

The Role of Gender on the Perception of Credibility of Sports Announcers

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Abstract

This study explored the role that gender plays on the perception of credibility of sports announcers. In a 2 x 2 independent groups factorial design conducted online, 39 California Lutheran University students accessed through the SONA system and adults were recruited through social media. Participants were randomly assigned one of four videos from either a professional softball game or a professional baseball game. Each of the two sports had one video with a male sports announcer and one video with a female sports announcer. Participants answered the credibility scale created by Berlo et al. (1969). Participants answered questions on their demographics and background regarding their knowledge and experience with the sport in the video they watched. I hypothesized that female sports announcers will be perceived as more credible than male sports announcers when commentating on sports typically played by women, and that male sports announcers will be seen as more credible than female sports announcers when commentating on sports typically played by men. Hypotheses were not supported. Findings from this study could be relevant to the possibly changing views and perceptions seen in the field of sports media.

Introduction

Although the field of sports media is heavily dominated by men, more women are entering this domain and are being met with opposition. Some women in sports broadcasting have experienced sexism and harassment and are seen as less credible than their male coworkers. As women obtain more opportunities in this area, it is important to examine the public perceptions of female sports announcers. Sexism is a possible factor that lowers the perceived credibility of female sports announcers (Mudrick et al., 2016). Interestingly, male and female sports announcers have been perceived as more credible when commentating on sports that align with their gender. (Pratt et. al, 2018, Harris, 2013)

The present study focused on the association between perceived credibility and gender of the sports announcer, as well as taking into consideration the sport that is being commentated on. Will sports announcers be perceived as more credible when commentating on sports that align with their gender?

Hypotheses

Female sports announcers will be perceived as more credible than male sports announcers when commentating on sports typically played by women.
Male sports announcers will be seen as more credible than female sports announcers when commentating on sports typically played by men.

Method

Participants

- 39 adults
- 59% Hispanic/Latino, 23.1% White, 10.3% Multiracial, 2.6% Black/African American, 2.6% Asian
- 71.8% female, 28.2% male
- 19-55 years of age ($M = 24.10$, $SD = 8.66$)

Materials

- Informed Consent Form
- Credibility Scale (Berlo et al., 1969)
- 4 videos consisting of 5 clips from either a baseball game or softball game
- Background and Demographic Questions

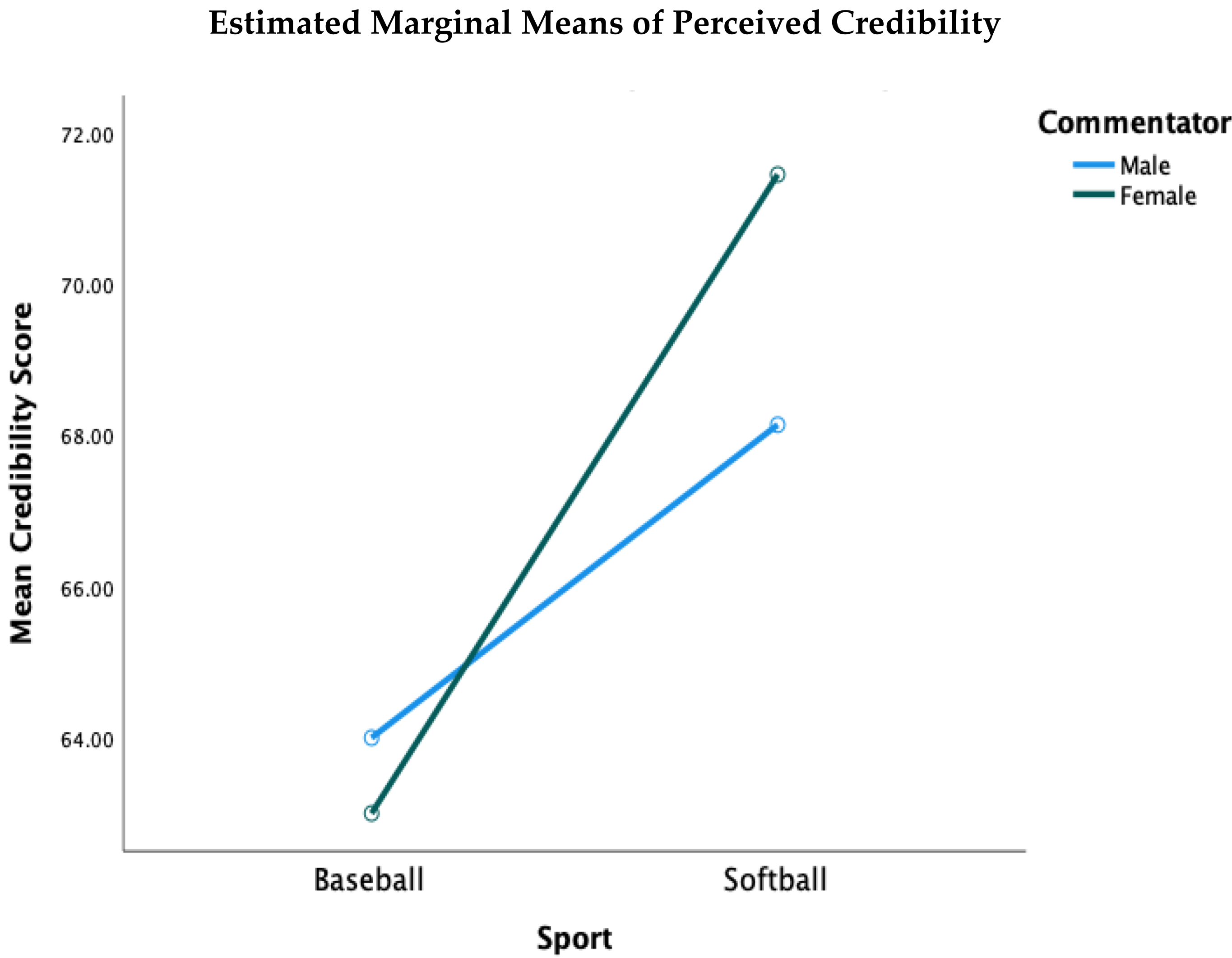
Procedure

1. Informed consent forms signed.
2. Participants watched one of four videos that were randomly assigned: Male sports announcer commentating on baseball, male sports announcer commentating on softball, female sports announcer commentating on baseball, female sports announcer commentating on softball.
3. Participants answered questions based on the video they watched.
4. Background and Demographic questions were completed.

Results

- Contrary to predictions, there was not a significant interaction between perceived credibility and the gender of the sports announcer depending on what sport they were commentating on $F(1, 38) = .267$, $p = .609$.

Findings



Discussion

Hypotheses were not supported. Possible reasons include:

- Small sample size
- Sexist or stereotypical perceptions may be reducing in society today
- Characteristics of sample, such as age; older generations of adults may have more sexist beliefs compared to younger adults

Future research should address the above issues and could explore the role of gender on the perception of credibility of sports announcers. There may be other factors besides those used in the Credibility Scale (Berlo et al., 1969) that are related to public perceptions of source credibility.

References are available upon request.