



UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA

SUSPENSE AND ENJOYMENT IN PORTUGUESE MEDIATED SPORTS

Dissertation to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to obtain
a Master's Degree in Communication Studies -Journalism

By

Vasco Romão Serrano

Faculty of Human Sciences

September 2024



UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA

SUSPENSE AND ENJOYMENT
IN PORTUGUESE MEDIATED SPORTS

DISSERTATION

Dissertation to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to obtain
a Master's Degree in Communication Studies - Journalism

By

Vasco Romão Serrano

Faculdade de Ciências Humanas

Under the supervision of

Prof. Jessica Roberts and Prof. John Carvalho

September 2024

Abstract

This dissertation explores how spectators of the Portuguese national football team experience suspense and enjoyment during a UEFA Euro 2024 match, focusing on their live emotional reactions. By tracing the evolution of mediated sports, both in Portugal and internationally, the research emphasizes the significance of studying sports contests as mediated experiences, particularly through television. The primary objective was to investigate the interplay between affective dispositions, suspense, and enjoyment to better understand what drives spectators to engage with sports through media. A quantitative methodology was employed, analysing emotional responses from spectators of a specific match. Findings revealed that spectators derived significant enjoyment from their strong emotional attachment to the team. However, the anticipated relationship between suspense and enjoyment was not fully supported, largely due to the predictability of the match, which limited the level of suspense experienced. Despite this limitation, the research makes a substantial contribution to the relatively under-researched area of Portuguese mediated sports. It highlights the active role of spectators in shaping their own mediated sports experiences, driven by their emotional investment in contests, and underscores the need for further exploration of how different factors influence those experiences. Thus, the findings pave the way for future studies to deepen the understanding of spectatorship in the context of Portuguese mediated sports.

Key words: Media, Sports, Portugal, Television, Football, Mediated Sports

Resumo

Esta dissertação explora a forma como os espectadores da seleção portuguesa de futebol experienciam o suspense e apreciam um jogo do UEFA Euro 2024, centrando-se nas suas reações emocionais ao vivo. Ao traçar a evolução do desporto mediado, tanto em Portugal como internacionalmente, a investigação enfatiza a importância de estudar as competições desportivas como experiências mediadas, particularmente através da televisão. O principal objetivo foi investigar a interação entre as disposições afetivas, o suspense e a apreciação para melhor compreender o que leva os espectadores a envolverem-se com o desporto através dos media. Foi utilizada uma metodologia quantitativa, analisando as reações emocionais dos espectadores de um jogo específico. As descobertas revelaram que os espectadores obtiveram uma apreciação significativa do seu forte vínculo emocional com a seleção. No entanto, a relação prevista entre suspense e apreciação não foi totalmente suportada, em grande parte devido à previsibilidade do jogo, que limitou o nível de suspense experienciado. Apesar desta limitação, a investigação dá um contributo substancial para a área relativamente pouco investigada do desporto mediado português. Destaca o papel ativo dos espectadores na constituição das suas próprias experiências desportivas mediadas, impulsionadas pelo seu envolvimento emocional nas competições, e sublinha a necessidade de uma maior investigação da forma como diferentes fatores influenciam essas experiências. Assim, os resultados abrem caminho para estudos futuros que aprofundem a compreensão do espectador no contexto do desporto mediado português.

Palavras-chave: Media, Desporto, Portugal, Televisão, Futebol, Desporto Mediado

Acknowledgements

I sincerely express my immense gratitude to my supervisors for their exceptional guidance and excellent coordination between each other and myself, assisting with the practical and theoretical aspects throughout the process making of this dissertation.

I am also grateful to all survey respondents for their contribution to the study, having demonstrated, firsthand, the potential of mediated sports to bring people together.

I extend my deepest gratitude to my mother and father for their unconditional support not only in this dissertation, but during my academic journey. I emphasize their contribution in forwarding the survey and collecting answers, without which the study would not have been completed. I would also like to acknowledge all family members for their invaluable support.

Lastly, I would like to mention all my friends, highlighting João for helping me choose my supervisors, Juliana for advising me on the statistical tests, and Francisco for continuously providing me encouragement.

Index

Introduction.....	6
1. Mediated Sports.....	10
1.1. Introduction to Mediated Sports	10
1.2. History of Mediated Sports	11
1.2.1. Media and Sports (1830s)	12
1.2.2. Mediated Sports (1950s)	15
1.2.3. Mediated Sports Research (1970s)	17
1.2.4. MediaSport (1990s)	23
1.2.5. Globalization of Mediated Sports (2000s)	26
1.2.6. Mediated Sports Today	29
2. Sports Spectatorship.....	33
2.1. Introduction to sports spectatorship	33
2.2. Motivations of sports spectatorship	35
2.2.1. Emotional motivations of sports spectatorship	36
2.2.2. Behavioural and social motivations of sports spectatorship	38
2.2.3. Cognitive motivations of sports spectatorship	40
2.3. Enjoyment of mediated sports	41
2.3.1. Affective dispositions	41
2.3.2. Suspense.....	46
2.3.3. Other elements of the enjoyment of mediated sports.....	50
3. Method.....	53
3.1. Purpose	53
3.2. Strategy and worldview	53
3.3. Research Question and Hypotheses	54
3.4. Procedure	56
3.4.1. Survey Design	56
3.4.2. Sampling	57
3.4.3. Data collection	58
3.4.4. Data analysis	58
4. Results.....	60
4.1. Data.....	60
4.1.1. Outcome of the match	60
4.1.2. Age, Gender, and Nationality	60
4.1.3. Relationship between fandom habits and affective dispositions (H4).....	61
4.1.4. Relationship between suspense and hope/fear (H2.1/H2.2)	67
4.1.5. Affective dispositions <i>versus</i> Suspense (H1).....	77
4.1.6. Suspense <i>versus</i> Enjoyment (H3)	78
4.2. Hypotheses	79
5. Discussion.....	81
5.1. Limitations and Recommendations	85
Conclusion	89
Bibliography	93
Appendix.....	105

Introduction

Sports are everywhere in the media, and people are watching. In the summer of 2024 alone, it was estimated that billions of people around the world watched the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, just as, on a smaller scale, millions of Portuguese gathered to watch their national football team playing at UEFA Euro 2024. Sports spectatorship, meaning the act of watching sporting events with some level of engagement, has long moved from being only possible in physical sporting venues to a focus on mediated sports, which are the product of the relationship between media and sports that has formed in the larger context of society. This relationship takes on a symbiotic character: on the one hand, sports generate advertising revenue to the media, on the other hand, the media generate broadcasting rights revenue to sports (McChesney, 1989; Rowe, 2004; Bellamy, 2009). But due to economic motivations, the relationship has become unbalanced, particularly since the development of television as a mass media in the 1950s and its imposition of broadcasting logics on sports, with constant negotiation between actors within a sports/media complex (Jhally, 1984; Wenner, 1989). These changes triggered the development of mediated sports research—sports had initially been deemed a peripheral research area due to being associated with leisure (Wenner, 1998)—producing studies that benefited from the contribution of multiple fields and their corresponding theoretical perspectives (see Real, 2013). This evolution always depended on the specific conditions of media and sports in each country, having thus proceeded differently in the United States and Europe, reaching Portugal at the turn of the 20th century. Nowadays, despite the emergence of digital competition to traditional forms of television (Boyle & Haynes, 2009; Hutchins et al., 2019), broadcasting logics continue to be reinforced by increased commodification and globalisation (Andrews, 2003; Rowe, 2004; Hutchins & Rowe, 2012), which poses additional challenges for mediated sports and their research. The social, cultural, economic, and historical evolution of sports in its symbiotic but also unbalanced relationship with the media has transformed them into something to watch, listen to, read about, and talk about, rather than just something to do. Within mediated sports history, the most significant development is perhaps the rise of the spectator as the essential linkage between media and sports (Bellamy, 2009). It is the popularity of sports spectatorship, evidenced by high viewership ratings across the globe, that determines the viability of the economic opportunities associated with mediated sports

(Bryant & Raney, 2000) and forces the sports/media complex to produce and distribute content that attracts spectators (Wenner, 1989). As a result, however, spectators are increasingly seen as consumers and less as human beings, being subject to economic pressures from within the sports/media complex which may compromise their rights (Rowe, 2004; Hutchins et al., 2019), even though they remain willing to invest time and money in consuming mediated sports.

The widespread consumption of mediated sports, aside from reinforcing their social, cultural, political, and economic significance, indicate that spectators enjoy them and have motivations to watch them. As individuals turn to sports programming to fulfil their multiple needs, their motivations have emotional, behavioural/social, or cognitive natures (Raney, 2006) and, most significantly, influence the two key elements of the enjoyment spectators derive from mediated sports: affective dispositions and suspense. Affective dispositions measure how strongly a spectator feels about teams and athletes, and thus how much they are likely to be invested in a match hence enjoyment of mediated sports increases by witnessing the success of a liked team and/or witnessing the failure of a disliked team (Zillmann et al., 1989; Zillmann & Paulus, 1993). Suspense represents an emotional experience associated with hope for a positive outcome and especially fear of a negative outcome happening to a liked team, thus requiring affective dispositions towards said team (Carroll, 1990; Zillmann, 1994). As the most significant predictors of the enjoyment of mediated sports, affective dispositions and especially suspense are crucial concepts of this dissertation.

This dissertation focuses on the enjoyment of mediated sports in Portugal, specifically examining how spectators in the country view televised football matches. The research is based on survey data collected from spectators of a UEFA Euro 2024 match involving the Portuguese national football team, which represents the broadest spectrum possible of Portuguese mediated sports spectatorship. By focusing on this super-event, it seeks to explore the dynamics of mediated sports spectatorship in Portugal, offering insights into the unique ways the audience engages with football through media. While mediated sports research has been largely concentrated in the anglophone world, there is a notable gap in empirical research on the Portuguese context, which has been predominantly qualitative rather than quantitative. My personal interest in the topic, as both a Portuguese person and a mediated sports spectator myself, further motivates this study, given the significant influence of

mediated sports in general and football in particular in the everyday lives of Portuguese people, including my own. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute new empirical data to the scholarly understanding of how spectators in Portugal enjoy mediated sports, thus offering new insights into a relatively underexplored area in the country.

According to Michael Real (1998), the study of mediated sports requires scholars to compare the power of institutions, the meaning of texts, and the aggregation of audiences. While research on Portuguese mediated sports has focused mainly on texts, uncovering their meaning to understand the impacts of the football phenomenon in the country, the defence of spectators from the economic pressures of the sports/media complex determines a need to place them at the centre of mediated sports research (Hutchins et al., 2019), ensuring that the media continue to bring social and cultural benefits to their experience, which motivates this study to focus on audiences and their live reactions to the sporting events they are watching. Furthermore, most studies on mediated sports reconcile different fields of knowledge to provide holistic explanations through historical contextualization and analysis (e.g., Rader, 1984; Coelho, 2001; Pinheiro, 2009). This is evident in mediated sports research in Portugal, where the prolonged absence of sociological studies has paved the way for a focus on media discourse as the main form of knowledge production in this field (e.g., Coelho, 2001). This dissertation focuses on the spectator, specifically on his/her experience of suspense and enjoyment in the context of Portuguese mediated sports, complementing quantitative research with an historical perspective.

To understand how spectators of the Portuguese national team experience suspense during a UEFA Euro 2024 match based on their emotional reactions to that specific match, the study starts by examining the mechanisms through which spectators become emotionally involved in sports contests, particularly the affective dispositions they hold towards the Portuguese national team. These affective dispositions are thought to emerge as a precondition of suspense, hence the relationship between both variables is the first focal point of this research. Moreover, as affective dispositions are shaped by fandom habits, uncovering their significance is a second focal point. Before the match, affective dispositions are indeed expected to have a significant influence on the emotional involvement of spectators, but during the match, suspense emerges from uncertainty enhancing fear of a negative outcome and hope for a positive outcome,

hence the relationship between suspense and these emotional reactions represents another focal point. Ultimately, emotions associated with suspense influence the enjoyment of spectators, as suspense adds to enjoyment when resolved with a positive outcome for the favoured team, so the relationship between suspense and enjoyment is the final focal point of this research. To achieve these aims, the quantitative methodology employs a survey to collect data during a specific UEFA Euro 2024 match, while statistical tests are conducted to test the hypotheses.

This dissertation is structured to systematically address the research aim of understanding how spectators of the Portuguese national team experience suspense during a UEFA Euro 2024 match. Chapter 1 provides the foundational context by exploring the evolution of mediated sports, tracing their history from their early days to the development of television and their subsequent globalization and commodification, considering the evolution of mediated sports research as well, and accounting for the intersection between Portuguese and international contexts. Most significantly, this chapter sets the stage for the study by introducing mediated sports spectatorship as a significant research topic and subsequently the topic of this dissertation. Chapter 2 delves into the motivations behind sports spectatorship, exploring the role of affective dispositions and the suspense arising from uncertainty regarding an outcome in the enjoyment of mediated sports; in other words, it establishes a conceptual framework for understanding the emotional journey of spectators in sports contests, highlighting suspense as a crucial component of their experience. Chapter 3, the method chapter, outlines the research purpose, the specific research questions, and the quantitative methodology employed to collect and analyse data, detailing the procedures used to investigate the relationships between affective dispositions, suspense, and enjoyment. Chapter 4, on the results, presents the findings, testing the hypotheses and providing a numerical interpretation of the data collected from the survey, thus offering empirical evidence to support or refute the theoretical assumptions. Finally, chapter 5, the Discussion, synthesizes the findings and addresses the research questions by contextualizing the results within the existing literature, and reflects on the implications of the findings for the broader understanding of mediated sports spectatorship, contributing to the overall aim of the study.

1. Mediated Sports

1.1. Introduction to Mediated Sports

Mediated sports, in simple terms, is the product of the relationship between media and sports that occurs in the larger context of society. This relationship has mutual benefits and, as a consequence, takes on a symbiotic character: on the one hand, sports benefits the media by providing content to fill programming time at a low cost, generating revenue through sales and advertising; on the other hand, the media benefit sports by providing public attention and transforming them to reach a larger audience, having increased their popularity and also revenue (McChesney, 1989; Rowe, 2004; Bellamy, 2009). Thus, the symbiotic relationship between media and sports has an economic motivation (Smith, 1976), focused on the revenue that each party helps the other to gain, hence compromising a perfect balance between the two. In fact, since the development of television as a mass medium in the 1950s, the media have become dominant in the relationship with sports, imposing broadcasting logics on sports organizations (Bellamy, 2009). Thus, the relationship between media and sports, despite being symbiotic, is also unbalanced (Real, 1998) with constant negotiation between actors within a sports/media complex (Jhally, 1984; Wenner, 1989).

Research on mediated sports took many decades to develop, as sports was deemed a peripheral area in media studies due to being associated with leisure (Wenner, 1998), and perhaps also faced with the challenge of researchers abandoning their own position as fans and looking at the phenomenon from the outside (Dunning, 1979). The main field of research into sports was the sociology of sports, but it focused on active participation rather than sports spectatorship (Wenner, 1998). However, the evolution of mediated sports from the 1970s made it difficult to ignore its social, cultural, political, and economical implications, leading to studies that benefited from the contribution of multiple fields and their corresponding theoretical perspectives (see Real, 2013). This evolution always depends on the specific conditions of media and sports in each country of the world, having thus occurred at different speeds and with different characteristics in the United States and Europe, reaching Portugal at the turn of the 20th century.

The relationship between media and sports has always had an economic motivation (e.g., McChesney, 1989). Therefore, studying the interests behind that motivation,

which seek to boost entertainment in mediated sports to increase its commercial value (Parente, 1977; Jhally, 1984), is crucial to understanding an increasingly global and commodified phenomenon (Andrews, 2003; Rowe, 2004; Hutchins & Rowe, 2012). Otherwise, media and sports also have immense cultural value as institutions that allow societies to express their identity, in the form of values, aspirations, or objectives which may acquire a nationalist character (Boyle & Haynes, 2009). In short, mediated sports has undoubtedly demonstrated its intrinsic value over the past decades, keeping in mind that understanding its important implications requires the consideration of the larger contexts that surround it.

Most studies on mediated sports respond to the need to reconcile different fields of knowledge and provide holistic explanations with historical contextualization (e.g., Wenner, 1989; Whannel, 1992; Wenner, 1998; Boyle & Haynes, 2009), which in some cases takes an analytical form (e.g., Rader, 1984; Coelho, 2001; Pinheiro, 2009). This is particularly notable for mediated sports research in Portugal, where the prolonged absence of sociological studies has paved the way for a focus on media discourse as the main form of knowledge production in this field (e.g., Coelho, 2001). Considering that analysing the historical evolution of mediated sports has succeeded in examining the evolution of its surrounding contexts, this dissertation adopts a similar perspective.

1.2. History of Mediated Sports

The history of mediated sports is, primarily, the history of the symbiotic but unbalanced relationship between media and sports, which began to develop throughout the 19th century, with the Industrial Revolution and the prominence of capitalism in American and European societies (McChesney, 1989). The history of mediated sports is the history of media, the changes introduced by each development in communication and information technologies, from the printing press to the radio, from television to digital media. The history of mediated sports is also the history of sports and the many sports, which have different prominences and characteristics in each country, and are continuously transformed both on the field and off the field; some sports have come closer to the media due to their natural characteristics or adaptability (Jhally, 1984), as was the case with Portuguese football (Pinheiro, 2009),

so the focus is on them. Finally, the history of mediated sports is, more broadly, the history of society (Wenner, 1989), as sports shape cultural values, social identities, national ideologies, technological innovation, and economies across the globe.

1.2.1. Media and Sports (1830s)

The contemporary popularity of sports goes back to the 19th century and is closely associated with the Industrial Revolution and, more broadly, capitalism (McChesney, 1989). Previously, sports existed as a pursuit of the upper classes of society, with the middle and lower classes facing too many socioeconomical difficulties to engage in that leisure activity (Carvalho, 2017). Even though sports were reported in the printed press from the early 19th century, they targeted small and wealthy individuals in a limited universe of readers, in which most rejected active participation in sports due to moral reasons (McChesney, 1989). Despite persistent economic instability in its early days (Pinheiro, 2009), the press became the first medium informing people about sports, and it has done so ever since (Beck & Bosshart, 2003).

Across the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution brought dramatic social change which allowed the development of mass media: on the one hand, it increased literacy rates and that caused an expansion in the audience (McChesney, 1989), on the other hand, it brought technological innovations to means of transportation and communication that improved collective involvement in public events (Carvalho, 2017). In turn, the development of mass media in the 19th century promoted sports media. Great Britain played a pioneering role in the creation of the first newspaper sections dedicated exclusively to sports, since the 1810s, while in the United States sports only achieved similar mediatic regularity in magazines from the 1830s (Beck & Bosshart, 2003), until the continuous growth of the sports audience allowed the creation of the first daily sports newspaper, in Great Britain in 1852, an evolution that would reach France before the end of the 19th century, but Spain and Portugal only in the 1920s. These are the historical points when media in each country achieved enough stability, economic and in audience, to report about sports on a regular basis (Pinheiro, 2009).

With growing popularity, as well as growing media projection from the 1870s, sports sought their legitimization as a cultural institution. For that purpose, the emerging

sports media adopted a strong doctrinal component in its discourse, translating into a mission to promote active participation in sports for societies (McChesney, 1989; Pinheiro, 2009). In McChesney's (1989) view, this mission represents an early demonstration of economic motivation by the sports media, whose audience was made up of athletes and sports practitioners, and also by the generalist media, who began to promote sports to increase its audience (Carvalho, 2017). The consequence, intentional or unintentional, was the professionalization of the most popular sports and whose media prominence was greater, notably baseball in the United States and football throughout Europe, followed by the professionalization of sports journalism itself, creating a debate of "amateurship versus professionalism" in both fronts (McChesney, 1989). In the journalistic front, the principles of independence and objectivity were being called into question by journalists who, growing in status and importance to sports organizations, were accepting payments to favour them in coverages (Pinheiro, 2009).

The mission of promoting sports adopted by the sporting press did not just have an economic motivation. In the early 20th century, the increasing competition between nations, particularly in Europe, allowed the sporting mission to strengthen its appeals with nationalism. This was the case of Portugal, which experienced a period of economic instability and regime change domestically, leading sports journalists to advocate for the regeneration of the people through active participation in sports (Pinheiro, 2009). As sports boosted nationalism, the Olympic Games, originally transposed to modernity in 1896 with the aim of bringing people together, soon turned into the main event of nationalist competition (Marivoet, 2004). But the competitive nature of sports was not just restricted to nations, often taking on a regionalist character. The creation of a football championship in Portugal, despite aiding the development of the sporting press throughout the country, exacerbated regionalisms and created a climate of conflict— between clubs, fans and even the media—that persists to this day, but in truth was fundamental to consolidate Portuguese sports media, and continues to captivate audiences (Pinheiro, 2009). By the time the First World War broke out, and despite the difficulties faced by European media as a result of the conflict, the popularity of sports had become evident, being practiced and read about among soldiers (McChesney, 1989). However, it would be the years after the

global conflict that would develop the relationship between media and sports to unprecedented levels.

The 1920s are considered the “Golden Age of Sports”, the age when sports emerged as a prime source of entertainment, as well as the “Golden Age of Sports-writing”, the age when sports became indispensable to the media (McChesney, 1989), albeit with contrasting realities in different countries. On the one hand, sports in Portugal were still consolidating their position among the press, whereas the national football team was beginning to emerge as a factor of unity among sports journalists—who developed a news treatment of lack of criticism before the matches, followed by criticism after defeats, which is still dominant nowadays—and fans (Pinheiro, 2009). On the other hand, sports in the United States and Great Britain benefited from the emergence of broadcasting radio, which in turn capitalized upon sports to gain acceptance as a new medium (Jhally, 1984). The added value of radio, compared to the printed press, was live reporting, which turned sports into an activity that could not only be played or attended in sporting venues, but also *spectated* any time anywhere, cultivating “the impression of being there” (Beck & Bosshart, 2003, p. 9). The radio was also responsible for connecting the audience to the teams and athletes, an important condition of suspense and enjoyment (Zillmann et al., 1989; Bryant & Raney, 2000), by doing interviews that allowed them to be heard. Despite initial resistance from sports organizations, who acted upon live reporting limiting their revenue from ticket sale (Beck & Bosshart, 2003; Pinheiro, 2009), radio succeeded in crafting collective involvement in sporting events, placing the spectator at their centre for the first time in history (Bellamy, 2009). These developments would reach Portuguese sports in the 1930s, with the first sports radiocasts in partnership with the press (Pinheiro, 2009).

