

# Review of: "Soccer fans, stadium attendance, and interpersonal trust in the Mexican population"

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The paper titled "Soccer fans, stadium attendance, and interpersonal trust in the Mexican population" deals with an interesting topic which is- exploring the possible association between sports fandom and social capital, and interpersonal trust has been used as a measure of social capital. It has been an interesting read and the followings are my overall observations after reading this draft.

1. The research questions of this study are relationship between soccer fans and interpersonal trust' and 'what relationship exists between attendance at soccer matches in a stadium and interpersonal trust'. The hypothesis considered here is 'those who usually attend the stadium to watch live soccer matches are more trusting than those who do not usually attend'. The study rightly uses cross-tabulation with a t-test for different group means to check this hypothesis. The problem is, we cannot infer causal relationships from this method, and only significant association can be inferred without any causal inference. This limitation must be clearly mentioned in the 'Conclusion' section. In fact, I think it would be even better if this narrowing down is done in the section formulating research question/objectives, limiting the scope of this study then and there, so that no confusion arises later. Because if it is not done (and given sports fandoms and mention of certain clubs can invoke strong emotions), the results and conclusion sections may unintentionally give out messages like 'attending soccer matches can or cannot improve trust level of society' or 'being fan of X club can make people trusting'.
2. Overall structure of paper: the standard structure of paper having separate mentioned sections for literature review, research objectives, data, methodology, results and discussion, and conclusion, feels familiar and easier to read. However, it is totally upto author's and journal's preferences.
3. Literature section: In P.2, second paragraph, it is not clear why research on role of sport in creation of social capital can be approached through any of the dimensions, or even any of their sub-elements, instead of using this framework as a whole. If trust is to be taken as the central axis, as the following paragraph explains the importance of trust, that does not require the structural-relational-cognitive framework particularly, since trust has been considered by many conceptual frameworks on social capital. Lastly, although Claridge(2018) provides an excellent resource on conceptualization and measurement of social capital, structural-relational-cognitive dimensions of social capital was originally proposed by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998), would be helpful for the readers if this is mentioned.
4. Methodology section:
  - Third paragraph from the 'Instrument' section (P.3-4): It is better to have a clear and detailed description of the

questionnaire- the questions and the scale at which the responses are recorded.

- The sampling method is not at all mentioned in methodology-how the participants were selected for sending out the Google forms, how the sample size was determined, and what criteria was used for selecting the participants. A transparent survey and sampling description is necessary for interpreting the results appropriately, and it is also very helpful for other researchers who may want to conduct similar studies elsewhere to know how the survey has been carried.
- More clarity over measurement of trust is required to understand the result section i.e. how these trust scores are exactly calculated from those eight questions about trust will make the numbers in the result tables comprehensible; for instance, what exactly does a trust level of 3 mean? If I have understood correctly, four questions are measured in 5-point scale, the rest four are at 10-point scale, and the answers are coded numerically and those numbers are averaged to arrive at individual trust scores? This method, and also how the issue of different scales are dealt with, what these scores indicate-need to be clearly described in the methodology part. A brief table for descriptive statistic of these trust scores along with visual representation (graphs) can be a great help in this case.
- Description of the sample: although age distribution table along with percentages of male-female, being fans of Mexican soccer teams, and attending stadium are provided, it would be more helpful to provide the group-wise information tables/graphs, especially the groups according to which the different means were presented later, clearly describing the groups.

#### 5. Result section:

- Since the result interpretations rely mainly upon statistical significance of the differences of group means, it will be better if the significances are marked within the tables themselves.
- Table 5a and 5b can be presented together in one table. Also, the sub-groups, especially 'social' and 'fans', need clarification.
- General formatting of the tables, mention of units and sources (which is 'calculated by author' in this case), adding graphs for better visualization-will be very helpful the readers.

All the best!