

Factors That Influence Cal Poly Students' Decision to Attend Sporting Events and
Theatrical Performances

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ABSTRACT

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CAL POLY STUDENTS' DECISION TO ATTEND SPORTING EVENTS AND THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES

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Research shows the main factors that influence student attendance to performances are social status, motivation, and perception of time, whereas the main factors for attending sport games are team identification and social networking. The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influence Cal Poly students' decision in attending sporting games versus attending performances at the Performing Arts Center. The researcher collected data from 250 students in nine classrooms during Cal Poly's Spring Quarter. This study found that students claim to more frequently attend games and have a higher interest in attending games than performances. Social networking was a top motivation for students to attend games and lack of time was a common reason for not attending both games and performances. It is recommended that Cal Poly Arts and Cal Poly Athletics better advertise game and performance times, as well as discounted student rates, and offer incentives for student participation.

Keywords: attendance, motivation, sports-related leisure, art-related leisure, student participation

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Background of Study

Leisure and recreational opportunities significantly increase for adults just after the adolescence stage of life, especially at universities since students experience freedom from parental control as well as increased recreational activities provided by universities (Hickerson, & Beggs, 2007; Raymore, Barber, & Eccles, 2001). Students also gain freedom from strict scheduling and experience different patterns of free time throughout their days (Gordon & Catalbiano, 1996 & Hultsman, 1993, as cited in Hickerson & Beggs, 2007).

According to the United States Department of Labor (2008), the average college or university student spends four hours a day on recreational activities, which is more than they spend on work and school related work (each found to be around three hours a day). Students spend around twenty hours a week, not including weekends, on recreational activities. This study focuses on two types of recreational or leisure activities, attending theatrical performances and attending sports games.

In San Luis Obispo there are many opportunities for California Polytechnic State University students interested in attending sporting events. Cal Poly has 10 men's and 10 women's sport teams, not including the many club sports. All Cal Poly home games are free for students, and usually include free t-shirts for the first couple hundred fans. Football games have the largest crowds, especially for homecoming and rival games.

Student interested in the arts have access to the Christopher Cohan Performing Arts Center on the Cal Poly campus. The Performing Arts Center (PAC) is easily accessible to students and offers 10-dollar ticket prices for students. The PAC is the largest theater between San Francisco and Los Angeles and brings famous performers such as Elvis Costello, the cast from *Who's Line is it Anyway*, and the Martha Graham Dance Company.

A lot of the research conducted on college students focuses on motivations to attend either art-related or sport-related events but limited information is available on why individuals choose to attend one over the other. Knowing why individuals choose either art or sport-related activities will help, the Performing Arts Center, and Cal Poly Athletics, successfully market events to students and create programs that better suit students' needs and desires.

Review of Literature

The following is a compilation of research relating to arts-related leisure and recreation attendance. The research addresses motives, influences, and attitudes of the individuals attending art-related and sports events. All research was conducted through the Robert E. Kennedy Library at California State University San Luis Obispo using the databases ABI/INFORM Global, Academic Search Elite, and Google Scholar. It is organized into three sections: arts-related leisure and college sports. The first section summarizes research on college students' motivations to attend live performance, and the

second section summarizes research specific to college students attending sporting events.

Art-related leisure. Art-related leisure is defined many different ways but for the purpose of this review, it is limited to attending live theatrical performances (dance, theatrical, musical, etc.). Participation in art-related activities is mainly influenced by three factors, education, motivations, and perceptions of time, but perceived outcome has the most influence on attendance (Andreasen & Belk, 1980; Boudier-Pailler, 2008; Krackman, 1996; Montgomery & Robinson, 2006; Swanson, Davis, & Zhou, 2008). The following is a closer look at the impact of those factors on individuals.

Individuals with higher levels of education are more likely to attend live art performances than those who stop education after high school (Andreasen & Belk, 1980; Krackman, 1996; Montgomery & Robinson, 2006; Swanson, Davis, & Zhou, 2008). Although many studies were not looking specifically at the correlation of education level and attendance, some found a strong positive correlation between higher levels of education and high attendance rates. Swanson, Davis, and Zhou (2008) found higher levels of attendance specifically in those who attended 4-year universities. And, not only the individual's education, but also his or her parents' education level influenced attendance (Andreasen & Belk, 1980; Montgomery & Robinson, 2006). Individuals with educated parents are likely to have been exposed to the arts while growing up, and then continue attending as adults.

