






Sports Communication Using Transformative Engagement Theory: The Impact of Virtual Reality Technology

Sajjad Pashaie^{1*}, Timothy Jung², Hamed Golmohammadi³, Zühal Yurtsizoglu⁴, Javad Karimi⁵

¹ Assistant Professor of Sport Management, Department of Sport Management, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, University of Tabriz, Tabriz, Iran




² Faculty of Business and Law, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, UK & School of Management, Kyung Hee University, Seoul, South Korea

³ Department of Physical Education and Sport, Institute of Health Science, Sivas Cumhuriyet University, Sivas, Türkiye

⁴ Department of Sport Management, Sivas Cumhuriyet University, Sivas, Türkiye

⁵ Department of Physical Education, Lorestan University, Khorram Abad, Lorestan, Iran

* **Corresponding author email address:** sajjad.pashaie@yahoo.com

E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Saman Kamari Songhorabadi  Department of Psychology and Cognitive Sciences, University of Trento, Trento, Italy s.kamarisonghorabadi@unitn.it	Reviewer 1: Masoud Mirmoezi  Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran. Email: massoudmirmoezi@live.com Reviewer 2: Seyed Mohammad Hosseini  Assistant Professor, Department of Health and Rehabilitation in Sports, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran. Email: moh_hosseini@sbu.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1 Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the sentence “The area, which was once dominated by broadcast and print media, has changed...”, consider expanding this historical transition with data or citations from post-2015 sports media studies to strengthen the context.

The example “VR applications enable fans to experience sports from unique perspectives...” is compelling. Adding a recent case (e.g., 2023 FIFA VR initiatives or NBA VR platforms) would make this section more current.

The statement “users may experience physical discomfort, such as VR sickness...” (para 1) should be linked to prevalence data or studies quantifying VR sickness rates to show empirical grounding.

The description of “Media Richness Theory” is accurate but brief. Since this is a core framework, please elaborate on why VR qualifies as the richest medium compared to AR or traditional broadcasts.

The statement “Another surprising result was VR’s role in data visualization...” should be better tied to participant quotations to demonstrate empirical grounding rather than appearing as author speculation.

Author revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

1.2 Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

You note, “little is known about its precise uses and revolutionary potential in sports communication.” This is overstated since several recent reviews (e.g., sports VR in fan engagement) exist. Revise to acknowledge these while highlighting your study’s distinct contribution.

The RQs are well stated, but they should explicitly connect to the proposed theory. For example, RQ3 could mention “integration into transformative engagement practices” rather than general improvement.

The paragraph “Most existing studies focus on individual applications...” could benefit from a comparative table summarizing prior VR applications (fan, training, marketing), to show the research gap more clearly.

The description “connections between first- and second-level categories were established...” would benefit from an example code tree or excerpt to illustrate how categories evolved.

The table is overly dense and mixes open, axial, and selective coding. Consider restructuring into a clearer three-column format with fewer, stronger examples under each category to improve readability.

The sentence “VR significantly improves communication through immersive live broadcasts and interactive simulations, , which as an are key elements under causal conditions.” contains grammatical errors and repetition. Please revise for clarity and conciseness.

Author revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.