

## **Antecedents and outcomes of sponsorship in the context of Esports**

POLYAKOVA, Olga <<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6947-2394>> and  
ALEXANDRIS, Kostas

Available from Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (SHURA) at:

<https://shura.shu.ac.uk/32254/>

---

This document is the Accepted Version [AM]

### **Citation:**

POLYAKOVA, Olga and ALEXANDRIS, Kostas (2023). Antecedents and outcomes of sponsorship in the context of Esports. In: LENG, Ho Keat and ZHANG, James, (eds.) Sports Sponsorship and Branding: Global Perspectives and Emerging Trends. World Association for Sports Management Series . London, Routledge, 56-74. [Book Section]

---

### **Copyright and re-use policy**

See <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/information.html>

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Antecedents and Outcomes of Sponsorship in the Context of Esports**

Olga Polyakova  
Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

Kostas Alexandris  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

#### **Abstract**

This chapter is based on a case study which explores characteristics of esports consumption, the profile of esports viewers and the factors that determine sponsorship effectiveness in esports. It comprises of three sections. The first section explores boundaries of esports sector and types of esports consumers, while establishing a link to the concept of leisure involvement. The second section considers approaches to evaluation of sponsorship effectiveness and outlines main sponsorship outcomes. In the third and last section descriptive results of the case study are presented, followed by discussion. Our findings suggest that opportunities in up-and-coming segments are very promising for brand sponsorships and advertising. The growing segment of females open up new doors for sponsors who are willing to make holistic business decisions and focus on improving sustainability of the esports industry.

**Keywords:** sport sponsorship, esports consumer, esports segments

## **Introduction**

Evidence suggests that the esports industry has developed rapidly in recent years and transformed from niche sector into the mainstream (Insider, 2021). Between 2019 and 2021 the global esports audience grew from 398 million to 474 million, with an even split between esports enthusiasts and occasional viewers (Newzoo, 2021). Apart from growing markets of people who watch professional esports content more than once a month (i.e. of esports enthusiasts) and those who watch esports less than once a month (i.e. occasional viewers), the games live-streaming audience is on the rise and will reach 729 million in 2021, with projections of 920 million by 2024. With the growing revenue streams from main three esports markets, i.e. Asia-Pacific (APAC), North America, and Europe, the most of the revenue (69%) comes from sponsorships and advertising (Newzoo, 2019). By the end of 2021 sports sponsorship alone is expected to generate \$641.0 million which accounts for 59% of the entire market (Newzoo, 2021).

Many brands have identified esports environment as a new field, where they can explore new possibilities to engage with their targeted groups through unique activations and branding (Ke & Wagner, 2020), as well as build on different aspects to raise their brand equity and have an effective return on their investment (Finch et al., 2020). However, an opportunity of sponsorship success comes with such challenges as volatility of fast-paced esports industry and pressure on sponsors to convey a genuine interest in the esports world (McKinsey & Company, 2020). Sponsorship decisions should be made with even more care since research provides evidence that esports fans tend to rather exhibit love to the esports industry than concern for themselves; they would like sponsors to improve the overall esports industry and its sustainability, rather than simply try improve fans' experience through creating relevant content (Freitas, Contreras-Espinosa & Correia, 2020). This means that in order to create a better environment for the fans to enjoy esports, sponsors need to be seen as

helping to the pro-players and tournaments and focusing on supporting the general esports industry.

Over the years, sport sponsorship became a powerful marketing medium for generating value to both the sponsor and the property being sponsored (Cheong, Pyun & Leng, 2019). The benefits for sponsor may include such outcomes as sponsorship awareness, positive customers' attitudes towards sponsors, perceived congruence between sponsors and sponsored property as well intentions to buy products from the sponsoring company (O'Reilly & Madill, 2009). For example, a brand's association with a successful team or a player helps the brand differentiate from other competitors in consumer's mind (Ke & Wagner, 2020), while brand recall facilitates consumer loyalty (Samsita & Suki, 2014). Yet, evaluation of sponsorship effectiveness has historically been underutilized by businesses. In 2004, it was reported that 40% of 200 companies with major sponsorship investments spent nothing to evaluate their investment and only 35% of the companies spent 1% or less of their budget for sponsorship evaluation (Crompton, 2004). Fast-forward to 2017, IEG (2017) report, based on 208 companies, indicated that 31% of businesses spent nothing to evaluate their sponsorship contracts and additional 47% of the companies invested 1% or less. The reported numbers demonstrate a shift towards an increase in the amount of money spent on research; however, in the span of 13 years this increase proves to be insignificant.

Despite continuous growth of esports sponsorship, there is a lack of empirical evidence on the state and trends of sponsorship in the esports industry (Finch et al., 2020). Previous literature (Cunningham et al., 2018; Hallmann & Giel, 2018) identified the need to develop models for explaining and predicting esports consumer behaviours as well as pointing out at limited knowledge generated in relation to esports consumers (Jang & Byon, 2019). There is still a significant gap in empirical research which explores consumers' experiences with esports and leads to establishing distinct segments (Jang et al., 2021).

Previously, researchers focused on exploring factors of esports consumption related to gameplay consumption (Jang & Byon, 2020), esports event spectating motivation (Pizzo et al., 2018) and game experiences (Jang et al., 2021), while other studies (Seo, 2016; Taylor, 2012) examined relationship between esports and serious leisure. Studies on leisure consumers suggested that highly involved consumers are also more likely to be aware of sponsoring companies (Lardinois & Derbaix, 2001; Lascu et al., 1995), develop a positive image of those sponsors (Javalgi et al., 1994; Turco, 1995) and report an intention to purchase sponsors' products (Ko et al., 2008). Moreover, businesses whose products or services are not associated with an esports market (i.e. non-endemic sponsors) may benefit from sponsoring esports events through increased goodwill and purchase intentions (Huettermann et al., 2020). Yet, no studies have yet categorised esports consumers according to their involvement with esports, neither investigated the relationship between esports consumer involvement and outcomes for companies sponsoring esports. The present study addresses an existing gap in literature on esports consumers and contributes to the limited literature on segmentation of esports consumers and their recall of esports sponsors.

