A systematic review of motivations for season-long fantasy sport participation

Authors:
Ryan J. Martin, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Health Education and Promotion
East Carolina University
3106 Carol Belk Building
Greenville, NC 27858
Phone: (252) 737-1939
Email: martinry@ecu.edu

Kurtis G. Kozel, BSPH
Department of Health Education and Promotion
East Carolina University
Email: kozelk14@students.ecu.edu

Kerry B. Sewell, MSLS
Laupus Library
East Carolina University
Email: browderk@ecu.edu

Jeffrey G. Coghill, CAS-HSL, AHIP, MLS, MA
Laupus Library
East Carolina University
Email: coghillj@ecu.edu

Joseph G. L. Lee, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Assistant Professor
Department of Health Education and Promotion
East Carolina University
2304 Carol Belk Building
Email: LEEJOSE14@ECU.EDU

Keywords: fantasy sports; motivations; systematic review; entertainment; competition; rewards; gambling
Abstract

Background/Purpose: Any sport can be played from a fantasy sports perspective and fantasy sports participation is increasing. The purpose of this study is to perform a systematic review to identify reported motivations for season-long fantasy sport participation and to summarize the findings of those studies.

Method: After development of a search strategy, we searched nine academic databases in July 2017 and utilized dual independent coding for inclusion. This process identified 21 peer-reviewed articles that reported one or more motivations for participating in season-long fantasy sports. For those studies, we report information on the purpose, sample, methods, and motivation-related results.

Results: The four motivations reported most often were entertainment, competition, social interaction/camaraderie, and enjoyment/arousal. Other often reported motivations include sports knowledge utilization, love of sports, surveillance (learn about sports), escape, rewards/prizes, vicarious involvement as a manager/general manager, and achievement/self-esteem. Relative to other motivations, rewards/prizes were not necessarily a strong motivation for participating in season-long fantasy sports leagues. Thus, gambling (with entry fees) on season-long fantasy leagues does not appear to be a primary factor for participation.

Discussion: Because the studies in the review examined motivations for participation in season-long fantasy sports leagues, future research examining motivations for daily fantasy sports (DFS) participation is warranted.