More than ever, sports were serving the media by providing regular entertainment at reduced financial and political costs (McChesney, 1989). The expansion of radio elevated the sports suited to its format, such as baseball in the United States (McChesney, 1989), boxing in France (Pinheiro, 2009), or cricket in Great Britain (Whannel, 1992); sports newspapers began favouring professional sports in their coverage, resolving the “amateur versus professional” debate; athletes began interacting with the media, while learning the value of marketing and advertising; but sports journalism, despite its growing professionalism, still faced credibility issues

(Carvalho, 2017; Pinheiro, 2009). The enthusiasm for sports among society, fuelled by the dominance of radio among media, continued throughout the political tensions and economic crisis of the 1930s (Carvalho, 2017), and even though World War II halted the evolution of sports media, particularly in Europe, that evolution would resume after the global conflict (Pinheiro, 2009). Most significantly, the 1950s would bring an important development to media and sports that would deepen but also unbalance their symbiotic relationship, centring the discussion around mediated sports.

1.2.2. Mediated Sports (1950s)

The development that converted the relationship between media and sports to the singular designation of *mediated sports* was the emergence of television. The added value of television, compared to radio, lies in the visual images that complement the audio sound, reinforcing “the impression of being there” for spectators (Beck & Bosshart, 2003). In effect, television increased the availability of sporting events to millions in their own homes, apart from the thousands who attended matches, turning sports into a domestic activity (Whannel, 2009). Within the universality of the new medium, different landscapes formed in each country: whereas most European states, including Portugal, sought to guarantee a monopoly on television broadcasts, creating public television channels for this purpose (Pinheiro, 2009), control of television in the United States was shared between private channels (McChesney, 1989). Naturally, the dominance of television among media determined its dominance over sports as well (Beck & Bosshart, 2003), and since the first experiments with sports broadcasts in the 1936 Olympic Games, sporting events became the most popular television programming. The success of sports programming is explained by the action it provides, the target male audience it can reach, and the products it can sell to that audience, while comprising low production costs (Bellamy, 2009). But the most immediate consequence of the success of sports programming was a decrease in sporting venue attendance, which led professional teams and leagues to impose rights fees on broadcasters, similarly to what they had done to radio, but only until they learned how to get their share of revenue (Rader, 1984).

In the early days of mediated sports, the symbiotic relationship between sports and television was mutually beneficial, “almost perfect” according to Bellamy (2009, p.

65), but the supposed perfection only lasted until television became dominant over sports, a process which intensified in the 1960s (Bellamy, 2009). This power unbalance first become evident in changing behaviours of people involved in mediated sports: professional teams and leagues changed the rules of their matches to suit television's commercial requirements (e.g., longer seasons, playing during prime-time hours) and demands for action (e.g., the field goal in American football, the slam dunk in basketball), to captivate more audiences (Rader, 1984); professional athletes also changed, both on the field, as the style of play was affected by sanctions on violence, and off the field, as they employed agents and, in some cases, formed labour unions to negotiate better salaries, increasing financial pressure on their teams; even sports journalists began overusing the commercial perspective in their coverage, alienating fans and amateur players who still lacked the educational tools to understand it (Altheide & Snow, 1979).

How did television evolve from being rejected by sports organizations to being embraced by them, and ultimately supporting the entire mediated sports landscape, in the span of a few decades? McChesney (1989) identifies four historical changes in the that explain this development in the United States. First, the development of television into a mass medium, penetrating every household in the country. Second, the significant improvement of sports coverage through technologies such as portable cameras, satellite transmissions, and colour broadcasting (see Whannel, 2009). Third, the Sports Broadcasting Act of 1961, which allowed sports organizations to negotiate broadcasting rights together and consequently strengthen their position in relation to media organizations. Fourth, the purchase of television rights directly from sports organizations, and their sale to advertisers (McChesney, 1989). In Portugal, the first telecast of a football match in Portugal only took place in 1958, and television was fundamental to consolidate sports journalism as a profession, which effectively enhanced the economic motivation of reaching more audiences (Pinheiro, 2009).

These historical changes point toward the creation of a business around television and sports (Bellamy, 2009), who represent different ideologies and objectives: whereas sports kept its values of character, discipline, competition, and/or fitness intact, television became increasingly dominated by the business of broadcasting rights (Altheide & Snow, 1979; Whannel, 2009), causing their fees to increase significantly (Wenner, 1989). Depending more and more on the sale of these rights, with the

different sports adapting their rules to meet broadcasting logics (McChesney, 1989), the economic motivation eventually took over sports and created situations of incompatibility with its core values. One example of such situation concerns competition: while big teams invest and sometimes exceed their profits to sign better athletes, small teams became content with television revenue, having no incentive to spend so much (Altheide & Snow, 1979). In other words, sports broadcasting rights demonstrated the potential to turn every team into winners off the field, even if they were losers on the field.

By the 1970s, televised sports had become so profitable that networks depended on sports programming to fill their weekend daytime hours. Furthermore, with growing audiences, advertisers were spending more and more to reach them, which further increased broadcasting rights fees (McChesney, 1989). Years later, the technological breakthroughs in televised sports would allow the creation of the first television networks specialized in sports—ESPN in the United States, and Eurosport among others in Europe—which, in turn, brought televised sports closer to entertainment (Beck & Bosshart, 2003); sports broadcasts in Portugal would only begin to evade public channels in the 1990s, and the first pay-per-view sports channel only appeared in the end of the 20th century. (Pinheiro, 2009). In the meantime, the press and the radio had adopted a supporting role, complementing television with analysis, stats, and background information after the matches (McChesney, 1989). Most significantly, television had turned sports into an industry, and its cultural creed was perceived to be under threat from the economic creed of its mediated version (e.g., Novak, 1976; Altheide & Snow, 1979). These developments would cause mediated sports to gain more empirical attention from the 1970s.

1.2.3. Mediated Sports Research (1970s)

By the 1970s, televised sports had reached maturity (Whannel, 2009) and their business had become dominant to the point of threatening to impose economic logics on cultural values and national identities (Altheide & Snow, 1979). But it was precisely the growing impacts of televised sports, causing great concern among researchers of the social sciences, that prompted them to recognize the importance of studying mediated sports (Real, 2013). Up to this point, there was no coherent body of

literature that connected media and sports: on the one hand, sports was absent from the early days of media studies, as it was considered a peripheral subject; on the other hand, the media ignored the social implications of sports, leaving the research agenda to focus on active participation (Wenner, 1998). Most authors agree that the scientific periphery of sports is explained by their view as an activity of leisure, meaning of secondary importance to society (e.g., Wenner, 1989), but Dunning (1979) complements this explanation by hypothesizing that sociologists, as spectators of mediated sports themselves, might simply have been too close to the action to ensure scientific rigor:

Sociologists have forgotten about sport mainly because only a few have managed to distance themselves sufficiently from the dominant values and ways of thinking characteristic of Western societies to have the ability to understand the social meaning of sport, the problems it poses or the field of action it offers for exploration of areas of social structure and behaviour that are, for the most part, ignored in conventional theories. (p. 2)

The main line of inquiry into sports at the time was the sociology of sports, but there was massive disagreement among authors in approaches to research (e.g., behaviourism versus critical research, quantitative versus qualitative) and few media-centred works, which limited the extent to which televised sports, and their growing implications could be studied (Wenner, 1989).

The starting point for mediated sports studies was the mediatisation of sports and its implications (Wenner, 1989), precisely the subject of the first prominent studies on mediated sports, focused on the Super Bowl. Since its creation in 1967, the Super Bowl had become the most popular event in the United States—more than a game, it developed into “America’s ultimate celebration of itself” (Real, 2013, p. 31)—but like mediated sports, it lacked substantial critical analysis. Drawing from anthropology, sociology, communication research, and journalism techniques, Michael Real published a study (1975) and then a book (1977) on the Super Bowl. Confronting the high viewership ratings of the Super Bowl VIII broadcast with the short and one-sided action seen on the field, Real (1975) described the Super Bowl as the combination of electronic media and sports spectatorship in a ritualized mass activity that reveals the cultural values of American ideology, thus being a contemporary form of “mythic spectacle” (p. 31). This mythic spectacle allows for personal identification with teams and athletes, portrays the heroic archetypes of a culture, creates strong social engagement, has frames of reference, and controls the environment around sports,

providing indoctrination into socially and culturally dominant values in the country where it takes place (Real, 1975). Real's (1975) considerations allow him to draw the following definition of American football:

North American professional football is an aggressive strictly regulated team game fought between males who use both violence and technology to gain control of property for the economic gain of individuals within a nationalistic entertainment context (p. 42).

Real's (1975) definition is supported by the theory of *deep play*, an expression used by Geertz (1973) to label the most intense involvement of spectators in sporting events, whether the Balinese cockfights observed by the latter, or the modern technological Super Bowl studied by the former. Despite significant differences in the medium and the sports themselves, both events reflect broader social meanings, are bound by written rules, include drama and violence, demonstrate status hierarchies, all without producing goods or social welfare. The intensity of social involvement in deep play demonstrates the connection between fans and, more broadly, how dominant rituals capture the essence of a culture (Geertz, 1973), which explains why the most important sports rituals surpass even religious and patriotic holidays in public interest (e.g., Rothenbuhler, 1988).

Reactions to *Super Bowl: Mythic Spectacle* (Real, 1975) confirmed that mediated sports were worthy of empirical research. In 1977, the *Journal of Communication* dedicated an issue to mediated sports, expanding research with studies on the interdependence of television and sports (Parente, 1977), the structure of televised sports (Williams, 1977), or socialization within sports (Goldstein & Bredemeier, 1977), which would provide reference for further discussions on mediated sports. Another important pole of early mediated sports research was the "Alabama school," through the works of Dolf Zillmann, Jennings Bryant, and colleagues (e.g., Comisky et al., 1977; Bryant et al., 1977) that are crucial to understanding sports spectatorship on chapter 2 of this dissertation. Before 1977, but equally significant, the book *Football on Television* (Buscombe, 1975) had brought a new perspective on the landscape of English football that would go on to inspire mediated sports studies also in Europe (e.g., Hargreaves, 1982; Whannel, 1983). At this time, Portuguese mediated sports diverged from their European counterparts, because despite the enormous cultural significance of sports and particularly football for society, the distancing of

social and cultural studies from mediated sports would continue for a few more decades (Pinheiro, 2009).

The first mediated sports studies defined its content as containing dramatic language (Bryant et al., 1977) with social and cultural impact (Rainville & McCormick, 1977). Sports and especially super-events offer exciting narrative texts staged in the broader national culture and ideology (Real, 1975), and whose value statements create their own version of the *national sports creed* (Edwards, 1973). The symbolic importance of media culture allows the understanding of how humans act in their connection with televised sports, as mythic spectacles inspire *deep play* among fans in the form of putting emotion and sometimes money on the line, often with emotional and material consequences (Real, 1975). And even though televised spectatorship differed from live in-person spectatorship in being changed by technology, it had the potential to enhance the spectator experience (Birrell & Loy, 1979). In short, the appeal of mediated sports resides in their potential for drama that comes from their unscripted nature and is boosted by technology and commentary (e.g., Comisky et al., 1977; Rainville & McCormick, 1977; Sullivan, 1991), thus holding immense social potential. This potential turns sports into a powerful institution that is accessed through media, being widely known, enforced, revered, internalized, inculcated in early life, and promoter of conformity (Edwards, 1973), especially in super-events (Wenner, 1989).

The studies on mediated sports in the 1970s began to determine their independence as a field of research, providing unparalleled opportunities for the expansion of research in the 1980s (Real, 2013). The few articles about mediated sports multiplied into dozens in this period, expanding mediated sports research to subjects such as culture (Jhally, 1984), history (Rader, 1984), and gender (Bryant, 1980; Williams et al., 1985), adopting a critical approach that sought to base social theory claims in history, cultural studies, or political economy (Gruneau, 1983). Research was also expanded by American (e.g., Wenner, Bryant, Zillmann), British (e.g., Tomlinson, Whannel), Australian (e.g., Rowe, McKay), and Canadian (e.g., Gruneau) scholars, but despite their contributions, there persisted a split that prevented them from working as a community (Whannel, 1992; see Real, 2013). Specifically, many authors understood television and sports as maintaining their symbiotic relationship (e.g., McChesney, 1989; Wenner, 1989) defined in commercial terms, with sports benefiting from

television revenue and public interest, and television benefiting from inexpensive programming content that brings in advertising revenue (Real, 2005). However, a significant number of authors detected harmful elements in sports as mediated by television that could make their relationship parasitic instead of symbiotic (e.g., Rader, 1984; Barnett, 1990), as televised sports continued to fuel excessive behaviours in mediated sports (Real, 2005). Despite the scholarly debate, the social, cultural, economic, and historical approaches introduced in the 1980s succeeded in consolidating mediated sports research (see Wenner, 1998). Entering the 1990s, books such as Lawrence Wenner's (1989) *Media, Sports, and Society* in the United States, and Garry Whannel's (1992) *Fields in Vision: Television, Sports and Cultural Transformation* in Great Britain tied approaches together in systematic overviews, organizing the scholarly community to provide the first comprehensive collections of mediated sports studies, thus bringing credibility into the field (Wenner, 2012).

In addition, the development of mediated sports research in the 1980s allowed for the first systematizations of the *sports/media complex* (Jhally, 1984), which had been in operation since the development of television in the 1950s (Wenner, 1989; Bellamy, 2009). Approaches to the sports/media complex are varied, but in general, its study demands a focus on the agents within the complex (e.g., Wenner, 1989) and the relations between them (e.g., Jhally, 1984). Specifically, the sports/media complex includes the promoters of sporting events, who govern sports organizations, the administrators of media organizations, and sports journalists. According to Wenner (1989), sports organizations are teams and athletes governed by the leagues and federations to which they belong, and these institutions are ruled by sports promoters, who stage sporting events and seek to develop them into highly marketable products that can generate revenue or, in case they are benefactors, social welfare. In another category, media organizations are units of production and distribution of mediated sports, and those units include: broadcasting networks, who draw on their larger audiences to make money from advertising by broadcasting sports on weekends; cable channels, which expanded the offer of mediated sports to compete with broadcasting networks for audiences; independent television or radio stations, which cover local teams to capture niche audiences; daily newspapers, with sports sections that present advertisers with a cheaper alternative to reach audiences; sports magazines, which concentrate on feature material of interest to the sports audience (Wenner, 1989); and

more recently, streaming services, which are greatly expanding the economic possibilities of mediated sports (Hutchins et al., 2019). In this context, media administrators control the framework of sports information, setting policy, evaluating performance, and coordinating various sub-groups (Smith, 1976). The economic relationship between sports organizations and media organizations works as follows: media organizations pay sports organizations for the rights to broadcast contests, and media organizations compensate for these costs by selling spectators to advertisers, while advertisers compensate for their costs by selling products to spectators, particularly adult males (Real, 2005). Television revenue has become central to sports organizations, composing the major share of the budgets of super-events such as the Olympic Games and the World Cup (Real, 2005). Finally, sports journalists convey information about sports to attract the audiences which allow media organizations to retain advertisers (Smith, 1976; Boyle, 2013).

Ideally, sports journalists decide primarily on the mediated content, guaranteeing that public interest prevails over the economic interest of the organizations that employ them, which increases the role expectations of journalists—the public expects them to keep them well informed, have sports knowledge, expose injustices, and sometimes fulfil a leadership role (Smith, 1976); the Portuguese case even shows them being responsible for shaping the country’s sporting language (Pineiro, 2009). However, role conflicts emerge as journalists are subject to the demands of organizations but considering the mutual interdependent relationship they need to preserve with sports promoters, who need journalists to publicize events, just as journalists need promoters to gain access to those events (Smith, 1976). Moreover, to provide insightful information on sports teams and events, sports journalists must be close to the action, relying on sports promoters that use a system of social controls (e.g., persuasion techniques, gratuities, or even threats) that unbalances the relationship between them; while socially aware journalists can resist social controls, they ultimately risk getting fired by their organizations (Smith, 1976). Indeed, the independence of sports journalists in relation to football clubs has always been a problem in Portuguese mediated sports, with the whole 20th century, with particular incidence in the first half, marked by conflicts between journalists and negative relationships or excessive proximity with sports institutions (Pineiro, 2009). In short, under the influence of organizations, sports journalists have difficulties in guaranteeing objectivity and

transparency, which leads Smith (1976) to believe that sports journalism is “not really a profession” (p. 21), despite defending its professionalization through regulation. Since then, despite the proliferation of communication degrees and digital journalism (Boyle, 2013), sports journalists remain conditioned by the sports/media complex, facing criticism of lack of critical ambition (e.g., Rowe, 2007).

1.2.4. MediaSport (1990s)

The evolution of mediated sports studies throughout the 1970s and 1980s was gradual but impressive, initially focusing on the super-events that best reflected how important mediated sports had become to society (e.g., Real, 1975; Buscombe, 1975), before expanding to cultural, historical and political-economical approaches to research (e.g., Jhally, 1984; Rader, 1984), and finally coming together in comprehensive collections (e.g., Wenner, 1989; Whannel, 1992). However, during the 1990s, the sports/media complex would go through important changes, reflecting ongoing changes in American and European societies. These changes complicated the relationship between sports and television, as broadcasting rights reached such high fees that advertisers became reluctant to increase their pay in the same proportion (Eastman & Meyer, 1989). Moreover, facing competition from cable television, broadcast television could no longer draw massive audiences from regular sports programming (Whannel, 2009), although this type of programming remained steady in this period due to the continuous appeal of super-events (Real, 1998).

The changes in the mediated sports landscape at the time could be explained by society’s transition into postmodernism. In this regard, Real (1998) points out an erosion of the traditional values of sports, associated with modernist ideals, by the business-oriented television, associated with postmodernism. Postmodernism posits the absence of consensus around any ideals, as increased commercialization in the context of late capitalism promotes their relativization (Real, 1998). Having applied his research on the American Super Bowl to the Olympic Games and the football World Cup, Real (1998) expressed concern over the commodification of mediated sports, meaning the reduction of sports to its material value as a result of the growing importance of broadcasting rights and corporate sponsorship in the mediated sports landscape (e.g. Barnett, 1990).

Technology may have contributed to the advancement of postmodernism, but its role is more ambiguous. Most significantly, technology allowed super-events to reach worldwide audiences (Real, 1998) and sports promoters to strengthen the sports/media complex in cooperation with media administrators (Real, 1998). Moreover, televised sports adopted the *pastiche* style of postmodernism which, by combining high art and popular culture into entertainment and mass-mediated culture, standardizes all television programming (Real, 1998). The Olympic Games make the most use of pastiche, allowing the customization of the same broadcast for multinational audiences (e.g., American spectators watch more track and field, Indian spectators watch more field hockey), but technology does not lessen the importance of nationalist values for these spectators, forcing broadcasters to continue to affirm them even in these difficult conditions, which Altheide and Snow (1979) already described in the late 1970s as an illusion that sells “the sizzle instead of the steak” (p. 72).

But is mediated sports pure illusion imposed on spectators by the sports/media complex? Real (1998) believes that mediated sports and particularly super-events retain some idealism. In his view, sports distinguish themselves from postmodernism in taking place in the real world, remaining authentic and unpredictable, which is not possible for other entertainment programming (Real, 1998). Furthermore, having emanated from the interplay between the actors in the sports/media complex, sports are not imposed by any of those actors, hence the contests themselves avoid postmodernism (Oriard, 1993). In short, postmodernism “links the commercial initiative of MediaSport producers with the conditioned pastiche tastes of MediaSport consumers in a deep play spectacle of nationalistic technological representation” (Real, 1998, p. 26). This definition reinforces the idea of unbalance in the relationship between media and sports, but not parasitism, as sports continue to provide enjoyable television experiences for spectators all over the world (Real, 1989; Larson & Park, 1993; Moragas et al., 1995).

Eventually, the growing institutional alignment of media and sports began challenging the basic notions of mediated sports. Up to this point, media and sports were understood as separate institutions in a symbiotic, albeit unbalanced, relationship (e.g., McChesney, 1989), but they were beginning to merge into a single institution: MediaSport. According to Real (1998), who contributed an article to *MediaSport* (Wenner, 1998), the study of MediaSport requires social analysts to compare the

power of institutions, the meaning of their texts, and their aggregation of spectators to form audiences. At the time, *MediaSport Institutions* were going through enormous change, and traditional categories within the sports/media complex were being challenged by acquisitions of sports organizations by media conglomerates (Real, 2005), requiring new parameters of analysis (Wenner, 1998). Comparatively, *MediaSport Texts* were being more extensively examined, as discourse analysis is often simpler than institutional studies (Wenner, 1998). Finally, research on *MediaSport Audiences* provides understanding of the spectator experience, having to overcome challenges in observation (Wenner, 1998). Drawing on the research agenda of *MediaSport*, Real (2005) would conclude that televised sports draw their power from news value and entertainment value, particularly narrative drama emphasized by spectacle (Rowe, 2004), the up close and personal approach that presents athletes as characters for spectators to become emotionally invested in them (Real, 2005), and assemblage techniques that bring it all together (Whannel, 1992).

Throughout the 1990s, while prominent international authors were already studying the merge of media and sports into MediaSport, research on mediated sports finally began to emerge in Portugal, in a process which paralleled that of the United States in the 1970s. It was football, dominant in Portuguese society since the beginning of the 20th century, that caught the attention of sociologists by fitting into the concept of *total social fact* (see Mauss, 1966), in the way it mobilizes the entire of society and its institutions, including the media (Coelho, 2001). Consequently, studies emerged in Portugal that sought to unravel the reasons for the immense popularity of sports spectatorship in football (e.g., Sousa, 1996; Coelho, 2001; Neves & Domingos, 2004), and the potential of the dominant sport to provide representations of society and national identity (Elias & Dunning, 1992), especially through media discourse, became evident to Portuguese researchers. Marivoet (2004) explains how these representations are made:

If, on the one hand, the media contributes to this purpose with the production of symbols of unity, by heroizing deeds, forging idols, and instigating differences, on the other, the spectacle of football in itself as a shared and lived celebration concludes par excellence the production and reproduction of emotional states around different identities (p. 14).

This finding was the catalyst for mediated sports research in Portugal. In a pioneering book, João Nuno Coelho (2001) defined the media discourse around the Portuguese

national football team as reflecting the country's semi-peripheral position in space and time, divided between Europe and the rest of the world, and most significantly between the glorious past and the decadent present, depending on whether the team wins or loses. He argues that such discourse could be useful for establishing intercultural dialogue (Coelho, 2001), possibly in understanding an emerging phenomenon: globalization.