As defined by the International Esports Federation, esports (or electronic sports) is a competitive sport where gamers use their physical and mental abilities to compete in various games in a virtual, electronic environment (IESF, 2021). Another definition comes from Newzoo (2021), the world's leader in games market insights and analytics: *“professional or semi-professional competitive gaming in an organized format (tournament or league) with a specific goal/prize, such as winning a championship title or prize money.”* (p. 8) There has been an ongoing debate as to whether esports can be considered as sports. According to Rodgers' (1977) established definition, sport, as a minimum, should always involve physical activity and be practiced for recreational purposes and, ideally, involve an element of

competition and have a framework of institutional organisation. The European Sport Charter (Council of Europe, 2001) defines sport as *“all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels”*. As with other activities such as chess and darts, the physical activity element creates contrasting opinions. Unlike traditional sports, esports take place in virtual worlds, can be accessed quickly and have a shorter game length (Jang & Byon, 2020). Also, traditional sports tend focus on development and performance of complex motor skills, whereas gamers rely more on cognitive skills (Himmelstein, Liu & Shapiro, 2017).

This study does not intend to follow the footsteps of contentious debate neither focuses on reviewing pros and cons as to whether esports can indeed be considered as sport; the latter is beyond the scope of the study. Yet, it is important to mention that due to differing definitions of esports, the esports market boundaries stay fluid and can extend to amateur competitions and live streaming around non-organized competitive gaming. This happens because esports and live-streaming formats do overlap, for example, when popular streamers who usually broadcast themselves playing online start competing in pro-level esports more often and some tournaments are allowing their competitors to live stream themselves competing.

## **Review of Literature**

As with any market, the market of esports consumers is not homogeneous and is becoming ever more fragmented: it now involves not only those who play esports, but also those who watch esports and game video content. Due to the fact that the boundaries of esports market are blurred, the process of dividing, or segmenting (Mullin et al., 2007), this market into heterogeneous groups that hold common characteristics becomes crucial for understanding preferences of specific groups. In leisure services, market segmentation is used

to support development of targeted marketing strategies, more relevant service design and ultimately meet consumers' needs better (Liu et al., 2008). In the context of esports, there is still a significant gap in empirical research which explores consumers' experiences with esports in a manner that cultivates distinct segments (Jang et al., 2021). To date, previous studies have focused on exploring factors and moderators of esports consumption, in particular segmentation factors related to gameplay consumption (Jang & Byon, 2020), esports event spectating motivation (Pizzo et al., 2018) and game experiences (Jang et al., 2021).

Newzoo's Gamer Segmentation (Newzoo, 2019) offered a way of segmenting esports consumers on the basis of their engagement with games, i.e., playing, viewing, and owning. The segmentation is presented in the form of nine unique personas that encompass all aspects of consumer engagement with games; they are: the Ultimate Gamer; the All-Round Enthusiast; the Conventional Player; the Subscriber; the Lapsed Gamer; the Back Seat Viewer; the Popcorn Gamer; the Hardware Enthusiast; and the Time Filler. The segmentation demonstrates that two biggest segments are the Subscribers (21%) who enjoy playing high-quality free or discounted games without buying hardware unnecessarily, and the Time Fillers (23%) who game when they have spare time, preferably on mobile devices. In addition, insights from another report from Newzoo (2019) revealed that over a third of all female game enthusiasts fall within Time Fillers and almost two-thirds of all Time Fillers are women.

### ***Esports and Leisure Involvement***

With different types of esports consumers, comes different type of involvement with esports. Seo (2016) suggested that involvement in esports presents a form of serious leisure, defined by Stebbins (1992) as "the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity that participants find so substantial and interesting, in the typical case, they launch

themselves on a career centred on acquiring and expressing its special skills, knowledge and experience” (p. 3). Taking into account the Popcorn Gamers, esports can be seen as a combination of active serious leisure and casual passive entertainment (Seo & Jung, 2016). A move from participating in gaming as a casual activity to a serious occupational pursuit represents a transition from serious leisure into a profession. Yet, regardless of the level, esports present a competitive activity (which resembles professional sports) surrounded by cultural norms in the esports community and it requires dedication in order to progress in gaming. There were previous studies (Seo, 2016; Taylor, 2012) which examined relationship between esports and serious leisure, with primary focus on setting of competitive players; however, more recently there has been a call to pursue more research in this direction (McCauley et al., 2020).

As a psychographic variable for segmentation, involvement has been successfully used in segmenting recreational tennis players (Alexandris, 2013), dancers (Alexandris et al., 2012), runners (Kyle, Kerstetter, & Guadagnolo, 2002) and adults in fitness market (Havitz et al., 1994). The involvement construct was used as a segmentation criterion by most of these studies, yet they did not utilize more psychographic variables for further profiling the involvement groups. The study on tennis players (Alexandris, 2013) extended this approach and profiled the involvement groups with both demographic and psychographic variables. The results indicated that while psychographic segmentation, with the use of the variables of involvement, constraints and motivation, is useful in segmenting recreational tennis players, the demographic variables were not found to be a useful approach in that context.

Leisure involvement represents how an individual and the external stimulus are related (Kyle et al., 2007) and it represents the extent to which an individual is involved in leisure and recreational activities. Involvement subsequently enhances individuals’ sensitivity to certain activities and their perceptions of a particular activity’s importance as well as the

individuals' commitments to specific services or places (McIntyre & Pigram, 1992). The first two models developed for measuring involvement were the personal involvement inventory (PII) (Zaichkowsky, 1985) and the consumer involvement profile (CIP) (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985). Subsequently, the one-dimensional PII model was improved through introduction of the dimensions of importance and pleasure (McQuarrie & Munson, 1987), and later - dimensions of cognitive and affective involvement (Zaichkowsky, 1994). Both PII and CIP models were used for the development of adapted involvement models in leisure context.

The key model for measuring involvement was developed by McIntyre and Pigram (1992) and subsequently used in many other leisure and recreation studies. The model seemed to have accommodated a consensus on number and nature of dimensions for measuring the involvement; involvement was presented as a function of attraction, self-expression and centrality to one's lifestyle. Attraction refers to the concepts of importance and pleasure, implying activities that are important to an individual. Self-expression refers to personal impressions that individuals convey to others through their participation in leisure activities. Finally, centrality to life relates leisure participation to an individual overall lifestyle by judging the extent to which an individual's life is organised around that activity.

### ***Evaluation of Sponsorship Effectiveness***

Previous literature (e.g. Jensen & White, 2018) argued that evaluation of sponsorship programme often faces challenges when attempting to isolate a sponsorship program and test its unique influence on sponsorship related sales. This is due to the fact that sales are also influenced by other marketing and communication activities as well as macro environmental factors. Therefore, communication data and consumer surveys present more accurate tool when evaluating the development of positive outcomes for the sponsor. Customer surveys form the basis for attitude research which is often used to understand the sport sponsorship process (Funk, Alexandris & McDonald, 2022, in press). Some of the most common

sponsorship outcomes include attitudinal variables, e.g., attitude toward sponsors and consumer interest, and behavioural constructs, e.g., sponsorship awareness (or recall) (Maanda, Abratt & Mingione, 2020), consumer purchase intentions and word-of-mouth communications (Alexandris, Tsaousi & James, 2007).