According to Swanson, Davis, and Zhou (2008) there are six motivations for individuals to attend art-related activities: aesthetics, education, recreation, escape, self-

esteem enhancement, and social interaction. The most common four were education, recreation, self-esteem enhancement, and aesthetics. Tajtáková, Klepochová, and Žák (2005) also found aesthetics to be a top motivation for attendance. This means the majority of individuals were motivated to attend an art-related event because they liked the art, they were interested in learning about it, they considered it a good leisure activity, and they believed that attending the event would raise their self-esteem. Motivations to attend art-related events are stronger when the individual perceives the activity will have a positive outcome (Andreason & Belk, 1980; Boudier-Pailler, 2008). Since attending an art performance is considered a leisure activity, individuals often expect it to have a positive outcome. Once an individual is influenced by a motivator to attend an art-related event, he or she then considers their use of time (Boudier-Pailler, 2008).

Perceptions of personal and social time also influence participation in art-related activities (Boudier-Pailler, 2008). Those who believe their personal and social time is limited may not choose to attend live performances, while those who believe they have a lot of extra time are more likely to attend performances. This may be the reason Montgomery and Robinson (2006), and Andreason and Belk (1980) reported that age affected attendance. Both studies showed increasing attendance rates as individuals aged. This also accounts for the lack of attendance among young individuals. The retired population most likely believes they have recreational time to spend at live performances and museums, while the young population who work or go to school, may not feel the same way.

Andreason and Belk (1980) found that above education, age, income, perceived

outcome had the biggest influence on attendance. Their research found that a positive outcome was the main reason for attending. A positive outcome can increase future attendance by improving expectations, increasing the perceived importance of attending performances, and encouraging others to join in attending. A positive experience at a performance encourages future attendance.

College sports. Unlike art-related events, education does not seem to affect sporting event attendance (Montgomery & Robinson, 2010). Attendance at college games is affected mostly by team identification, social rewards, and desired quality of life. The following is a compilation of several research studies that support team identification and social benefits as motivations to attend college sports games.

The strongest motivation for individuals to attend college games is team identification (Madrigal, 1995; Robinson, Trail, Dick, & Gillentine, 2005; Snipes & Ingram, 2007; Swanson, Gwinner, Larsons, & Janda, 2003). Students take pride in their university, which translates into pride for their universities sports teams. College teams with ranks such as NCAA Division 1 bring in fans with higher team identification and have higher attendance rates than teams in lower divisions. Fans of college teams with high rankings are more likely to attend because there is a high probability of winning and boosting self-esteem (Robinson, Trail, Dick, & Gillentine, 2005). Teams that have a high chance of losing often have a smaller audience of students.

Team identification affects more than just game attendance. According to Wann and Robinson (as cited in Wann, Brame, Clarkson, Brooks, & Waddill, 2008) students with high team identification have higher graduation rates because they are devoted to

their university. Sporting events promote excitement for the university and encourage students to take pride in their college. Sporting events bring students together through a common pride or excitement about their university.

Tinto (as cited in Berson, 1996) stated that students' experiences while at college have a higher impact on their education than the skills and attitudes they began college with. Attending sports games is a social bonding experience not found in any other campus activity. Sport games are an important part of the college experience (Wann et al., 2008). Sports events provide students with the opportunity to socially network and connect with other students while generating excitement about the university (Ruble & Henriksen, 1993, as cited in Wann et al., 2008)

Ellis, Compton, Tyson, and Bohlig (as cited in Hickerson & Beggs, 2007) found that students thought attending games was important and affected their quality of life. Participating in the activity raised their moods and overall affected their health. Heckerson and Beggs (2007) reported that not only did students think participating as a spectator would raise their current quality of life, but have a positive impact on their future as well. Blake and Vandiver, and Mattlin, Wethington, and Kessler (as cited in Misra & Mckean, 2000) said the perceived impact on quality of life comes from relieving stress. Since college is a highly stressful time, participation in recreational and leisure activities is an easily accessible way to relieve stress.

