Abstract

This study was conducted with the goal of identifying why NASCAR has seen such a sharp decline in television viewership.  Data was gathered on what NASCAR fans love about their sport, and if NASCAR has lost or removed the aspects of their sport that their fans care for.  Data was collected from a poll that I took myself, and three other polls that I found.  All four polls were conducted on reddit.  Once it was determined that a sizable portion of NASCAR fans watch NASCAR for crashes, close finishes, or lead changes.  Data was gathered on racing-refrence.com for 12 randomly selected races a year from 2000 to 2018.  The data collected about the racing in NASCAR was compared to television viewership, and television ratings.  The ratings were estimated using the Nielsen rating scale.  Both correlation tests, and comparison tests were done. The first wave of tests calculated correlation between crashes, lead changes, and margin of victory to television viewership, and the results showed that lead changes correlate to more television viewers, whilst margin of victory and crashes don't correlate to more television viewership.  A second wave of tests was done to analyze which generation of cars in NASCAR had the most passing for the lead, per race.  The fifth generation of cars had the most lead changes per race, by a narrow margin over the fourth generation.  The last two tests were done to find any potential correlation between the generation of car that NASCAR was using, and the television viewership.  The data shows that there is no correlation between the fourth or fifth generation of cars and the television viewership, but the sixth generation of cars correlate to less television viewership.  According to the data, the television viewership won't vary much if NASCAR goes back to their older generations of cars, but the television viewership is likely to increase.  This means that NASCAR has options to increase their television viewership, and they aren't confined to a linear path if they want to bring back their audience.