Certain attitudinal variables can positively influence the success of a sport sponsorship and act as antecedents of positive sponsorship outcomes; they include: involvement, perceived fit (or congruence) between sponsor and sponsored entity, attitudes toward sport sponsorship, fans' attachment level with the team (or team identification) (Funk et al., 2022, in press). Furthermore, Crompton (1996, 2004) proposed an integration of the communication and product adoption processes which integrated consumer decision-making with the sponsorship outcomes. It was proposed that four stage of product adoption - awareness, interest, desire, and purchase actions - are linked with four sponsorship benefit categories respectively: awareness, image enhancement, product trial or sales opportunities, and hospitality opportunities. In line with the previous literature, an overview of main sponsorship outcomes is presented, namely: involvement, sponsorship awareness, attitude toward sponsors (image), perceived fit between sponsor and sponsored entity, purchase intentions and word-of-mouth communications.

### ***Sponsorship Outcomes***

***Involvement.*** Previous research established that involvement is associated with positive behavioural and attitudinal consequences, such as commitment, attachment, increased participation levels and loyalty (Alexandris, 2012; Beaton et al., 2011; Iwasaki & Havitz, 2004; Kyle, Graefe, Manning, & Bacon, 2004). Studies on leisure consumers (including fans or spectators) suggested that highly involved consumers are also more likely to be aware of sponsoring companies (Lardinoit & Debix, 2001; Lascu et al., 1995), to develop a positive image of those sponsors (Javalgi et al., 1994; Turco, 1995) and to report an

intention to purchase sponsors' products (Ko et al., 2008). The study by Dees et al (2008) which measured the effectiveness of sponsorship of an elite intercollegiate football program found that fan involvement (similar to attitude) was correlated with attitude toward the sponsor. This was supported by Huettermann et al (2020) who found that esports brand attitude significantly predicted attitude toward the sponsor.

The results of Huettermann et al.'s (2020) study were relevant to businesses whose products and/or services are not associated with an esports market (i.e. non-endemic sponsors); they suggested that these such businesses sponsoring esports events can achieve increased goodwill and purchase intentions. Mao and Zhang's (2013) research into branding effectiveness of event sponsors at Beijing Olympic Games found that consumer's attitude toward the sponsored event was partially determined by consumer's involvement. Finally, Singh and Singh's (2018) study of The Indian Premier League showed that sponsor's brand image was positively impacted by event involvement and that high involvement of the attendees with an event positively influenced their purchase intentions.

***Sponsorship Awareness.*** Sponsorship awareness is defined as "*the percentage of sport consumers who are able to recall (unaided) or recognize (aided) the sponsor of a sport club, event, or athlete*" (Funk et al., 2022, in press). Despite being a behavioural variable, sponsorship awareness linked with positive attitudinal sponsorship outcomes (Eddy & Cork, 2019; Maanda, Abratt & Mingione, 2020). Studies on leisure consumers suggested that highly involved consumers are more likely to be aware of sponsoring companies (Lardinoit and Derbaix, 2001; Lascau et al., 1995). There is also evidence from relatively recent studies (Mazodier & Quester, 2014; Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006) that, as a part of effective sponsorship, positive brand awareness and image can be consequences of perceived fit between sponsor and sponsored entity (Pappu and Cornwell, 2014). According to McKinsey & Company (2020), over the past ten years recall of nonendemic brand sponsors in esports

has increased and was recently 53 percent which is higher than for endemic brands (43 percent). This echoes Nielsen's (2018) research into Twitch esports fans that revealed that 90 per cent could recall at least one non-gaming related sponsor within esports.

***Attitude toward Sponsors (Image) and Purchase Intentions.*** Keller (1993) defined attitude toward the sponsor as a consumer's overall evaluation of a sponsor. There is evidence that strong positive attitudes toward sponsorship can positively impact on attitudes toward the actual sponsors (Lee, Sandler & Shani, 1997). Esports brand attitude was also found to predict attitude toward the sponsor, yet the amount of variance explained in sponsor attitude was not meaningful (Huettermann et al., 2020). Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) established that consumer attitudes directly influence their behavioural intentions and, subsequently, their purchasing behaviour. This means that while consumer purchase intentions (i.e., behavioural intentions) do not always predict actual buying behaviour, they still serve as a strong indicator of this behaviour. In the area of sport consumer behaviour research, intentions to buy sponsors' products have been the most common attitudinal variable used in leisure and sport sponsorship studies (Alexandris, Tsaousi & James, 2007; Gwinner & Swanson, 2003; Madrigal, 2001).

***Perceived Fit Between Sponsor and Sponsored Entity.*** There is a plethora of definitions of sponsorship fit, yet most of them are centred around 'congruence' as a central concept which can mean 'relevance' (Johar & Pham, 1999), 'similarity' (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999) or 'compatibility' (Ruth & Simonin, 2003). Becker-Olsen and Hill (Becker-Olsen & Hill, 2006) defined sponsorship fit as the perceived match between a sponsor's and a sponsored organization's target groups, mission, organizational values, corporate goals, and strategic focus. Positive association of a brand and the sponsored entity plus consistency in the characteristics of either party form the sponsorship fit - the degree to which a sponsor is perceived by consumers to be congruent with the sponsorship (Roy & Cornwell, 2003).

Congruence effects in marketing can be explained by several theories, for example balance theory (Heider, 1958), congruity theory (Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955) and schema theory (Alba & Hasher, 1983). The study by Maanda et al. (2020) examined the influence of sport sponsorship on brand equity in South Africa and found that sponsorship fit has a positive impact on brand recall. This finding aligns with a notion that “*the brand associations [are] held in consumers’ memory*” (Keller, 1993, p.3) and, therefore, high perceived fit makes the memory more accessible.