Summary. The motivations for individuals to attend live performances are much different than motivations to attend college sport events. For arts-related activities individuals are mostly influenced by level of education, motivation, time, and perceived

outcomes. College game attendees are motivated mostly by team identification, social rewards, and perceived quality of life. There is plenty of research available on the motivations for individuals to attend both types of events, but there is little found on why students choose one type over the other. The following study attempts to determine why students choose either art-related events or sporting events, or if students spend equal time at both types of events.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine factors that influence student participation in arts-related leisure activities versus sports-related recreation at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Why do students attend Cal Poly sporting events?
2. Why do students attend performances at the Performing Arts Center?
3. Do students choose sports-related activities over arts-related activities and why?
4. Does gender, year in school, or college affect attendance?
5. What are the top reasons students do not attend either sports events or performances?

Delimitations

This study was delimited to the following parameters:

1. The subjects of this study were students at California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo
2. The variables of this study were frequency of attendance at sports-related recreation and art-related leisure, time spent on arts-related leisure and sports-related recreation, level of interest in arts and sports-related leisure, gender, age, and college.
3. The study was conducted in spring 2010.
4. The researcher used self-administered questionnaires to conduct the study.

Limitations

This study was limited by the following factors:

1. The instrument used in this study was not tested for validity or reliability.
2. The sample excludes students who did not attend class.
3. The sample excludes students whose professor did not allow researcher to attend class.
4. The sample excludes students not enrolled in courses Spring Quarter.

Assumptions

This study was based on the following assumptions:

1. It was assumed that respondents answered truthfully and to the best of their ability.
2. It was assumed that respondents understood questions asked during the survey.
3. It was assumed that the researcher's presence did not affect respondents' answers.
4. It was assumed that order of questions did not affect respondents' answers.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in this study:

Arts-related leisure. art gallery and Christopher Cohan Performing Arts Center attendance

Leisure. time characterized as freedom from work or obligated task, and an opportunity to engage in pursuits that bring pleasure (Kraus, 2000)

Recreation. activities performed voluntarily for pleasure or to achieve important personal outcomes (Kraus, 2000)

Sports-related recreation. Cal Poly sporting events

Chapter 2

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to determine California Polytechnic State University's students' preferences between arts and sports related activities and why they choose one type of activity over the other. The following is a description of the subjects studied, the instrument used, the procedures of the study and finally the method of analysis used by the researcher.

Descriptions of the Subjects

The subjects of this study were undergraduate students at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. According to California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo, in 2009 there were 18,516 undergrad students, 44% of which were female and 56% were male. The average age of undergraduate students at Cal Poly was 20.5 years. Creative Research Systems (2010) says a representative sample size for this population would be 390. A sample of 250 students responded to questionnaires distributed during classes. The sample was selected through random cluster and convenience sampling. The researcher clustered all courses offered during Spring Quarter 2010 from Cal Poly's six colleges. Then the researcher randomly selected four courses from each college to attend and distribute questionnaires to the students. The researcher was given permission by professors to attend nine courses to collect data.

Description of Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a self-administered questionnaire developed by the researcher. All answers provided by respondents were anonymous. Due to limited time and resources the questionnaire was tested using a field test of only two students who completed the survey and gave feedback to the researcher. Also, the researcher used advice from the senior project advisor to create and edit the questionnaire.

There were three demographic questions (gender, year in school, and college) and seven questions about sport games and performances. The seven questions about games and performances addressed reasons for attending or not attending both events, frequency of attending, and interest in attending either event. Three questions were close-ended, and four were partially open-ended with an optional response of “other”. The researcher added “other” as the final answer to include possible responses not given by the researcher. Participants were asked to choose the answer that best described their response to the other three questions. The final question was a Likert-type scale on which respondents rated their interest in attending Cal Poly games and PAC performances.

