Profiling public viewing and South African viewers during the 2010 FIFA World Cup

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Abstract

The study forms part of a more comprehensive investigation that focused on profiling and determining sport consumer behaviour during the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa. Marketing theories inform the typology of sport consumers with differential analyses based on the interrelated needs, stemming from the intellectual, psychological and sociocultural denominators. A total of 567 research participants who were recruited to complete questionnaires at fan parks and public viewing sites were South Africans with 65 holding dual citizenship. Sport consumer behaviour and "fan equity" were informed by national identity, gender, age and educational levels. A minority (n=165, 29.1%) could be classified as sport tourists indicating that they would travel to other provinces to attend matches. Most respondents preferred public viewing areas due to the cost factor, accessibility, festive atmosphere and celebrating with other members of an identifiable subculture. First, second and third choices of teams indicate nationality (women and older men), highly successful teams (mostly men) and star players, especially from the Premier Soccer League (SA), European clubs or Brazil (mostly younger men and highly educated respondents) as motivating factors in supporting a team. Support for South Africa being the host country was negligible (ranging from 18.8% to 22.2%), compared to other motivating factors. Event-related experiences that created excitement and the 'Basking Reflective Glory' (BIRG) effect were key motivating factors for fan support and identification.

Keywords: FIFA 2010 World Cup, South Africa, fan parks, consumer behaviour.

Introduction

It took a century for South Africa that has held membership of FIFA (The Fédération Internationale de Football Association) since 1909/10 (six years after the organisation was founded in Paris), to be awarded host status of the 2010 World Cup (Lowrey & Williams, 2002). It is the first African country to be honoured in this way and this provided a big thrust in opening a gateway for the continent (Hay & Joel, 2007). Up to date, Africa's participation in the mega-event enterprise has been limited to hosting All Africa Games competitions (since 1965) and The African Cup

of Nations (continental football final competitions held since 1957), whilst these continental events were characterised by management deficiencies and the lack of resources (Darby, 2005).   The 2010 FIFA World Cup would not only attract extensive international expertise, but completely fall into a unique bracket in terms of territorial branding (Van Ham, 2002).

Gursoy and Kendall (2006) emphasise that such hallmark events provide a nation with significant sociopolitical construction opportunities, and even for host cities it signifies arrival at the world stage (Whitelegg, 2000). Not only did South Africa become the recognized leader in the African continent by global acclaim (Bresler, 2011), but billions of rands were invested in infrastructure development, including world class stadiums and the Gautrain project (Van der Westhuizen, 2007). Despite the expected political rhetoric and showcasing of development, critical voices were silenced by a media discourse that embraced the commercialisation of the spectacle (Lee, 2005). Prior to the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the mega-event strategy (Andranovich, Burbank & Heying, 2001) was firmly implemented under the watchful eye of global decision-makers and national implementing partners (including the state machinery) (Cornelissen, 2007).

Focusing on branding and changing the image of a host country or city, Florek, Breitbarth and Conejo (2008) emphasise that mega events are of limited duration and that the legacy of the event lies in the global profile of the event that provides the superstructure for associative branding. The event, rather than the destination, is the core product and key motivating factor for sport tourism (Chalip, Green & Hill, 2003; Mikunda, 2004).   Such assumptions are evident in mainstream marketing theory, where the analysis focuses on the relationship between destinations and established brands. Smith (2005a) refers to the universalism and transcendence of mega events and explores image benefits associated with such high profiled events. Branding can have a synecdochical effect (when something specific stands for the whole), or it can be more subtle, where events connote associations that then become attached to the city, as it is imaged (Smith, 2005b).   A sport event provides the imagery as a source of spectacle which adds to the image value of the location and a legacy or landmark (Richards, & Wilson, 2004).