Tsordia, Papadimitrioua and Parganas (2017) investigated influence of sport sponsorship on brand equity and purchase behaviour in the case of the Greek basketball team (sponsee) and Microsoft’s videogame console X-Box (sponsor). The results confirmed that perceived fit plays an important role in the development of positive sponsorship outcomes, such as brand engagement, brand loyalty and purchase behaviour. Yet, in the context of sport events, perceived fit can have indirect effects, through sport involvement, on three antecedent variables: credibility, attitudes towards the sponsor and purchase intentions (Koo & Lee, 2019). In esports context, previous studies suggest that esports consumers seek validation for esports as a socially acceptable activity (Schiano et al., 2014); thus, non-endemic sponsorships may be perceived as a signal of mainstream social acceptance (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009), growth and endorsement for the industry (Huettermann et al., 2020), which may have implications for perceived fit. Burton (2017), however, notes that sponsorships must logically connect the brand’s products with the esports culture, and as long as they make the brand an integral component of the scene, they will find acceptance of esports.

Empirical literature on esports sponsorship is very scarce and mentions of perceived fit are predominantly limited to conference papers and degree dissertations. Nevertheless, there are first indications that sponsor-event fit has the strongest impact on attitude toward the

sponsor in esports (Forster, 2019). It has also been mentioned that ubiquity of the sponsors and perceived benefits for the esports scene can have positive influence fans perception of the sponsorship fit (Baldvinsson & Isopahkala, 2019). Finally, an EASM conference paper (Kim et al., nd.) suggested that there is an interaction between esports news consumption and perceived sponsor-team fit, i.e. the higher perceived fit between the sponsor and the esports team, the greater the influence of esports news consumption on brand image and loyalty.

### ***Models of Sponsorship Evaluation***

Several attitudinal and behavioural variables have been used by researchers to develop theoretical models and presented in the models as positive sponsorship outcomes (consequences) and antecedents of sport sponsorship. For their pioneering model, Lee et al. (1997) conducted a study in the context of three sport mega-events and proposed that spectators' attitudes toward the event and toward sponsorship are antecedents of sponsorship outcomes (consumer behavioural intentions). The assumption of the model was that individual's attitude towards an event is stable because the attitude is based on expected benefits from the event (e.g. fun and enjoyment). Another study conducted by Speed and Thompson (2000) in an event setting assessed college students' attitudes towards potential sponsorship; it proposed two event related factors ('personal liking of the event' and 'event status'), one sponsorship factor ('sponsor-event fit'), and three sponsor factors ('attitude toward sponsor', 'sincerity of sponsor' and 'ubiquity of sponsor') as antecedents of such sponsorship outcomes, as 'interest toward sponsorship', 'favourability', and 'use of the sponsor's products'. 'Attitude toward the event' (labelled 'personal liking of the event' in Speed and Thompson's model) was found to be significantly related with respondents' willingness to consider the sponsor's products, which was in line with Lee et al.'s findings. Also, 'sincerity of sponsors' and the 'attitudes toward sponsors' were found to be the key variables in predicting sponsorship outcomes.

Two other notable studies by Madrigal (2001) and Gwinner and Swanson (2003) empirically tested the influence of attitudinal constructs on sponsorship outcomes in the context of collegiate sports. Madrigal's (2001) findings confirmed suitability of their proposed model which included variables of team identification, beliefs about the benefits of sponsorship, the perceived importance of these beliefs, attitudes towards buying products from a sponsor and purchase intentions; in particular, they revealed the important role of team identification as antecedent of favourable sponsorship reactions. The latter was supported by Gwinner and Swanson (2003) who concluded that team identification had a positive direct effect on such sponsorship outcomes as sponsor recognition, attitude toward sponsor, sponsor patronage and satisfaction with sponsor.

One of the variables found by Gwinner and Swanson (2003) to predict team identification was 'domain involvement'. The 'domain involvement' had been previously reported by Lascau et al. (1995) in their study on golfers: it was found that individuals highly committed to golf were more likely to remember the sponsors of the event than individuals with low commitment to golf. Similar to the 'domain involvement' construct was used by Alexandris, Tsaousi, and James (2007) in the setting of a basketball all-star game in Greece. The study tested the relationships between attitudinal variables ('attitude toward the event', 'activity involvement', and 'beliefs about sponsorship') and consumers' behavioural intentions; it proposed the construct of 'activity involvement' as an antecedent of sponsorship outcomes. Alexandris, Tsaousi, and James (2007) used multi-dimensional involvement construct which was originally proposed by McIntyre and Pigram (1992) and later found in the studies by Iwasaki and Havitz (2004) and Kyle et al. (2004) It was one of the first studies which tested the construct of activity involvement as opposed to widely researched sponsorship antecedents such as fan involvement and team identification (Madrigal, 2001; Meenaghan, 2001).

## **Case study: Consumers of esports**

The case study is based on the results of the research on adult esports consumers who watched esports. Its objectives were to: (a) create a demographic and behavioural profile of esports viewers and (b) explore the recall rate of sponsors among esports viewers. Quantitative data was collected via online survey from adults (over 18 years of age), via SIRC Survey platform - an online survey tool for the Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University. SIRC Survey platform is dedicated to professional data collection in sport and physical activity for the research purposes. Convenience sampling was utilised to recruit participants to the study using research platform Prolific ([www.prolific.co](http://www.prolific.co)). Initial population selection was done through Prolific filters qualifying individuals who watched esports tournaments. Overall, the initial screening identified 42,815 eligible participants, and the questionnaire was sent to 381. Out of 381 responses, 311 were usable and were included in the final sample; 58 responses were returned incomplete, and 5 responses were excluded from analysis due to being ineligible, with additional 7 participants withdrawing their consent to participate in the study.

### ***Sociodemographic Profile***

The respondents were esports consumers of 18 years old or over who watched esports. The total sample of 311 respondents comprised of 163 males (52%) and 136 were females (44%). Table 1 shows the breakdown of female and male respondents across locations. The largest group of responses came from North and Central America (N=163) followed by Europe (N=118). The largest proportion of female respondents came from North and Central America (N=91). The youngest group of respondents (i.e. 18-22 years old) comprised a largest proportion of females across all age groups (N=71); this was followed by 23-30 years old (N=70) and 18-22 years old (N=67) males (Figure 1).

**<Insert Table 1 and Figure 1 about here>**

Approximately, 47% of the respondents (N=144) spent less than 1 hour a day watching esports. In terms of recall of sponsors, 35% of all respondents (N=108) were able to remember a sponsor of an esports tournament that they watched in the past 12 months. This means that one out of three respondents remembered the sponsor. The most experienced group had the largest proportion of respondents (43%) who could remember sponsors of tournaments, followed by the group who has been watching esports for 1-3 years (33%).