The letter of consent and questionnaire were reviewed and approved by Cal Poly’s Human Subjects Committee prior to collection (see Appendix A). A letter of consent was given to each participant describing the study and researcher. The consent form informed participants that their responses were voluntary would remain anonymous. It also provided information about Cal Poly’s Human Subjects Committee and who to contact in case the participant had any questions (see Appendix B).

Description of Procedures

Using the Cal Poly portal, available to Cal Poly students, the researcher obtained a list of all courses offered during Cal Poly's Spring Quarter 2010 organized by college departments. Using a random number generator, the researcher selected a department from a specific college, then use the random number generator again to randomly select a course from the department. These procedures were used four times for every college until twenty-four courses were selected. After selecting the courses, the researcher contacted the professors from each class by e-mail and phone to inform them about the study and ask permission to survey his or her students. Nine professors responded and granted permission to collect data. Once permission was granted from professors, the researcher attended the selected classes to distribute the questionnaire. The researcher was not given permission to attend any courses from The College of Architecture and Environmental Design. Instead, the researcher attended an open studio time where architecture students work on projects, there they were asked to participate.

The researcher presented the letter of consent on an overhead projector and passed out copies to the students. After the students read the consent letter and agreed to participate, the researcher distributed a questionnaire. If students did not participate, the researcher told them to leave their questionnaire blank and return it with the completed questionnaires. While the students who agreed to participate completed their responses, the researcher stayed in the room and was available for questions or comments about the questionnaire. Once the participants completed their answers, the questionnaires were returned to the researcher. The researcher thanked the participants and the professor for

their time and left. Completed questionnaires were accessible only by the researcher.

Method of Data Analysis

Once the questionnaires were collected, the researcher tabulated and analyzed the data to answer the study's research questions using Microsoft Excel. Open-ended responses were also recorded on the same database using Microsoft Excel. Similar answers were grouped together and organized using frequency and percentages.

The first two research questions, reasons why students attend Cal Poly sporting events and performances at the PAC, were answered by data collected from questions two and five of the questionnaire. Frequency and percentages were used to determine the most common responses to the questions.

The third research question, asking if students choose one activity over the other and why, was answered by data collected from questions one, three, four, six, and seven of the questionnaire. Questions one and four asked respondents how often they attend games and performances. The researcher used frequency and percentages to determine if students generally attend one type of activity over the other. Frequency and percentages were also used for data from question three and six to answer why students choose one activity over the other.

The fourth research question regarding demographics' influence on attendance was answered by comparing the results from questions one and four with the demographics data. The researcher conducted cross-tabulations to determine if gender influences attendance and if year in school or college influences attendance.

The last research question, reasons why students do not attend both types of activities, was answered by data collected from questions three and six of the questionnaire. Frequency and percentages were used to determine the most common reasons student do not attend either games or performances.

Chapter 3

PRESENTAION OF THE RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to determine factors that influence Cal Poly students' choice of attending sports-related recreation activities versus arts-related performances. Data used to answer research questions were collected during Cal Poly's Spring Quarter, April 19th through April 28th, 2010. The researcher attended eight courses randomly selected from the University's six colleges. Two hundred and sixty students were asked to participate in the study, with a response rate of 96.15% (n=250), ten students did not participate. Data were collected using a questionnaire written by the researcher. The questionnaire asked students to provide gender, year in school, and college affiliation, then seven questions asking about frequency of attendance of sport and art-related events, reasons for attendance, and a rating scale of interest in attending such events.

Demographics

Of the 250 respondents, more females (n=129, 51.60%) responded than males (n=120, 48.00%). Third-year (n=79, 31.60%) and fourth-year students (n=85, 34.00%) had the highest response rates. See Table 1 for frequency and percentage of respondents from all years in college.

Table 1
Frequency and Percentage of Subjects Based Year In School

Year in School	<i>F</i>	%
1 st	17	6.80
2 nd	41	16.40
3 rd	79	31.60
4 th	85	34.00
5 th	27	10.80
Total	250	100.00

The top three colleges represented were The College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Science (n=81, 32.40%), College of Engineering (n=81, 32.40%), and The Ofreala College of Business (n=52, 20.80%). See Table 2 for frequency and percentage of all colleges.