The 2010 FIFA World cup left the skyline of many cities with a lasting impression of a world class destination (a synecochical effect) such as the architectural masterpiece of Greenpoint Stadium against a backdrop of Table Mountain and the sea. Many host cities converted their inner areas and townships by creating public viewing facilities (Moodley, 2009). Andranovich, Burbank and Heying (2001) refer to the concept of tourist bubble (Judd, 1999) to indicate how cities create well-defined boundaries separating tourist spaces as secured and protected environments. Fan parks represent such spaces. They are large (but also controlled) areas in close

proximity to match stadiums and were first constructed in 2002, and became increasingly popular since 2006 (Cornelissen, 2007).

Branding is a two-way occurrence – in the first instance branding and image equity (event and location) is also transcended to that of fans. Calhoun and Gorman (1997:237) refer to 'fan equity' to identify the 'relentless emotional and physical investment of fans' who would travel extensively to act as first-line sport event consumers.

Reflecting on the fan participation and how they construct meaning according to their desired outcomes from attendance at or viewing such major events (Hay & Joel, 2007), this paper aims to explore reflective constructed meanings of South Africans who attended various fan parks and public viewing areas during the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Such information aims to provide insight into South African football World Cup supporters' motivating factors as they construct social meanings, guiding their behaviour.

Motivating factors for sport tourists, spectators and fans

Motivating factors

Sport consumers experience a deepening commitment being socialised into fanship as their experiences are met by psychological, social and cultural needs (Wann, Melnick, Russel & Pease, 2001). Green (2001) discusses brand-image association by also identifying cognitive, emotional and behavioural elements. Numerous theories have been proposed to shed light on the phenomenon of sport spectator involvement, emphasising recognised benefits in terms of cathartic experiences, escapism, positive stress release (eustress), confirmation of group membership and socialisation (Capella, 2002).

Several authors (Green, 2001; Sutton, McDonald, Milne & Cimperman, 1997) interrogated the psychological component of motivation and described what has become known as the Basking in Reflective Glory (BIRG) phenomenon. Activity characteristics, team identification and images of success contributed to increased involvement of fan-identification (Gialdini, Borden, Thorne, Walker, Freeman & Sloan, 1976). Satisfaction levels are affected by contextual influences (Smith & Stewart, 2006) and the degree to which an individual and group might identify with the context, team and/or event (Lee, 2005). Association with and satisfaction of fans relate to the augmented experiences afforded by an event where opportunities exist for participants to parade and celebrate the subculture they share (Curi, 2008).

Chen (2007) determined four interrelated antecedents of motivations underpinned by loyalty, namely: satisfaction, attachment, involvement and commitment. The degree

of supporter involvement, identified as loyalty, is an expression of the degree to which this orientation meets the psychological, social and cultural needs of sport consumers (Hughson, 1999).

Ferrand and Pages (1996) discuss various contextual factors that impact on fan sport behaviour such as location, balance of competition, uncertainty, success, physical environment, promotional factors and social context. It seems that the degree of commitment is mainly associated with highly emotional behaviour (as undertaking pilgrimages to events) or travelling with teams (Garnham, 1996). The prioritising of social and emotional content compared to economic impact can be explained by fans' behaviour to have a party rather than a shopping trip (Gibson, Willming & Holdnak, 2002). Emotional experiences generate excitement and a sense of belonging that enable supporters as sport consumers to celebrate a subculture that is uniquely shared by members of the same group (Bresler, 2011).

Although events, including mega events, are of limited duration, they still have extraordinary impact at various levels of engagement (Florek et al., 2008). They represent a national voice, which might be a commercial infused symbolism of the FIFA-family (Lowrey & Williams, 2002), profiling and leveraging host countries and cities (Gibson at al., 2002), or to propose national identity formation for the host nation (Cornelissen, 2007). Most of these phenomena intersect to inform a unique set of motivating factors. All these factors also find expression at the individual (micro) and community (meso) levels. In this sense, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2011) refers to 'banal nationalism' which needs to be understood in the historical and sociocultural context of broader society. The 2010 FIFA World Cup thus had unique manifestations at all levels of engagement and effect.