**<Insert Tables 2-5 here>**

### **Discussion**

Most of the respondents (86 per cent, N=268) in the study were aged between 18 and 30 years old. This is in line with Sutton's (2016) suggestion that esports are particularly appealing to younger consumers. The sample in the study was balanced in terms of binary gender representation with 52 per cent males and 44 per cent of females. The youngest group - 18-22 years old respondents - comprised the largest proportion of females across all age groups which accounted to 23 per cent of overall sample.

The study discovered that 35 per cent of all respondents remembered a sponsor of a tournament that they watched in the past 12 months; it means that only one out of three respondents remembered the sponsor. In comparison, previous studies reported between 60 per cent of respondents (Lee & Bang, 2005) and 85 per cent of respondents (Biscaia et al., 2014; Moore, Pickett & Grove, 1999; Turley & Shannon, 2000) who correctly could identify at least one brand. It should be noted that previous studies on sponsorship recall were predominantly focused on sports fans or spectators in the events, whereas the context of current study included esports players. The group with more than 5 years of experience had the largest proportion of respondents (43 per cent) who could remember sponsors of esports tournaments. While this supports the notion from previous literature that the frequency and duration of exposure have an effect on the recall rate of sponsors among spectators (Breuer &

Rumpf, 2011; Cornwell & Humphreys, 2013), it can also be an early indication that sponsorship recall rate may vary in different modes of esports consumption. It is also worth mentioning that only 33% of females could remember a sponsor as opposed to 65% of males.

As a global phenomenon, esports and its viewership continue growing year after year (Hiltscher & Scholz, 2017). Newzoo (2021) reports there were 200.8 million occasional viewers and 197 million eSports enthusiasts, making the total audience 397.8 million. The year-over-year growth continued in 2020, with a combined esports audience of 435.9 million. By 2024, Newzoo (2021) predicts that the total audience will be 577.2 million. Increased viewership drives opportunities for brand sponsorships and advertising creating cash flow for gamers, streamers and team owners. The fact that generation of revenue from media rights in esports sector is still in its infancy, places a particular importance on sponsorship. With its high economic significance (Ströh, 2017) and large international reach (BI Intelligence & Elder, 2017), esports can provide enormous benefits to its sponsors, such as brand visibility and awareness. On the other hand, player wages are rising, and ambitions of the esports are expanding, therefore the future commercial success of esports heavily depends on the attraction of new sponsors and sponsorship sectors.

In our case study, most of the respondents were aged between 18 and 30 years old (86 per cent). The sample in the study was balanced in terms of binary gender representation with 52 per cent males and 44 per cent of females. The youngest group - 18-22 years old respondents - comprised the largest proportion of females across all age groups which accounted to 23 per cent of overall sample. In our sample only one out of three females remembered the sponsor (as opposed to two out of three males). This indicates a lack of appropriate target marketing; a marketing gap into which forward-thinking brands have a great potential to tap into, through sponsoring female esports teams and promoting inclusivity for women.

## References

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211.
- Alba, J. W., & Hasher, L. (1983). Is memory schematic? *Psychological Bulletin*, 93(2), 203.
- Alexandris, K. (2012). Exploring the role of motivation on the development of sport involvement. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 12(1-2), 57-72.
- Alexandris, K. (2013). Segmenting recreational tennis players according to their involvement level: A psychographic profile based on constraints and motivation. *Managing Leisure*, 18(3), 179-193.
- Alexandris, K., Balaska, P., & Douka, S. (2012). *Involvement with active leisure participation* (No. RefW-40-7777). Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.
- Alexandris, K., Tsaousi, E., & James, J. (2007). Predicting sponsorship outcomes from attitudinal constructs: The case of a professional basketball event. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 16(3).
- Baldvinsson, Á. A., & Isopahkala, J. (2019). Examining the Fans' Perception of Sponsorship Fit in eSports [Masters dissertation, Lund University]. Lund University Libraries.  
<https://lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/search/publication/8989231>
- Beaton, A. A., Funk, D. C., Ridinger, L., & Jordan, J. (2011). Sport involvement: A conceptual and empirical analysis. *Sport management review*, 14(2), 126-140.
- Becker-Olsen, K. L., & Hill, R. P. (2006). The impact of sponsor fit on brand equity: The case of nonprofit service providers. *Journal of service research*, 9(1), 73-83.
- BI Intelligence, & Elder, R. (2017, March 15). The ESports Competitive Video Gaming Market Continues to Grow Revenues & Attract Investors. Business Insider.  
<http://www.businessinsider.com/esports-market-growthready-for-mainstream-2017-3>.

- Biscaia, R., Correia, A., Ross, S., & Rosado, A. (2014). Sponsorship effectiveness in professional sport: an examination of recall and recognition among football fans. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 16(1), 2-18.
- Breuer, C., & Rumpf, C. (2011). Memorization of sport sponsorship activities: the case of the German Bundesliga. *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal*, 1(3), 284-293.
- Burton, R. (2017). Using eSports Efficiently to Enhance and Extend Brand Perceptions. 15th Annual Sport Marketing Association Conference, Boston, MA
- Cheong, C., Pyun, D. Y., & Leng, H. K. (2019). Sponsorship and advertising in sport: a study of consumers' attitude. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 19(3), 287-311.
- Cornwell, T. B., & Humphreys, M. S. (2013). Memory for sponsorship relationships: A critical juncture in thinking. *Psychology & Marketing*, 30(5), 394-407.
- Council of Europe. (2001). Recommendation No. R (92) 13 REV of the committee of ministers to member states on the revised European sports charter.  
[https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016804c9dbb](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016804c9dbb)
- Crompton, J. L. (1996). The potential contributions of sports sponsorship in impacting the product adoption process. *Managing Leisure*, 1(4), 199-212.
- Crompton, J. L. (2004). Conceptualization and alternate operationalization of the measurement of sponsorship effectiveness in sport. *Leisure studies*, 23(3), 267-281.
- Cunningham, G. B., Fairley, S., Ferkins, L., Kerwin, S., Lock, D., Shaw, S., & Wicker, P. (2018). eSport: Construct specifications and implications for sport management. *Sport Management Review*, 21(1), 1-6.
- Dees, W., Bennett, G., & Villegas, J. (2008). Measuring the effectiveness of sponsorship of an elite intercollegiate football program. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 17(2), 79.