Table 2
Frequency and Percentage of Subjects Based on College

College	<i>f</i>	%
CAFES	81	32.40
CAED	12	4.80
OCOB	52	20.80
COE	81	32.40
CLA	10	4.00
COSAM	13	5.20
Total	250	100.00

Cal Poly Sport Games

The most common response (n=75, 30.00%) for frequency of attending sport games was “once a quarter” followed by “never” (n=74, 29.60%), “once a month” (n=50, 20.00%), “once a year” (n=45, 18.00%), and “at least once a week” (n=5, 2.00%). The most common reason for attending a game was “go with friends” (n=100, 40.00%), followed by “fan of the sport” (n=52, 20.80%), “other” (n=29, 11.60%), “support of university athletics” (n=11, 4.40%), and finally “free admission” (n=10, 4.00%). “Lack of time” (n=141, 56.40%) was the most common reason for not attending a sporting event, then “don’t know when games are” (n=35, 14.00%), “do not like sporting events” (n=30, 12.00%), “other” (n=24, 10.00%), and finally “spectators are too rowdy” (n=5, 2.00%). A common response (n=9, 37.50%) provided by respondents who answered “other” was “know an athlete” or something similar like “friend on team”, “roommate is athlete”, etc. The following Tables, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, show frequency and percentage of respondent’s attendance at sporting events based on gender, year in college, and college of study.

Table 3
Frequency and Percentage of Respondent's Attendance to Sporting Events Based on Gender

Frequency of Attendance	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
At Least Once a Week	3	1.20	2	.80
Once a Month	23	9.20	27	10.80
Once a Quarter	37	14.80	38	15.20
Once a Year	17	6.80	27	10.80
Never	40	16.00	34	13.60
Total	120	48.00	178	52.00

Table 4
Frequency and Percentage of Respondent's Attendance to Sporting Events Basted on Year in School, Years 1-3

Frequency of Attendance	Year in School					
	1		2		3	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
At Least Once a Week	5	2.00	1	.40	0	0
Once a Month	7	2.80	12	4.80	16	6.40
Once a Quarter	7	2.80	13	5.20	17	6.80
Once a Year	3	1.20	9	3.60	16	6.40
Never	2	.80	6	2.40	29	11.60
Total	24	9.60	41	16.40	78	31.20

Table 5
Frequency and Percentage of Respondent's Attendance to Sporting Events Based on Year in School, Years 4 and 5+

Frequency of Attendance	Year in School			
	4		5+	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
At Least Once a Week	4	1.60	4	1.60
Once a Month	13	5.20	13	5.20
Once a Quarter	27	10.80	27	10.80
Once a Year	17	6.80	17	6.80
Never	24	9.60	24	9.60
Total	85	34.00	85	34.00

Table 6
Frequency and Percentage of Respondent's Attendance to Sporting Events Based on College (College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Science, College of Architecture and Environmental Design, and The Ofreala College of Business)

Frequency of Attendance	College					
	CAFES		CAED		OCOB	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
At Least Once a Week	3	1.20	0	0	0	0
Once a Month	18	7.20	0	0	12	4.80
Once a Quarter	27	10.80	1	.40	13	5.20
Once a Year	9	3.60	5	.20	12	4.80
Never	24	9.60	6	2.40	14	5.60
Total	166	66.40	12	4.80	51	20.40

Table 7
Frequency and Percentage of Respondent's Attendance to Sporting Events Based on College (College of Engineering, College of Liberal Arts, and College of Science and Math)

Frequency of Attendance	College					
	COE		CLA		COSAM	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
At Least Once a Week	1	.40	1	.40	0	0
Once a Month	16	6.40	2	.80	2	.80
Once a Quarter	24	9.60	4	1.60	6	2.40
Once a Year	15	6.00	2	.80	2	.80
Never	25	10.00	1	.40	3	1.20
Total	81	32.40	10	4.00	13	5.20

