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An Investigation of Sport Sponsorship Antecedents and Outcomes through Levels of Sponsor Prominence

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An Investigation of Sport Sponsorship Antecedents and Outcomes through Levels of Sponsor Prominence

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ABSTRACT

 Currently, global sport sponsorship is a multi-billion dollar industry that continues to show strong year-to-year growth (IEG, 2016). Additionally, the current body of sport sponsorship literature has reported the effects of salient attitudinal and behavioral constructs on sponsorship effectiveness. For example, previous studies have indicated that the perceived sincerity and attitude toward a sponsor do positively effect a consumer's behavioral intentions toward a sponsor (Speed & Thompson, 2000; Biscaia, Correia, Rosado, Ross, & Maroco, 2013). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to measure consumer attitudes and behavioral intent toward sponsor, through experimental design, when exposed to one of three hypothetical sponsorship scenarios. The hypothetical sponsors were classified by their level of national market prominence (e.g. national, regional, or local) and participants completed an online survey containing salient attitudinal and behavioral constructs. The final sample size was 1162 and were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk. The final MIMIC model exhibited data-model fit very well. Results indicated that local sponsors, when covaried by a hypothetical sponsor's level of national market prominence, were the best predictor of consumer attitudes and behavioral intent.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1980's, the business of global sport sponsorship was originally described as an industry driven by philanthropic motives. However, today the industry primarily operates with thinly hidden commercial objectives that generated an estimated $60 billion in 2016 ("Sponsorship Spending Forecast", 2017). Furthermore, the continuing trend of sponsorship growth has become readily apparent in North America. Since 2010, North American sport sponsorship revenue has exhibited a steady year-to-year growth rate of approximately 4% ("Sponsorship Spending Forecast", 2017). Additionally, 2017 North American sponsorship spending is estimated to eclipse $21 billion ("Sponsorship Spending Forecast", 2017). The consistent revenue growth trend is highlighted by recent sponsorship deals.

Current Sponsorship Deals

Examples of the growth of sport sponsorship are a number of recently announced sponsorship agreements between teams and global brands. For example, Real Madrid, a professional European soccer team, announced an exclusive apparel deal with the global sporting goods brand Adidas. Real Madrid, Spain's most popular professional soccer team, revealed a ten-year $1.6 billion agreement with the sporting goods company (Smith, 2016).In addition to the yearly sponsorship rights fees, Real Madrid will now generate an additionally estimated $32 million in apparel sales from Adidas (Smith, 2016). In total, the estimated value of the uniform sponsorship will generate approximately $192 million a year for a single sponsorship agreement.

Also, in Table 1, are six other examples of sponsorship deals are presented announced in 215. The announced sponsorship agreements have a total value of $4.5 billion (Smith, 2016a). The sponsorship deals in Table 1 represent a trend of rapid growth for the global industry of

sport sponsorship. Additionally, the sponsorship deals outlined in Table 1 are examples of

national or international brands partnering with a variety sport entities.

Table 1
Global Sponsorship Agreements

Sponsor	Sponsee	Value	Duration
Toyota	International Olympic Committee	$1.63 billion	8 years
Nike	National Basketball Association	$1.4 billion	8 years
Adidas	Bayern Munich	$940 billion	12 years
Majestic Athletic	Major League Baseball	$275 million	5 years
Nike	University of Texas	$250 million	15 years
Under Armour	University of California Los Angles	$250 million	15 year

The previously mentioned sponsorship deals draw attention to the growth in spending

across sports. However, the focus of this paper will be the National Basketball Association

(NBA). Globally, sponsorship of professional basketball is a billion dollar a year business

(Glendinning, 2016). For the 2014-2015 season, the NBA announced league wide sponsorship

revenue of $739 million for the 2014-2015 ("Sponsorship Spending on the NBA", 2015).

As a major United States economic sector that controls nearly $15 trillion dollars in

assets, banks have invested heavily in the NBA and sponsorship (Schaefer, 2014). According to

industry reports, banks and credit card companies were 3.8 time more likely to be a team sponsor

compared to other industries ("Sponsorship Spending on the NBA", 2015). Recently, JPMorgan

Chase and the Golden State Warriors announced a facility naming-rights sponsorship deal. The

new deal guarantees that the Warriors future arena will be named after the financial institution.