- Eddy, T., & Cork, B. C. (2019). Sponsorship antecedents and outcomes in participant sport settings. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 20(1), 26-42.
- Finch, D. J., Abeza, G., O'Reilly, N. O. R. M., & Mikkelsen, A. (2020). Esport sponsorship: Practitioners' perspectives on emerging trends. *Journal of Brand Strategy*, 9(1), 59-74.
- Forster, F. V. (2019). Analyzing domain-specific success factors in eSports sponsorship: The role of personal involvement and sponsor fit [Unpublished masters dissertation]. Deutsche Sporthochschule Köln.
- Freitas, B. D. A., Contreras-Espinosa, R. S., & Correia, P. Álvaro P. (2020). How Sponsors Should Bring Relevant-Added Value to Esports. *Scientific Annals of Economics and Business*, 67(3), 363–387.
- Funk, D., Alexandris, K., & McDonald, H. (2022, in press). *Sport consumer behavior: marketing strategies* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: Routledge.
- Gwinner, K. P., & Eaton, J. (1999). Building brand image through event sponsorship: The role of image transfer. *Journal of Advertising*, 28(4), 47-57.
- Gwinner, K., & Swanson, S. R. (2003). A model of fan identification: Antecedents and sponsorship outcomes. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 17(3), 275-294.
- Hallmann, K., & Giel, T. (2018). eSports—Competitive sports or recreational activity? *Sport Management Review*, 21(1), 14-20.
- Havitz, M. E., Dimanche, F., & Bogle, T. (1994). Segmenting the adult fitness market using involvement profiles. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 12(3), 38-56.
- Heider, F. (1958). *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*. New York: Wiley.
- Hiltscher, J., & Scholz, T. M. (2017). Preface. In J. Hiltscher & T. M. Scholz (Eds.), *eSports Yearbook 2015/16* (pp. 7-8). Norderstedt: Books on Demand GmbH.

- Himmelstein, D., Liu, Y., & Shapiro, J. L. (2017). An exploration of mental skills among competitive league of legend players. *International journal of gaming and computer-mediated simulations*, 9(2), 1-21.
- Huettermann, M., Trail, G. T., Pizzo, A. D., & Stallone, V. (2020). Esports sponsorship: an empirical examination of esports consumers' perceptions of non-endemic sponsors. *Journal of Global Sport Management*, 1-26.
- IEG. (2017). 'What sponsors want and where dollars will go in 2018'.  
<http://www.sponsorship.com/IEG/files/f3/f3cfac41-2983-49be-8df6-3546345e27de.pdf>
- Insider. (2021). 'Esports Ecosystem Report. <https://www.businessinsider.com/esports-ecosystem-market-report?r=US&IR=T>
- International Esports Federation. (n.d.). Esports – true sports? Retrieved June 14, 2022, from <https://iesf.org/esports>
- Iwasaki, Y., & Havitz, M. E. (2004). Examining relationships between leisure involvement, psychological commitment and loyalty to a recreation agency. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 36(1), 45-72.
- Jang, W. W., & Byon, K. K. (2020). Antecedents and consequence associated with esports gameplay. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 21(1), 1-22.
- Jang, W. W., Byon, K. K., Pecoraro, J., & Tsuji, Y. (2021). Clustering Esports Gameplay Consumers via Game Experiences. *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*, 3, 133.
- Javalgi, R. G., Traylor, M. B., Gross, A. C., & Lampman, E. (1994). Awareness of sponsorship and corporate image: An empirical investigation. *Journal of Advertising*, 23(4), 47-58.

- Jensen, J. A., & White, D. W. (2018). Trends in sport sponsorship evaluation and measurement: insights from the industry. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 19(1), 2-10.
- Johar, G. V., & Pham, M. T. (1999). Relatedness, prominence, and constructive sponsor identification. *Journal of marketing research*, 36(3), 299-312.
- Ke, X., & Wagner, C. (2020). Global pandemic compels sport to move to esports: understanding from brand extension perspective. *Managing Sport and Leisure*, 1-6.
- Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), 1-22.
- Kim, K., Cheong, Y., Noh, Y., Ryu, Y. & Kim, J. (n.d.). Sponsorship of eSports Teams: Antecedents and the Moderator of its Influence on Brand Image and Loyalty. European Association for Sport Management Conference.  
<http://www.easm.net/download/Sponsorship-of-eSports-Teams-Antecedents-and-the-Moderator-of-its-Influence-on-Brand-Image-and-Loyalty.pdf>
- Ko, Y. J., Kim, K., Claussen, C. L., & Kim, T. H. (2008). The effects of sport involvement, sponsor awareness and corporate image on intention to purchase sponsors' products. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 9(2), 79-94.
- Koo, J., & Lee, Y. (2019). Sponsor-event congruence effects: The moderating role of sport involvement and mediating role of sponsor attitudes. *Sport Management Review*, 22(2), 222-234.
- Kyle, G., Absher, J., Norman, W., Hammitt, W., & Jodice, L. (2007). A modified involvement scale. *Leisure Studies*, 26(4), 399-427.
- Kyle, G., Graefe, A., Manning, R., & Bacon, J. (2004). Predictors of behavioral loyalty among hikers along the Appalachian Trail. *Leisure Sciences*, 26, 99-118

- Kyle, G. T., Kerstetter, D. L., & Guadagnolo, F. B. (2002). Market segmentation using participant involvement profiles. *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 20(1), 1-21.
- Lardinoit, T., & Derbaix, C. (2001). Sponsorship and recall of sponsors. *Psychology & Marketing*, 18(2), 167-190.
- Lascu, D., Giese, T., Toolan, C., Mercer, J. & Guehring, B. (1995) Sport involvement: a relevant individual difference factor in spectator sports, *Sports Marketing Quarterly* 4(4), 41-46
- Laurent, G., & Kapferer, J. N. (1985). Measuring consumer involvement profiles. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 22(1), 41-53.
- Lee, J. H., & Bang, J. S. (2005). An analysis of brand recall of 2002 FIFA Korea/Japan World Cup on official sponsor corporation. *International Journal of Applied Sports Sciences*, 17(1), 30.
- Lee, M. S., Sandler, D. M., & Shani, D. (1997). Attitudinal constructs towards sponsorship: Scale development using three global sporting events. *International Marketing Review*, 14(3), 159-169.
- Liu, Y. D., Taylor, P., & Shibli, S. (2008). Utilizing importance data to identify customer segments for English public sport facilities. *Managing Leisure*, 13(3-4), 189-206.
- Maanda, P. M., Abratt, R., & Mingione, M. (2020). The influence of sport sponsorship on brand equity in South Africa. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 26(6), 812-835.
- Macey, J., Tyrväinen, V., Pirkkalainen, H., & Hamari, J. (2020). Does esports spectating influence game consumption? *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 1-17.
- Madrigal, R. (2001). Social identity effects in a belief–attitude–intentions hierarchy: Implications for corporate sponsorship. *Psychology & Marketing*, 18(2), 145-165.

