholarly literature. Thus, future research should focus on the discovery of motivations for various types of consumers (e.g., highly identified fans vs spectators, highly committed vs less committed) and include demographic factors (e.g., gender, income, race) to assist in understanding the intent to attend non-ticketed events.

### **Conclusion**

The primary purpose of this study was to understand the relationship between motivation and psychological commitment to a sport-related non-ticketed event on a college campus. In addition, we sought to understand if the excitement of having a non-ticketed event (i.e., College GameDay) on campus impacted attending a ticketed event (i.e., the football game). Findings from the study suggest that the higher commitment level of participants connected to higher levels of motives, which is further likely to lead to actual attendance to the ticketed football game and attendance to a non-ticketed activity such as the ESPN GameDay broadcast. Findings from our study suggest that spectator motivations may differ across ticketed and non-ticketed events. Thus, intercollegiate sport administrators must take into account these differing motivations. For example, results from the study suggest that "community" primarily explained attendance at the football game, while "amusement" was the primary motivator for attending the ESPN GameDay broadcast. Another finding from the study suggests that those individuals attending the College GameDay broadcast were primarily motivated by the fact that attending this non-ticketed event was a "once in a life-time experience" for them.

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