Segmentation

The degree of involvement differs between several types of participants and it is difficult to establish clear segmentation (Casto-Ramos, 2010). Scott and Turco (2009) describe an *ex ante* model (ACE) to estimate potential spending impacts. They differentiate between primary sport tourists (visiting the host communities), residents (sport event attendees in their home communities), VFR (visiting friends and relatives), as well as WFR (watching friends and relatives where friends and/or relatives are participating in the sport event). The main distinguishing factor is the degree of involvement representing a "pull" or drawing power for different types of engagement.

This type of market segmentation has also been investigated in terms of categorical variables represented by differentials in gender (Selmer & Sülzle, 2010), age (Udo, 2007), class (Smith & Stewart, 2006) and ethnicity/nationality (Curi, 2008). Another less distinguishable variable relates to the degree of involvement and emotional

commitment of supporters. There is a causal relationship between fan equity and self and group-identity with which various identification modalities intersect.

Football is a *gendered* space where male values are dominant and the FIFA World Cup event expresses the pinnacle of masculinity based on the values of aggression, mental toughness, physical prowess and heroism (Bilyeu & Wann, 2002). Women tend to be drawn to attend events as secondary consumers as they often prioritise the needs of family members in accordance with an ethic of care (Smith & Stewart, 2006).

Another market segmentation is visible in *age* as independent variable, as older fans seem to express a relatively weaker affiliation from the economic perspective (Wann, Brewer & Royalty, 1999). The subcultural styles of contemporary young fans seem to favour colourful and festive activities associated with events and/or teams (Udo, 2007). They scored high on the Passion Scale as implemented in research during the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany (Vallerand, Ntoumanis, Phillipe, Lavigne, Garbonneau, Bonnevile, Lagace-Labonte & Maliha, 2008).

Income and class as expressed in levels of education, and income or socio-economic status are negatively correlated with five motives, such as eustress, economics, esteem, group affiliation and cultural affiliation. Fans from higher *income levels* seem to attend sporting events for economic gain (including business opportunities), bolstering of self-esteem, positive stress and group affiliation with members of the same segmentation (Armstrong, 2002). The cost of tickets and being able to afford travelling might be out of the range for the lower socio-economic stratum. As a subculture, the lower social strata have constructed identifiable behavioural patterns, ranging from reported violence (Burnett, 2002) and deviance (Lee, 2005) to positive socialisation (Florek et al., 2008). Armstrong (2002) identified eustress, group recreation, aesthetics, cultural affiliation, group entertainment, escape and personal investment (economic and psychological) as most meaningful to African American sport consumers. Such findings are based on different variables (e.g. the Sports Spectator Identity Scale) and contextual realities (Wann & Branscombe, 1993).

Methodology

This paper taps into a broader study that was a joint undertaking between the University of Johannesburg and the University of Pretoria. A mixed method approach was implemented for the broader study, featuring interviews and questionnaires. For this paper, only the data collected through a questionnaire was utilised, and on request from some who needed assistance, the questionnaire was administered as a structured interview (Smith & Stewart, 2006). It entails various categories of closed and open-ended questions. In addition to the biographical information and ranking of team choices, all other categories allowed for an

individual response (e.g. experiences, influences and perceptions) relating to real-life experiences of the event, where participants could construct their own meanings and follow their own interests (Müller, van Zoonen & de Roode, 2008).

Prior to the collection of data, two senior students and one lecturer from the University of Pretoria were trained to collect questionnaire data and permission was obtained to approach fans at various venues before, during and after a match. Although data was collected from all English-speaking participants who were willing (and able) to answer questions, the purposive and random selection of respondents for this paper, included only those who identified themselves as being South African citizens (n=567). Data was collected at 5 sites in Gauteng: Loftus Stadium (6 times); Burger's Park in Sunnyside (3 times); and Hatfield (5 times); the fan park in Centurion was visited 3 times and Innisfree Park in Sandton was visited once. An intermediate distributor collected questionnaires in the rural areas (n=40), while an online survey was also used to collect 79 questionnaires. All of the questionnaires were grouped together, and the data entered in SPSS 20 for analysis.

