



MOTIVES FOR CHOOSING A DIFFERENT WAY - LESS POPULAR SPORT ATHLETES

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INTRODUCTION

A sport is not only a physical activity, but also an element of national pride, cultural identity, an art form, and a part of daily life. Furthermore, globalization has increased the possibilities for all sports stakeholders (Kerr & Gladden, 2008).

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With more demand, interest, and coverage, new sports have become so established in a society that it is as if they had always existed (Fişne & Hasaan, 2021).

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However, not every sport can be equally popular. Thus, popular (mainstream) and less popular (niche) sports concepts emerged. Popular sports are those that can gather mass media and public coverage, while less popular sports are those that are less popular or nonexistent.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rosner and Shropshire (2011) discussed four categories of niche sports: minor league; emerging sports; indoor sports that are alternatives to traditional outdoor sports; and gender-specific leagues.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mahoney, Hambrick, Svensson, and Zimmerman (2013) suggested that niche sports organizations can use the psychological continuum model (PCM) framework to better understand sports consumers and help them advance through the stages towards allegiance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Fişne and Hasaan (2021) explored difficulties faced in the branding and marketing of a niche sport in a new area, this study uses the case study of Sivas Kangals Rugby FC.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

A niche sport is a type of sport that is less popular or emerging in society (Martin, Williams, Whisenant, & Dees, 2015).

Niche sports are defined as any sports that do not attract mainstream support or media attention in the region in which they operate (Dwyer et al., 2016).

Niche sports do not attract a mass audience (Miloch & Lambrecht, 2006), instead only attracting a low percentage of a country's population (Zhang, Bennett, & Henson, 2003).

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

They do not receive regular coverage in the local and national media (Simmons, Greenwell, Thorn, Hambrick, & Greenhalgh, 2013) because they do not appeal to the public in the same way as mainstream sports (Kang et al., 2019).

These sports offerings are quite different from mainstream sports (Dwyer et al., 2016).

Thus, the study is groundbreaking in that it examines less popular sport athletes in order to provide managers and marketers with insights into the factors that drew young boys and girls to less popular sports as future athletes and fans. The study's findings would serve as a foundation for future research in this area.

RESEARCH QUESTION

- To figure out what motivates athletes to choose a less popular option.
- To identify reasons that can contribute to attract future less popular sport athletes

METHODS

Study type: A qualitative study

Sample: 21 athletes from two different countries (Pakistan and Turkey).

Data collection: Face-to-face interviews were conducted with athletes to learn about their motivations for participating in less popular sports.

Data analysis: two level coding systems for data analysis (the open-coding level and the axial level).

RESULTS

Major themes that emerged from the interviews include

- (1) **Being distinct** (i.e., to become prominent, different from others),
- (2) **parents/family choice,**
- (3) **by chance,**
- (4) **for better opportunities** (as popular sports are the choice of many, niche sports still have places to fill), and
- (5) **childhood favorite.**



THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION...

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