1.2.5. Globalization of Mediated Sports (2000s)

In the beginning of the 21st century, mediated sports research was expanded in the face of an important conceptual development: globalization replacing postmodernism as the central theory of social sciences (Miller et al., 2001). Sports, and particularly football, have been advancing globalization since the 19th century, even establishing international organizations for its management, but at the same time that national identities have been successfully resisting the formation of a global sports culture (Whannel, 2009). For this reason, some authors define football as a globalized localism, meaning a local phenomenon that has successfully globalized due to the integration of certain local aspects and the exclusion of others (e.g., Rowe, 2003; Andrews & Ritzer, 2007; Nolasco, 2004). Proof of this globalized localism is the rise of global sporting heroes, who assert themselves to the whole world through meritocratic narrative and symbolic presence (Nolasco, 2004). Super-events provide the global media landscapes with shared representations, but as the modern Olympic Games have demonstrated (e.g., Pinheiro, 2009), overcoming oneself easily degenerates into competition against others (Sousa, 1996). Indeed, global super-events maintain their appeal, with audiences of hundreds of millions, by being arenas of competition between nations (Bale & Maguire, 1994; Rowe, 2003). It was precisely a super-event, UEFA Euro 2004 hosted by Portugal (see Neves & Domingos, 2004), that prompted Portuguese mediated sports researchers to investigate globalization, updating research trends to those coming from abroad.

The last two decades of the 20th century accelerated the globalization of mediated sports, bringing technological innovation in cable television, direct satellite broadcast, and ultimately the Internet, all supported by deregulation policies, and creating the first global media networks (Andrews, 2003). Having great appeal to advertisers

(Whannel, 2009), these opportunities prompted media organizations to convert into transnational media corporations, through processes of growth, concentration, and convergence (Herman & McChesney, 1997) which promoted vertical integration and, ultimately, created a global media economy (Andrews, 2003). These organizations (e.g., Walt Disney, Time Warner, News Corporation) soon realised the importance of sports, in their greater commercial appeal within entertainment, to their transnationalization strategies (Real, 2005). The case of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation provides the most significant example of successful trans-nationalization, originating from an Australian newspaper to become the first media conglomerate with global reach (Andrews, 2003; Real, 2005). Specifically, News Corporation adopted a strategy of short-term large spending on broadcasting rights, particularly the most popular sports in each country, as the local remains fundamental (Rowe, 2003), to create long-term profitability (Andrews, 2003). In addition, Murdoch's purchases of and/or investments in sports organizations and media organizations (Real, 2005) furthered his prominence in the sports/media complex. In short, the essence of transnational media corporations resides "in the capacity to operate within the language of the sporting local, in multiple locations simultaneously" (Andrews, 2003, p. 244). In doing so, these corporations created additional advertising revenue, thus strengthening the business dimension of mediated sports (Real, 2005), although cable television would face strong competition from digital television in the following years (Whannel, 2009).

The Digital Revolution, underway since the 1950s, finally reached mediated sports in the early 2000s, bringing important changes aided by commodification and globalization (Borges, 2019). The transformation of media organizations into transnational media corporations, motivated by their economic desire to reach global audiences, occurred in a context of competition with each other, with bidding wars for broadcasting rights that increased their fees significantly, faster than domestic audiences could grow. This situation called into question the sustainability of the economic model of media organizations; in fact, some corporations and television networks went bankrupt (Boyle & Haynes, 2009), and even the bigger conglomerates faced financial difficulties (Andrews, 2003). In this context, sports organizations sought to turn the crisis of their main source of revenue into an opportunity to gain on television and restore balance in their relationship, first by expanding control over

their image rights and branding, and then by producing and distributing their own mediated content (Borges, 2019). Seeking alternatives to broadcast television, they initially turned to cable television, creating their own pay-per-view channels, but despite increasing their revenue, their subscription-based models never matched initial expectations, having fragile viability even today (Boyle & Haynes, 2009). However, the Internet and its global distribution infrastructure would prove more suitable to organizational goals, increasing consumption (Borges, 2019) and creating new opportunities for differentiation among the competition (Hutchins & Rowe, 2012). Moreover, sports organizations acting as media organizations produces overlapping roles within the sports/media complex, but this situation is not unprecedented, as media organizations have been promoting sporting events created by themselves for decades (Borges, 2019).

This situation demonstrates the dynamic nature of the sports/media complex, with agents negotiating among themselves and adjusting their positions in response to external changes (Wenner, 1989). Despite sports organizations exploring alternative sources of revenue and changing the dynamics of their interaction with media organizations in the process, they remain dependent upon broadcasting rights fees, and television continues to hold onto these rights to maintain control (Borges, 2019). Within the symbiotic relationship, sports also continue to be essential for the economic viability of broadcast and cable television, pressured by rapid changes in viewing habits (Hutchins et al., 2019). These changes were propelled by multi-screen viewing—the use of multiple electronic devices by spectators while watching television programs—which spread with the proliferation of mobile electronic devices and the development of web interactivity through social media (Cunningham & Eastin, 2015). Despite risk of cognitive overload, the use of multiple screens enhances opportunities for interaction with teams, athletes, and other spectators, which is something that fans actively seek out (Gantz, 1981, 2013) and allows them to consult information and statistical data to complement the broadcasts (Cunningham & Eastin, 2015). In short, multi-screen viewing adds the multiplication of content to the multiplication of screens, increasing the spectrum of spectator experiences through customization (Cunningham & Eastin, 2015; Hutchins et al., 2019), and reducing the degree to which events can be framed by the media (Boyle & Haynes, 2009).

Furthermore, as streaming services guarantee the distribution of the products of mass television to niche audiences online, they promote the multiplication of business (models). But despite changing viewing practices such as multi-screens, multi-content, and multi-business evading the control of broadcast television, streamed content is still television content and is referred to as digital television (Boyle & Haynes, 2009), thus perpetuating broadcast logics (Hutchins et al., 2019). Even though streaming services take advantage of the borderless nature of the Internet to disseminate televised sports across the globe (e.g., Tencent Video, DAZN, Amazon Prime Video), they still must overcome technical difficulties that spectator enjoyment to challenge the dominance of broadcast and cable television (Hutchins et al., 2019). In turn, the belief that traditional broadcasters cover sports better than other media has not halted their efforts to multiply content via digital television, using streaming and other services to bypass the schedule constraints of broadcasting (Boyle & Haynes, 2009).

1.2.6. Mediated Sports Today

The social, cultural, economic, and historical evolution of sports in its symbiotic but unbalanced relationship with the media has transformed them into something to watch, listen to, read about, and talk about, rather than just something to do (Bellamy, 2009). Within the relationship, sports continue to provide media with audiences that guarantee advertising revenue, whereas media continues to provide sports with public attention and also revenue from broadcasting rights (McChesney, 1989; Bellamy, 2009). In recent years, the symbiosis between media and sports has been enhanced by commodification and globalization, which have merged their separate institutions into MediaSport (Wenner, 1998). The development of mediated sports research over the last fifty years has reduced the stigma around sports (Wenner, 1998), and important social, political, economic, and historical conclusions have been drawn from their study (e.g., Real, 1975; Jhally, 1984; Rader, 1984; Wenner, 1989; Whannel, 1992; Wenner, 1998; Rowe, 2004; Boyle & Haynes, 2009; Bellamy, 2009; Hutchins et al., 2019). The sports/media complex has been a focal point of mediated sports research, and the need to adapt to changes in mediated sports have become evident to agents within the complex: whereas sports organizations and media organizations are reinforcing their marketing strategies and digital presence due to facing increased

competition and financial pressure, sports journalists are struggling to handle the fast-flowing information and maintain quality standards (Boyle & Haynes, 2009).

Furthermore, technological innovation became so rapid that regulation can no longer keep up with it, which promotes market liberalization and enhances the business dimension of mediated sports (Boyle & Haynes, 2009). Despite the financial pressures faced by television in this context, sports are key to the growing power of media entertainment (Bellamy, 2009). This is why Bellamy (2009) defines mediated sports as a “key television exemplar” (p. 66) in eight dimensions. First, mediated sports continue to be well suited to advertising as they attract audiences. Second, sports also continue to make for cost-effective programming. Third, the absence of significant language barriers facilitates the global distribution of mediated sports and raises its value without added cost. Fourth, mediated sports have cultural value in being universally appreciated. Fifth, mediated sports facilitate loyalty transfers from teams and athletes to their sponsors, which pleases advertisers. Sixth, mediated sports make its advertising zap-proof by deeply integrating it into the content. Seventh, mediated sports are effective in promoting other programming. Eighth, the mediated sports content produced by teams and athletes translates into more television programming without added costs (Bellamy, 2009). Because of this, broadcasters continue to pay for the increasingly expensive broadcasting rights. In 2024, the global value of these rights is expected to reach a record \$62 billion, relying on the weight of the Olympic Games and the UEFA European Championship (SVG Staff, 2023). However, this growth is occurring despite years of turbulence that started before the Covid-19 pandemic but were aggravated by it, producing contrasting realities between sports and leagues. This is the case with football in Europe, which remains the most valuable sports worldwide, worth \$19.2 billion, but the UEFA Champions League and the top five European football leagues are facing difficulties in attracting new audiences and grow their revenues beyond current levels. Faced with stagnation, sports promoters are renegotiating television packages to increase the number of matches and, by that means, preserve the profitability of broadcasting rights for sports organizations (SVG Staff, 2023; Gabilondo, 2023), which in turn increases financial pressure over media organizations.

In addition, the UEFA Champions League is preparing to launch an expanded format that could establish a 6-year multi-network agreement worth around \$5 billion for the

television rights (Gabilondo, 2023), whereas fees for the main European leagues, led by the English Premier League, vary between \$600 million and \$2 billion annually (UEFA Intelligence Centre, 2023)—the Portuguese *Primeira Liga* is valued at a much more modest \$170 million (Abola, 2023). In the United States, the National Football League (NFL) alone has its broadcasting rights valued at \$12.4 billion, and because they include the most prized sporting event for U.S. networks, the Super Bowl, each network has contracts over \$2 billion until 2033. In addition, the National Basketball Association's (NBA) rights are valued at \$2.6 billion until 2025, the Major League Baseball's (MLB) at \$1.8 billion until 2028, and the National Hockey League's (NHL) at \$635 million also until 2028. These figures encompass not only the purchases by broadcast and cable networks, which maintain their dominance in the media landscape, but also the growing importance of streaming services, with Amazon already spending over \$1 billion on NFL rights (Crupi, 2024).

The NFL's continued dominance in the American market, aided by the Super Bowl, demonstrates that super-events maintain the same appeal that Real (1975) attributed to them in his pioneering study of mediated sports. Since then, globalization has allowed mediated sports to move beyond national cultures and ideologies and develop a global appeal. The Olympic Games continue to reflect this process, by providing audiences that granted the International Olympic Committee (IOC) a television revenue of \$4.6 billion in the 2017-2020 quadrennial (*Funding*, n.d.). Football has acquired a global hegemony unprecedented among other sports and historical periods (Boyle & Haynes, 2009), with FIFA earning a television revenue of \$2.8 billion in 2022, when the most recent edition of the World Cup took place (*FIFA Publications*, n.d.). Finally, the UEFA European Championship, despite being a continental super-event, is adopting a global approach in searching for new markets to reverse the stagnation of television revenue in European football (*UEFA Euro 2020*, 2021).

In conclusion, despite the challenges in adapting to new technologies and paying for increasingly expensive broadcasting rights, as well as the ones arising from the unpredictable consequences of the pandemic and other significant global developments, television has demonstrated great adaptability in its multi-century history, and regardless of the supposed stagnation in American and European sports, mediated sports continue to expand into other regions of the globe (Hutchins et al., 2019). Within mediated sports history, the rise of the spectator as the essential linkage

between media and sports, enabled by the development of electronic media across the 20th century, is perhaps the most significant development (Bellamy, 2009). However, nowadays, spectators are increasingly seen as consumers, subject to economic pressures from the sports/media complex, and comparatively less seen as human beings and citizens with rights, which is causing concern among scholars (e.g., Rowe, 2004; Hutchins et al., 2019). For these authors, the defence of spectators must consider both their citizenship rights and their consumer rights, ensuring that the media continue to bring social and cultural benefits to their experience, but most importantly, it needs to place them at the centre of mediated sports research (Hutchins et al., 2019). This dissertation focuses on the spectator, specifically on his/her experience of suspense and enjoyment in the context of Portuguese mediated sports.

2. Sports Spectatorship

2.1. Introduction to sports spectatorship

Sports spectatorship is the act of watching sporting events with some level of engagement, whether attending a sporting venue or consuming media. The study of sports spectatorship is justified by the centrality of spectators to sports, which they acquired with the development of electronic media, firstly radio and then television, throughout the 20th century, but is now put at risk by economic pressures that promote commodification (Hutchins et al., 2019). Before the development of television as a mass medium, spectator research focused on the experience associated with the sporting venue, that is, spectators physically attending matches (Bryant & Raney, 2000). However, attendance figures grew little since the sporting events of Ancient Rome, whose venues already hosted tens and even hundreds of thousands of spectators (Harris, 1976). And despite the greater variety of sports increasing cumulative attendance figures, they have long taken a backseat to the enormous size of the audience for mediated sports (Bryant & Raney, 2000), hence the focus of this dissertation on mediated sports spectatorship.

The popularity of mediated sports spectatorship is confirmed by ratings across the globe, which allow television to draw revenues that are crucial to its financial sustainability, as explained in chapter 1. This popularity is evident in Portuguese football, in which the Cup final, whose 2024 edition was played between two of the biggest clubs in Portugal—Sporting and FC Porto—attracted an average television audience of more than 2 million spectators (Record, 2024), while no stadium in Portugal can host more than 65000 people. The scale of mediated sports spectatorship is even larger in European football, of which Portuguese football is only a small part. The most powerful example is the UEFA Champions League, in which the best Portuguese clubs compete. The final of this European competition generally averages an estimated 400 million spectators in more than 200 countries, whereas the UEFA Euro 2020 final attracted an audience of 328 million across the globe (May et al., 2024), and what would be the last match of Portugal in the competition was viewed by an average of 3.8 million spectators in the country, more than 35% of its population (Lusa, 2021). By comparison, the Super Bowl seems to face more difficulties in captivating global audiences, generally averaging an estimated 150 million spectators,

the majority in the United States (May et al., 2024). The maximum global expression of football occurs at the FIFA World Cup, whose 2022 final between Argentina and France attracted 1.5 billion spectators around the world (FIFA, 2023). Moreover, the increase in mediated sports consumption is being fuelled by digital platforms, which are beginning to catch up with television (Nielsen Media Research, 2022).

The popularity of mediated sports, which is evidenced by high spectatorship ratings that peak for super-events with global reach, determines the viability of business opportunities (Bryant & Raney, 2000) which continue to grow with commodification and globalization (Wenner, 1998; Hutchins & Rowe, 2012; Borges, 2019). The sports/media complex seeks to take advantage of these opportunities and, in this context, spectators play a central role in the relations between sports organizations, media organizations and sports journalists, because they all need to produce and distribute content that attracts these spectators (Wenner, 1989). Considering also that sports can make their advertising zap-proof by integrating it into the content (Bellamy, 2009), spectators are confronted with commercials in more than 30% of sports broadcasting time in the United States, compared to just 7% in European football (Whitelock, 2023).

Despite the inconveniences of sports programming, also caused by economic pressures that the sports/media complex exerts over spectators, they remain willing to consume them, which reinforces its usefulness to fill programming time on broadcast television (McChesney, 1989; Bryant & Raney, 2000). A recent survey has showed that the average American watches 4 hours of mediated sports per week, and 38% of Americans watch between 2 and 5 contests during that time (Ivanovska, 2023). But spectators do not just spend large amounts of time watching sports, they also spend large amounts of money. One study revealed that the average American sports fan spends \$664 on his/her favourite team (e.g., tickets, merchandising...), and one third of sports fans risk going into debt just because of these spendings (Schiff, 2022). And despite not having a direct relationship with the spectator experience, sports betting is also an important vehicle for financial spending in mediated sports, producing harmful consequences for fans that extend far beyond their condition as such (Raney, 2006).

The time and money that spectators invest in consuming mediated sports evidences their social, cultural, political, and economic impacts discussed in chapter 1, and further reinforces their relevance. More significantly, the level of interest in mediated

sports indicates that spectators enjoy them and have motivations to watch them. Indeed, extensive research has contributed to uncovering the sociological, psychological and communication factors that determine the enjoyment of mediated sports (e.g., Comisky et al., 1977; Sapolsky, 1980; Gantz, 1981; Zillmann et al., 1989; Bryant et al., 1994; Gan et al., 1997; Wenner & Gantz, 1998; Bryant & Raney, 2000; Raney, 2006; Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2009). Thus, providing comprehensive explanations of mediated sports spectatorship requires the examination of these motivations.

2.2. Motivations of sports spectatorship

The motivations of sports spectatorship explain the popularity of mediated sports, as previously discussed. These motivations can take on many different forms, but regardless of their nature, a general principle holds true: individuals turn to the media to fulfil their various psychological and sociological needs, and sports programming does not evade this principle (Raney, 2006). However, in this context, while the general motivations that lead to media exposure have been the subject of extensive research, the particular reasons for watching mediated sports were ignored for a long time.

Walter Gantz (1981) conducted the first prominent study of the motivations of sports spectatorship, drawing on uses and gratification theory to identify four motivations which are generalizable across sports: to thrill in victory, to let loose, to learn, and to pass time. Within these dimensions, to thrill in victory was the only one to be reported as “somewhat important” by spectators (p. 266), indicating some contrast in the uses of sports programming compared to other entertainment programming. He concluded that the particularity of sports broadcasts resides in the extent to which spectators anticipate them, by reading about, talking about, or simply waiting for them to happen (Gantz, 1981). Gantz’s survey provided the basis for several studies conducted together with Lawrence Wenner (see Wenner & Gantz, 1998). Alternatively, the Bryant-Zillmann-Raney research group (see Raney, 2006) sought to use disposition theory to explore how team identification, outcome, and eustress promote the enjoyment of mediated sports. Both approaches were brought together by Raney (2006) in a most comprehensive understanding of the various motivations for

watching mediated sports, distinguishing between their different natures: emotional, behavioural/social, and cognitive.

2.2.1. Emotional motivations of sports spectatorship

The most evident motivation for watching mediated sports arises from its positive emotional impact on spectators, who are assumed to be dependent upon and governed by the affective dispositions that they hold towards the contestants. The disposition theory of sports fandom explains how enjoyment comes from seeing a favoured team competing in sporting events (Zillmann et al., 1989; Bryant & Raney, 2000), while its in-depth discussion comes in the next subchapter. For now, the widely observed tendency of spectators to show their affective dispositions is sufficient to demonstrate the role of these dispositions at the core of the first motivation for watching mediated sports: entertainment (Gantz, 1981; Zillmann et al., 1989; Raney, 2006). As spectators want to thrill in victory (Gantz, 1981), they tune into mediated sports and cheer for their team in the pursuit of that outcome, expecting to experience enjoyment when that outcome materialises, being entertained until then (Raney, 2006). Thus, having the potential to create great enjoyment, the entertainment motivation for watching mediated sports can provide them with immense gratification, in the case of a positive outcome for their team.

The process of the entertainment motivation, to which affective dispositions are crucial, points to a second emotional motivation for watching mediated sports, because anticipation of a positive outcome also causes arousal and excitement as part of an emotional state of eustress (Wann, 1995; Raney, 2006). These emotions are rooted in the suspenseful nature of sports contests (Zillmann, 1991), and numerous studies indicate that they are indeed associated with the spectator experience. Specifically, sports spectators describe the process of viewing as exciting (Krohn et al., 1998), arousing (Wann et al., 2001), and able to get them psyched (Gantz, 1981; Wann, 1995). Moreover, the under-stimulation experienced by most individuals in their daily lives (Gantz, 1981; Krohn et al., 1998; Wann et al., 2001) may explain why they search for the strong emotions associated with eustress in mediated sports. But most importantly, the eustress motivation shows that, while the confirmation of a positive outcome at the end of a sports contest certainly provides spectators with great

enjoyment, they would be considerably less thrilled in victory if they did not experience arousal and excitement during the contest.

The third emotional motivation that Raney (2006) associates with watching mediated sports is distinct from the previous two in that it only manifests itself after the viewing experience is completed. In this context, sporting events provide an opportunity for spectators to feel better about themselves and, more broadly, enhance their self-esteem (Gantz, 1981; Wann, 1995; Wenner & Gantz, 1998). Specifically, watching a favoured team succeed is associated with increased self-esteem and confidence in one's own abilities, whereas viewing a favoured team failing is associated with diminished self-confidence and esteem. Hirt et al. (1992) demonstrated this extension of disposition theory to mood management by having students watching a live basketball match and then estimating their own performance at several tasks. The authors not only managed to identify a significant relationship between match outcome and estimates of one's own performance, but also corroborated the notion that self-esteem, rather than mood, mediated the relationship (Hirt et al., 1992; Madrigal, 1995; Owens & Bryant, 1998). Previous research conducted by Cialdini et al. (1976) had already validated the emotional utility of being a sports fan in the tendency to *bask in reflected glory* (BIRG). In line with the other emotional motivations, the self-esteem motivation depends largely on the confirmation of an outcome which spectators can enjoy.

The final emotional motivation for watching mediated sports is less dependent upon affective dispositions and the confirmation of a positive outcome, instead coming from the need of some spectators to escape everyday life (Gantz, 1981; Smith, 1988; Sloan, 1989). Current times are enormously stressful for individuals, whether by the pressures in their daily lives or concerns of global importance, having reinforced the tendency to use mediated content as a means of escapism, and mediated sports are no exception (Raney, 2006). In this context, the escape motivation might be one of the most important, as it provides gratification to spectators in the entirety of the viewing experience, specifically in the emotional intensity of that experience, regardless of what outcome materializes in the end (e.g., Smith, 1988).

2.2.2. Behavioural and social motivations of sports spectatorship

Another motivation for watching mediated sports comes from the realisation that even though the intense emotional experience associated with sporting events acts primarily upon the individual, it is also greatly conditioned by the social context surrounding him/her and which determines his/her behaviour. In this context, the previously discussed potential for emotional release, regardless of the outcome of a sports contest, resurges as the first behavioural and social motivation for watching mediated sports (Raney, 2006). Behaviours associated with emotional release during sports broadcasts include cheering, talking, complaining, pacing the floor, and having a beer (Gantz, 1981), while some scholars add that these behaviours are transferred from sporting venues to the spectators' living rooms, where they are boosted by group viewing (e.g., Rothenbuhler, 1985). Moreover, the spectator experience not only produces its own range of emotions, but it also enhances those belonging to the individuals themselves (Raney, 2006); in simple terms, watching mediated sports not only benefits the spectators, but it also benefits from the spectators. Regardless of the nature of the emotions experienced, the expectation of such an experience motivates spectators to watch mediated sports and provides them with gratification (Gantz, 1981; Krohn et al., 1998; Wenner & Gantz, 1998).