Results and Discussion

Biographical data

The random selection of respondents resulted in obtaining data from 327 males (57.7%) and 240 females (42.3%). There were two missing values for the question requiring them to provide their age. The majority of respondents were between 21 and 30 years old (n=261, 46.2%), followed by respondents 20 years and younger (n=168, 29.7%), aged between 31 and 40 years (n=76, 13.5%) and those 41 years and older (n=60, 10.6%). The sample thus represents a bias towards relatively youthful respondents as it was this category that comprised the majority of the population determined by observation.

All the respondents held South African citizenship with 65 (11.5%) also indicating that they had dual citizenship. Most of them held second citizenship from a country in Europe (n=47, 8.3%), Australasia (n=7, 1.2%), North and/or South America (n=6, 1.1.%) or another African country (n=4, 0.7%).

The educational profile varied with the majority having only completed their secondary schooling (n=221, 39.4%), followed by those who obtained a tertiary degree (n=198, 35.3%) and post-school certificate or diploma (n=112, 20.0%). A relatively small minority only completed primary education (n=27, 4.8%) or had no formal education (n=3, 0.5%). The educational level was indirectly linked to the socio-economic standing of respondents and was thus taken as a socio-economic indicator.

Sport consumer behaviour

The respondents indicated that they would be visiting different viewing sites in eight different provinces (excluding the Northern Cape Province). The majority of them would be visiting such sites in Gauteng (n=53.9%), the Western Cape (n=202, 27.1%) and/or KwaZulu-Natal (n=35, 4.7%), with only nine indicating that they would also conduct viewing in the Eastern Cape and North West Province. Only two indicated that they would go to Limpopo and Mpumalanga, and only one who would travel to the Free State Province. The 165 or 29.1% of the total number of respondents (n=567) who had or would travel to the other provinces, qualify to fall into the category of sport tourists (Scott & Turco, 2009).

The type of public viewing areas, preferred by most respondents, were the official FIFA public viewing areas and fan parks (57.2%), followed by fan parks or public areas in the urban areas (31.3%), rural spaces (9.0%) and/or FIFA stadiums (2.4%) (Figure 1).

From observations and media reports as well as pictures, fans and spectators mostly dressed up in the colours or displayed paraphernalia of the teams (and countries) they would support. However, many also just dressed up for the occasion and as teams of their choice were eliminated from the competition, fans increasingly started to wear all kinds of costumes. Ranking the choice of teams and countries which they offered as first, second and third choices, most respondents chose Bafana Bafana (the South African national team) as their favourite (n=279, 50.8%).
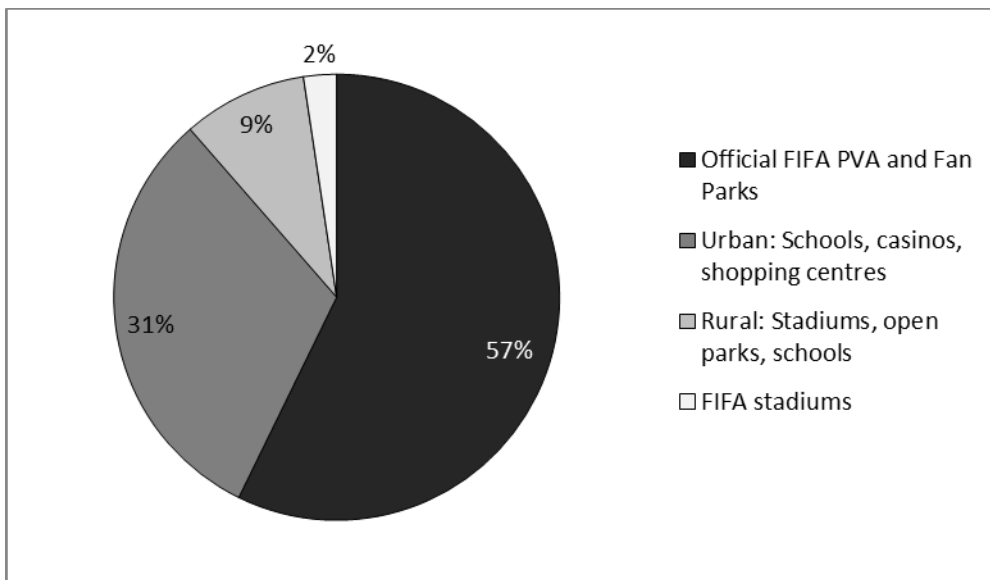

Figure 1: Proportion of respondents visiting different categories of public viewing sites

As all respondents were South African citizens, it meant that other countries were also chosen as first choice. Figure 2 provides the ranking profiling of the first ten preferred countries.

