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Change of Girl Students' Interest in Volleyball and its Factors: a Hypothesis by Analysis of Qualitative Data

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女子生徒のバレーボールに対する関心の変化とその要因

一質的データ分析による仮説一

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本研究は、「見るスポーツ」の社会心理学的研究の一環として行ったものであり、女子生徒のバレーボールに対する関心が時間の経過とともにどのように変化し、そこにいかなる要因が働いたのかということ仮説的に追求したものである。その結果、バレーボールに対する関心度が変わらない者あるいは高まった者は、直接間接にバレーボールに多く接触しており、そこには積極的、好意的態度がみられこれを持続させてきた心理的要因が強く働いたと考えられる。また、関心度が低下していった者の社会的、心理的要因としては、第1に全日本男子バレーチームの構成メンバーが変わったこと、第2に同チームの国際競技における成績が低下してきたこと、第3にマスコミによるバレーボールの取り上げ方が量的に減少したこと、そして第4に対象者の心理的発達に伴ってものごとへの関心が多様化してきたことがあげられる。

Introduction

As a rise in the standard of living, an increase of free time and the social conditions concerning sports such as sports facilities, leaders, companies and so on are prepared by the economic development, those who play sporting activities have gradually been increasing in Japan. On the other hand, spectators and fans who go to see sports matches and enjoy sports through the mass media such as television, radio, newspapers and so on, have been increasing, too.

Kenyon¹⁾ calls the former "primary involvement" which means direct participation in sporting activities as participants and the latter "secondary involvement" which means indirect participation in sports. In continuing the sociological research on sports, we cannot overlook the latter, "spectator sports" as our object. Very few studies on spectator sports have been done so far, but in such a case the existence of spectators or fans will especially become an issue. We cannot imagine professional sports or big athletic meets of amateur sports without any spectators. It is easily considered that not only players but also spectators join in athletic meets, the existence of spectators effects on players' performance, their plays satisfy spectators mentally and thus they effect each other. This belongs to the field of social-psychological research on sports. Then, why do people go attending sporting events? J. M. Schwartz²⁾ has been trying the theoretical approach toward spectator sports and arranged various theories into "pleasure from observing excellence, the need for excitement toward a renewal of life, release of tensions and expression of socially-based frustrations, affirmation of values, desire for sociability,

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need for continuity in life, establishment of sexual identity, group conformity, and goal-directed consumption" as the motivation of sports-seeing. Such things can surely be considered theoretically, but I wanted to choose sports fans who love sports heartily and pursue positively how their interest in sports changes and what factors there are, instead of remaining in the former internal, psychological and theoretical approaches. The trend of volleyball in our country gave me the most suitable materials for my expectation.

Volleyball is one of the most popular sports in Japan. The popularity came to the first peak when the All Japan Women's Team won the victory in the Tokyo Olympics in 1964. And then men's volleyball had been popular since about 1970 and it came to the second peak when the Munich Olympics was held in 1972. This second volleyball boom was created by the All Japan Men's Team, which won the gold medals in the Munich Olympics. It is not uncommon that a lot of spectators get together to see international volleyball matches held in our country and matches by the leading teams of enterprises. In 1972, spectators waited in a long line to see the training of the players of the All Japan Men's Team in a gymnasium. So far, such was the first phenomenon to be seen in the amateur sportsdom. What kind of people are these men's volleyball fans and what attracts them to the All Japan Men's volleyball Team? Under such simple doubts, I began the factfinding research in April, 1972. The results were as follows³⁾ :

- (1) Enthusiastic fans of the All Japan Team are mostly girl-students at the age of 14 through 17.
- (2) About 40% of the fans play volleyball themselves at the club activities of their schools and the rest have nothing to do with it directly.
- (3) They are fascinated by the first-rate plays of the All Japan players and their attitudes devoting themselves to volleyball.