The social component of the release motivation leads to the second behavioural and social motivation for watching mediated sports: companionship (Gantz, 1981; Melnick, 1993; Wenner & Gantz, 1998). Research supports the notion that sports programming promotes communicative behaviour between spectators more than other media genres (Wenner & Gantz, 1998), translating a unique experience that Melnick (1993) describes as the *sports encounter*. Specifically, the sports encounter benefits from favourable conditions created by mediated sports, in the way individuals share assumptions about their knowledge, their behaviours, their motivations, their commitment, and the time boundaries of the conversation (Melnick, 1993), as the simplicity and universality of certain sports, notably football, facilitates it (Coelho, 2001). The opportunity for interaction provided by the sports encounter through shared knowledge and a common language increases spectator enjoyment, and it is further enhanced by group affiliation (Smith, 1988; Krohn et al., 1998). In fact, spectators with strong affective dispositions towards a team experience a sense of community and belonging (Smith, 1988) that, in global super-events like the Olympic Games and

the football World Cup, can promote national integration. The potential for group affiliation from sports spectatorship is such that Raney (2006) considers it as another behavioural and social motivation for watching sports.

Considering the social context of watching mediated sports, spending time with the family emerges as an additional motivation to watch mediated sports (Gantz, 1981; Guttman, 1986; Wenner & Gantz, 1998), present in traditions such as the Rose Bowl American football game on New Year's Day, or Boxing Day following Christmas in English football. Thus, family represents as legitimate a motivation for watching mediated sports as any other (Raney, 2006); and more broadly, the analysis of these motivations suggests the importance of the social context of watching mediated sports to the degree to which a sports contest can be enjoyed by spectators.

For now, the analysis focuses on the final behavioural and social motivation that, despite not having as broad a reach as the others, can still be significant in specific contexts. This is the economic and financial motivation, demonstrated by individuals investing on mediated sports daily, primarily through betting (Gantz, 1981; Wann, 1995), and often with the expectation of making economic gains (Guttman, 1986). Gambling is a deeply widespread practice which becomes problematic due to the excessive spending it promotes among ordinary people, resulting in the destruction of millions of lives around the world, including those of professional athletes like former football player Wayne Rooney or former NBA star Michael Jordan (Burke, 2019). In the United States, the National Council on Problem Gambling estimates that 2 million adults face severe gambling problems, with between 4 and 6 million struggling with mild or moderate addiction (NCPG, 2023), while the European Gambling and Betting Association has been alerting to the increased number of Europeans suffering from gambling addiction, as the growth of online betting is only aggravating their situations (Carbonaro, 2023). However, the grim worldwide reality of sports betting does not appear to be related with affective dispositions and enjoyment of watching mediated sports, as Wann (1995) demonstrated that spectators who reported a high economic motivation did not qualify as sports fans in their behaviour.

2.2.3. Cognitive motivations of sports spectatorship

The final motivations for watching mediated sports prove that this activity not only has an emotional and social character, but it also involves cognitive processes, which are implicit in motivations that are both independent and complementary to those mentioned above. Therefore, the first cognitive motivation for watching mediated sports is learning about teams, athletes, or the sports themselves (Gantz, 1981; Wenner & Gantz, 1998; Raney, 2006). More than the pleasure that spectators derive from cognitive activity, the knowledge they accumulate in this context becomes useful in promoting socialization with friends and even strangers through the sports encounter (Melnick, 1993). In turn, sporting events seek to communicate this knowledge in an interactive way, as broadcasts present a series of statistical, historical, or trivial facts that facilitate both learning and socialization, as well as motivates spectators to watch (Raney, 2006). Thus, the learning motivation not only enhances the gratifications associated with the companionship motivation for watching mediated sports, but also provides gratification in itself.

Another cognitive motivation for watching mediated sports is related to the aesthetic aspects of the competition, more specifically in the appreciation that spectators have for these aspects and the corresponding emotions they feel (e.g., Bense, 1954). While evaluation is a cognitive process, therefore contributing to the categorization of this motivation, appreciation includes a component of affect, pointing to an ambiguous nature (Raney, 2006). More specifically, on the one hand, spectators report an attraction to the artistic and stylistic beauty of the competition, with this component even being incorporated by some sports through the attribution of scores (e.g., gymnastics, figure skating, diving); therefore, the aesthetic motivation is crucial for these sports (Sargent et al., 1998). On the other hand, spectators may also feel motivated to watch sports due to the novelty, riskiness, and unexpectedness of the play (Zillmann et al., 1989). The appeal of these elements depends on the uncertainty they place on the outcome, as risky plays are less expected, so their attempt creates great expectation, and have a higher risk of failure, so their success creates great enjoyment (Zillmann et al., 1989; Bryant & Raney, 2000). As a result, sports commentators place great emphasis on elements associated with novelty or risk, while broadcasters use replays to highlight unexpected plays (Bryant & Raney, 2000). Thus, the aesthetic

motivation for viewing sports provides gratifications of an emotional nature, despite them being the result of a cognitive process.

2.3. Enjoyment of mediated sports

The enjoyment of mediated sports emanates from the various factors that motivate sports spectators to seek out that viewing experience, while extensive research has attempted to explain the reasons for their enjoyment through various entertainment theories, such as uses and gratifications (Gantz, 1981; Hall, 2015), mood management (Cialdini et al., 1976; Hirt et al., 1992), and disposition theory (Sapolsky, 1980; Zillmann et al., 1989; Zillmann & Paulus, 1993). From those theories, there are two key elements to the enjoyment of mediated sports: affective dispositions and suspense. These key elements are extensively examined, while other elements that also contribute to the enjoyment of mediated sports are addressed more succinctly. Since the 1970s that the attempts to prove the propositions of disposition theory and drama theory, including considerations of suspense regarding the enjoyment of mediated sports, have met with different levels of success. Specifically, that difference reflects a separation between studies on the impact of affective dispositions on the enjoyment of sports contests, which found early empirical support, and studies on the effect of suspense on enjoyment, which initially lacked similar support.

2.3.1. Affective dispositions

Affective dispositions are defined by Hartmann et al. (2008) as users' stances toward media characters that vary between liking and disliking of that character (Zillmann, 1996). Affective dispositions are formed during media exposure, when spectators set aside their presumed neutrality regarding the content they are watching (Raney, 2004) through moral reasoning or emotional reactions (Hartmann et al., 2008). Therefore, the specific factors that lead spectators to connect with a particular character depend on the content on display. Whereas in movies affective dispositions rely on well-designed structures, such as character development and plot, in sports these connections are influenced by more subjective factors (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2009), such as geographical, national, or ethnic proximity between spectators and athletes (Owens &

Bryant, 1998; Sapolsky, 1980; Zillmann et al., 1989). Even though situational factors can justify rooting for one team in specific cases (e.g., rooting for a neutral team as they face a disliked team), the dispositions of most spectators are permanent, as they are fuelled by fandom habits (Hartmann et al., 2008).

Considering all the above, affective dispositions exert a strong and direct influence on the enjoyment spectators draw from mediated sports content. In this context and according to disposition theory, the level of enjoyment will increase when witnessing the success of a liked competitor and/or witnessing the failure of a disliked competitor, as it will decrease from witnessing the failure of a liked competitor and/or witnessing the success of a disliked competitor (Zillmann et al., 1989; Zillmann & Paulus, 1993). Based on this double principle, the potential to create conflict and drama and, therefore, to boost spectatorship through the framing of participants in sporting events is evident. This is especially true for contact sports (Wenner & Gantz, 1989), as Knobloch-Westerwick et al. (2009) describe the process:

Sports competitions and matches most obviously portray rivalling individuals or teams who combat for victory, often exploiting all their physical and emotional resources, thus creating a clear-cut conflict that qualifies for great drama. The conflict is furthermore often emphasized through sports commentary, which enhances appreciation (p. 752).

A considerable number of studies have validated the double principle at the core of disposition theory, in terms of the impact of affective dispositions on the enjoyment of sports contests. The most significant of these investigations were conducted by the Zillmann-Bryant-Sapolsky research group and have been grouped together in their 1989 article *Enjoyment from sports spectatorship*. Their earliest study in this domain assessed the pre-existing affective dispositions of the participants toward professional American football teams, as the participants viewed a contest between two of the teams and then rated their enjoyment of each play and then of the whole match (see Zillmann et al., 1989). However, the researchers could not support the double principle unequivocally, because while spectators with positive affective disposition toward a team reported more enjoyment from that team's plays, the contrary was found to be true only with strong negative dispositions (Zillmann et al., 1989). In a separate study, they chose to enhance the nationalist dimension of affective dispositions by having male and female American students watch a portion of the 1976 Olympics basketball game between the United States and Yugoslavia, once again rating their enjoyment of

each play. Disposition theory received stronger empirical support in this study, as spectators not only reported great enjoyment from the United States baskets, but also demonstrated negative emotions whenever Yugoslavia scored. Moreover, as the experiment was conducted at an university that had players representing the national team, affective dispositions toward athletes were also observed, as those player's baskets caused the most enjoyment in the audience (Zillmann & Sapolsky, 1978).

Another early study on affective dispositions and their effect on enjoyment was conducted by Sapolsky (1980) by manipulating the coverage of a high school basketball game, with participants viewing only portions that were edited to make the score appear closer in the end and more lopsided earlier. A total of 94 Black and White male undergraduates viewed those portions, as the game was between an all-Black and an all-White team, therefore enhancing the racial dimension of affective dispositions. Participants viewed two versions of the game with different outcomes regarding the teams winning or losing, and then rated their enjoyment of some of the baskets scored as well as the outcome. In conformity with disposition theory, Black students found themselves committed to the Black team and consequently reported more enjoyment from their team's victory and baskets scored by Black athletes. Although the affective dispositions of White students were remarkably weaker, as they did not express greater enjoyment with baskets scored by White athletes, the impact of affective dispositions on their enjoyment was also evident.

More investigations have supported and further extended disposition theory over the years. Testing a structural model of fan satisfaction for sporting events, specifically women basketball matches, Madrigal (1995) analysed three possible predictors of enjoyment and overall fan satisfaction: expectancy disconfirmation, team identification, and quality of opponent. Out of those predictors, team identification had the dominant influence on affective dispositions, whereas enjoyment had the dominant influence on fan satisfaction (Madrigal, 1995). Another study was conducted by Owens and Bryant (1998) on the impact of hometown ("homer") announcers and colour commentary on the audience's affective dispositions and, consequently, on their enjoyment of a mediated high school American football game. Disposition theory was reinforced by students of the home team reporting higher levels of enjoyment from the game commentated by the "homer" announcer, who enhanced their affective dispositions in the geographical dimension.

Affective dispositions also generate positive consequences beyond the simple enjoyment of sports broadcasts, primarily from the tendency to *bask in reflected glory* (BIRG), previously mentioned in the context of the emotional motivation for watching sports (Raney, 2006). According to Cialdini et al. (1976), BIRG consists of publicizing a connection with another person who has been successful. In three field studies, they found that students sought to link themselves to the success of their football team by wearing team-identified apparel, without having directly contributed to the team's success. But while individuals can employ BIRG as an enhancement tactic (Tesser, 1986), they can also *cut off reflected failure* (CORF) to protect their image and avoid being perceived negatively in case of defeat (Snyder et al., 1983). However, in the context of sports, the emotional bond resulting from the connection with a team, even though initially based on that team's success, no longer allows them to CORF (Hirt et al., 1992). Per social identity theory, the team becomes an extension of the self, hence the team's success or failure equals personal success or failure. It is from this assumption, along with the consideration of its impact on individual mood and judgements, that Hirt et al. (1992) identify the significant relationship between match outcome and self-esteem.

Disposition theory and BIRG approaches have been adopted to explain the enjoyment of sporting events in the case of positive emotions (e.g. Cialdini et al., 1976; Hirt et al., 1992), but as sports can also provoke negative emotions while maintaining their appeal to spectators, they provide more gratifications than just enjoyment. One possible gratification, proposed by Hall (2015) based on the work of Oliver (e.g., Oliver & Bryant, 2011), is *appreciation*. Appreciation has similarities with enjoyment in emanating from affective dispositions, but becomes distinct in evoking a mix of emotions, including negative ones, which reward spectators with a sense of meaningfulness and human connection. Studying a baseball game, Hall (2015) demonstrated that appreciation is associated with strong positive, negative, and meaningful emotions, hence keeping spectators motivated to watch sports.

As meaningful human connection promotes engagement with mediated sports content, the social context of the viewing has great importance. In this context, it is widely believed that watching a sporting event in the company of others is better than watching alone, as social facilitation emanates both from a transformed individual state of mind due to contagion by other people's behaviours (Zajonc, 1965). The

question remains whether social facilitation can intensify affective dispositions. In the Sapolsky and Zillmann's (1978) study of Olympic basketball, they expected social facilitation to intensify the basic pattern of affective dispositions, but their results could not support this premise. One possible explanation is the different levels of relaxation of social control when viewing the game alone, with another person or in a crowd, as the participants of the study could not appreciate the opposition's baskets in the company of friends.

In recent times, research on disposition theory has benefited from contributions from other fields. An example of those contributions is a study conducted by Hartmann et al. (2008) which combined affective dispositions with the concept of *parasocial relationships* (PSR). Specifically, PSR consist of one-sided interpersonal relationships that spectators establish with media characters (Horton & Wohl, 1956) during media exposure, and which create positive or negative attitudes toward those characters; according to the authors, PSR function like affective dispositions, except in representing long-term bonds with said characters. In short, the conceptual alignment between PSR and affective dispositions provides a new framework for studying the enjoyment of mediated sports. But the external contributions can also come through innovative statistical approaches, as evidenced by the application of multilevel analysis to the longitudinal data collected by Knobloch-Westerwick et al. (2009) studying affective dispositions in a college football game with intense rivalry between teams, whose results not only demonstrate the influence of shifts in affect, but also that affective dispositions are a precondition to boost suspense.

Up to this point, affective dispositions have been considered according to a dual principle, meaning as entirely positive or negative; however, sports broadcasts reveal a more complex reality:

In considering broadcast audiences, it is important to realize that avid fans for teams involved in athletic contests tend to be a small minority, and the majority of spectators will hold non-extreme dispositions toward the teams, varying from moderate liking and moderate disliking to total indifference. This is certainly the case for nationally mediated contests.... Except of regionally narrow coverage of games, the large majority of spectators thus may qualify as avid fans of a sport or of sports at large but not of the teams involved in a specific broadcast contest. The stated expectations, then, should apply to these massive sports audiences. (Gan et al., 1997, p. 55).

Since the majority of sports broadcasts cannot afford to rely on strong affective dispositions on the part of their audience, they need to leverage other elements to increase enjoyment. Within those elements, suspense stands out as the most impactful.

2.3.2. Suspense

Suspense is defined by Zillmann (1996) as a “noxious affective reaction” that comes from “fearful apprehension about deplorable events that threaten liked protagonists” and is governed by “high but not complete subjective certainty” (p. 208), meaning it comes from a high degree of perceived certainty that a negative outcome will affect a favoured character in a mediated reality (Carroll, 1990; Zillmann, 1996). In short, suspense refers to an emotional experience for the audience that is associated with uncertainty about the outcome of a future event (Carroll, 1990) on the one hand, and requires affective dispositions from its members towards media characters (Zillmann, 1994) on the other hand, hence drama theory and disposition theory are both crucial to understanding suspense.

Affective dispositions emerge as a precondition for suspense and, as such, disposition theory plays a crucial role in explaining how it functions. Prior examination of affective dispositions and how they impact spectators’ perceptions of mediated content leaves no doubt that the interplay between positive and negative affect, present in the tension between fear of a negative outcome and hope for a positive outcome, is at the core of suspense (Knobloch-Westerwich et al., 2009). Analysing this tension, Zillmann (1996) points out an imbalance between the extended time consecrated by suspense plots to cause negative emotions in the prospect of a negative outcome, in comparison to the ephemeral duration of the happy ending. This imbalance is justified by the need to create another emotion, closely associated with negative affect and which, consequently, enhances the extent to which a happy ending is enjoyed: arousal. Whereas arousal translates the intensity of the experience to spectators, it is only through cognitive processing that such experience is possible (Zillmann, 1996).

The cognitive aspect within suspense is reinforced by its other condition: uncertainty, focused on whether a positive outcome will materialize or not. To understand its crucial role in suspense, it is important to consider that the concept of suspense was originally developed within the theoretical framework of fictional drama (e.g. Bense,

1954) and to date, its most sophisticated analyses have been conducted through the lens of drama theory (Peterson & Raney, 2008). Those studies continue to provide the basis for the study of suspense in mediated sports, and the similarities between the two types of content, which incorporate the same elements of suspense, sustain this application. We consider the key elements of suspense to be uncertainty and affective disposition, although Peterson and Raney (2008) argue that the presence of repeated opportunities for the favoured character to suffer the negative outcome—a common technique used in drama plots—also increases suspense and could represent another key element.

Despite the popular conception that equates suspense with uncertainty, maximal uncertainty does not promote maximal suspense in drama plots. Instead, as previously discussed, suspense arises from scenes that promote the perceived certainty of a negative outcome for a liked character (Carroll, 1990; Zillmann, 1994), therefore intensifying the more the spectator anticipates that negative outcome (Bryant & Raney, 2000). The difference between uncertainty in its absolute form and uncertainty as perceived by spectators, which Zillmann (1994) calls subjective certainty, becomes crucial to drama theory. Regarding suspense, he provides a comprehensive explanation:

It seems quite unlikely that the degree of uncertainty about outcomes and the intensity of the experience of suspense vary proportionally. One would expect, for instance, that witnessing the endangerment of an intensely liked protagonist produces less fearful apprehensions, and thus less suspense, when the odds for his/her safety are perceived to be 50-50 rather than, say, 25-75 (Zillmann, 1994, p. 206).

This situation occurs in fictional drama, but it represents a difference for mediated sports. Since suspense depends on perceptions and these are constructed by each genre using the tools at each one's disposal, the impact on the audience is limited by the genre. In the case of fictional drama, the effect of suspense is limited by the audience's awareness that the scenes they are watching do not correspond to reality (Peterson & Raney, 2008), whereas sports contests are real and authentic. This not only increases the levels of suspense, but also changes the spectators' perceptions at its core:

However, it seems reasonable to argue that in the decidedly nonfiction world of sports, the closer to 50-50 the likelihood of a liked team's defeat or victory becomes, the more suspenseful the contest. That is, suspense should increase

the more a team's odds of winning and losing approach even (Peterson & Raney, 2008, p. 549).

Accordingly, suspense in sports contests becomes about "leaving the outcome of the game in doubt until the very end" by levelling the odds (p. 549). Therefore, based on the previous dispositions, sports can be considered a "risky entertainment choice" (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2009, p. 754), because despite producing situations in which spectators experience emotional states associated with suspense (e.g., fear, apprehension, hope) much like in fictional drama, it has no script, and its timing is less predictable, thus failure is a realistic possibility that enhances emotional states and, consequently, suspense (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2009), giving sports "a unique flavour" (Wenner & Gantz, 1989, p. 242).

Although affective dispositions and uncertainty are the key elements of suspense, as they work together to enhance the emotional states associated with it, their combination alone does not guarantee enjoyment (Bryant et al., 1994). On the contrary, suspense appears to represent a paradox for enjoyment (Madrigal et al., 2011) because it is experienced as an unpleasant state of empathetic distress that more commonly occurs in response to the possibility of a negative outcome happening to a liked character. It is only through a cognitive process of excitation transfer that this distress can turn into enjoyment or disappointment (Zillmann, 1978). It proceeds as follows: when suspense is resolved and empathetic distress ceases, it gives way to a state of excitation that, in combination with affective dispositions, generates dysphoric or euphoric states in spectators, depending on whether they consider the outcome positive or negative (Bryant et al., 1994). Research conducted by Madrigal et al. (2011) suggests that relief is the positive emotion responsible for converting suspense into enjoyment. Relief arises from the pleasure felt by spectators when the prospect of a negative outcome is disconfirmed in the end of a match, even if they perceived that outcome as likely to happen during its course, therefore interrupting expectation (Madrigal et al., 2011). Thus, maximal relief occurs following a positive outcome preceded by a high level of subjective certainty of a negative outcome.

From the duality of affective dispositions and uncertainty that characterizes the emotional experience of suspense, the intertwining between cognition and affect in the enjoyment of sports contests—mentioned by Raney (2006) in his examination of the motivations to watch mediated sports—becomes even more evident. While the

affective dimension of suspense naturally comes from the affective dispositions that spectators hold towards media characters (Zillmann, 1994; Hartmann et al., 2008), its cognitive dimension is a consequence of uncertainty regarding the outcome of a future event and, specifically, the replacement of the empathetic distress by enjoyment through the cognitive process of excitation transfer (Zillmann, 1978, 1980; Bryant et al., 1994) which relief might mediate (Madrigal et al., 2011). The dual nature of suspense, depending on the proper combination of affective and cognitive elements to create enjoyment, is crucial to understanding the phenomenon, and has the greatest consideration in the study.

Despite the widespread recognition of the relationship between suspense and enjoyment of mediated sports, it has not always received substantial empirical support. The earliest attempt to prove the effect of suspense on enjoyment was made by Sapolsky (1980), as previously examined, through manipulation of suspense in a basketball game. While the results of the experiment showcased affective dispositions as a significant factor in enjoyment, they could not find a strong correlation between suspense and enjoyment. Gan et al. (1997), who would succeed in proving that correlation years later, provide a possible explanation for Sapolsky's failure. According to them, his focus on the racial dimension of the affective dispositions of the participants disregarded other dimensions, particularly the geographical dimension, which also strengthens those dispositions. As a result, and because the teams were from a different state than the students, they were not invested in the broadcast to the point of experiencing suspense, hence no impact on enjoyment was discerned.

Two later attempts were more successful in establishing the relationship between suspense and enjoyment. The first of these attempts was made by Bryant et al. (1994). They studied a high school American football match by having it videotaped professionally and then edited the tapes to create a suspenseful version and a non-suspenseful version. The manipulation of suspense was made through the addition of commentary: in the non-suspenseful version, the commentary diminished the importance of the game, whereas in the suspenseful version, the commentary enhanced it. As predicted, watching a more suspenseful version of the broadcast made the match more enjoyable and exciting, and less dull and boring as well. Moreover, under conditions of high suspense, spectators were more anxious about the outcome, cared more about whether their favoured team won, and liked the winning team more

than did spectators of the non-suspenseful version of the broadcast. Thus, using commentary to make a sports contest relevant presents an alternative to manipulation by closeness of score in the creation of suspense and enjoyment.