Following the majority support for South Africa (n=66 as second choice and 39 as third choice), the only other African country that was ranked among the first ten, was Ghana (n=18 as first choice, 45 as second choice and 39 as third choice). This means that national loyalty and identity contributed to ranking South Africa as the most popular choice. Ethnic and/or continental association posed weaker ties of association than other socio-emotive factors which were consistent with findings reported by Garnham (1996).

Other most popular teams in order of mean-ranking values were Spain, Germany, Holland, Italy and England, followed by teams from South America (i.e. Brazil and Argentina). Spain and Holland were the teams that went through to the final and inevitably had most exciting players whilst representing the success story of the tournament. Most fans were keen supporters of European club teams whose matches they followed in the South African media, and which offered opportunities to elite South African players to pursue an international career in football. This phenomenon is reflected in the work of Lee (2005), as well as in that of Smith and Stewart (2006).

Motivational factors

Figure 3 indicates the factors with the highest frequencies that have been indicated by ten or more respondents. Most authors provide a compelling argument in favour of a festive atmosphere where emotional involvement is high and most gratifying (Gibson et al., 2002). The results seem to provide substantiation to this observation, as 194 respondents (26.6%) of respondents indicated that it was the atmosphere created by live music, a vibe and "spirit" that motivated the attendance of public viewing sites. One respondent was highly appreciative of the fact that South Africans were displaying a festive mood in the streets and in public places, and for him 'South Africa rocked'.
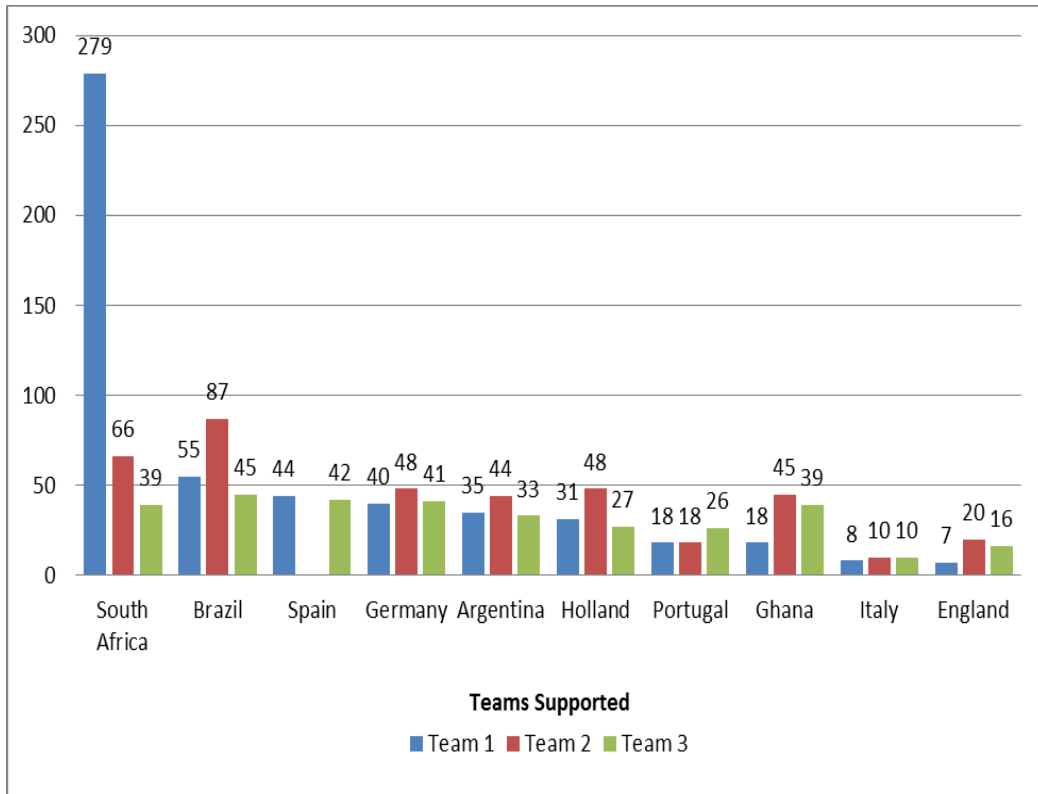
Figure 2: Support for top ten teams (first, second and third choice)