Performances at the Performing Arts Center

The most common response for frequency of attending performances was “never” (n=113, 45.20%), then “once a year” (n=87, 34.80%), “once a quarter” (n=39, 15.60%), “once a month” (n=9, 3.60%), and finally “at least once a week” (n=2, .80%). The most common reason for attending performances was “school requirement” (n=50, 20.00%), then “enjoy the art form” (n=49, 19.60%), “go with friends” (n=37, 14.80%), “know artist/performer” (n=25, 10.00%), “discounted student rates” (n=15, 6.00%), and finally “other” (n=10, 4.00%). “Too expensive” (n=72, 28.80%) was the most common reason respondents chose for why they do not attend performances, followed by “lack of time” (n=65, 26.00%), “don’t know when performances are” (n=45, 18.00%), “do not like

theatrical performances” (n=26, 10.40%), and “other” (n=11, 4.40%). The most common response (n=8 30.76%), provided by respondents who answered “other” was “do not care” or similar answers. The following Tables, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, show frequency and percentage of respondent’s attendance at performances based on gender, year in college, and college of study.

Table 8
Frequency and Percentage of Respondent's Attendance to Performances Based on Gender

Frequency of Attendance	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
At Least once a Week	1	.40	1	.40
Once a Month	5	2.00	4	1.60
Once a Quarter	18	7.20	21	8.40
Once a Year	36	14.40	51	20.40
Never	60	24.00	52	20.80
Total	120	48.00	129	51.60

Table 9
Frequency and Percentage of Respondent's Attendance to Performances Based on Year in School Years 1-3

Frequency of Attendance	Year in School					
	1		2		3	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
At Least Once a Week	1	.40	1	.40	0	0
Once a Month	2	.80	3	1.20	1	.40
Once a Quarter	5	2.00	8	3.20	5	2.00
Once a Year	7	2.80	15	6.00	29	11.60
Never	2	.80	14	5.60	44	7.60
Total	17	6.80	41	16.40	79	31.60

Table 10
Frequency and Percentage of Respondent's Attendance to Performances Based on Year in School Years 4 and 5+

Frequency of Attendance	Year in School			
	4		5+	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
At Least Once a Week	0	0	0	0
Once a Month	1	.40	2	.80
Once a Quarter	14	5.60	7	2.80
Once a Year	29	11.60	7	2.80
Never	41	16.40	11	4.40
Total	85	34.00	27	10.80

Table 11
Frequency and Percentage of Respondent's Attendance to Performances Based on College (College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Science, College of Architecture, and The College Ofreala College of Business)

Frequency of Attendance	College					
	CAFES		CAED		OCOB	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
At Least Once a Week	0	0	0	0	0	0
Once a Month	4	1.60	1	.40	0	0
Once a Quarter	11	4.40	2	.80	8	3.20
Once a Year	32	12.80	4	1.60	16	6.40
Never	34	13.60	5	2.00	28	11.20
Total	81	32.40	12	4.80	52	20.80

Table 12
Frequency and Percentage of Respondent's Attendance to Performances Based on College (College of Engineering, College of Liberal Arts, and College of Science and Math)

Frequency of Attendance	College					
	COE		CLA		COSAM	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
At Least Once a Week	2	.80	0	0	0	0
Once a Month	4	1.60	0	0	0	0
Once a Quarter	9	3.60	5	2.00	4	1.60
Once a Year	27	10.80	3	1.20	4	1.60
Never	39	15.60	2	.80	5	2.00
Total	81	32.40	10	4.00	13	5.20

Interest in Attending

The average level of interest in attending both Cal Poly sporting events and performances at the Performing Arts Center was measured on a 1-5 scale (1 = not interested at all, and 5 = most interested). For performances, the average is 2.89. For sporting events the average is 3.07.

Using a T-test, there is a .01 correlation between respondents' interest in attending sporting events and interest in attending performances. Respondents who are more interested in attending sports are also more interest in attending performances. Although the correlation is low, it is positive which means students had similar interest in attending both types of events.