The second successful attempt was made by Gan et al. (1997), as mentioned above, providing clarification regarding the role of suspense in enjoyment. The authors asked male and female students to watch live broadcasts of eight basketball matches and then rated their enjoyment of the second half. Associating greater closeness of score with greater suspense, contests were categorized in four levels of suspense based on point difference in the final score. While men's enjoyment increased with suspense in all cases, women's enjoyment also increased with suspense but only up to a certain point, after which their enjoyment decreased substantially. This gender difference manifests itself in the empathetic distress felt during the match and is discussed in further detail in the next subchapter.

2.3.3. Other elements of the enjoyment of mediated sports

Despite the relative importance of affective dispositions and suspense for the enjoyment of mediated sports, these are not the only elements that contribute to it. These additional elements not only explain differentiations between spectators in the viewing experience, but more broadly reflect considerations of drama theory that are equally important to understand the phenomenon. Regardless of how they translate into enjoyment and therefore provide that understanding, they have been subject of mediated sports research, and that makes their discussion necessary, albeit brief, in the context of this dissertation.

One of the most common elements that is related to the enjoyment of mediated sports and that has consequently drawn empirical attention is gender. Studies that analyse this dimension support the conventional notion that men watch more sports than women (Gantz & Wenner, 1991; Dietz-Uhler et al., 2001; Deaner et al., 2016; Ivanovska, 2023), which may find a justification in the predominance of male sports programming on television, as spectators prefer to watch same-sex athletes (Guttmann, 1986), although other experts point to the role of social norms and expectations, especially in the family context, in conditioning sports spectatorship for women (Gantz & Wenner, 1991; Whiteside & Hardin, 2011). Perhaps that is the reason why,

even though men and women do not differ in their identification as sports fans, the former conceive sports fandom as part of their identity, while the latter report enjoyment of sporting events per se and also in their social component (Dietz-Uhler et al., 2001). Additionally, men's motivations for sports participation and spectatorship incorporate greater competitiveness and risk taking, but gender differences are minor in terms of live attendance of sporting events (Deaner et al., 2016). More significant to the present study are the indicators that men and women experience suspense differently, as one study (Gan et al., 1997) revealed that, while men and women both experience enjoyment from increased suspense, women's enjoyment only increases up to a certain point before decreasing substantially. According to the authors, this gender difference is focused on the empathetic distress felt during sports contests, which female spectators may experience in such an aggravated way that not even its resolution at the end is sufficient to keep a high level of interest (Gan et al., 1997).

Although the enjoyment of mediated sports is related to gender differences, the consensus surrounding sporting events is that closely contested matches are more enjoyable than matches where the outcome is never in doubt (Gan et al., 1997). In this context, drama theory emphasises the role of uncertainty in keeping spectators attached to their television screens (e.g., Berlyne, 1960), since the only way for them to abandon that "noxious state" is to wait for a resolution that only comes at the close (Zillmann, 1991). In addition, given that perceived certainty of a negative outcome for a liked character is crucial for suspense, the amount of time that is left to avoid that outcome plays an important role too: the less time a favoured character has to avoid that negative outcome, the higher the suspense will be (Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2009). This pattern has been demonstrated for movie spectators in their rated perceptions of suspense (e.g. Vorderer et al., 2001) and it has been applied to mediated sports, specifically to study the effect of the suspense felt by the audience on their enjoyment of sporting events (e.g., Sapolsky, 1980; Gan et al., 1997).

Within the elements used by broadcasters to enhance suspense and enjoyment of mediated sports, commentary stands out as the most impactful. Sports commentary contributes to a more informed and engaged spectator experience, enhances the entertainment value of sporting events, and ultimately builds a reputation for broadcasters (Comisky et al., 1977; Sullivan, 1991). Since television typically mediates between the audience and the sporting events on display, commentary has a

fundamental role in influencing the enjoyment spectators derive from sporting events, including the emotions that determine their experience of suspense. Specifically, spectators in front of the television have different impressions from the game in comparison to the fans in the stadium, as they are presented with a media product in which broadcasters enhance the action for them (Bryant et al., 1977). This dramatic function of sports commentary comprises two main objectives: on the one hand, highlight events that amuse spectators to enhance the spectacular dimension, on the other hand, enhance suspense in sports contests mainly through conflict (Sullivan, 1991), as several studies have demonstrated the relationship between commentary that uses dramatic statements and increases spectators' perceptions of roughness of play and hostility between teams and players with greater enjoyment of sports contests (Comisky et al., 1977; Bryant et al., 1981; Bryant et al., 1982). For this reason, the framing of sports contests as conflicts has become frequent, with sports commentators often using war metaphors, battle analogies, and life-or-death hyperboles in their narration of contests, with the purpose of creating high drama (Bryant & Raney, 2000). This dramatic framing promotes the public's acceptance of violence between teams and players, by integrating that violence into sports and giving it a natural appearance that allows its interpretation as part of the struggle for victory. Hence dramatic commentary mediates perceptions of how contests are won and lost, as well as demonstrates the authenticity that makes sports drama unique (Sullivan, 1991).

Finally, the specific sport under observation could represent an additional factor of differentiation not only to the enjoyment of mediated sports, but also regarding suspense. Raney and Depalma (2006) examined reactions to the viewing of professional wrestling and boxing, two sports whose most significant difference is that the first is scripted and the latter is unscripted. The results indicated that television spectators of the unscripted sport reported higher levels of suspense in comparison with spectators of the scripted sport. Based on this premise, Peterson and Raney (2008) argue that the uncertainty promoted by unscripted sports, on par with affective dispositions and situational factors, "should ensure that all games have the potential for suspense" (p. 548).

3. Method

3.1. Purpose

The purpose of this research is to examine the influence of affective dispositions, and the feelings of suspense experienced by spectators of Portuguese football matches in their enjoyment of matches. By focusing on the participation of the Portuguese national team in UEFA Euro 2024, which exemplifies a super-event in terms of its social and cultural significance, it seeks to capture the broadest spectrum possible of Portuguese mediated sports spectatorship. Specifically, it aims to investigate whether football fans experience suspense during matches and to understand what factors influence their experience. This is assumed to be reflected not only in the relationships between affective dispositions and suspense, and between suspense and enjoyment, but in the factors that compose affective dispositions and suspense as well.

Research on Portuguese mediated sports has focused mainly on texts, uncovering their meaning to understand the social, cultural, political and economic impacts especially of the football phenomenon in the country. While the focus on Portuguese football remains, through the participation of the Portuguese national team in UEFA Euro 2024, the need to place the spectator at the centre of mediated sports leads this study to focus on audiences and their live reactions to a specific sports contest. Most significantly, this study aims to fill a gap in the existing literature, contributing to a deeper understanding of sports spectatorship and specifically enjoyment of Portuguese mediated sports.

3.2. Strategy and worldview

To provide insights into the spectator experience of watching the Portuguese national team in UEFA Euro 2024, this study employed a quantitative method. Quantitative research aims to test objective theories by examining the relationships among variables, which are measured using instruments that provide numerical data, and then are analysed using statistical procedures. Thus, quantitative researchers seek to deductively test theories, take measures to avoid bias, control for alternative explanations, and ensure that findings are generalizable and replicable by future studies (Creswell, 2008). Furthermore, the adoption of this method arises from a

postpositivist worldview. Acknowledging that absolute certainty is unattainable for claims about human behaviour (Phillips & Burbules, 2000), post-positivism leads researchers to assess causes and effects through the observation of reality and condense complex ideas into a smaller set of variables to form hypotheses and research questions, based on the development of numeric measures (Creswell, 2008). In their mediated sports research, the Zillmann-Bryant-Sapolsky group adopts quantitative methods based on this worldview (e.g., Zillmann et al., 1989), and because this study seeks to assess their most significant claims regarding affective dispositions, suspense, and enjoyment in the context of Portuguese mediated sports, it adopts a similar approach.

3.3. Research Question and Hypotheses

This study is guided by the research question “How do spectators of the Portuguese national team experience suspense in a UEFA Euro 2024 match?” The phrase “spectators of the Portuguese national team” considers the possibility of having affective dispositions towards the team without having Portuguese nationality. On the one hand, this study seeks to take advantage of UEFA Euro 2024 as a super-event that, by placing national teams from different European countries in competition, evokes strong nationalist feelings in spectators and moves their affective dispositions toward a strong emotional investment. On the other hand, suspense arising from a match with uncertainty about its outcome posits the strongest emotional reactions from sports spectators, and in the case of a positive outcome in the end, it determines their enjoyment of mediated sports, thus becoming the main focus of the study. From these considerations, it becomes possible to draw research questions to further guide the study.

RQ1. What is the effect of the affective dispositions of spectators of the Portuguese national team on their feelings of suspense while watching a UEFA Euro 2024 match?

Affective dispositions emerge as precondition for suspense. Spectators are presumed to hold affective dispositions towards the Portuguese national team based on sharing the same nationality with the athletes, although some exceptions are expected to occur. In turn, affective dispositions are expected to predict their emotional involvement with

the broadcast before the match, as uncertainty regarding the outcome has not been enhanced by the match experience yet. Based on this understanding of affective dispositions and suspense, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H1: Spectators with stronger affective dispositions toward the Portuguese national team will experience stronger feelings of suspense while watching a UEFA Euro 2024 match, compared to those with weaker affective dispositions.

RQ2. What is the effect of feelings of suspense by spectators of the Portuguese national team on their feelings of fear and hope while watching a UEFA Euro 2024 match?

Suspense, whether as experienced by spectators of the Portuguese national team during a UEFA Euro 2024 match or as predicted by them before the match, involves emotional reactions of hope for a positive outcome and especially fear of a negative outcome, but also excitement to watch the match and find out its outcome. As suspense has the potential to be enhanced by the match experience, it needs to be studied especially after the end of the match, when these feelings are still present, albeit already overlaid by enjoyment or disappointment from a positive or negative outcome. Based on this understanding of the relationship between suspense and feelings of hope and fear, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H2.1: Spectators who experience stronger feelings of suspense while watching a UEFA Euro 2024 match will also experience stronger feelings of hope for a positive outcome, compared to those with weaker feelings of suspense.

H2.2: Spectators who experience stronger feelings of suspense while watching a UEFA Euro 2024 match will also experience stronger feelings of fear for a negative outcome, compared to those with weaker feelings of suspense.

RQ3: What is the effect of the experience of suspense felt by spectators of the Portuguese national team on their enjoyment of a UEFA Euro 2024 match?

Suspense represents a paradox for enjoyment, because it is experienced by spectators as distress, while the confirmation of a positive outcome at the end of a match breaks

with such unpleasant state to give place to enjoyment. This process requires spectators to be emotionally involved with the broadcast, whether motivated by their affective dispositions or by uncertainty regarding the outcome of the match. Based on this understanding of the relationship between suspense and enjoyment, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H3: Spectators of the Portuguese national team who experience stronger feelings of suspense in a UEFA Euro 2024 match will experience stronger feelings of enjoyment, in the case of a positive outcome for the Portuguese national team.

RQ4. What is the effect of fandom habits of spectators of a UEFA Euro 2024 match of the Portuguese national team on their affective dispositions?

As previously discussed, spectators are presumed to hold affective dispositions towards the Portuguese national team based on nationality, and fandom habits better explain the intensity of those affective dispositions. Fandom habits range from watching all the Portuguese national team's matches to making special arrangements, searching for information, wearing merchandise, discussing the matches with friends/coworkers or using social media, or simply feeling an emotional connection to the team. These habits are expected to reflect the affective dispositions of spectators towards the Portuguese national team in the UEFA Euro 2024. Based on this understanding of the relationship between fandom habits and affective dispositions, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H4: Spectators who hold stronger affective dispositions towards the Portuguese national team will also report stronger fandom habits, compared to those with weaker affective dispositions.

3.4. Procedure

3.4.1. Survey Design

This study employed a survey as its research method (Attachment 1), aiming to quantitatively describe the trends, attitudes, and opinions of Spectators of the Portuguese national team regarding their experiences during a UEFA Euro 2024

match. Survey design, according to Creswell (2008), is an effective method for examining a sample of a population to generalize findings, making it suitable for quantitative research. Specifically, this study draws on two online surveys, conducted at two different moments, and with two different samples: Survey 1, to assess affective dispositions and suspense before the match; Survey 2, to assess suspense and enjoyment after the match. Survey 1 also collected data regarding the age, gender, and nationality of respondents. This demographic data reinforces the need to comply with the highest ethical standards associated with scientific research, and in that regard, the anonymity of participants was guaranteed throughout the study. Furthermore, as affective dispositions, suspense, and enjoyment are all categorical ordinal variables, Survey 1 and Survey 2 used a Likert scale. Likert scales are suited for survey research in presenting statements followed by answer statements ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), from which respondents choose the option that best corresponds to how they feel (Creswell, 2008).

3.4.2. Sampling

This study adopted a non-probability sampling method, facilitating data collection through non-random selection based on convenience. A convenience sample includes the individuals who are most accessible to the researcher, and for the purpose of this study, it represents an easy and inexpensive way to gather data (Creswell, 2008). To determine the size of the population, comprised of spectators of Portuguese mediated sports, audience ratings of the Portuguese national team's matches during UEFA Euro 2020 were used, as audience data for UEFA Euro 2024 was unavailable during the tournament. The most watched match of UEFA Euro 2020 in Portugal was Portugal-Belgium, attracting 3.8 million viewers, but the average viewership of 3 million for Portugal's matches in the tournament (Lusa, 2021) should serve as reference, representing approximately 29% of the Portuguese population. To ensure a statistically significant sample size and considering a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, it was determined that 317 respondents would be an adequate number.

3.4.3. Data collection

The Portugal-Turkey match during UEFA Euro 2024 was chosen as the focal point for data collection in this study. This match, which was the Portuguese national team's second in the tournament, was selected due to its potential for suspense, given that qualification for the next stage was at stake. The previous match, Portugal-Czechia, being the first match of the national team in UEFA Euro 2024, was also deemed suitable for selection, however the surveys were not ready in time. In contrast, the last match of the group stage, Portugal-Georgia, was deemed unsuitable as suspense levels were likely to be low, given the chances of Portugal securing qualification for the tournament's next stage in the previous match. Finally, the matches Portugal-Slovenia (last 16) and Portugal-France (quarter-final) in the knockout stages become involved in high tension after the defeat of the Portuguese national team in the last match of the group stage, and considering the additional challenges to observation, a decision was made to not collect data from them.

The data collection for Survey 1 proceeded from the day of the Portugal-Turkey match and closed when the match started, while the data collection for Survey 2 began immediately after the match ended and closed the following day. The surveys were presented on Google Forms to facilitate their distribution through multiple channels, in an effort to increase age and gender diversity among respondents. Specifically, they were distributed online, with surveys being shared on social media platforms and through WhatsApp, but also through in-person solicitation, by approaching individuals in public places where the match was being broadcast and requesting their participation. A total of 249 respondents participated in Survey 1, while 176 respondents completed Survey 2, for a total of 425 responses.

3.4.4. Data analysis

Once the data collection was completed, the responses were extracted from Google Forms and processed using Microsoft Excel for initial organization. After checking for missing data, all 425 responses were validated. Further analysis was conducted using SPSS to perform statistical tests to determine relationships among variables for each hypothesis. Firstly, internal reliability was assessed through Cronbach's Alpha. Secondly, having 8 items to assess affective dispositions on Survey 1, 5 items to assess

suspense on Survey 1, and 4 items to assess suspense on Survey 2, factor analysis was applied to determine underlying factors that could generate composite variables of affective dispositions and suspense, as well as to assess the strength of fandom habits and feelings of fear and hope respectively. Composite variables are made up of two or more variables that are highly related to one another statistically (Ley, 1972), having the potential to improve the study by providing more concise information about the variables. Finally, simple linear regression was applied to assess the correlations between affective dispositions and suspense, and between suspense and enjoyment, using the composite variables whenever possible. This approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of how spectators of the Portuguese national team experienced suspense during the Portugal-Turkey match in UEFA Euro 2024.

4. Results

4.1. Data

4.1.1. Outcome of the match

The Portugal-Turkey match at UEFA Euro 2024 produced a positive outcome for the Portuguese national team, which secured a 3-0 victory and qualification for the next stage of the tournament. Although this study is focused on suspense as experienced subjectively by spectators of the national team, the decisive score and the early resolution of the match indicated objectively low suspense, which had the potential to influence the results of the study.

4.1.2. Age, Gender, and Nationality

Demographic data on age, gender, and nationality was collected in Survey 1.

Table 1 - Age groups by Gender

Age groups	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
[18-24]	23	19,2%	17	13,2%	40	16,1%
[25-44]	28	23,3%	35	27,1%	63	25,3%
[45-64]	57	47,5%	68	52,7%	125	50,2%
+ 65	6	5,0%	4	3,1%	10	4,0%
Null	6	5,0%	5	3,9%	11	4,4%
Total	120	100%	129	100%	249	100%

Table 1 shows the age and gender of Survey 1 respondents (universe n=249). Even if response to these items was not mandatory, they are still noteworthy. To facilitate the interpretation, the sample was organized in four age groups of 18-24 years, 25-44 years old, 45-64 years old, and more than 65 years old. In addition, there were 11 null responses. The 45-64 group had the biggest number of respondents, followed by the 25-44 group and the 18-24 group; in contrast, the +65 group obtained a low number of respondents. Furthermore, Survey 1 had an approximate number of male and female respondents.

Table 2 - Nationality

	Absolute Frequency (F_i)	Relative Frequency (f_i)	Cumulative f_i
Portuguese	244	98%	98%
Other	5	2%	100%
Total	249	100%	

Table 2 shows the nationality of Survey 1 respondents, an item whose response was mandatory because of its importance to the affective dispositions towards the Portuguese national team. In that regard, the great majority of respondents had Portuguese nationality, with only five having other nationality.

4.1.3. Relationship between fandom habits and affective dispositions (H4)

Data on affective dispositions was collected on Survey 1, with the purpose of assessing not only the relationship between fandom habits and affective dispositions (H4), but the relationship between affective dispositions and suspense (H1) as well.

Table 3 - Reliability statistics for affective dispositions

Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Number of Items
0,855	0,855	8

Table 3 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha of the eight items of affective dispositions on Survey 1 was $\alpha = 0.855$, which indicates a good level of internal consistency.

Table 4 - Item statistics for affective dispositions

Affective dispositions	Mean	Std. Deviation (σ)	N
I support the national team	4,60	0,701	249
I feel a strong emotional connection to the national team	3,98	1,043	
I watch all the national team's matches	3,86	1,156	
I discuss the national team's matches with friends/coworkers	3,74	1,124	
I search for information on the national team's matches	3,66	1,132	
I make plans to watch the national team's matches	3,39	1,146	
I use merchandise to watch the national team's matches	2,74	1,251	
I discuss the national team's matches on social media	2,19	1,176	

Table 4 shows that the means of the eight items of affective dispositions on Survey 1 received moderate to high levels of agreement, with only the items “I use merchandise to watch the national team’s matches” and “I discuss the national team’s matches on social media” showing indifference, meaning neither agreement nor disagreement. “I support the national team” had the highest level of agreement. Nonetheless, “I feel a strong emotional connection to the national team” had a high level of agreement, along with “I watch all the national team’s matches”. Other fandom habits, such as “I discuss the national team’s matches with friends/coworkers”, “I search for information on the national team’s matches”, and “I make plans to watch the national team’s matches” also reflected agreement, showcasing that most respondents hold strong affective dispositions toward the Portuguese national team.

Table 5 - Correlation Matrix for Affective dispositions ^a

	I support the national team	I watch all the national team's matches	I make plans to watch the national team's matches	I search for information on the national team's matches	I use merchandise to watch the national team's matches	I discuss the national team's matches with friends/coworkers	I discuss the national team's matches on social media	I feel a strong emotional connection to the national team
I support the national team	Pearson Correlation --							
I watch all the national team's matches	Pearson Correlation 0,410**	--						
I make plans to watch the national team's matches	Sig. <0,001							
I search for information on the national team's matches	Pearson Correlation 0,298**	Pearson Correlation 0,534**	--					
I use merchandise to watch the national team's matches	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001						
I discuss the national team's matches with friends/coworkers	Pearson Correlation 0,355**	Pearson Correlation 0,531**	Pearson Correlation 0,412**	--				
I discuss the national team's matches on social media	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001					
I feel a strong emotional connection to the national team	Pearson Correlation 0,312**	Pearson Correlation 0,505**	Pearson Correlation 0,576**	Pearson Correlation 0,463**	--			
	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001				
	Pearson Correlation 0,324**	Pearson Correlation 0,609**	Pearson Correlation 0,458**	Pearson Correlation 0,666**	Pearson Correlation 0,417**	--		
	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001			
	Pearson Correlation 0,197**	Pearson Correlation 0,361**	Pearson Correlation 0,330**	Pearson Correlation 0,404**	Pearson Correlation 0,432**	Pearson Correlation 0,324**	--	
	Sig. 0,002	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001		
	Pearson Correlation 0,427**	Pearson Correlation 0,563**	Pearson Correlation 0,430**	Pearson Correlation 0,429**	Pearson Correlation 0,454**	Pearson Correlation 0,364**	Pearson Correlation 0,305**	--
	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	Sig. <0,001	

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

^a. Listwise N=249

Table 5 shows the correlations between the eight items of affective dispositions on Survey 1. “I watch all the national team’s matches” demonstrated the strongest correlations with “I discuss the national team’s matches with friends/coworkers”, “I feel a strong emotional connection to the national team” and “I make plans to watch the national team’s matches”, while “I support the national team” featured some of the weakest correlations with “I discuss the national team’s matches on social media” and with “I make plans to watch the national team’s matches”. Further interpretation required factor analysis to check for underlying factors of the eight items of affective dispositions on Survey 1.

Table 6A - Total Variance explained for affective dispositions

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %
1	4,019	50,241	50,241	4,019	50,241	50,241
2	0,869	10,864	61,106			
3	0,779	9,735	70,841			
4	0,691	8,638	79,479			
5	0,547	6,831	86,310			
6	0,441	5,518	91,829			
7	0,376	4,698	96,526			
8	0,278	3,474	100			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 6A shows the explained variance (σ^2) of the eight components extracted from the eight items of affective dispositions on Survey 1, from which the Eigenvalues allowed to determine the existence of underlying factors. The items being faithful to the literature, confirmation of “affective dispositions” as the only underlying factor was expected. Since only Component 1 had an Eigenvalue larger than 1 (4,019), it was confirmed that “affective dispositions” were the only underlying factor of the eight items.

