

# To what extent is the commercialization of sport a positive trend?

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I feel that commercialisation of sports is bad as it denies the sport players of their privacy. As the players would be constantly under the limelight, details of their lives, both the good and the bad, are released to the public. For example, in the recent Tiger Wood's scandal involving his many mistresses, his private life was broad casted to the public, attracting many criticisms. Therefore, the commercialization of sports is bad as it compromises the personal space of the athletes. Performance may not be the main focus in all sports. Some people may take up a sport just to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Many sports, such as running and swimming can be solitary and non-competitive. It does not matter if one does not perform well in the activity, as long as the individual feels that being engaged in it brings benefit to his/her health. If the commercialization of sports were to cause people to develop a mindset that victory and quality of performance is of utmost importance, unnecessary pressure will be imposed on the sportsman. Their mentality may change, resulting in them thinking that only those who can excel in the sport deserve to take part.

This causes those who do sports for health benefits but are not proficient to lose their penchant. Commercialization in this case is disadvantageous as it has the power to distort the mindset of people negatively. The psychological phobia may cause some people to be robbed of their chance to engage in a sport they like. The commercialization of sports has set in motion a shift in paradigm in sports; particularly those which involve teams. Players have become commodities to be traded and sold for extravagant sums of money and even clubs are being sold to the highest bidders.

The trouble with this is that while sport used to be about performance excellence and hard work, clubs may now simply obtain success by splurging astronomical amounts of money to buy the best players that money can buy. Players no longer stay loyal to the clubs that trained them and honed their skills but instead seek greener pastures where the pay is higher than the exorbitant amount it already is. The overall result of this is a lack of sense of loyalty and passion and also makes a case for the notion that success can be bought with money.

Commercialisation of sports leads to the erosion of its values. No longer is the focus about doing one's best to win, it is now about wearing the branded goods. The promotion of sports apparel or energy beverages gives the idea that without these goods, one cannot achieve their optimal point in sports. Some of these brands include Nike, Adidas and Gatorade. While they may help the body's posture and movement, it is the person's perseverance that will pull them through. Commercialisation is only another form of distraction. Hence, commercialisation of sports is bad.

Commercialisation of sports is bad. It seems that sports had lost its true meaning. Sports is no longer a simple physical exercise but involves many other issues. Instead, one's popularity and ability to appeal to the public is more important than one's talent and skills. For example: Anna Kournikova is the biggest tennis star yet she never won a grand slam, she gains a large amount of earnings through sponsorship alone. Justin Henin (world no 1) is able to earn in a lifetime. This has shown the disparity between both individuals.

Therefore, I conclude that commercialisation of sports have led to people placing more emphasis on looks then talent. Nowadays, if one was to declare themselves a fan of Chelsea football club, the reply you would get would most probably " Before or After Roman Abramovich? " Chelsea Football Club was bought over by a rich oil merchant in 2003, and this led to an interesting disadvantage of commercialisation in sport. Because of the large amount of capital that is provided to these clubs who are bought over by rich businessmen, they are able to buy their way to success.

This effectively destroys sportsmanship in the spirit of competition and causes unfair advantages to smaller teams that do not have that large an amount of capital at their disposal and thus are unable to spend as freely. This is not just limited to football. Sport that are taken over by sponsorship or under ownership will all suffer from this disadvantage. In F1, Ferrari and MacLaren are always the teams that occupy the pole position whereas teams with less renowned cars like Toyota rarely become champions.

Hence, commercialization has been proven to disrupt and distort the playing field, providing unfair economical and thus other advantages to certain teams Commercialisation is becoming increasingly prevalent in sport and while this moral issue would generally be perceived as positive with the availability of more money and resources, many believe that the idea of sport as an industry has allowed amateur sport to become overly competitive and the rise of riots due to sports, is a recognizable consequence of this. This change in many ways allowed us to enjoy the level of professional sport we enjoy in Singapore today.

However, some believe the trickle down of commercialisation to amateur sports has increased the tendency to provide some type of reward with athletes adopting an attitude of "winning no matter the cost". This is now even seen within the Olympics with athletes who live off their sport now competing in an 'amateur' competition. Children in particular are today are socialised to value winning over playing fair. This affects their moral knowledge and development, ultimately affecting their decision making. Commercialisation of sports is bad as it only advertises certain types of sports as well as its players.

