

The Association Between Sports Patriotism and Gender, Race, and Age in America

Megan Bauerle, Applied Data Analysis, Wesleyan University

Introduction

- *Sports Patriotism* is a feeling of pride in a country resulting from the country's performance in sports.
- Studies have shown that viewing more international sports media is associated with increased feelings of patriotism and nationalism (Billings et al., 2015; Billings et al., 2019)
- Research has found that there is greater racial representation and response in national sports (Dyreson, 2005; Stanton & Johnson, 2012), and that younger age groups are more likely to demonstrate sports patriotism (Meier & Mutz, 2016, Gilal et al., 2020).
- However, gender has been used positively and negatively to commentate international sports media (McCree, 2011; Mishra, 2014).
- Levels of sports patriotism may reflect group representation in sports media.

Research Questions

- Is there agreement with the influence of sports patriotism for each gender, after controlling for race and age?
- Is there an association between sports patriotism and gender, after controlling for race and age?

Methods

Sample

- Respondents (n=1271) were drawn from the 2014 General Social Survey (GSS), a nationally representative sample of English-speaking, non-institutionalized adults in America.

Measures

- Sports patriotism was measured by response to the statement "When my country does well in international sports, it makes me proud to be an American." rated on five-point scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) or 6 "Can't choose" coded dichotomously in terms of agreement or non-agreement.
- For race, response options were "White," "Black," and "Other" coded dichotomously in terms of White or non-White.
- Gender was coded male or female.
- Age was categorized into four even levels, with age groups 18-34, 35-49, 50-62, 63-99 coded 1-4.

Results

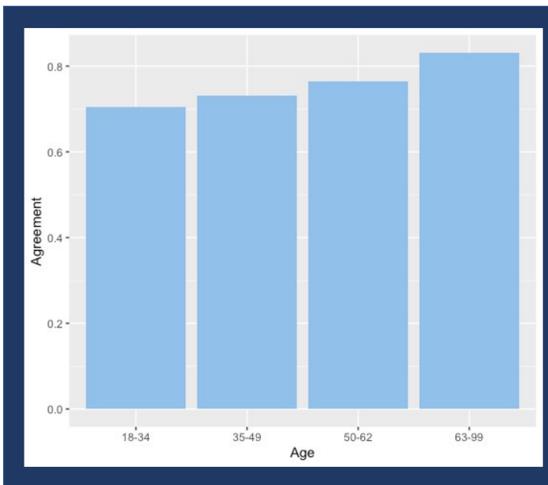
Univariate

- 45.0% of respondents were male.
- 74.5% of respondents were white.
- 75.6% of respondents had agreement with the sports patriotism statement.

Bivariate

- A Chi Square test showed that **gender** was not significantly associated with **level of sports patriotism** ($X^2 = 0.255$, $p = .6139$).
- A Chi Square test showed that **race** was not significantly associated with **level of sports patriotism** ($X = 1.146$, $p = .2843$)

Figure 1. Average Sports Patriotism Agreement Based on Age

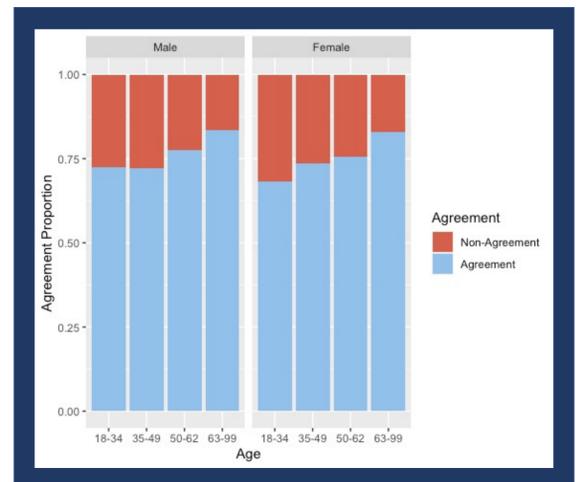


- Figure 1 shows that as the age group increases, a higher proportion of respondents agreed with the sports patriotism statement.
- A Chi Square test showed that **age** was significantly associated with **level of sports patriotism** ($X^2 = 14.964$, $p = .00185$).
- Post hoc tests showed that for the 2014 GSS sample, there was a significant difference between the **18-34 age group and the 62+ age group**, as well as a significant difference between the **35-49 age group and the 62+ age group**.

Multivariate

- Figure 2 shows both male and female respondents have visually similar proportions of agreement for each age group, with older age groups having higher average agreement.
- A multiple logistic regression between age, gender and race gave the results that after controlling for race and gender, **age is independently associated with sports patriotism between the 18-34 and 63-99 age groups** (OR = 2.18, p-value=0.0001).

Figure 2. Average Sports Patriotism across Gender and Age



Discussion

- Gender and race may not have an effect on sports patriotism agreement.
- Regardless of gender and race, age may have an effect on sports patriotism agreement.
- This data suggests that national sports media has engaging representation across gender and race, but does not capture all age groups.
- Sports media and youth sports organizations may use this information to determine which demographics to target in advertising campaigns, outreach events, and partnerships.
- This data set was limited in specificity of the sample, so further research is needed to determine if there are differences between individual sports and sporting events.

Billings, A., Brown, K., & Brown-Devlin, N. (2015). Sports Draped in the American Flag: Impact of the 2014 Winter Olympic Telecast on Nationalized Attitudes. *Mass Communication & Society*, 18(4), 377–398.

Billings, A. C., Scott, O. K., Brown, K. A., Lewis, M., & Devlin, M. B. (2019). The patriotism down under: Nationalized qualities and Australian media consumption of the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 54(3), 325–347.

Dyreson, M. (2005). Aggressive America: Media nationalism and the "war" over Olympic pictures in sport's "golden age." *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 22(6), 974–989.

Gilal, F. G., Gilal, N. G., Tariq, B., Gilal, R. G., Gilal, R. G., Gong, Z., & Channa, N. A. (2020). Intergenerational differences in fans' motivation to watch the T20 world cup: A generation cohort theory perspective. *International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print).

McCree, R. D. (2011). The Death of a Female Boxer: Media, Sport, Nationalism, and Gender. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 35(4), 327–349.

Meier, H. E., & Mutz, M. (2016). Sport-Related National Pride in East and West Germany, 1992-2008: Persistent Differences or Trends Toward Convergence? *SAGE Open*, 6(3), 215824401666589.

Mishra, S. (2014). Nationality and gender in sports photography: A case study on portrayals of figure skaters at Torino Winter Olympics. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 6(3), 382–400.

Stanton, T. J., & Johnson, C. D. (2012). Differential customer racial attitudes toward scandal and patriotism: The Mitchell Report, the Olympics, race, and baseball memorabilia. *The Social Science Journal (Fort Collins)*, 49(2), 214–218.