Table 7A - Communalities for affective dispositions

Affective dispositions	Initial	Extraction
I watch all the national team's matches	1	0,662
I search for information on the national team's matches	1	0,583
I discuss the national team's matches with friends/coworkers	1	0,564
I use merchandise to watch the national team's matches	1	0,548
I make plans to watch the national team's matches	1	0,521
I feel a strong emotional connection to the national team	1	0,501
I discuss the national team's matches on social media	1	0,321
I support the national team	1	0,319

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 7A shows the communalities which allowed to determine how the underlying factor “affective dispositions” accounts for the variance (σ^2) of the eight items on Survey 1, thus discovering which variables have a significant contribution to measure that underlying factor. Predicting each of the eight variables from “affective dispositions” through simple linear regression, “I watch all the national team’s matches” had the highest R-Squared value, followed by “I search for information on the national team’s matches”, while “I discuss the national team’s matches with friends/coworkers”, “I use merchandise to watch the national team’s matches”, “I make plans to watch the national team’s matches”, and “I feel a strong emotional connection to the national team” also demonstrated a strong contribution to measure “affective dispositions”. As “I discuss the national team’s matches on social media” and “I support the national team” had R-Squared smaller than 0,5, their contribution was reduced and, consequently, they were to be excluded from the composite variable, which thus incorporates only six of the eight variables. However, as the removal of two variables changes all results, the analysis had to be redone to confirm that these assumptions held true.

Table 6B - Total Variance explained for affective dispositions

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %
1	3,478	57,964	57,964	3,478	57,964	57,964
2	0,771	12,855	70,818			
3	0,622	10,374	81,192			
4	0,472	7,860	89,052			
5	0,377	6,282	95,334			
6	0,280	4,666	100			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 6B shows the explained variance (σ^2) of the six components extracted from the six items of affective dispositions on Survey 1, from which the Eigenvalues allowed to determine the existence of underlying factors. The six items being faithful to the literature, further confirmation of “affective dispositions” as the only underlying factor was expected. Since only Component 1 had an Eigenvalue larger than 1 (3,478), again it was confirmed that “affective dispositions” were the only underlying factor of the six items.

Table 7B - Communalities for affective dispositions

Affective dispositions	Initial	Extraction
I watch all the national team’s matches	1	0,684
I discuss the national team's matches with friends/coworkers	1	0,602
I search for information on the national team's matches	1	0,593
I make plans to watch the national team's matches	1	0,554
I use merchandise to watch the national team's matches	1	0,544
I feel a strong emotional connection to the national team	1	0,501

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 7B shows the communalities which allowed to determine how the underlying factor “affective dispositions” accounts for the variance of the six items on Survey 1, thus discovering which variables have a significant contribution to measure that underlying factor. Predicting each of the six variables from “affective dispositions” through simple linear regression, “I watch all the national team’s matches” kept the highest R-Squared value (0,684), while the remaining variables kept R-Squared values larger than 5. Then the six variables were computed to form the composite variable of “affective dispositions” necessary to assess the relationship between affective dispositions and suspense (H1).

4.1.4. Relationship between suspense and hope/fear (H2.1/H2.2)

Data on suspense and feelings of fear and hope was collected on both Survey 1 and Survey 2, with the purpose of assessing not only the relationship between suspense and feelings of hope for a positive outcome (H2.1) and the relationship between suspense and feelings of fear of a negative outcome (H2.2), but the relationship between affective dispositions and suspense (H1), and the relationship between suspense and enjoyment (H3) as well.

Table 8 - Reliability statistics for suspense before the match

Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Numb. of Items
0,774	0,781	5

Table 8 shows that Cronbach’s Alpha of the five items of suspense on Survey 1 is $\alpha = 0,774$, which indicates an acceptable level of internal consistency.

Table 9 - Item statistics for suspense before the match

Suspense	Mean	Std. Deviation (σ)	<i>N</i>
I hope for a positive outcome for the national team in this match	4,41	0,725	249
I am excited to watch this match	4,17	0,918	
I anticipate a high level of suspense in this match	3,95	0,980	
I am anxious to find out the outcome of this match	3,94	1,087	
I fear a negative outcome for the national team in this match	3,23	1,118	

Table 9 shows that the means of the five items of suspense on Survey 1 have received a high level of agreement, with no items pending for disagreement. “I hope for a positive outcome for the national team” obtained the highest level of agreement, with “I fear a negative outcome for the national team” obtaining the lowest level of agreement. Comparatively, “I am excited to watch this match” also demonstrated a high level of agreement, compared to the more moderate one of “I anticipate a high level of suspense in this match” and “I am anxious to find out the outcome of this match”, showcasing that even though respondents accounted for the possibility of experiencing suspense, it may not have been their main feeling before the match.

Table 10 - Correlation Matrix for Suspense before the match ^a

	I am excited to watch this match	I anticipate a high level of suspense in this match	I hope for a positive outcome for the national team in this match	I fear a negative outcome for the national team in this match	I am anxious to find out the outcome of this match
I am excited to watch this match	Pearson Correlation	--			
I anticipate a high level of suspense in this match	Pearson Correlation	0,713**	--		
	Sig.	<0,001			
I hope for a positive outcome for the national team in this match	Pearson Correlation	0,453**	0,354**	--	
	Sig.	<0,001	<0,001		
I fear a negative outcome for the national team in this match	Pearson Correlation	0,245**	0,309**	0,143*	--
	Sig.	<0,001	<0,001	0,024	
I am anxious to find out the outcome of this match	Pearson Correlation	0,625**	0,606**	0,371**	0,337**
	Sig.	<0,001	<0,001	<0,001	<0,001

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

^a . Listwise N=249

Table 10 shows the correlations between the five items of suspense on Survey 1. The strongest correlations were found between “I am excited to watch this match” and “I anticipate a high level of suspense in this match”, “I am excited to watch this match” and “I am anxious to find out the outcome of this match”, and “I anticipate a high level of suspense in this match” and “I am anxious to find out the outcome of this match”. Not only did “I hope for a positive outcome for the national team” and “I fear a negative outcome for the national team” had the weakest correlations with the other variables, but they also had the weakest correlation of all between themselves. Further interpretation required factor analysis to check for underlying factors of the five items of suspense on Survey 1.

Table 11A - Total Variance explained for suspense before the match

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %
1	2,749	54,987	54,987	2,749	54,987	54,987
2	0,885	17,706	72,693			
3	0,684	13,673	86,366			
4	0,410	8,193	94,558			
5	0,272	5,442	100			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 11A shows the explained variance of the five components extracted from the five items of suspense on Survey 1, from which the Eigenvalues allowed to determine the existence of underlying factors. The items being faithful to the literature, confirmation of “suspense” as the only underlying factor was expected. Since only Component 1 had an Eigenvalue larger than 1 (2,749), it was confirmed that “suspense” was the only underlying factor of the five items.

Table 12A - Communalities for suspense before the match

Suspense	Initial	Extraction
I am excited to watch this match	1	0,749
I anticipate a high level of suspense in this match	1	0,717
I am anxious to find out the outcome of this match	1	0,680
I hope for a positive outcome for the national team in this match	1	0,372
I fear a negative outcome for the national team in this match	1	0,230

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 12A shows the communalities which allowed to determine how the underlying factor “suspense” accounts for the variance of the five items on Survey 1, which are variables. Predicting each of the five variables from “suspense” through simple linear regression, “I am excited to watch this match” had the highest R-Squared value, followed by “I anticipate a high level of suspense in this match”, and “I am anxious to find out the outcome of this match”, with these three variables demonstrating a strong contribution to measure “suspense”. As “I hope for a positive outcome for the national team” and especially “I fear a negative outcome for the national team” had R-Squared smaller than 0,5, their contribution was reduced and, consequently, they were to be excluded from the composite variable, which thus incorporates only three of the five variables. However, as the removal of two variables changes all results, the analysis had to be redone to confirm that these assumptions held true.

Table 11B - Total Variance explained for suspense before the match

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %
1	2,298	76,591	76,591	2,298	76,591	76,591
2	0,417	13,890	90,481			
3	0,286	9,519	100			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 11B shows the explained variance of three components extracted from the three items of suspense on Survey 1, from which the Eigenvalues allowed to determine the existence of underlying factors. The three items being faithful to the literature, further confirmation of “suspense” as the only underlying factor was expected. Since only Component 1 had an Eigenvalue larger than 1 (2,298), it was confirmed that “suspense” was the only underlying factor of the three items.

Table 12B - Communalities for suspense before the match

Suspense	Initial	Extraction
I am excited to watch this match	1	0,799
I anticipate a high level of suspense in this match	1	0,785
I am anxious to find out the outcome of this match	1	0,713

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 12B shows the communalities which allowed to determine how the underlying factor “suspense” accounts for the variance of the three items on Survey 1, which are variables. Predicting each of the three variables from “suspense” through simple linear regression, “I am excited to watch this match” kept the highest R-Squared value (0,799), while the remaining variables kept R-Squared values larger than 5. Then the three variables were computed to form the composite variable of “suspense”.

Table 13 - Reliability statistics for suspense after the match

Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Numb. of Items
0,525	0,478	4

Table 13 shows that Cronbach’s Alpha of the four items of suspense on Survey 2 is $\alpha = 0,525$, which indicates a poor level of internal consistency.

Table 14 - Item statistics for suspense after the match

Suspense	Mean	Std. Deviation (σ)	<i>N</i>
I was hoping for a positive outcome for the national team	4,48	0,743	167
I experienced a high level of suspense during this match	3,48	1,052	
My feelings about the outcome of this match varied between hope and fear, depending on which team was attacking	2,90	1,142	
I feared a negative outcome for the national team during this match	2,35	1,086	

Table 14 shows that the means of the four items of suspense on Survey 2 received low to high levels of agreement, with significant disparities between items. While “I was hoping for a positive outcome for the national team” demonstrated the highest level of agreement, “I experienced a high level of suspense during this match” obtained lower agreement in comparison, and the means of “My feelings about the outcome of this match varied from hope to fear, depending on which team was attacking” and “I feared a negative outcome for the national team” did not represent either agreement or disagreement.

Table 15 - Correlation Matrix for Suspense after the match^a

		I experienced a high level of suspense during this match	I was hoping for a positive outcome for the national team	I feared a negative outcome for the national team during this match	My feelings about the outcome of this match varied between hope and fear, ...
I experienced a high level of suspense during this match	Pearson Correlation	--			
I was hoping for a positive outcome for the national team	Pearson Correlation	0,321**	--		
	Sig.	<0,001			
I feared a negative outcome for the national team during this match	Pearson Correlation	0,154*	-0,230**	--	
	Sig.	0,047	0,003		
My feelings about the outcome of this match varied between hope and fear, depending on which team was attacking	Pearson Correlation	0,284**	-0,080	0,668**	--
	Sig.	<0,001	0,301	<0,001	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

^a . Listwise N=176

Table 15 shows the correlations between the four items of suspense on Survey 2. Unlike for affective dispositions and suspense on Survey 1, correlations for suspense on Survey 2 were not strong, with the exception of the correlation between “I feared a negative outcome for the national team” and “My feelings about the outcome of this match varied from hope to fear, depending on which team was attacking”. Even though “I experienced a high level of suspense during this match” was positively correlated with every other item, all those correlations were weak or very weak. Furthermore, the items “I was hoping for a positive outcome for the national team” and “I feared a negative outcome for the national team during this match”, which intended to reflect the dual nature of suspense, were negatively correlated. Further interpretation required factor analysis to check for underlying factors of the four items of suspense on Survey 2.

Table 16 - Total Variance explained for suspense after the match

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %	Total	% of Variance (σ^2)	Comulative (σ^2) %
1	1,801	45,037	45,037	1,801	45,037	45,037	1,795	44,885	44,885
2	1,333	33,334	78,372	1,333	33,334	78,372	1,339	33,487	78,372
3	0,553	13,820	92,192						
4	0,312	7,808	100						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 16 shows the explained variance of the four components extracted from the four items of suspense on Survey 2, from which the Eigenvalues allowed to determine the existence of underlying factors. The items being faithful to the literature, confirmation of “suspense” as the only underlying factor was expected. However, besides Component 1 (1,801), there was also Component 2 with an Eigenvalue larger than 1 (1,333), thus “suspense” could not be confirmed as the only underlying factor of the four items.

Table 17 - Component matrix^a for suspense after the match

	Component	
	1	2
My feelings about the outcome of this match varied between hope and fear, depending on which team was attacking	0,903	
I hoped for a positive outcome for the national team during this match	0,883	
I feared a negative outcome for the national team during this match		0,856
I experienced a high level of suspense during this match	0,419	0,747

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

^a. Two extracted components.

Table 17 shows the component matrix of the four suspense items in Survey 2. Having discovered two underlying factors, it had become more relevant to discover which items measure which underlying factors, reflected on factor loadings, than resorting to communalities, as it had been done for items of affective dispositions and suspense in Survey 1. Ideally each item must measure one factor, but in this case, there was a cross-loading involving “I experienced a high level of suspense during this match,” meaning that it demonstrated strong contributions to measure both Component 1 and Component 2. The solution for this issue could be to redistribute the factor loadings through a varimax rotation.

Table 18 - Rotated component matrix^a for suspense after the match

	Component	
	1	2
My feelings about the outcome of this match varied between hope and fear, depending on which team was attacking	0,901	
I hoped for a positive outcome for the national team during this match	0,894	
I feared a negative outcome for the national team during this match		0,830
I experienced a high level of suspense during this match	0,331	0,790

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser’s Normalization.^a

^a. Rotation converged in three iterations.

Table 18 shows the rotated component matrix, but the varimax rotation failed to redistribute all loading factors and the cross-loading involving “I experienced a high level of suspense during this match” remained. This issue determined the impossibility of creating the composite variable for suspense on Survey 2. To continue the analysis, it was determined that “I experienced a high level of suspense during this match” would be adopted as the variable of “suspense” as experienced by spectators during the match.

4.1.5. Affective dispositions *versus* Suspense (H1)

Table 19 - Model Summary of Affective dispositions *versus* suspense

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,731 ^a	0,534	0,532	0,5951

^a. Predictors: (Constant), DISP_ComponentScore

Table 19 shows a strong relationship between the dependent variable “suspense” and the independent variable “affective dispositions”. Furthermore, the R-Squared, focused on the extent to which the variation in “suspense” is explained by “affective dispositions”, indicates a moderate effectiveness of this model to define the relationship. The adjusted R-Squared, focused on the variation of the sample from the population in the simple linear regression, had a minimum difference from R-Squared, validating generalization.

Table 20 - Coefficients ^a of affective dispositions *versus* suspense

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,413	0,159	8,865	<0,001
	Affective dispositions (composite)	0,731	0,043	0,731	16,815

^a. Dependent Variable: Suspense

Table 20 shows an acceptable p-value of “affective dispositions”, as this value should be less than 0,05 using a 95% confidence interval, indicating the rejection of the null hypothesis. Thus, “suspense” as predicted by spectators varied significantly in conformity with their “affective dispositions” toward the national team.

4.1.6. Suspense *versus* Enjoyment (H3)

Table 21 - Model summary of suspense *versus* enjoyment

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,457 ^a	0,209	0,204	0,586

^a. Predictors: (Constant), Suspense

Table 21 shows a moderate relationship between the dependent variable “enjoyment” and the independent variable “suspense”. However, the R-Squared, focused on the extent to which the variation in “enjoyment” is explained by “suspense,” indicates a low effectiveness of this model to define the relationship, even though the Adjusted R-Squared, having a minimum difference from R-Squared, validated generalization.

Table 22 - Coefficients^a of Suspense *versus* Enjoyment

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3,541	0,157		22,540	<0,001
	I experienced a high level of suspense during this match	0,285	0,043	0,457	6,595	<0,001

^a Dependent Variable: I experienced a high level of suspense during this match

Table 22 shows an acceptable p-value of “affective dispositions”, as this value should be less than 0.05 using a 95% confidence interval, indicating the rejection of the null hypothesis. Thus, the “enjoyment” spectators derived from watching the match varied significantly in conformity with the “suspense” they experienced.

4.2. Hypotheses

H1: Spectators with stronger affective dispositions toward the Portuguese national team will experience stronger feelings of suspense in a UEFA Euro 2024 match, compared to those with weaker affective dispositions.

The relationship between affective dispositions and suspense (H1) was supported. The data showed a strong correlation between the variables ($r=0,731$) which is statistically significant ($p<0,001$), as well as a moderate effectiveness of the model to define the relationship ($r^2=0,534$).

H2.1: Spectators who experience stronger feelings of suspense in a UEFA Euro 2024 match will also experience stronger feelings of hope for a positive outcome, compared to those with weaker feelings of suspense.

H2.2: Spectators who experience stronger feelings of suspense in a UEFA Euro 2024 match will also experience stronger feelings of fear for a negative outcome, compared to those with weaker feelings of suspense.

The relationship between suspense and feelings of hope for a positive outcome (H2.1) was not supported. Survey 1 data showed a weak correlation between the variables ($r=0,354$) which was statistically significant ($p<0,001$), and Survey 2 data showed another weak correlation ($r=0,321$) which was statistically significant ($p<0,001$). In addition, the hope variable demonstrated a weak contribution to measure suspense before the match ($r^2=0,372$), being excluded from the composite variable. This variable could not be obtained for suspense after the match, given the cross-loading of the item “I experienced a high level of suspense during this match”.

The relationship between suspense and feelings of fear of a negative outcome (H2.2) was not supported either. Survey 1 data showed a weak correlation between the variables ($r=0,309$) which was statistically significant ($p<0,001$), and Survey 2 data showed a very weak correlation ($r=0,154$) which was not as statistically significant ($p=0,047$). In addition, the fear variable demonstrated a very weak contribution to measure suspense before the match ($r^2=0,230$), being excluded from the composite variable as well. In addition, Survey 1 data showed a very weak correlation between the hope and fear variables ($r=0,143$) with lower statistical significance ($p=0,024$), and

Survey 2 showed a negative correlation between them ($r=-0,230$) which was statistically significant ($p=0,003$).

H3: Spectators of the Portuguese national team who experience stronger feelings of suspense in a UEFA Euro 2024 match will experience stronger feelings of enjoyment, in the case of a positive outcome for the Portuguese national team.

The relationship between suspense and enjoyment (H3) was not supported. Even though the data showed a moderate correlation between the variables ($r=0,457$) which is statistically significant ($p<0,001$), it also showed the low effectiveness of the model to define the relationship ($r^2=0,209$).

H4: Spectators with stronger affective dispositions towards the Portuguese national team will also report stronger fandom habits, compared to those with weaker affective dispositions.

The relationship between fandom habits and affective dispositions (H4) was supported. The data showed that items reflecting fandom habits demonstrated stronger contributions to measure affective dispositions compared to just supporting the Portuguese national team. The strongest of those contributions came from the item “I watch all the national team’s matches” ($r^2=0,662$), followed by items of searching for information, discussing the national team with friends/coworkers, using merchandise, making plans to watch the matches, or feeling a strong emotional connection to the team ($r^2>0,5$). In contrast, the item “I discuss the national team’s matches on social media” ($r^2=0,321$), having demonstrated a weak contribution to measure affective dispositions, was excluded from the composite variable along with “I support the national team” ($r^2=0,319$).

5. Discussion

The results of the study found that spectators of the Portuguese national team enjoyed watching the UEFA Euro 2024 match primarily by witnessing the success of their team, based on their strong affective dispositions towards it, but this enjoyment was moderated by the absence of a high degree of perceived certainty that a negative outcome would befall the team, due to weak suspense and uncertainty regarding the outcome of the match. In practical terms, fans of a team always enjoy watching their team win, but if the opponent is relatively weak and the outcome of the match is not really ever in doubt, there is a limit to the level of enjoyment they will experience. Thus, the spectator experience seems to reach its fullest potential not only in watching the success of the supported team, but especially from feeling the emotional rollercoaster of a closely contested match in the path to that outcome.

Whereas variables of affective dispositions were associated with strong fandom habits, allowing the creation of a composite variable that supported the relationship between affective dispositions and suspense, suspense during the Portugal-Turkey match in UEFA Euro 2024 was objectively low. This low level of suspense limited its subjective experience by spectators, particularly their feelings of hope and fear regarding the outcome of the match. The sense of suspense felt before the match was largely associated with general excitement and anticipation to watch the match unfold and find out the outcome in the end, rather than with the deeper feelings of hope and fear that arise from uncertainty regarding the outcome. Because the match's outcome became predictable, suspense after the match could not be effectively measured or converted into a composite variable, limiting the analysis of the relationship between suspense and enjoyment in this particular context. In short, this study suggests that when an outcome feels predictable, the emotional stakes tied to hope and fear are diminished, preventing suspense from significantly contributing to overall enjoyment. These findings are aligned with the reality of early mediated sports studies, in which affective dispositions found empirical support, but propositions of suspense within drama theory initially struggled to find such support.

The data supported the relationship between affective dispositions and suspense (H1), which is consistent with disposition theory (Zillmann et al., 1989; Bryant et al., 1994; Gan et al., 1997; Hartmann et al., 2008). The linear regression analysis revealed a

strong correlation between affective dispositions and suspense, confirming the hypothesis that spectators' emotional investment in their team significantly influences the way they conceptualize their experience of suspense, even before the match begins. The creation of composite variables for both affective dispositions and suspense before the match determined the effectiveness of the measuring model. As previously discussed, affective dispositions emerged as the sole predictor of emotional involvement before the match, because suspense, in this case, had not been enhanced by the match experience yet. These findings underscore the importance of affective dispositions in shaping how spectators engage with mediated sports, particularly before the real-time action of a sports contest enhances suspense from uncertainty.

Contrary to the hypothesized associations, the relationship between suspense and hope for a positive outcome (H2.1), as well as the relationship between suspense and fear of a negative outcome (H2.2), were not supported by the data. The results challenge the traditional view of suspense, which posits that the interplay between positive and negative affect—specifically hope for a positive outcome and fear of a negative one—forms the core of its experience (Zillmann, 1996; Knobloch-Westerwick et al., 2009). While feelings of hope and fear were positively correlated, neither significantly contributed to measure suspense in either Survey 1 or Survey 2.

Analysis of Survey 1 found weak correlations between suspense and feelings of hope and fear regarding the outcome of the Portugal-Turkey match in UEFA Euro 2024. Since experiencing suspense requires uncertainty about the outcome of a future event (Carroll, 1990), besides affective dispositions of spectators towards a team (Zillmann, 1994), the described lack of uncertainty makes it unsurprising that respondents of the study did not report heightened feelings of fear or hope before the match. Consequently, these feelings could not contribute significantly to measure suspense as predicted by spectators before the match. By contrast, in representing the feelings of spectators at the time of response, variables of excitement to watch the match and find out its outcome were more significant to measure suspense. One plausible explanation for this shift in suspense could be the perceived quality of the opponent (Madrigal, 1995). The Turkish national team, ranked lower in the FIFA Men's Ranking (2024) and having an unfavourable record against Portugal (with eight losses and only two wins per *record v Turkey*, n.d.), may not have been perceived as a serious threat by Portuguese fans. This perception likely reduced the potential for suspense, as

spectators felt confident in their team's ability to secure a positive outcome. As a result, excitement became a stronger emotional driver than fear or hope before the match, as fans looked forward to witnessing their team's success without dreading at the possibility of a negative outcome.