By sports fans we mean those who have positive and selective attitudes and mainly pleasant feeling toward sports. If one or more of the factors connecting them with sports disappear, they will lose their interest in them and go away from them. So, this thesis tried to make clear hypothetically how the interest of girl-students who were enthusiastic volleyball fans just in 1972 has changed and what the social and psychological factors are.

Method

Seven panel researches were conducted by mailing questionnaires from 1972 to 1974. The first research was held in November, 1972, the second in February, 1973, the third in May, 1973, the fourth in October, 1973, the sixth in July, 1974 and the seventh in December, 1974. These researches were all held just after the big volleyball matches in Japan. And then I made the subjects write their opinions and thoughts concerning volleyball on the questionnaires every time. I chose ten girl-students who were enthusiastic fans of the All Japan Men's Volleyball Team in 1972 as the subjects. At that time they were 14 or 15 years old and all lived in Tokyo. They were third year students of junior high school then. The reason why I limited the subjects to ten people was that volleyball fans had the same state of mind and by pursuing them as the sample I could guess the whole. Therefore, It should be said that the data from these subjects are not quantitative but qualitative.

The outline of the subjects is shown in Table 1. The capital letters of the alphabet here, "A" through "J" are used for each subject. They became volleyball fans from 1968 to 1972 and all of them belong to clubs or circles as their extracurricular activities. And generally they are all fond of sports.

Table 1. Outline of subjects

Subjects	Age		Period of becoming volleyball fan	Club activities at school	
	1972	1974		1972 (Third year of junior high school)	1974 (First or second year of senior high school)
A	14	16	1969 — 1970	Softball, Soft tennis	Regulation-ball tennis
B	15	17	1972	Softball, Soft tennis	Singing poems
C	15	17	1969 — 1970	Badminton	Folk guitar club
D	14	16	1972	Softball, Soft tennis	Singing poems
E	14	16	1969 — 1970	Badminton	Bakery club
F	15	17	1969 — 1970	Softball, Soft tennis	Regulation-ball tennis, Flower arrangement
G	15	17	1972	Volleyball	Volleyball
H	15	17	1969 — 1970	Japanese chess	Calligraphy
I	15	17	1968	Gymnastics	Gymnastics
J	14	16	1968	Softball	Brassband, Movies

Results and Discussion

1. Change of Interest in Volleyball

All of the subjects were interested in volleyball very much at the time of the Munich Olympics (August in 1972). Table 2 shows how their interest changed one year (October in 1973) and two years (December in 1974) after the Olympics. At the point of one year after that, their interest changed variously, but two years after those whose interest did not change or weakened were conspicuous. Here at the point of two years after that, they are divided into three groups. That is to say, those who were interested in volleyball more than ever belong to the first group ("G" and "J"), those whose interest did not change, the second group ("E" and "I") and those whose interest weakened, the third group ("A", "B", "C", "D", "F" and "H"). The subjects recognize the degrees of their interest themselves and each degree should define their participation in volleyball. To back up the change of their interest objectively, let's

Table 2. Change of interest in volleyball : in comparison with the time of the Munich Olympics

Degree of interest	One year after (Oct. in 1973)	Two years after (Dec. in 1974)
It strengthened considerably	E, J	
It strengthened a little	G	G, J
It did not change	B, I	E, I
It weakened a little	A, C, F	B, D, F, H
It weakened considerably	D, H	A, C

examine watching volleyball matches, and the contact with volleyball through TV and newspapers.

a) Watching Matches

After the Munich Olympics, only "J" of the first group and "I" of the second group watched one of the biggest matches, Nippon Volleyball League and several other international matches held in Japan. "G" and "E" wanted to go to see those matches but they could not. On the contrary, the third group had a lot of matches which they did not watch because of the short of time and money. Especially "A", "F" and "H" replied that they were not interested in going to see the East Germany versus Japan Match (June, 1973) and the Good-will Match of China and Japan (July, 1973). It can be said that at this point their interest in volleyball reduced completely.