This makes people believe that the sport being advertised is more popular than the rest. Furthermore, people's knowledge on the types of sports will be limited. The same applies to the player being internationally well known. The player may not be the best player but due to the vast commercialising of him, it may bring a perception that he is the best player. As a result, people are ignorant about the worthiness of the players and their feelings are being toyed with if it is known that their favourite player is just an average sportsman. Therefore, commercialisation of sports is bad.

Commercialisation is bad due to the social impact it resulted. It has been noted that many kids nowadays dream about making money through sports like basketball instead of just playing the game they love. For instance, a magazine named Slam talks about basketball and the players in NBA. It consists of an advertisement which asks "What Sports Center do you watch". Then it says, "Steve Francis watches the 6AM Sports Center." In my opinion, the advertisement is trying to use Steve Francis' popularity to persuade

audiences to watch the Sports Center. This is one example of companies using sports figures to sell their products.

In the advertisement, the picture of Steve Francis in his house, shows us what really is important to him -- the pool and golf course in his back yard through the window in his bedroom. Hence, it is partly due to commercialisation of sports that many people look up to him in terms of his material possessions and not the way he plays basketball. Positive There will be an increase in higher quality of performance as people strive to do better and win in sports. Funding and business profits from the commercialization of sports enable sportsmen to improve themselves and thus ring the sport to higher grounds. If a player lacks equipment or proper training grounds like, say a tennis court, funding and money can provide the player with what he requires to improve his skills. Sports has to be commercialized in order to gain these funds, and thus the commercialization of sports is good.

Commercialisation plays an important role in the sport existence. It helps to provide the funds and resources needed for athletes to be able to perform at their fullest potential. Take a Track and Field athlete for example, without a proper pair of spikes the athlete cannot perform his best.

Without commercialisation there will not be efficient athletes and without efficient athletes the sport cannot exist. Thus commercialisation plays an important role in the sports industry to help keep sports alive by providing funds and resources needed. Another benefit for commercialization of sports is that amateur level sports can benefit through commercialization of sport at the professional level. Commercialization has brought greater exposure to

sports such as A-League, NRL, Super 14 and these sports at an amateur level benefit directly through commercialization and the exposure brings it to a professional level sport

Indeed, sports helps to generate revenue not only for the benefit of creating more capital for sports but also to generate more revenues for different industries. Modern sports links to commerce are highly visible. Stadiums and arenas bear the names of businesses, sponsors' logos are appearing on athletes' clothing and equipment and on the facilities they play in. Media companies pay a huge amount for the rights to broadcast sports events, and advertisers pay to promote products during the screening of sports events.

The revenue of a country would increase due to the commercialisation of sports as more international competitions will be held in the country.

Advertisements of the tournament or competition would interest more foreigners and bring in greater revenue. This would be beneficial to the country's economy. It was evident for the Beijing Olympics held in 2008 where many people turned up for the major event due to commercialisation; hence, contributing to China's economic growth the facilities built could still be used to train more athletes and sportsmen, hence, allowing them to perform at their full potential to prepare for future competitions.

With better competitors, the sports event would be more exciting and entertaining to the viewers and this would generate revenue to the country especially if it is the one hosting the event. This would potentially lead to economic growth. In China, the commercialisation of sports was also a strategy to increase its 'soft power' which is the ability to affect others to

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obtain the outcomes China wants. It has helped China to appear more attractive to other countries and this is the first step for China to build political relations with other countries, making it beneficial for them.

Commercialization of sports has resulted in the increase in the number and quality of sports shown on television today. Without commercial sponsorship, people would not be able to follow their favourite sports from their homes as closely as they want. Thus commercialization of sports has benefited society in providing entertainment. Through commercialisation, sports have been able to reach out to large audiences. With the help of the business community, there is funding and also international coverage from the media.

If not, international sports events such as the Olympic Games or the Sea Games would not be made possible. It is due to this support, that athletes are able to compete and to strive for the very best in such key international events. Furthermore, sponsorships and partnerships can help sports create opportunities, such as the Olympic Games, to not only survive but thrive in today's much economically and work-driven world. Moreover, commercialisation of sports can give a good exposure of the sport to youths of today's society.

The lives of many youths today revolve around technology, leading to a very mundane lifestyle. Thus this exposure may lead to them picking up certain sports, diversifying and making their lifestyle more active instead of just spending hours on end on their computers. Thus, sports should be an important aspect of our lives and the only way to ensure it continues to flourish, especially in today's context, is through commercialisation.

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