Analysis of Survey 2 further confirmed the weak correlations between suspense and feelings of fear and hope regarding the outcome of the Portugal-Turkey match, reinforcing the idea that the non-suspenseful nature of the match limited the emotional reactions of respondents. With Portugal achieving an impressive victory, hope for a positive outcome among spectators was not only sustained but naturally reinforced as the match unfolded, while fear of a negative result diminished almost immediately, likely within the first half of the match. This rapid decline in fear, rather than a gradual decrease toward the end, suggests that a positive outcome for the Portuguese national team seemed inevitable from early on, preventing the buildup of suspense. Therefore, while the correlation between suspense and hope remained stronger than that between suspense and fear, both correlations were relatively weak, underscoring the limited role that these emotional reactions played in the context of a one-sided match. The study also aimed to test Zillmann's (1996) proposition that fear may play a more critical role in the enjoyment of mediated sports than hope, but the lack of suspense in this particular match prevented the exploration of this imbalance. Nonetheless, because it was impossible to draw firm conclusions about this dynamic due to the one-sided nature of the Portugal-Turkey match, the results do not preclude the assumption that under different conditions, fear may indeed contribute more heavily to emotional engagement in sports contests. The only strong correlation involving suspense after the match was between "I feared a negative outcome for the Portuguese national team during this match" and "My feelings about the outcome of this match varied between hope to fear, depending on which team was attacking." This suggests that moments of fear may arise more from shifts in match play which create emotional uncertainty, rather than from an overarching sense of suspense throughout the match. Nonetheless, further studies would be required to examine how fluctuating emotional responses to sports contests contribute to the experience of suspense and ultimately enjoyment of mediated sports.

The relationship between suspense and enjoyment (H3) was not supported by the data. Although the linear regression revealed a moderate correlation between suspense and

enjoyment, aligning with the initial hypothesis, the study's inability to create a composite variable for suspense after the match hindered the effectiveness of the model; specifically, because only one variable related to suspense could be used in the analysis, the strength of the findings might have been diluted. Most notably, as enjoyment of the Portugal-Turkey match in UEFA Euro 2024 was constrained by the lack of uncertainty regarding the outcome, a critical element for generating suspense, spectators' engagement with the broadcast might have relied almost entirely on their strong affective dispositions towards the Portuguese national team. This, however, does not imply that the match was not enjoyable for spectators of the Portuguese national team, just that maximum enjoyment could not be attained due to low suspense. The absence of distress, due to the confirmation of the positive outcome throughout the match rather than at a climactic moment, deprived spectators from the emotional journey of ups and downs that is often essential for maximum enjoyment in mediated sports. These findings underscore the complex relationship between suspense and enjoyment in mediated sports, showing that while affective dispositions can sustain some enjoyment, they may not be enough to elevate the experience to its full potential without the emotional reactions associated with suspense.

The hypothesized relationship between fandom habits and affective dispositions (H4) was supported, building on the existing evidence of uses and gratifications (Gantz, 1981; Hall, 2015), mood management (Cialdini et al., 1976; Hirt et al., 1992), and disposition theories (Zillmann et al., 1989; Zillmann & Paulus, 1993; Hartmann et al., 2008). Within fandom habits, watching all the national team's matches showed the strongest correlations with every other habit, suggesting that the more consistent the engagement with the team's matches, the deeper the emotional connection to the team. By contrast, while support for the national team was widely expressed among spectators, it did not significantly contribute to affective dispositions. This discrepancy likely arises because support for the national team represents a broad and somewhat superficial form of allegiance, lacking the specificity and intensity that comes from strong fandom habits. The correlations between general support and specific fandom habits were found to be low to moderate, indicating that mere acknowledgment of the national team does not equate to a strong emotional connection or an engaged fandom. Consequently, although a majority of respondents identified as supporters of the Portuguese national team in some capacity, many did not exhibit the strong fandom

habits—especially watching all matches—that are essential for developing strong affective dispositions towards the team. These findings suggest a nuanced understanding of sports fandom, where self-identification as a supporter does not necessarily imply deep emotional investment as a fan.

In addition, the strong correlation between “I search for information on the national team’s matches” and “I discuss the national team’s matches with friends/coworkers” highlights the importance of the social context surrounding the spectator and its influence on behaviour. Spectators with strong affective dispositions toward a team often experience a sense of community and belonging (Smith, 1988; Raney, 2006), which leads to plans for watching mediated sports involving socialization. Consequently, these spectators may be subject to stronger social controls (Zajonc, 1965; Sapolsky & Zillmann, 1978) and might *bask in reflected glory* to enhance their self-esteem (Cialdini et al., 1976; Hirt et al., 1992) through their connections with other fans. Additionally, the strong correlation between “I make plans to watch the national team’s matches” and “I use merchandise to watch the national team’s matches” indicates that the motivation to watch mediated sports often stems from companionship, particularly during sports encounters that require shared knowledge of the discussed sports. Engaging in discussions about sports in general and specific matches with friends or coworkers appears to be a common form of social interaction, encouraging spectators to search for information and learn about teams, athletes, or the sports themselves (Melnick, 1993). Interestingly, while discussing the national team with friends or coworkers is indicative of fandom habits, transitioning that discussion to social media did not show a strong contribution to measuring affective dispositions. Nonetheless, further studies would be required to examine how different forms of social discussion around sports contribute to the experience of suspense and ultimately enjoyment of mediated sports.

5.1. Limitations and Recommendations

The data revealed some limitations that warrant discussion in this sub-chapter, alongside recommendations for improving these aspects and, more broadly, for continuing to develop mediated sports research in Portugal. The most fundamental limitation stems from the methodological choices of the study, particularly the

constraint of not being able to conduct a controlled experiment, due to the need of rewarding respondents (e.g., Bryant et al., 1994; Gan et al., 1997). Such an experiment would allow the manipulation of suspense, either by closeness of score (e.g., Sapolsky, 1980; Gan et al., 1997) or changes in perception caused by sports commentary (e.g., Bryant et al., 1994). By introducing these manipulations, researchers could eliminate dependence on live matches, which inherently possess unpredictable levels of suspense. In this study, the primary consequence of the absence of empirical control was the use of different samples for Survey 1 and Survey 2. A single sample would have enabled a more robust comparison between the suspense predicted by spectators before the match and the suspense they actually experienced during the match, thus facilitating a clearer understanding of the relationship between affective dispositions and enjoyment.

While the decision to utilize online distribution methods and in-person solicitation aided in data collection—particularly across a broad spectrum of Portuguese mediated sports spectatorship—future research must address observational challenges by implementing controlled experiments to reduce sampling and selection biases. Furthermore, the lack of uncertainty surrounding the match outcome hindered the confirmation of drama theory propositions related to suspense in the context of the Portugal-Turkey match during UEFA Euro 2024, which in turn limits the generalizability of the findings to the entire Portuguese mediated sports landscape. Without the ability to control the suspense levels across different matches, researchers are left with only the option of extending data collection to encompass more matches involving the same team within the same competition. This study, unfortunately, could not pursue that avenue for UEFA Euro 2024. Moving forward, a more comprehensive approach that includes multiple matches and controlled experimental designs will be essential for obtaining richer insights into the dynamics of affective dispositions, suspense, and enjoyment of Portuguese mediated sports. By addressing these limitations and expanding the methodological frameworks used in future studies, researchers can contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationships that define the spectator experience in this context.

Future research offers rich avenues for exploring the dynamics of mediated sports beyond the current focus on the Portuguese national team and super-events like the UEFA Euro 2024. Expanding the scope to include the regular Portuguese football

championship could reveal additional dimensions of the mediated sports landscape in the country, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of audience engagement. Specifically, it would be essential to determine how factors such as league standings and team rivalries might influence spectators' emotional responses during prolonged sequences of sports contests. Moreover, another important avenue for future research lies in exploring the role of gender in shaping the mediated sports experience. Building on earlier studies (e.g., Gantz & Wenner, 1991; Gan et al., 1997), new studies could investigate whether the social roles and gender-specific ways of experiencing suspense suggested in the past remain relevant in today's changing cultural landscape. As gender norms and media consumption patterns evolve, it becomes increasingly important to assess whether these dynamics continue to affect how different audiences engage with and derive enjoyment from sports broadcasts. In addition, research could examine the effects of time on spectators' perceptions of suspense—whether the intensity of suspense felt during a live match diminishes or is enhanced when recalled later—and how these subjective experiences compare to the actual, objective suspense inherent in the sporting event. This exploration could deepen our understanding of the emotional longevity of sports viewing experiences. Finally, the introduction of half-time surveys could yield new insights could offer real-time insights into how suspense and enjoyment fluctuate throughout a match. Although some researchers (e.g., Gan et al., 1997) have raised concerns over the effectiveness of this approach, it could still provide valuable data on the evolution of spectators' emotions as the match progresses.

The focal points of this dissertation also provide numerous avenues for future research to expand the understanding of Portuguese mediated sports. Considering the relationship between affective dispositions and enjoyment (H1), one promising direction would be to explore how varying levels of affective dispositions influence the intensity of suspense as a match unfolds. It remains to be observed whether stronger emotional connections to a team continue to invoke greater feelings of suspense during key moments or if other variables, particularly uncertainty regarding the outcome, play a more dominant role in modulating the enjoyment derived by spectators. In addition, regarding the relationship between suspense and feelings of fear and hope regarding the outcome of sports contests (H2.1 and H2.2), future research could investigate whether emotional responses beyond suspense—such as

anxiety, excitement, or even frustration—are central to the spectator experience, particularly during broadcasts of different sports that may offer unique emotional landscapes. These alternative emotional responses could alter the traditional balance between hope, fear, and suspense in unexpected ways, providing a broader understanding of how fans engage with various sports contests. Reflecting upon the lack of support for the relationship between suspense and enjoyment, further studies need to examine whether the patterns observed in this research persist in more tightly contested matches, where the uncertainty regarding the outcome remains until the final moments. Understanding how suspense interacts with other variables, such as the competitive balance between teams or the high stakes of particular matches, could enrich knowledge of how mediated sports experiences become more emotionally engaging. It would also be valuable to study how fans of teams on the losing side experience suspense, and whether this impacts their enjoyment differently, providing a more nuanced perspective on how affective dispositions and suspense combine to shape the spectator experience. Finally, observing the relationship between affective dispositions and strong fandom habits (H4), another important area for future research lies in exploring the differences between casual supporters and dedicated fans. The level of engagement with a team likely plays a crucial role in shaping emotional responses during high stakes matches, and understanding these distinctions could reveal how varying intensities of fandom affect the enjoyment of those matches. Investigating other factors that influence affective dispositions, such as the role of social dynamics, community involvement, or simply the presence of more localized connections to teams, could further enrich our understanding of how emotional connections are formed and maintained in sports through media. Altogether, these future research avenues promise to significantly advance the theoretical frameworks used to study sports spectatorship, particularly within the evolving landscape of Portuguese mediated sports. Expanding on these areas could lead to a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of how sports fans emotionally engage with the teams and contests they follow, enriching both academic inquiry and practical applications within the mediated sports landscape in general.

Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to examine how spectators of the Portuguese national team experience suspense during a UEFA Euro 2024 match, based on their live emotional reactions to the match. By tracing the history of mediated sports and their exploration within both Portuguese and international contexts, the research highlighted the significance of mediated sports as a research topic, affirming the relevance of this dissertation. The evolution of sports spectatorship, particularly the emergence of the spectator as a key figure in the sports/media dynamic, has been identified as one of the most important historical developments in mediated sports. Consequently, the study adopted a focus on the spectator, analysing how sports contests are experienced through media, particularly television, the most popular form of sports spectatorship in modern times. The dissertation explored how the relationship between the spectator and the mediated sports event is shaped by a complex interplay of emotions, especially affective dispositions and the suspense driven by the uncertainty of match outcomes. This focus on emotional engagement, specifically how suspense enhances enjoyment, addressed a key aspect of why sports audiences continue to engage with live broadcasts, underscoring how sports spectatorship is not simply about passive viewership but is deeply rooted in emotional engagement, connections to the teams and the broader social contexts that influence these dynamics. By examining the interplay between affective dispositions, suspense, and enjoyment, the research provided insights into the motivations that drive spectators to continuously engage with sports through media, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of mediated sports spectatorship.

This dissertation sought to explore and deepen the understanding of Portuguese mediated sports through an empirical approach, which, by focusing on the audience, emphasized the spectator experience of suspense and enjoyment in football matches. The decision to focus on the audience was driven by a desire to address a key concern in recent studies of mediated sports: defending spectators from the economic pressures of the sports/media complex. The complex often manipulates and shapes emotional engagement, fostering a view of spectators as passive consumers rather than active participants in mediated sports. By placing the spectator at the centre of this research, the study aimed to counteract this trend, offering a more authentic and nuanced understanding of their emotional responses to mediated sports. In addition, the study

was motivated by the need to fill a gap in the existing body of research on Portuguese mediated sports, which has historically relied on qualitative methods and largely overlooked the quantitative dimensions of audience experience. This dissertation broke from that tradition by adopting a quantitative approach to data collection and analysis, allowing for a more structured and measurable investigation of how spectators experience suspense and ultimately enjoyment in football matches.

Employing a quantitative method, the study collected data from a match of the Portuguese national team in UEFA Euro 2024, a super-event that represented the broadest spectrum possible of Portuguese mediated sports spectatorship. In line with the literature review, the data revealed that spectators derived significant enjoyment from watching the match due to their strong affective dispositions towards the team, a connection deeply rooted in nationalistic pride and habitual fandom. These affective dispositions made the viewing experience emotionally meaningful for the audience, reinforcing the importance of team allegiance in shaping spectator engagement. However, the study also highlighted a key limitation to this enjoyment: the lack of suspense in the match. The weaker opposition and the low uncertainty regarding the outcome diminished crucial emotions like hope and fear, which are vital components of suspense. This finding aligns with previous research that emphasizes suspense as a core element in maximizing the enjoyment of mediated sports. While the strong affective dispositions of spectators were positively linked to their emotional investment before the match, the predictable nature of the game itself restricted the opportunity to observe how suspense could amplify enjoyment during the contest. Thus, the study suggests that while affective dispositions are essential for fostering emotional involvement with a team, the absence of suspense significantly curtails the potential for maximum enjoyment, illustrating the complex interplay between emotional attachment and the events of sports contests in shaping the mediated sports experience.

From the outset, I anticipated that this research would yield important insights into the relationship between affective dispositions, suspense, and enjoyment, revealing how these emotional responses are intertwined, particularly during super-events such as UEFA Euro 2024 matches featuring the Portuguese national team, with the aim of providing new empirical data to the scholarly understanding of how spectators in Portugal engage with mediated sports. While the results were partially aligned with

these expectations—particularly in supporting the relationship between affective dispositions and suspense—they could not provide confirmation of the relationship between suspense and enjoyment. This gap in the findings reveals the multifaceted nature of sports spectatorship, where factors beyond suspense, such as affective dispositions or the context of the event, may play a more significant role in determining enjoyment. In addition, the study highlighted how the predictability of the match limited the intensity of suspense, raising questions about the conditions under which suspense drives enjoyment in mediated sports. More broadly, although the findings offered some understanding of how spectators of the Portuguese national team experienced suspense during a UEFA Euro 2024 match, they did not encompass every aspect of the spectator experience in mediated sports as initially hoped, which demonstrates the complexity of such experiences. While this study revealed the strong influence of affective dispositions on predictions of suspense, it also demonstrated that the relationship between suspense and enjoyment often cannot be fully explained by a single sports contest.

Despite these limitations, the contribution of the research to understanding Portuguese mediated sports remains significant. The empirical data gathered adds to the sparse body of quantitative research on Portuguese mediated sports, and it opens new avenues for further exploration. Indeed, future research could broaden the focus beyond the Portuguese national team and super-events like UEFA Euro 2024 to include the regular Portuguese football championship, offering a deeper understanding of audience engagement as factors such as league standings and team rivalries may impact spectators' emotional responses over prolonged sequences of matches. Another promising area of research involves examining how gender influences the mediated sports experience, building on past studies to see if gender-specific ways of experiencing suspense remain relevant today, considering the evolution in gender norms and media consumption. Research could also investigate how the perception of suspense changes over time—whether its intensity fades or grows after a live match—and compare these perceptions to the actual suspense in the event. Additionally, introducing half-time surveys could provide real-time insights into how emotions fluctuate throughout a match, despite some concerns about their effectiveness.

The focal points of this dissertation also highlight numerous potential avenues for future research to deepen the understanding of Portuguese mediated sports. In this

context, future research could explore how different levels of affective dispositions influence the intensity of suspense during matches and whether stronger emotional connections to teams lead to heightened suspense in key moments or whether uncertainty regarding the outcome plays a more significant role in shaping spectator enjoyment. Investigating emotions like anxiety, excitement, or frustration, particularly in various sports, may reveal new dynamics in the balance between hope, fear, and suspense. Further studies should examine if the observed patterns persist in closely contested matches, where suspense increases until the end. It would also be valuable to study how fans of losing teams experience suspense and how it affects their enjoyment. Finally, exploring differences between casual supporters and dedicated fans, along with the role of social dynamics and personal connections, could provide deeper insights into how emotional connections with teams are formed and sustained.

In conclusion, this dissertation has provided a comprehensive exploration of how spectators of the Portuguese national team experienced suspense and enjoyment during a UEFA Euro 2024 match, emphasizing the complex interplay of emotions within the broader context of mediated sports. By focusing on the audience, the research highlights the importance of viewing spectators not merely as passive consumers, but as active participants in the mediated sports experience and whose emotional connections significantly shape their engagement. Despite meeting some of the initial expectations, particularly regarding the relationship between affective dispositions and suspense, the findings also revealed limitations in supporting the relationship between suspense and enjoyment due to the predictability of the match. This complexity underscores the need for further investigation into various factors influencing spectatorship, such as the dynamics of league competitions, the impact of gender, and the experience of additional emotional states during matches. Furthermore, the dissertation's quantitative approach fills a gap in the existing literature on Portuguese mediated sports, paving the way for future studies that can broaden the scope of research and enhance the understanding of how spectators emotionally engage and ultimately enjoy mediated sports.

Bibliography

- 1 | *Revenue from television broadcasting rights* / FIFA Publications. (n.d.). FIFA Publications. <https://publications.fifa.com/en/annual-report-2022/finances/finance/notes-2022/1-revenue-from-television-broadcasting-rights-2022/>
- Abola. (2023, August 29). Opinião de JOÃO BONZINHO: Direitos televisivos – ‘quo vadis’? *Abola*. <https://www.abola.pt/futebol/noticias/opiniao-de-joao-bonzinho-direitos-televisivos-quo-vadis-2023082909230475400>
- Agência Lusa. (2021, June 28). Euro 2020. Bélgica-Portugal foi o jogo mais visto, com audiência média de 3,8 milhões. *Observador*. <https://observador.pt/2021/06/28/euro-2020-belgica-portugal-foi-o-jogo-mais-visto-com-audiencia-media-de-38-milhoes/>
- Altheide, D. L., & Snow, R. P. (1979). The television effect. *The Wilson Quarterly* (1976), 3(3), 65–73.
- Andrews, D. L. (2003). Sports and the Transnationalizing Media Corporation. *Journal of Media Economics*, 16(4), 235–251.
- Andrews, D. L., & Ritzer, G. (2007). The global in the sporting global. *Global networks*, 7(2), 135–153.
- Babbie, E. (1990). *Survey research methods* (2nd ed). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Barnett, S. (1990). *Games and Sets: The Changing Face of Sports on Television*. London: British Film Institute.
- Beck, D., & Bosshart, L. (2003). Sports and media. *Communication research trends*, 22(4).
- Bellamy, R. V. (2009). Sports media: A modern institution. In A. A. Raney, & J. Bryant (Eds.), *Handbook of sports and media* (pp. 66–79). New York: Routledge.
- Bense, M. (1954). *Aesthetica: Metaphysische Beobachtungen am Schdnen [Aesthetics: Metaphysical observations on beauty]*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt.

- Berlyne, D. E. (1960). *Conflict, arousal and curiosity*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Birrell, S., & Loy, J. W. (1979). Media sports: Hot and cool. *International Review of Sports Sociology*, 1(14), 5–19.
- Borges, F. V. (2019). Soccer clubs as media organizations: A case study of Benfica TV and PSG TV. *International Journal of Sports Communication*, 12(2), 275–294.
- Boyle, R. (2013). Reflections on communication and sports: On journalism and digital culture. *Communication & Sports*, 1(1-2), 88–99.
- Boyle, R., & Haynes, R. (2009). *Power play: Sports, the media and popular culture*. Edinburg, Scotland: Edinburg University Press.
- Bryant, J. (1980). A two-year investigation of the female in sports as reported in the paper media. *Arena Review*, 4, 32–44.
- Bryant, J., Comisky, P., & Zillmann, D. (1977). Drama in sports commentary. *Journal of Communication*, 27, 140–149.
- Bryant, J., Comisky, P., & Zillmann, D. (1981). The appeal of rough-and-tumble play in mediated professional football. *Communication Quarterly*, 29, 256–262.
- Bryant, J., Brown, D., Comisky, P. W., & Zillmann, D. (1982). Sports and spectators: Commentary and appreciation. *Journal of Communication*, 32, 109–119.
- Bryant, J., & Raney, A. A. (2000). Sports on the screen. In D. Zillmann & P. Vorderer (Eds.), *Why we watch: The attractions of violent entertainment* (pp. 153–174). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bryant, J., Rockwell, S. C., & Owens, J. W. (1994). “Buzzer beaters” and “barn burners”: The effects on enjoyment of watching the game go “down the wire”. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 18, 326–339.
- Burke, B. (2019, October 18). *Athletes who destroyed their careers because of gambling*. The Sports Bank. <https://www.thesportsbank.net/nba/bulls/athletes-who-destroyed-their-careers-because-of-gambling/>
- Buscombe, E. (Ed.). (1975). *Football on television*. London: British Film Institute.