The excitement, personal and psychological satisfaction can mostly be contributed to a collective exhilarating experience, which is key to the memory that would serve the deepening of involvement and continuation of fanship (Curi, 2008). The quality of the experience is enhanced by live entertainment (mentioned by 24 respondents respectively). The festivity and psychological hype is also augmented by the availability of hospitality services such as availability of refreshments and food (including drinks and "cheap beer") mentioned by 28 respondents.

It is not clear if the respondents would have preferred to attend live games at the stadiums, as 66 indicated that they preferred public viewing as it was affordable (or free) (Florek et al., 2008). The accessibility mentioned by 46 respondents is indicative of a socio-economic factor as local viewing sites were within their own communities or easily accessible.

The collective expression of identity related to the subculture association of football fans was recognised as a strong motivator by 56 respondents. This corresponds with findings reported by Armstrong (2002). It is also related to social constructions of

meanings indicated as 'gathering of friends' (mentioned by 54 respondents) and 'meeting new people' (mentioned by 45 respondents).

The social dynamics of fanship extends the possibility to bond with other South Africans and as such contribute to feelings of 'being united' and 'nation-building'. National identity formation is however only partially possible, given the frailty of socio-ethnic and racial divisions that continue to exist between the various population groups in South Africa (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011).
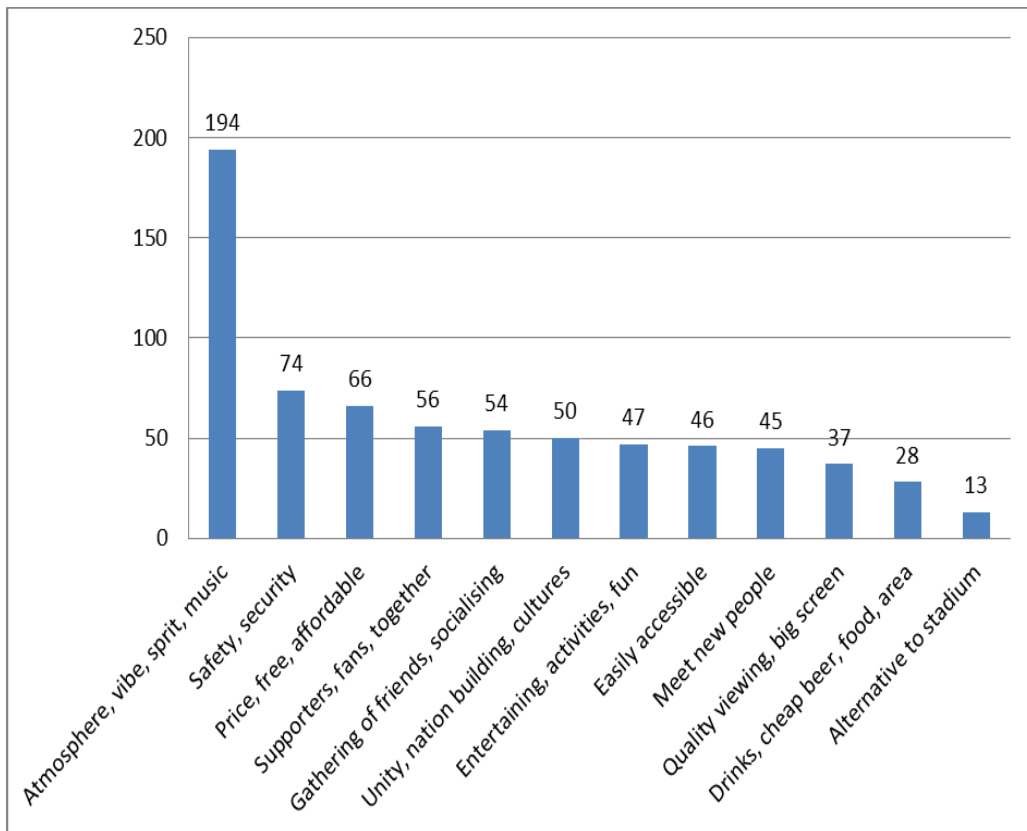
Figure 3: Most popular motivating factors for visitors at public viewing sites