b) Watching Matches on TV

The international volleyball matches held in Japan and Nippon League matches were mostly televised. The Sixth Nippon League was televised 12 times from December in 1972 till March in 1973 and the subjects except "G" watched them very often. The Seventh Nippon League was televised 14 times from December in 1973 till March in 1974, but "A", "C" and "G" replied that they did not watch them very much, compared with the last League. The number of watching matches on TV is apt to reduce. Concerning the international matches, "A", "B" and "D" did not watch the Eleventh NHK Cup International Match between East Germany and Japan (June, 1973 televised 6 times) and the Good-will Match between China and Japan (July, 1973 televised 5 times). The reasons why they did not watch them are as follows: "I had something else to do" ("A" and "B") and "I forgot to watch them carelessly" ("D"). These are not enough to back up the decline of their interest, but it can be said that the contact with volleyball through TV reduced.

c) Newspaper Articles

Big matches are sure to be made articles, not to speak of international matches. Examining their contact with the newspaper articles about the Sixth and Seventh Nippon League, the Seventh Asian Games (July, 1974) and the Eighth World Championships (October, 1974), it became clear that the attitudes of the third group to read those articles had changed. That is to say, they changed in quantity from "reading those articles by all means" to "not reading them very much" and in quality from "reading them carefully" to "glancing them over". On the other hand, "E" and "I" of the second group read them very well from the beginning. Though "G" and "J" of the first group weakened their contact with the articles of the last two matches in comparison with the first two matches, the change of their interest in volleyball cannot be judged only by these tendencies.

In this way, there was not remarkable tendency of joining in volleyball through TV and newspapers in the first and second group but as for the third group, the fall of their interest had the effect on their secondary involvement. Analyzing them individually from a different point of view, "J" who was interested in it more than ever was very co-operative to each research and wrote many opinions and thoughts on the free column and gave enthusiastic encouragement to the All Japan Men's Team as one of the volleyball fans. In this way, she always showed her positive and friendly attitude. And she also had a lot of contacts with volleyball by watching matches and going to see the training of the team of an enterprise. In the case of "G", she had comparatively few contacts with volleyball through the mass media, but she continued to play it herself as her club activity at school and had many chances to go to see the training of volleyball teams of enterprises or to talk about them with her friends. Such being the case, as she acquired the skill and knowledge of volleyball, her interest seemed to have been maintained and strengthened. In

the case of "E", her interest increased quite well one year after the Munich Olympics and did not change two years after it, she had comparatively much contact with volleyball through TV and newspapers. So, those who kept their interest in it as in 1972 or those who strengthened it had comparatively much contact with volleyball, whether it was the primary involvement or the secondary involvement.

2. Factors of Change of their Interest

Table 3 shows the factors which seem to have changed their interest by analyzing their opinions and thoughts about All Japan Team, their club activities at school, chances to talk about volleyball and indirect participation in it written on the questionnaires. The factors related to the members are about the members of the All Japan Team in the Munich Olympics such as the change of leading players and manager. The second group and "J" of the first group, not to speak of the third group, pointed out this on the free column. By the factors related to the team record we mean those related to the record at the international matches and its relating factors, mean that "the results of the All Japan Team became poor", "their power lowered", "they are lack of fighting spirit", "they have no target" and "they have made no progress". All but "G" of the first group and "A" of the third group pointed out this factor. The factor related to the mass media is especially due to the decrease of TV broad-casting and "C", "D" and "F" of the third group pointed it out. On the other hand, "A", "C", "H" and "I" pointed out another factor, "it is not interesting". This factor seems to include all elements, such as the team record and its members, so it may not be suitable to pick it up as a factor. And by "the intention

Table 3. Factors of change of interest in volleyball

Items		Subjects		Group I		Group II		Group III				
		G	J	E	I	A	B	C	D	F	H	
Factors related to members	Change of players				*	**	***	***	*	**	***	
	Change of manager		*	**	*			*	*		***	
Factors related to team record	Low record of team			***	*				**	**	***	
	Lack of fighting spirit		*		***		**	**	*		*	
	Lack of target						**				**	
	Lack of progress						***					
Factors related to mass communication	Reduction of TV broadcasting							*	***	***		
Others	Dull				**	**		***			*	
	Intension to other sports					*						
Factors keeping and strengthening interest	Club activity	*										
	Seeing the training	**	***									
	Topics about volleyball	**	**		**							

Note 1. group Ithose whose interest strengthened, group II.....those whose interest did not change, Group III.....those whose interest weakened.