Summary

The majority of students who responded were female, from the College and Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Science, and in the 4th year of college. Students attend games more frequently and are more interested in attending games than performances. "Too expensive" was the most common reason for not attending performances and "lack of time" was the most common reason for not attending games. See Chapter 4, Discussion and Conclusion, for a complete summary and discussion of results.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The purpose of the study was to determine the main factors that influence California Polytechnic State University students' choice to attend either sports-related or arts-related activities. On average, American college students spend 4 hours a day on recreation. Leisure time increases from adolescences to adulthood, especially in college because students acquire new freedoms and college campuses facilitate many opportunities for leisure. There are three main factors that influence a student's participation in arts-related recreation or leisure, social and economic status, motivations, and perception of time. Attendance at sports-related activities is mostly influenced by two factors, team identification and social rewards.

The study was conducted at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo during the Spring Quarter of 2010. The researcher used a self-administered questionnaire to collect data on frequency of attendance to sport games and art performances, reasons for attending, reasons for not attending, and level of interest in participating in both types of activities. Subjects were selected using random sampling and convenience sampling of undergraduate courses offered by Cal Poly's six colleges.

Generally, students reported attending games once a quarter with "going with friends" as the most common reason for attending, and "lack of time" as the most common reason for not attending games. Most students also said they only attend performances once a year, with "class requirement" as the most common reason for

attending and “tickets are too expensive” as the most common reason for not attending. Overall, students were slightly more interested in attending games over performances.

Discussion

Misra and McKean (2000) observed that although college offers many opportunities for leisure, students do not have enough time to take advantage of the opportunities. Similarly in this study, “lack of time” was among the top reasons for students to not attend both performances and sporting events. This is also similar to the findings of Boudier-Pailler (2008) that perception of time influences attendance at performances. One of the top reasons students do not attend performances is because of a perceived lack of time, the top reason was price of tickets. Although students said “lack of time” was a main reason for not attending performances, it was not one of the common reasons for not attending games. It must be perceived that either performances take more time than games, or that games are more worth the time.

Different from what Andreasen and Belk (1980), Krackman (1996), Montgomery and Robinson (2006), and Swanson, Davis, and Zhou (2008) found, higher education did not seem to motivate students to attend performances. Although the most common reason for attending performances at Cal Poly was “school requirement”, most students said they never attend performances. Even though education was a reason to attend, students at the university do not commonly attend performances. No studies conducted on motivations addressed course requirements as a reason for attending. Most likely, course requirement is a special motivation at Cal Poly for music, dance, and art classes that assign attendance

to a performance.

Tajtáková, Klepochová, and Žák (2008) reported that the main motivation for students attending performances was aesthetics. Aesthetics was a main motivation at Cal Poly; the second most common reason for attending performances was to “enjoy the art form”.

Unlike the findings of Madrigal (1995), Robinson, Trail, Dick, and Gillentine (2005), Snipes and Ingram (2007), and Swanson, Gwinner, Larsons, and Janda (2003) this study did not find team identification to be a determining factor for attending games. Support of university athletics accounted for only four percent of all responses to the question “which best describes why you attend games?”. The most common motivation for attending was “going with friends” which is congruent with the findings of Tinto (as cited in Berson 1996) who said social networking is a main motivation. Students noted in the open-ended answer that they were dissatisfied with the quality of sports at Cal Poly. Team identification most likely happens when a university team is successful enough to get the attention of the student body (Wann, Brame, Clarkson, Brooks, & Waddill, 2008). Since Cal Poly teams are not considered successful, team identification would not be a main motivation for Cal Poly students to attend games.

The limitations of this study were mostly involving the respondents who participated in the questionnaire. The sample was selected randomly, however professors chose to either allow their students to participate or not and a representative sample size was not reached. Therefore the sample was not fully representative of the student body. It is recommended that future research use a representative sample.

More insightful answers may come from interviewing students as opposed to using a questionnaire as in this study. Students would be able to explain their reasons for attending or not attending and would not be limited to the answers provided by the researcher. Interviews would allow researchers to collect data on opinions, attitudes, and personal motivations to attend performances and games.