- Mao, L. L., & Zhang, J. J. (2013). Impact of consumer involvement, emotions, and attitude toward Beijing Olympic Games on branding effectiveness of event sponsors. *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal*, 3(3), 226-245.
- Mazodier, M., & Quester, P. (2014). The role of sponsorship fit for changing brand affect: A latent growth modeling approach. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 31(1), 16-29.
- McCauley, B., Nguyen, T. H. T., McDonald, M., & Wearing, S. (2020). Digital gaming culture in Vietnam: an exploratory study. *Leisure Studies*, 39(3), 372-386.
- McIntyre, N., & Pigram, J. J. (1992). Recreation specialization reexamined: The case of vehicle-based campers. *Leisure Sciences*, 14(1), 3-15.
- McKinsey & Company. (2020). Esports and the next frontier of brand sponsorships. <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/esports-and-the-next-frontier-of-brand-sponsorships>
- McQuarrie, E. F., & Munson, J. M. (1987). The Zaichkowsky Personal Involvement Inventory: Modification and Extension. In Wallendorf, M. & Anderson P. (Eds.) *Advances of Consumer Research* (pp. 36-40). Association for Consumer Research.
- Meenaghan, T. (2001). Understanding sponsorship effects. *Psychology & marketing*, 18(2), 95-122.
- Moore, J. N., Pickett, G. M., & Grove, S. J. (1999). The impact of a video screen and rotational-signage systems on satisfaction and advertising recognition. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 13(6), 453-468.
- Mullin, B. J., Hardy S., & Sutton, W. A. (2007). *Sport marketing* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Newzoo. (2019). Introducing Newzoo's Gamer Segmentation: The Key to Understanding, Quantifying, and Reaching the New Era of Game Enthusiasts.

<https://newzoo.com/news/introducing-newzoos-gamer-segmentation-the-key-to-understanding-quantifying-and-reaching-game-enthusiasts-across-the-world/>

Newzoo. (2019). Women account for 46% of all game enthusiasts.

<https://newzoo.com/insights/articles/women-account-for-46-of-all-game-enthusiasts-watching-game-video-content-and-esports-has-changed-how-women-and-men-alike-engage-with-games/>

Newzoo. (2021). Global Esports & Live Streaming Market Report.

<https://newzoo.com/products/reports/global-esports-live-streaming-market-report/>

Nielsen. (2018). Nielsen releases unprecedented insights on esports fan attitudes and

behaviors leveraging Twitch data. [https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/press-](https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/press-releases/2018/nielsen-releases-unprecedented-insights-on-esports-fan-attitudes/)

[releases/2018/nielsen-releases-unprecedented-insights-on-esports-fan-attitudes/](https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/press-releases/2018/nielsen-releases-unprecedented-insights-on-esports-fan-attitudes/)

O'Reilly, N., & Madill, J. (2009). Methods and metrics in sponsorship evaluation. *Journal of Sponsorship*, 2(3).

Osgood, C. E., & Tannenbaum, P. H. (1955). The principle of congruity in the prediction of attitude change. *Psychological Review*, 62(1), 42.

Pappu, R., & Cornwell, T. B. (2014). Corporate sponsorship as an image platform: understanding the roles of relationship fit and sponsor–sponsee similarity. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 42(5), 490-510.

Pizzo, A. D., Na, S., Baker, B. J., Lee, M. A., Kim, D., & Funk, D. C. (2018). eSport vs. sport: A comparison of spectator motives. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 27(2), 108-123.

Rodgers, B. (1977). *Rationalising sports policies: Sport in its social context. International comparisons*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Roy, D. P., & Cornwell, T. B. (2003). Brand equity's influence on responses to event sponsorships. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 12(6), 377-393.

- Ruth, J. A., & Simonin, B. L. (2003). “ Brought to you by Brand A and Brand B” Investigating multiple sponsors’ influence on consumers’ attitudes toward sponsored events. *Journal of advertising*, 32(3), 19-30.
- Santos, F. M., & Eisenhardt, K. M. (2009). Constructing markets and shaping boundaries: Entrepreneurial power in nascent fields. *Academy of Management Journal*, 52(4), 643-671.
- Sasmita, J., & Suki, N. M. (2015). Young consumers’ insights on brand equity: Effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand image. *International journal of retail & distribution management*, 43(3), 276-292.
- Schiano, D. J., Nardi, B., Debeauvais, T., Ducheneaut, N., & Yee, N. (2014). The “lonely gamer” revisited. *Entertainment Computing*, 5(1), 65-70.
- Seo, Y. (2016). Professionalized consumption and identity transformations in the field of eSports. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(1), 264-272.
- Seo, Y., & Jung, S. U. (2016). Beyond solitary play in computer games: The social practices of eSports. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 16(3), 635-655.
- Simmons, C. J., & Becker-Olsen, K. L. (2006). Achieving marketing objectives through social sponsorships. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(4), 154-169.
- Singh, J., & Singh, A. (2018). The Impact of Attendees’ Event Involvement on Sponsors’ Brand Image and Behavioral Intentions: A Study of Indian Premier League. *IUP Journal of Marketing Management*, 17(4), 54.
- Speed, R., & Thompson, P. (2000). Determinants of sports sponsorship response. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 28(2), 226-238.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1992). *Amateurs, professionals, and serious leisure*. McGill-Queen’s Press – MQUP.

- Taylor, T. L. (2012). *Raising the Stakes: E-sports and the professionalization of computer gaming*. Cambridge, MA: MIT
- Tsordia, C., Papadimitriou, D., & Parganas, P. (2018). The influence of sport sponsorship on brand equity and purchase behavior. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 26(1), 85-105.
- Turco, D. M. (1995). The effects of sport sponsorship on product recall and corporate image. In Grant, K. & Walker, I. (eds) *World Marketing Congress* 7(3). Melbourne: Academy of Marketing Science.
- Turley, L. W., & Shannon, J. R. (2000). The impact and effectiveness of advertisements in a sports arena. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 14(4), 323-336.
- Zaichkowsky, J. L. (1985). Measuring the involvement construct. *Journal of consumer research*, 12(3), 341-352.
- Zaichkowsky, J. L. (1994). The personal involvement inventory: Reduction, revision, and application to advertising. *Journal of advertising*, 23(4), 59-70.