Note 2. *.....Oct. in 1973, **.....Dec. in 1974, ***.....both Oct. in 1973 and Dec. in 1974.

to other sports" we mean that their interest turned to other sports (which means tennis here) as a club activity. "A" of the third group is applicable to this case.

The fore-going are the factors that weakened their interest. The last factors to keep their interest and strengthen it are as mentioned above mainly "I play volleyball as my club activity" ("G"), "I go to see the training of the team of an enterprise with my friends" ("G" and "J") and "I talk about volleyball with my friends" ("G", "I" and "J"). These can be said to be the factors to raise their interest. As the subjects were enthusiastic fans at first, the main issue of this research is to pursue the reasons why their interest had reduced. So, to list up the reasons to have their interest lower, they are mainly "the players in the Munich Olympics cannot be found in the team" ("A", "B", "C", "D", "F" and "H"), "the manager has retired" ("C", "D" and "H"), "the players I like do not play in matches very much" ("C"), "the All Japan Team has become weaker than before" ("D", "F" and "H"), "fighting spirit cannot be found in the team" ("B", "C", "D" and "H") and "there is less TV coverage of volleyball matches" ("C", "D" and "F"). These factors should be supported by several materials.

a) Record of the All Japan Team and its Member

The All Japan Men's volleyball Team took the third place in the Tokyo Olympics (1964), the second place in the Mexico Olympics (1968) and the first place in the Munich Olympics for the first time. To look over the main international matches after that, the USSR versus Japan Match in 1973 was a 1-5 win-loss record, the International Friendship Volleyball Competition in Czechoslovakia (September, 1973) the fifth place, the USSR versus Japan Match in 1974 was a 1-5 win-loss record, the International Selective volleyball Men's Tournament (June and July, 1974) the fourth place, the Seventh Asian Games (September, 1974) the first place and the Eighth World Championships (October, 1974) the third place. Except Japan the men's Volleyball level of the Asian Area is low, so the first place in the Asian Games is of little account. That is to say, at the international matches in which the top-level teams at that time such as USSR, East Germany, Poland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia and so on took part, the All Japan Team resulted in the third-fifth place and could not maintain the first place of the Munich Olympics. It is said that the real power among the leading teams in the volleyball world differs very little, but it is natural that the insufficient power and lowered level of the All Japan Team should be pointed out.

Now, let's examine the change of the members of the All Japan Team. The representative players in the Munich Olympics were 12 and each subject of this research has a favorite player in this team more or less. It is said that most enthusiastic fans in their teens have their favorite players⁴⁾. In the case of this research, their feeling of longing for the star players was strongly expressed on the free column. However, three or four players of the All Japan Team in Munich Olympics were retired and the two other players hardly played in matches. That is because the leaders of the All Japan Team began to bring up new players. And the famous manager who had brought up the team for the Munich Olympics for eight years after the Tokyo Olympics with his particular training method, retired in October, 1972. If their favorite players did not play in matches or if they could not see them play actively, their interest would diminish naturally. It will be said that as most subjects of this research pointed out, the change of the members of All Japan Team was one of the factors which lowered their interest in volleyball.

b) Mass Communications

Table 4 shows how television has treated volleyball including NHK and other commercial TV stations. This is the total of broadcasting hours of men's and women's volleyball. It is mostly broadcasting of matches. The total of TV broadcasting was 156 times and more than 158 hours