- Carbonaro, G. (2023, June 8). Europe's betting industry is thriving: Are we prepared to tackle a rise in gambling addiction? *Euronews*.
<https://www.euronews.com/business/2023/06/08/europes-betting-industry-is-thriving-are-we-prepared-to-tackle-a-rise-in-gambling-addictio>.
- Carroll, N. (1990). *The philosophy of horror or paradoxes of the heart*. New York: Routledge.
- Carvalho, J. (2017). Communications and Journalism. In R. Edelman, & W. Wilson (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Sports History* (pp. 159–170). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cialdini, R. B., Borden, R. J., Thorne, A., Walker, M. R., Freeman, S., & Sloan, L. R. (1976). Basking in reflected glory: Three (football) field studies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *34*, 366–375.
- Coelho, J. N. (2001). *Portugal, A Equipa de Todos Nós – Nacionalismo, Futebol e Media*. Porto: Edições Afrontamento.
- Comisky, P., Bryant, J., & Zillmann, D. (1977). Commentary as substitute for action. *Journal of Communication*, *27*, 150–153.
- Cunningham, N., & Eastin, M. S. (2015). Second Screen and Sports: a structural investigation into team identification and efficacy. *Communication & Sports*, *5*(3), 288–310.
- Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Crupi, A. (2024, February 1). What You Need to Know About U.S. Sports TV Contracts. *Sportsico.com*. <https://www.sportsico.com/feature/sports-television-contracts-media-nfl-nba-ncaa-rights-1234764931/>
- Deaner, R. O., Balish, S. M., & Lombardo, M. P. (2016). Sex differences in sports interest and motivation: An evolutionary perspective. *Evolutionary Behavioral Sciences*, *10*(2), 73–97.
- Dietz-Uhler, B., Harrick, E. A., End, C., & Jacquemotte, L. (2001). Sex differences in sports fan behavior and reasons for being a sport fan. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, *23*, 219–231.

- Dunning, E. (1979). Soccer: the social origins of sport and its developments as a spectacle and profession. *Sports Council*, 9, 38pp.
- Eastman, S. T., & Meyer, T. P. (1989). Sports programming: Scheduling, costs, and competition. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *Media, Sports, and Society* (pp. 97–119). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Edwards, H. (1973). *Sociology of sports*. Homewood, IL: Dorsey.
- Elias, N., & Dunning, E. (1992). *A Busca da Excitação*. Lisboa: Difel.
- Financial Sustainability & Research Division / UEFA Intelligence Centre. (2023). The European Club Footballing Landscape. UEFA. https://editorial.uefa.com/resources/0272-145b03c04a9e-26dc16d0c545-1000/master_bm_high_res_20220203104923.pdf
- Funding*. (n.d.). IOC. <https://olympics.com/ioc/funding>
- Gabilondo, A. (2023, May 10). UEFA eyeing €5 billion Champions League TV rights windfall. *Diario AS*. <https://en.as.com/soccer/uefa-eyeing-5-billion-champions-league-tv-rights-deal-n/>
- Gan, S., Tuggle, C. A., Mitrook, M. A., Coussement, S. H., & Zillmann, D. (1997). The thrill of the close game: Who enjoys it and who doesn't? *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 21, 53–64.
- Gantz, W. (1981). An exploration of viewing motives and behaviors associated with television sports. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 25, 263–275.
- Gantz, W. (2013). Reflections on communication and sports: On fanship and social relationships. *Communication & Sports*, 1, 176–187.
- Gantz, W., & Wenner, L. A. (1991). Men, women, and sports: Audience experiences and effects. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 35, 233–243.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Goldstein, J. H., & Bredemeier, B. J. (1977). Socialization: Some basic issues. *Journal of Communication*, 27, 154–159.
- Gruneau, R. S. (1983). *Class, sports, and social development*. Amherst, MA: Massachusetts University Press.

- Guttman, A. (1986). *Sports spectators*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hall, A. E. (2015). Entertainment-Oriented Gratifications of Sports Media: Contributors to Suspense, Hedonic Enjoyment, and Appreciation. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 59(2), 259–277.
- Hargreaves, J. (Ed.). (1982). *Sports, culture, and ideology*. London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Harris, H. A. (1976). *Green athletics and the Jews*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- Hartmann, T., Stuke, D., & Daschmann, G. (2008). Positive parasocial relationships with drivers affect suspense in racing sport spectators. *Journal of Media Psychology*, 20(1), 24–34.
- Herman, E., & McChesney, R. W. (1997). *The global media: The new missionaries of corporate capitalism*. London: Cassell.
- Horton, D., & Wohl, R. (1956). Mass communication and parasocial interaction. *Journal of Psychiatry*, 19, 215–229.
- Hutchins, B., & Rowe, D. (2012). *Sports beyond Television: The Internet, Digital Media and the Rise of Networked Media Sports*. New York: Routledge.
- Hutchins, B., Li, B., & Rowe, D. (2019). Over-the-top sports: Live streaming services, changing coverage rights markets and the growth of media sports portals. *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(7), 975–994.
- Ivanovska, E. (2023, April 28). America's Sports Watching Habits. *Time2Play*. <https://time2play.com/blog/americas-sports-watching-habits/>.
- Jhally, S. (1984). The spectacle of accumulation: Material and cultural factors in the evolution of the sports/media complex. *Insurgent Sociologist*, 3, 41–57.
- Knobloch-Westerwick, S., David, P., Eastin, M. S., Tamborini, R., & Greenwood, D. (2009). Sports Spectators' Suspense: Affect and Uncertainty in Sports Entertainment. *Journal of Communication*, 59, 750–767.
- Krohn, F. B., Clarke, M., Preston, E., McDonald, M., & Preston, B. (1998). Psychological and sociological influences on attendance at small college sporting events. *College Student Journal*, 32, 277–288.

- Larson, J. F., & Park, H. S. (1993). *Global television and the politics of the Seoul Olympics*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Ley, P (1972). *Quantitative aspects of psychological assessment*. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co.
- Marivoet, S. (2004). Futebol: Desporto e Emoção. *Noites de Sociologia*, 3/2004, 13–15.
- Madrigal, R. (1995). Cognitive and affective determinants of fan satisfaction with sporting event attendance. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 27, 205–227.
- Madrigal, R., Bee, C., Chen, J., & LaBarge, M. (2011). The effect of suspense on enjoyment following a desirable outcome: The mediating role of relief. *Media Psychology*, 14, 259–288.
- May, J., Roche, C., & Reidy, P. (2024, June 1). Champions League final vs Super Bowl: which is the most watched sporting event? *Diario AS*. <https://en.as.com/soccer/super-bowl-vs-champions-league-final-which-is-the-most-watched-sporting-event-n/>.
- Mauss, M. (1966). *The gift: forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies*. London: Cohen & West.
- McChesney, R. W. (1989). Media Made Sports: A History of Sports Coverage in the United States. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *Media, Sports, and Society* (pp. 46–69). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Melnick, M. J. (1993). Searching for sociability in the stands: A theory of sports spectating. *Journal of Sport Management*, 7, 44–60.
- Men's Ranking*. (2024, June 20). Inside FIFA. <https://inside.fifa.com/fifa-world-ranking/men?dateId=id14415>
- Miller, T., Lawrence, G., McKay, J., & Rowe, D. (2001). *Globalization and sports: Playing the world*. London, England: Sage.
- Moragas, M., Rivenburgh, N. K., & Larson, J. F. (1995). *Television in the Olympics*. London, England: J. Libbey.

- National Council on Problem Gambling. (2023, December 12). *FAQs: What is Problem Gambling? - National Council on Problem Gambling*.
<https://www.ncpgambling.org/help-treatment/faqs-what-is-problem-gambling/>.
- Neves, J. & Domingos, N. (2004). *A Época do Futebol: O Jogo Visto pelas Ciências Sociais*. Lisboa: Assírio & Alvim.
- Nielsen Media Research. (2022). *Year in Review: Sports Consumption Evolution*.
- Nolasco, C. (2004). Futebol: Desporto e Emoção. *Noites de Sociologia*, 3/2004, 16–20.
- Novak, M. (1976). The game's the thing: a defense of sports as ritual. *Columbia Journalism Review*, 15(1), 33.
- Oliver, M. B., & Raney, A. A. (2011). Entertainment as pleasurable and meaningful: Identifying hedonic and eudemonic motivations for entertainment consumption. *Journal of Communication*, 61, 984–1004.
- One Month On: 5 billion engaged with the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022*. (2023, January 18).
FIFA. <https://www.fifa.com/tournaments/mens/worldcup/qatar2022/news/one-month-on-5-billion-engaged-with-the-fifa-world-cup-qatar-2022-tm>.
- Oriard, M. (1993). *Reading football: How the Popular Press Created an American Spectacle*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Owens, J. W., & Bryant, J. (1998, July). *The effects of a hometown ("Homer") announcer and colour commentator on audience perspectives and enjoyment of a sports contests*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Jerusalem, Israel.
- Parente, D. E. (1977). The interdependence of sports and television. *Journal of Communication*, 27, 128–132.
- Peterson, E. M., & Raney, A. A. (2008). Reconceptualising and re-examining suspense as a predictor of mediated sports entertainment. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 52, 544–562.

- Phillips, D. C., & Burbules, N. C. (2000). *Postpositivism and educational research*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Pinheiro, F. (2009). *História da Imprensa Desportiva em Portugal*. Porto: Edições Afrontamento.
- Portugal national football team: record v Turkey*. (n.d.).
11v11. <https://www.11v11.com/teams/portugal/tab/opposingTeams/opposition/Turkey/>
- Raney, A. A. (2004). Expanding disposition theory: Reconsidering character liking, moral evaluations, and enjoyment. *Communication Theory*, *14*, 348–369.
- Raney, A. A. (2006). Why We Watch and Enjoy Mediated Sports. In Raney, A. A., Bryant, J., (Eds.), *Handbook of Sports and Media* (pp. 339–356). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Raney, A. A., & Depalma, A. (2006). The effect of viewing varying levels of aggressive sports programming on enjoyment, mood, and perceived violence. *Mass Communication and Society*, *9*, 321-338.
- Rader, B. G. (1984). *In its own image: How television has transformed sports*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Rainville, R. E., & McCormick, E. (1977). Extent of covert racial prejudice in pro football announcers' speech. *Journalism Quarterly*, *34*, 20–26.
- Real, M. R. (1975). Super Bowl: Mythic spectacle. *Journal of Communication*, *25*(1), 31–43.
- Real, M. R. (1977). *Mass-mediated culture*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Real, M. R. (1989). Super Bowl Versus World Cup Soccer: A Cultural-Structural Comparison. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *Media, Sports, and Society* (pp. 180–203). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Real, M. R. (1998). MediaSport: Technology and the commodification of postmodern sports. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *MediaSport* (pp. 14-26). London and New York: Routledge

- Real, M. R. (2005). Television and sports. In J. Wasko (Ed.), *A Companion to Television* (pp. 337–360). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Real, M. R. (2013). Reflections on communication and sports. *Communication & Sports*, 1(1–2), 30–42.
- Record. (2024, May 27). Final da Taça de Portugal foi o segundo programa mais visto do ano. *Record*. <https://www.record.pt/futebol/futebol-nacional/taca-de-portugal/detalhe/final-da-taca-de-portugal-foi-o-segundo-programa-mais-visto-em-2024>
- Rothenbuhler, E. W. (1985). Media events, civil religion and social solidarity: The living room celebration of the Olympic Games. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Annenberg School of Communications, University of Southern California.
- Rothenbuhler, E. W. (1988). The living room celebration of the Olympic Games. *Journal of Communication*, 38, 61–81.
- Rowe, D. (2003). Sports and the repudiation of the global. *International Review for the Sociology of Sports*, 38(3), 281–294.
- Rowe, D. (2004). *Sports, culture and the media: The unruly trinity* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- Rowe, D. (2007). Sports journalism: still the toy department of the news media? *Journalism*, 8(4), 385–405.
- Rowe, D. (2012). Reflections on communication and sports. *Communication & Sports*, 1(1–2), 18–29.
- Sapolsky, B. S. (1980). The effect of spectator disposition and suspense on the enjoyment of sport contests. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 11(1), 1–10.
- Sapolsky, B. S., & Zillmann, D. (1978). Enjoyment of a sports contest under different conditions of viewing. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 46, 29–30.
- Sargent, S. L., Zillmann, D., & Weaver, J. B. (1998). The gender gap in the enjoyment of mediated sports. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 22, 46–64.

- Schiff, M. (2022, October 2). 33% of Americans anticipate going into debt after splurging on their favorite sports teams. *CNBC*. <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/10/02/a-third-of-americans-may-go-into-debt-from-sports-spending.html>.
- Sloan, L. R. (1989). The motives of sports fans. In J. H. Goldstein (Ed.), *Sports, games, and play: Social and psychological viewpoints* (pp. 175–240). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Smith, G. J. (1976). A study of a sports journalist. *International Review of Sports Sociology*, 11(3), 5–26.
- Smith, G. J. (1988). The Noble Sports Fan. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 12(1), 54–65.
- Snyder, C. R., Higgins, R. L., & Stucky, R. J. (1983). *Excuses: Masquerades in search of grace*. New York: Wiley-Interscienc.
- Sousa, J. T. (1996). *Para a Sociologia do Futebol Profissional Português*. Lisboa: Faculdade de Motricidade Humana/Universidade Técnica de Lisboa.
- Sullivan, D. B. (1991). Commentary and viewer perception of player hostility: Adding punch to televised sports. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 35, 487–504.
- SVG Staff (2023, November 27). Global value of sports media rights nears \$56 billion, SportsBusiness report reveals. *Sports Video Group*. <https://www.sportsvideo.org/2023/11/27/global-value-of-sports-media-rights-nears-56-billion-sportsbusiness-report-reveals/>
- Tesser, A. (1986). Some effects of self-evaluation maintenance on cognition and action. In R. M. Sorrentino & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation and cognition: Foundations of social behavior* (Vol. 1, pp. 435–464). New York: Guilford Press.
- UEFA EURO 2020 impresses with 5.2 billion cumulative global live audience. (2021, September 2). UEFA. <https://www.uefa.com/news-media/news/026d-132519672495-56a014558e80-1000--uefa-euro-2020-impresses-with-5-2-billion-cumulative-globa/>

- Vorderer, P., Knobloch, S., & Schramm, H. (2001). Does entertainment suffer from interactivity? The impact of watching an interactive TV movie on spectators' experience of entertainment. *Media Psychology*, 3(4), 343–363.
- Wann, D. L. (1995). Preliminary validation of the Sports Fan Motivational Scale. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 19, 377–396.
- Wann, D. L., Melnick, M. J., Russell, G. W., & Pease, D. G. (2001). *Sports fans: The psychology and social impact of spectators*. New York: Routledge.
- Wenner, L. A. (1989). Media, Sports, and Society: The Research Agenda. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *Media, Sports, and Society* (pp. 13–48). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Wenner, L. A. (1998). Playing the MediaSport game. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *MediaSport* (pp. 3–13). London and New York: Routledge.
- Wenner, L. A. (2012). Reflections on communication and sports. *Communication & Sports*, 1(1–2), 188–199.
- Wenner, L. A., & Gantz, W. (1989). The audience experience with sports on television. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *Media, sports, and society* (pp. 241–269). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Wenner, L.A., & Gantz, W. (1998). Watching sports on television: Audience experience, gender, fanship, and marriage. In L. A. Wenner (Ed.), *MediaSport* (pp. 233–251). London: Routledge.
- Whitelock, J. (2023, March 18). *A lifetime of commercials: The average American sports fan spends 80 days of their life watching commercials*. World Sports Network. <https://www.wsn.com/blog/lifetime-of-commercials/>.
- Whiteside, E. E., & Hardin, M. (2011). Women (not) watching women: Leisure time, television, and implications for mediated coverage of women's sports. *Communication, Culture & Critique*, 4, 122–143.
- Williams, B. R. (1977). The structure of televised football. *Journal of Communication*, 27, 133–139.

- Williams, C., Lawrence, G., & Rowe, D. (1985). Women and sports: A lost ideal. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 8, 639–645.
- Whannel, G. (1983). *Blowing the whistle: The Politics of Sports*. London: Pluto Press.
- Whannel, G. (1992). *Fields in Vision: Television Sports and Cultural Transformation*. London: Routledge.
- Whannel, G. (2009). Television and the transformation of sports. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 625(1), 205–218.
- Zajonc, R. B. (1965). Social facilitation. *Science*, 149 (Whole No. 3681), 269–274.
- Zillmann, D. (1978). Attribution and misattribution of excitatory reactions. In J. H. Harvey, W. J. Ickes, & R. F. Kidd (Eds.), *New directions in attribution research* (Vol 2., pp. 335–368). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Zillmann, D. (1991). The logic of suspense and mystery. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Responding to the screen: Reception and reaction processes* (pp. 281–303). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Zillmann, D. (1994). The psychology of suspense in dramatic exposition. In P. Vorderer, H. J. Wulff, & M. Friedrichsen (Eds.), *Suspense: Conceptualizations, theoretical analyses, and empirical explorations* (pp. 199–231). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Zillmann, D. (1996). The psychology of suspense in dramatic exposition. In P. Vorderer, H. J. Wulff, & M. Friedrichsen (Eds.), *Suspense: Conceptualizations, theoretical analyses, and empirical explorations* (pp. 199–231). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Zillmann, D., & Paulus, P. B. (1993). Spectators: Reactions to sports events and effects on athletic performance. In R. N. Singer, M. Murphey, & L. K. Tennant (Eds.), *Handbook of research on sports psychology* (pp. 600–619). New York: Macmillan.
- Zillmann, D., Bryant, J., & Sapolsky, B. S. (1989). The enjoyment of watching sports contests. In J. H. Goldstein (Ed.), *Sports, games, and play: Social and psychological viewpoints* (pp. 241–278). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Appendix

A. Survey 1

27/09/24, 13:33

Suspense no jogo de Portugal no Euro 2024

Suspense no jogo de Portugal no Euro 2024

O presente inquérito, associado a uma dissertação do Mestrado em Ciências da Comunicação - Jornalismo da Universidade Católica Portuguesa, tem por objetivo conhecer a resposta à seguinte questão de investigação:

Como é que os espetadores da Seleção Portuguesa no UEFA Euro 2024 experienciam o suspense associado ao momento competitivo?

Pretende-se recolher alguns dados de caracterização do respondente para efeitos meramente estatísticos (idade, género e nacionalidade) bem como averiguar o apoio à seleção portuguesa (disposições afetivas) e as expetativas em relação ao jogo (suspense).

O inquérito está dividido em duas partes:

Parte 1 –
Conjunto de 13 questões que devem ser respondidas no momento que antecede o **início do jogo Portugal-Turquia**.

Parte 2 –
Conjunto de 7 questões que devem ser respondidas **após o fim desse jogo**.

Esta é a **Parte 1** do inquérito. Obrigado pela sua participação!

* Indica uma pergunta obrigatória

Seleção Nacional de Futebol



1. Idade

2. Género

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Feminino
- Masculino
- Outro

3. Nacionalidade *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Portuguesa
- Outra

Disposições afetivas

As disposições afetivas são as posições dos espetadores relativamente a personagens de media, que variam entre gostar e não gostar. No futebol, gostar de uma equipa é ter uma disposição afetiva positiva em relação a essa equipa; em contrapartida, não gostar de uma equipa é ter uma disposição afetiva negativa em relação a essa equipa.

4. Apoio a seleção *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

5. Vejo todos os jogos da seleção *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

6. Faço planos (estou com amigos, decoro a casa...) para ver os jogos da seleção *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
 Concordo
 Nem concordo nem discordo
 Discordo
 Discordo plenamente

7. Procuo informação (televisão, jornais, Internet...) sobre os jogos da seleção *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
 Concordo
 Nem concordo nem discordo
 Discordo
 Discordo plenamente

8. Uso merchandise (camisolas, bandeiras, cachecóis...) para ver os jogos da seleção *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
 Concordo
 Nem concordo nem discordo
 Discordo
 Discordo plenamente

9. Discuto os jogos da seleção com amigos/colegas de trabalho *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

10. Discuto os jogos da seleção nas redes sociais *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

11. Sinto uma ligação emocional forte à seleção *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

Suspense

O suspense advém da certeza subjetiva de que um resultado negativo afetará uma personagem da qual gostamos. No futebol, experienciamos suspense durante os jogos, quando o resultado está em disputa, especialmente quando a equipa que apoiamos corre o risco de perder.

12. Estou entusiasmado para ver este jogo *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

13. Antecipo um nível alto de suspense neste jogo *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

14. Tenho esperança num resultado positivo (vitória) para a seleção neste jogo *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

15. Tenho receio de um resultado negativo (derrota ou empate) para a seleção neste jogo *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

16. Estou ansioso para saber o resultado deste jogo *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

Este conteúdo não foi criado nem aprovado pela Google.

Google Formulários

B. Survey 2

27/09/24, 13:36

Suspense no jogo de Portugal no Euro 2024

Suspense no jogo de Portugal no Euro 2024

O presente inquérito, associado a uma dissertação do Mestrado em Ciências da Comunicação - Jornalismo da Universidade Católica Portuguesa, tem por objetivo conhecer a resposta à seguinte questão de investigação:

Como é que os espetadores da Seleção Portuguesa no UEFA Euro 2024 experienciam o suspense associado ao momento competitivo?

Pretende-se recolher alguns dados de caracterização do respondente para efeitos meramente estatísticos (idade, género e nacionalidade) bem como averiguar o apoio à seleção portuguesa (disposições afetivas) e as expectativas em relação ao jogo (suspense).

O inquérito está dividido em duas partes:

Parte 1 – Conjunto de 13 questões que devem ser respondidas no momento que antecede o **início do jogo Portugal-Turquia.**

Parte 2 – Conjunto de 7 questões que devem ser respondidas **após o fim desse jogo.**

Esta é a **Parte 2** do inquérito. Obrigado pela sua participação!

*** Indica uma pergunta obrigatória**

Seleção Nacional de Futebol

**Suspense**

O suspense advém da certeza subjetiva de que um resultado negativo afetará uma personagem da qual gostamos. No futebol, experienciamos suspense durante os jogos, quando o resultado está em disputa, especialmente quando a equipa que apoiamos corre o risco de perder.

1. Experienciei um nível alto de suspense durante este jogo *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

2. Tive esperança num resultado positivo (vitória) para a seleção durante este jogo, mesmo quando o adversário atacava *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

3. Tive receio de um resultado negativo (derrota ou empate) para a seleção durante este jogo, mesmo quando a seleção atacava *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

4. Os meus sentimentos sobre o resultado deste jogo variaram entre esperança e receio, dependendo de qual seleção atacava *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

5. Senti alívio no final deste jogo *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

6. Estou satisfeito com o resultado deste jogo *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

7. Gostei deste jogo *

Marcar apenas uma oval.

- Concordo plenamente
- Concordo
- Nem concordo nem discordo
- Discordo
- Discordo plenamente

Este conteúdo não foi criado nem aprovado pela Google.

Google Formulários

