
Statement of Research Interests

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My dissertation includes three essays that analyze applied microeconomic topics in markets that involve highly talented employees, as well as analysis of professional and college sports. The first paper evaluates the effect of collective nationalities on salaries for highly talented employees using the rank of that their nationality. This manuscript is currently under review at *Journal of Sports Economics*. In the second paper, I analyze the effect of various definitions of rivalries for Major League Soccer, and how that affects average attendance. The third paper empirically analyzes factors that impact the spread in men’s college basketball using a multilevel modeling approach.

Summary of “Can Ranking Nationalities Explain the Salary Discrepancies in Talent Driven Markets?”

The first study is a unique approach to the value of nationalities on salaries in talent driven markets. Previously, salaries were based on a broad categorization of nationality, though statistical discrimination may lie with the perceived value of a nationality. My approach looks at professional soccer and ranks a player’s nationality based on country rankings by FIFA. Players send signals based on their nationality, regardless of whether they contribute to their country’s ranking. My design divides continents in quarters to measure the value of claiming a “top” nationality.

Summary of “Do Rivalries Even Matter in Major League Soccer?”

The second study focuses on the per-game impact of rivalries in Major League Soccer, which has been in an expansion phase over the past decade. Contrary to expected results, different variations of rivalries do not impact per-game attendance. If the goal of Major League Soccer is to increase league-wide attendance, placing teams in areas to foster rivalries may not be the optimal decision.

Summary of “Home Court Advantage in Men’s Collegiate Basketball: A Multilevel Modeling Approach”

The third study analyzes factors that impact home court advantage in college basketball based on the point spread for each game. Sports fans respond to high scoring games and games with close outcomes, which implies that teams should schedule opponents with this in mind. Successful basketball programs increase the quality and quantity of students applying to their universities, and also serve as revenue-shifters for many non-revenue generating sports that are conditionally required by law. Overall, the quality of opponents has the largest impact on the point speeds followed by the actual home court advantage, which implies that teams should schedule similar-quality teams at home, which should result in increased attendance.

General and Future Interest

In the immediate future, I plan to work on the stream of research on investments in women’s sports at the university and high school level. Also, I am interested in developing a line of research on the effects of wind power and hydroelectricity on energy markets and the environment around hydroelectric dams.