Table 4. Broadcasting times and hours of volleyball through TV

Class	TV broadcasting	1972		1973		1974	
		Times	Hours	Times	Hours	Times	Hours
All Japan Team	Match	63	78.75	25	34.42	22	32.83
	Others	24	12.42	—	—	1	0.25
	Indistinct	7	—	1	—	4	—
	Subtotal	94	>91.17	26	>34.42	27	>33.08
Domestic matches	Match	44	52.07	25	33.70	17	22.30
	Others	1	0.25	2	2.83	3	3.80
	Indistinct	2	—	—	—	—	—
	Subtotal	47	>52.32	27	36.53	20	26.10
Students' matches	Match	15	14.70	27	29.98	14	16.47
	Others	—	—	—	—	1	0.50
	Indistinct	—	—	—	—	2	—
	Subtotal	15	14.70	27	29.98	17	>16.97
Total	Match	122	145.52	77	98.10	53	71.60
	Others	25	12.67	2	2.83	5	4.55
	Indistinct	9	—	1	—	6	—
	Total	156	>158.19	80	>100.93	64	>76.15

Note : The materials are adopted from the Asahi reduced-size edition.

in 1972, 80 times more than 100 hours in 1973 and 60 times more than 76 hours in 1974. The total in 1973 or in 1974 is 40%—60% of the total in 1972. It is noticeable that the broadcasting on the All Japan Team had decreased remarkably: the broadcasting in 1973 and 1974 is $\frac{1}{3}$ or less in times and 40% or less in hours.

Mass communications have a large effect on our society and it is the same with sports. In the past, Mizuno and Tanaka⁵⁾ had a research on the interest in the Olympics among junior high school students, senior high school students and college students. The results are the following :

- (1) While the Olympics is on, most people have the greatest interest in it.
- (2) Their interest centers on the issue of games and they place their excessive hope on specific players.
- (3) Their interest is influenced by mass communications both in quality and in quantity.

In the case of volleyball in the Munich Olympics, it was the event on which Japanese people placed their big hope together with gymnastics, as their research shows. For example, judging from the audience rating of the Munich Olympics, in the case of NHK the men's semifinal match between Bulgaria and Japan was recored 49.2% and the final match between East Germany and Japan 59.5%⁶⁾. On the other hand, the average audience rating of the Sixth Nippon Volleyball League in 1973 was 5.8%. There is a great difference between them. That is to say, each TV

station accepted the volleyball matches of the All Japan Team in a great deal in 1972 and a great many people watched them on TV during the Munich Olympics. According to my research⁷⁾, more than half of the students (53.1%) who did not belong to any sporting clubs became volleyball fans by watching TV. This shows that TV has a great effect on people's interest in sports very much.

Further, I examined how much space the major newspapers such as the Asahi the Yomiuri and the Mainichi allow for volleyball. As for the space of news item on domestic matches for two years after the Munich Olympics, remarkable change could not be seen in each of these newspapers. The space of sports column of newspapers depends on other matches and events, so it is variable. However, according to the reduced-size edition of each newspaper (27.6 cm × 20.9 cm), the Asahi shared 1835 cm², including photos as the space of volleyball during the Munich Olympics, the Yomiuri, 2639 cm² and the Mainichi, 2081 cm². It occupied 10 times or more in space as much as the major domestic matches did in the same year. Compared with the international matches after that, it was about 3 times as much as the USSR versus Japan Match (1973), about 4 times as much as the Good-will Match between China and Japan (1973), about 13 times as much as the Seventh Asian Games (1974) and about 4 times as much as the Eighth World Championships (1974). This proves that the Japanese newspapers accepted the volleyball matches in the Munich Olympics very much.