**Table 1. Gender of respondents (by location)**

| <b>Location</b>               | <b>Gender</b> |               |              |                             | <b>Total</b> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
|                               | <b>Male</b>   | <b>Female</b> | <b>Other</b> | <b>Preferred not to say</b> |              |
| North America/Central America | 63            | 91            | 3            | 6                           | 163          |
| South America                 | 2             | 0             | 0            | 0                           | 2            |
| Europe                        | 80            | 36            | 1            | 1                           | 118          |
| Africa                        | 11            | 2             | 0            | 0                           | 13           |
| Asia                          | 4             | 1             | 0            | 0                           | 5            |
| Australia                     | 2             | 2             | 0            | 0                           | 4            |
| Other                         | 1             | 4             | 1            | 0                           | 6            |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>163</b>    | <b>136</b>    | <b>5</b>     | <b>7</b>                    | <b>311</b>   |

## spent watching esports per day

| Type of consumption | Time spent per day |           |           |           |                      | Total<br>(N) |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------------|--------------|
|                     | Less than 1 hour   | 2-3 hours | 3-4 hours | 4-5 hours | More than 5<br>hours |              |
| I watch esports     | 144 (47%)          | 119 (39%) | 29 (9%)   | 9 (2%)    | 10 (3%)              | 311          |

Table 2: Time

## watching

| Type of consumption          | Experience in esports |           |           |                   | Total respondents (N) |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------|
|                              | Less than a year      | 1-3 years | 4-5 years | More than 5 years |                       |
| Table B. Esports consumption | 37 (12%)              | 123 (40%) | 50 (16%)  | 101 (32%)         | 311                   |

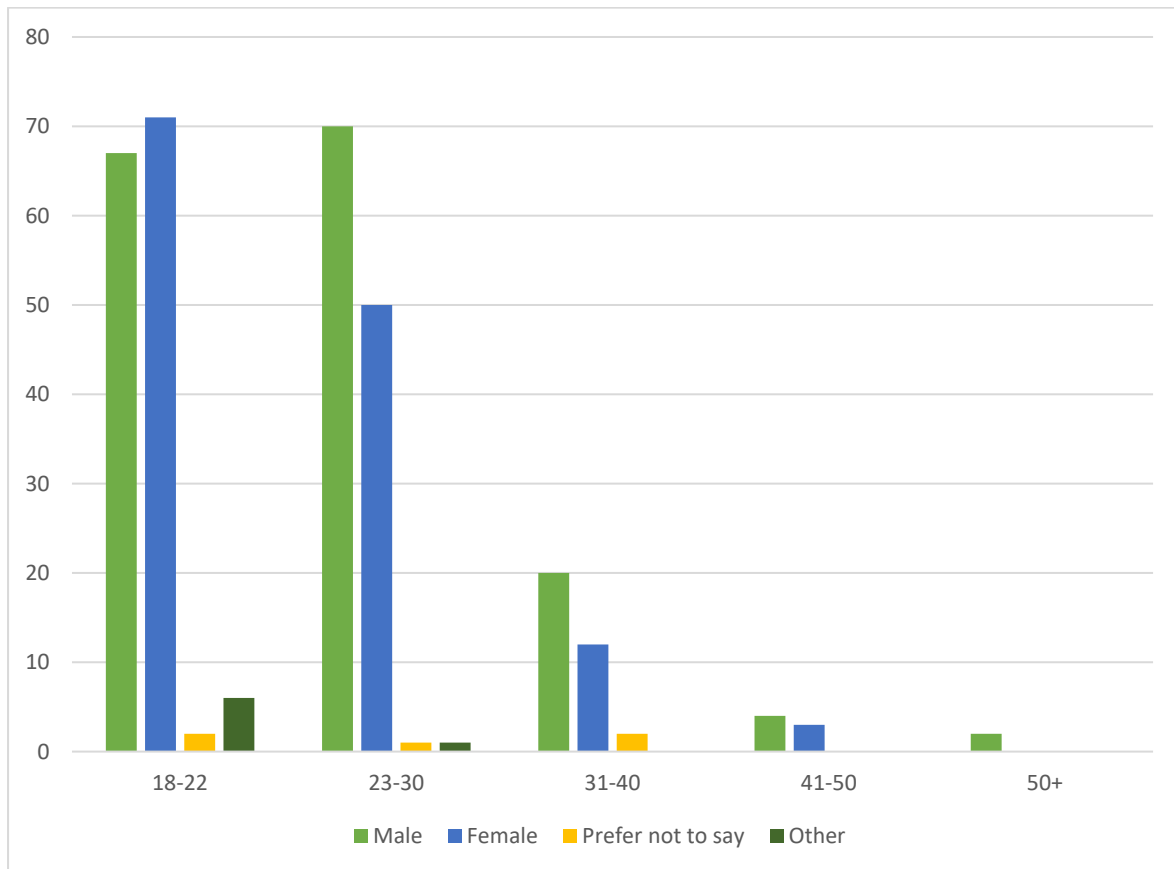
**Table 4: Recall of sponsors and watching**

| Recall       | Experience in esports |            |           |                   | Total (N)  |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|
|              | Less than a year      | 1-3 years  | 4-5 years | More than 5 years |            |
| Yes          | 5 (5%)                | 36 (33%)   | 20 (19%)  | 47 (43%)          | 108 (100%) |
| No           | 32 (16%)              | 87 (43%)   | 30 (15%)  | 54 (26%)          | 203 (100%) |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>37</b>             | <b>123</b> | <b>50</b> | <b>101</b>        | <b>311</b> |

**Table 5: Recall of sponsors amongst males and**

| Recall | Gender   |                      |                   |        | Total<br>(N) |
|--------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|--------|--------------|
|        | Male     | Female               | Prefer not to say | Other  |              |
| Yes    | 70 (65%) | 36 (33%)             | 0                 | 2 (2%) | 108 (100%)   |
| No     | 93 (45%) | 100 (49%)<br>females | 5 (3%)            | 5 (3%) | 203 (100%)   |
| Total  | 163      | 136                  | 5                 | 7      | 311          |

**Figure 1. Gender distribution of respondents (by age groups)**



**Alt text:**

Bar graph describing gender distribution of respondents across five age groups. The X-axis shows the different age groups and gender categories within them, and the Y-axis shows number of respondents ranging from 0 to 80 at an interval of 10. Age group of 18-22 years comprises of 71 females, 67 males, 6 other and 2 preferred not to say. Age group of 23-30 years comprises of 70 males, 50 females, 1 other and 1 preferred not to say. Age group of 31-40 years comprises of 20 males, 12 females, and 2 preferred not to say. Age group of 41-50 years comprises of 4 males and 3 females. Age group of 50+ years comprises of 2 males.