Contextual issues intersect with sport consumer satisfaction levels concerning issues around safety and security (mentioned by 74 respondents), and the quality of viewing afforded by the big screen (mentioned by 37 respondents). Team and club affiliation and association that might render a 'Basking in the Glory Effect' (Cialdini et al., 1976) would be relevant to the ranking of teams in terms of personal choices.

The mean values of categorical responses (provided on a Likert scale of 1 to 10) confirm the previously discussed frequencies as illustrated in Figure 4.
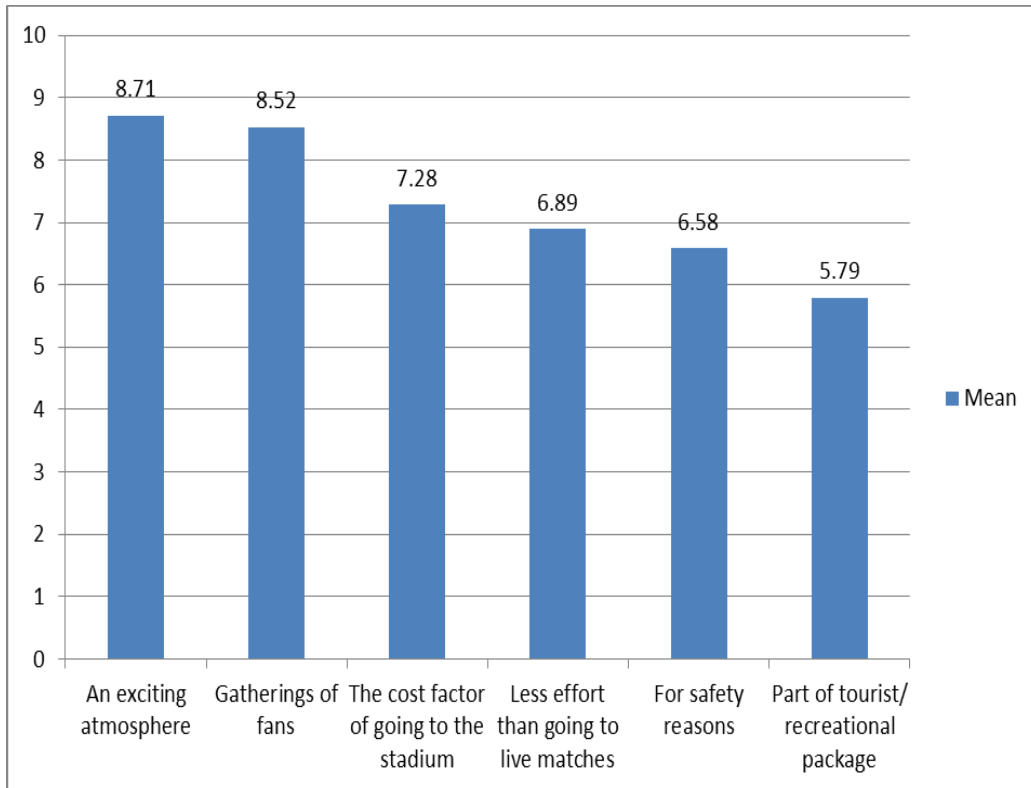
Figure 4: Mean values of factors motivating respondents to attend public viewing sites

The clustered ranking of motivating factors substantiated the prioritising of the pursuit of excitement (mean value of 8.71), gathering of fans (8.52), lower costs (7.28) or less of an effort compared to attending live matches (6.89), safety considerations (6.58) and being part of the tourist package (5.79).