In addition, a monthly volleyball magazine, "Volleyball" is published in Japan. As Table 5 shows, the monthly circulation was only 5000 copies in 1955, but in 1972 it rose explosively and reached 100000 copies just before the Olympics. Around that period of time, the contents of the magazine had been made up for fans in teens. After the Olympics, the circulation decreased gradually. This proves that the volleyball boom had been losing popularity little by little. From the materials of TV, newspapers and magazine concerning volleyball, it can be said that Japanese mass communications made the volleyball boom around the All Japan Men's Team catering the wishes of the nation. Conversely speaking, accepting volleyball by the mass media centering around TV had been reducing comparatively after the Munich Olympics. This may be the social factor that had reduced volleyball fans' interest.

c) Objects of their greatest Interest

At last, there is one more factor that we have to consider. It is the variety or ranking of girl students' interest in things accompanying with their psychological development. The most enthusiastic volleyball fans in 1972 were girl students at the age of 14 through 17. In this period, self-reliance is strengthened by self-creation and this is the period when their unsettled emotion seeks for changes, thrills and excitements. It is easily imagined that they met the unusual world, volleyball, responded to players devoting themselves to practices and matches,

Table 5. Change of circulation of monthly magazine "Volleyball"

Year	Circulation (copies)	Year	Circulation (copies)
1955	5000	Jan. 1973	95000
1964	12000	Aug. 1973	81000
Jan. 1972	55000	Jan. 1974	71000
Aug. 1972	100000	Aug. 1974	69300

Table 6. Ranking of objects of interest (Dec. in 1974)

Subjects	Rank	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
	Group I	G	4	2	1	3
J		1	4	5	2	3
Group II	E	4	1	2	5	3
	I	4	1	2	5	3
Group III	A	2	4	5	1	3
	B	2	4	1	5	3
	C	3	4	2	1	5
	D	3	2	4	1	5
	F	5	3	2	4	1
	H	5	1	3	4	2

Note : 1. All Japan Men's Volleyball 2. Club activities at school 3. Boyfriends
4. Hobbies 5. Study

and in this way their identification with players occurred. In 1972, the All Japan Men's Volleyball boom was on, but at that time people from 18 years up did not become so enthusiastic over it. It is because they must have had some other things in which they were interested. So, when the subjects became 16 or 17 years old two years after the beginning of this research (December, 1974), I asked them "what is the most interesting thing to you?". Their answers were put in order and shown in Table 6. According to it, only "J" of the first group found the All Japan Men's Volleyball most interesting and the others their hobbies, boyfriends, club activities and study. In the case of "G", her hobby was certainly playing volleyball in her club activity. And especially to "A", "B", "C", "D" and "F" of the third group, the All Japan Men's Volleyball was in low grade as objects of interest. It may be said that as they grew older they would be interested in other things, such as friends, hobbies, study for the examination for admission to a school of higher grade or getting a job and so on as their close problems or important objects of interest. That is to say, the variety of their interest accompanying with their psychological development can be listed as the psychological factor which has reduced their interest in volleyball.

Summary

As a part of the social-psychological research on spectator sports, I have carried out this research for two years, as to how sports fans' interest in sports changes with the passage of time and what kind of factors work, by the panel research on the girl students who were enthusiastic volleyball fans and collecting positive materials and analyzing them. Since this research consists mainly of qualitative data from a small number of subjects, this may still be a matter of hypothesis. However, the results are summarized as follows:

1. Those whose interest in the All Japan Men's Volleyball did not change or was strengthened two years after the Munich Olympics played volleyball, went to see the training of the team of

an enterprise, had a lot of chances to talk about it or a lot of contacts with it through TV and newspapers. In the end, they had comparatively much contact with it in some way, whether it is the primary involvement or the secondary involvement. In that case, it may be considered that the psychological factors which had kept their positive and friendly attitudes toward the All Japan Men's Volleyball worked intensively.

2. As social and psychological factors of those whose interest had lowered, it can be pointed out that first, the image of the team had been changed because the famous manager and several players were retired (factors related to the members), second, the team record of the international matches became poor after the Munich Olympics (factors related to the team record), third, accepting volleyball by the mass communications had been reduced in quantity (factors related to the mass communications) and last, the variety of their interest in things had been evoked with their psychological development (psychological factor). It is a matter of course that the three factors except the last are connected each other.

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