Conclusions

Based on the finding of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The most common reason students attend Cal Poly sporting events is to go with friends.
2. The most common reason students attend performances at the Performing Arts Center is because it is a school requirement.
3. Students attend sporting events more often than performances at the Performing Arts Center and are more interested in attending games over performances.
4. Gender does not influence attendance at performances, however it does influence attendance at games, and college and year in school do not influence attendance to either event.
5. “Tickets are too expensive” and “lack of time” are the most common reasons students do not attend performances and “lack of time” and “do not know when games are” are the most common reasons students do not attend games.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Make game and performance dates and times easier to access by students.
2. Increase advertising of discounted ticket rates for students at the Performing Arts Center.
3. Create better incentives for students to spend time at games.
4. Bring performers that are popular with students to the PAC such as popular bands and comedians.
5. Market specifically to students at college that tend to not participate by advertising in specific buildings or areas on campus.
6. Future studies should be conducted with a random and representative sample size.
7. Interviews should be conducted to gain data on opinions and preferences.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Questionnaire

Art and Sport Related Activities

Please take a few moments to complete this questionnaire. The purpose of this study is to determine factors that influence student participation in arts-related leisure activities versus sports-related recreation at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Your responses are anonymous and your participation is voluntary. It will take approximately 3-5 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Thank you for your time.

Please *circle* or *check* the answer that best describes your response.

Gender: M F

Year in School: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th +

College: CAFES (Ag) CAED (Arch.) OCB (Bus.) COE (Eng.)

CLA (Liberal Arts) COSAM (Science and Math)

1. How often do you attend Cal Poly sporting events? (If you are an athlete, please respond for sports other than the one you participate in.)

- At least once a week
- Once a month
- Once a quarter
- Once a year
- Never

2. Which best describes why you attend Cal Poly sporting events?

- Fan of the sport
- Go with friends
- Support of university athletics
- Free admission
- Other: _____

3. Which best describes why you do NOT attend Cal Poly sporting events?

- Do not like sporting events
- Lack of time
- Spectators are too rowdy
- Don't know when games are
- Other: _____

Please Turn Over

4. How often do you attend performances at the Performing Arts Center? (If you perform at the PAC, please answer for performances other than the ones you participate in.)
- At least once a week
 - Once a month
 - Once a quarter
 - Once a year
 - Never
5. Which best describes why you attend Performances at the Performing Arts Center?
- Enjoy the art form
 - Go with friends
 - School requirement
 - Know artist/performer
 - Discounted student rates
 - Other: _____
6. Which best describes why you do NOT attend performances at the Performing Arts Center?
- Do not like theatrical performances
 - Lack of time
 - Too expensive
 - Don't know when performances are
 - Other: _____

6. Please rate the following activities based on how interested you are in attending.

1 – not interested at all

5 – very interested

Attending Cal Poly sporting events: 1 2 3 4 5

Attending a performance at the Performing Arts Center: 1 2 3 4 5

Thank you for your time.

Appendix B
Informed Consent Letter

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY OF FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CAL POLY STUDENT'S DECISION TO ATTEND SPORTING EVENTS AND THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES.

A research project on art-related and sports-related recreation and leisure activities is being conducted by Meghan Hudson in the Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. The purpose of the study is to assess Cal Poly students' interest in art-related leisure activities versus sports-related recreation.

You are being asked to take part in this study by completing the attached/enclosed questionnaire provided by the researcher. Your participation will take approximately 3-5 minutes. Please be aware that you are not required to participate in this research and you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. You may also omit any items on the questionnaire you prefer not to answer.

There are no risks anticipated with participation in this study. Your responses will be provided anonymously to protect your privacy. Potential benefits associated with the study may include the improvement of art-related activity marketing strategies to promote awareness of the arts.

If you have questions regarding this study or would like to be informed of the results when the study is completed, please feel free to contact Meghan Hudson at mrhudson@calpoly.edu or 925-212-4950. If you have questions or concerns regarding the manner in which the study is conducted, you may contact Dr. Steve Davis, Chair of the Cal Poly Human Subjects Committee, at 805-756-2754, sdavis@calpoly.edu, or Dr. Susan Opava, Dean of Research and Graduate Programs, at 805-756-1508, sopava@calpoly.edu.

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research project as described, please indicate your agreement by completing and returning the attached questionnaire. Please retain this consent cover form for your reference, and thank you for your participation in this research.