Some differential findings relate to *gender* as fewer women (79.8% compared to 93.0%) are attracted to view football due to the capabilities of players and teams, as well as sport-specific characteristics. Subjective reasons provided an answer to the open-ended questions that mention specific support for clubs and players of teams like Manchester United or for South African players from some Premier League teams. Seven male respondents also mentioned the "flair" and "guts" of players which they highly admired.

Intragroup comparisons indicate that males (60.0%) mostly supported the best team (compared to 40.0% of women), previous "champions" (66.7% versus 33.3%) or found excitement for supporting the "underdogs" (76.5% compared to women, 23.5%). More females "instinctively" support a team without "any reason" compared to men (59.2% versus 40.8%). These findings articulate with the social orientation of female supporters that were reported by Selmer and Sülzle (2010).

The only other factor where intergroup (gender) comparison was biased towards women, relates to feelings of loyalty towards the country, citizenship and home team support (21.8% compared to 18.0%). These results are only partially supported by the research of Smith and Stewart (2006) in terms of the supportive roles played by female supporters.

The *age-effect* and reason for support mostly differ in terms of what nationality a team might be from. More young adult men (between the ages of 21 and 30 years, 88.8%) indicated preferences for a specific team or nation compared to the younger age category (76.1%) or older ones (71.2% for age group 31- 40 years, and 68.9% for 41 years and older). Older men (41 years and above) were relatively more motivated by loyalty to the own country (35.6% compared to 13.6% for 31 - 40 year old group, 17.5% for the 21 - 30-year old group, and 20.3% for the group of 20 years and younger). Concerning the support for a team because of the capabilities of players, a very high percentage (91.3%) of the youngest age category is motivated by idolism compared to the other age categories (with support decreasing over age from 86.9% to 80.0%), although still being a compelling motivator for most. The least motivating factor for team support was for the "hosting the event" (support ranged from 18.8% to 22.2% across the age categories). This prioritisation is well documented in several studies (Chen, 2007; Green, 2001; Udo, 2007).

The youngest category of supporters is mostly motivated to attend an event because of the lively atmosphere (60.1% which decreased across the age categories to 43.6%). A reverse tendency is also observed with more older supporters (41 years and older), indicating that the infrastructure (76.4%) is a decisive factor compared to the other age categories being (in reverse order) 65.7%, 50.0% and 42.7% respectively. Vallerand et al. (2008) found similar differentials based on the relative age factor. They reported on 'harmonious passion' and 'obsessive passion' that were particularly demonstrated by fans across the age and gender categories.

Factors relating to the *educational level* of supporters indicate a discretionary tendency as the more educated respondents supported teams and players based on their nationality and player capabilities (ranging between 71.1% and 100.0%), compared to the 50.0% by people with no formal education. Another in-group comparison relates to the lively atmosphere and entertainment. There is a noticeable decrease in support for such factors across the levels of education, from 64.0% and 60.0% respectively for people with primary education. Existing literature does not report on such findings and further research is thus required for adequate substantiation.

Conclusion

This type of research is informed by marketing theory and indicates the differential perceptions, experiences and motivating factors of South African supporters and fans who attended public viewing sites during the 2010 FIFA World Cup. The deconstruction of highly vocalised public debate and political rhetoric finds expression in the social construction of supporters' behaviour and orientation. Most sport consumers are motivated by mega-event excitement and collective celebrations with subtexts of identity formation as citizens and football connoisseurs where national, club and team identities intersect. Such events thus offer unique opportunities across gender, age and class differences to temporarily unite fans and offer reciprocal branding for locations and fans alike. The legacy of the 2010 FIFA World Cup is as much ingrained in the memories of fans as it is in the structural development of the country.

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