In return, industry experts have projected that the deal is worth more than $10 million a year and

will last for 20 years ("JPMorgan Chase's", 2016). Another example is the partnerships between two banks and the Charlotte Hornets. In 2013, the Hornets and Bank of America announced a partnership worth an estimated $1 million a year (Emmett, 2015). In addition, the Hornets and the Charlotte Metro Credit Union, a local bank, have a longstanding sponsorship deal targeting the community of Charlotte (Emmett, 2015).

While there are a variety of economic sectors that sponsor NBA teams (e.g. food, beverage, apparel) the unique nature of the United States Banking system is of interest for this study. One unique characteristic of the financial sector is the ability to classify companies based on the size of national market share. For example, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) has published a guideline that classifies banks as national, regional, or local/community banks (FDIC, 2017). The differentiation of banks by holdings and scope of service loosely correlates with the sponsorship characteristic of market prominence.

Market Prominence

As a sponsor characteristic and primary focus of this study, market prominence is defined as the perceived or real market share of the sponsor or the expected size of marketing budget (Johar & Pham, 1999). Further, literature has expanded the original definition to include prominence of sponsorship signage (e.g. size and location) or if the exposure to the sponsorship is experienced through television or not (Breuer & Rumpf, 2012). While prominence within the context of signage or type of exposure can be a significant indicator of sponsorship success, there is still the opportunity to determine if the full definition provided by Johar & Pham (1999) plays a significant role in sponsorship effectiveness. For example, the authors indicated that market prominence could refer to the perceived or real market share of the sponsor, or the expected size of a marketing budget (Johar & Pham, 1999). An industry report issued by the Harvard Business

Review reported that the primary indicator of a successful business venture was the size of the market share possessed by the company (Buzzell, Gale, & Sultan, 1975).

Building from the consumer awareness literature, subsequent studies show that increases in awareness positively drive increases in consumer perceptions and attitudes that ultimately lead to desired behaviors (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003; Hickman, 2015; Meenaghan, 2001). For example, as a latent construct, market prominence (i.e. market share) was shown to be an important indicator of consumer perception and attitude development (Ko, Chang, Park, & Herbst, 2016). However, despite previous results, there still is a dearth of literature investigating, through experimental design, the influence of national market prominence on additional attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. This assertion is especially true when considering other potential definitions or applications of market prominence and outside the context of event signage or logo size.

One application of market prominence and the effects of sport sponsorship is exploring a category of sponsors that possess a small portion of the national market share. For example, a potato chip manufacturer, Uncle Ray's, was present only in the markets that surrounded the greater Detroit area and the Carolina's before 2016 ("How Uncle Ray's," 2017). However, the company saw an opportunity to leverage an association with America's Minor League Baseball (MiLB) system. After gaining the rights to be the exclusive potato chip of Minor League Baseball, Uncle Ray's market share grew at the second-fastest rate in the country ("How Uncle Ray's", 2017). Uncle Ray's and MiLB are just one example of companies possessing small (i.e. local) market share effecting leveraging an association with a sport property.

Another example of local business entering a sponsorship agreement can be viewed through the partnerships that exist between local healthcare providers and professional sports

teams. Punke (2015) noted from an interview with healthcare consultant Michelle Mader that many of these deals can last for more than a decade and can demand a value more than a million dollars. An example would be the recent partnership between UCHealth and the Denver Broncos (Punke, 2015). Recently, UCHealth and the Denver Broncos entered into an agreement for the exclusive naming rights for the Broncos' practice facility (Punke, 2015). In exchange, UCHealth obtained the ability to leverage the association in marketing activities ("Denver Broncos and UCHealth", 2015). Punke (2015) noted that the creation and leveraging of an association with a professional team could derive benefits such as generating new patients for the medical facility and accomplishing Corporate Social Responsibility objectives for the Broncos. Even though there are examples of local and small businesses who sponsor a sport, there remains a lack of literature that explores the effect the sponsor characteristic of size of market share has on salient attitudinal and behavioral outcomes.

Even though the literature and industry publications establish the potential impact of market prominence on salient sponsorship metrics and overall success of a business, it still does not address the primary question of this study. The potential exists that market prominence can be a significant predictor in the relationship between relevant latent constructs. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to investigate salient consumer attitudinal and behavioral responses when market prominence is introduced as a predictor during a hypothetical sponsorship scenario.

How Sponsorship Works

As a marketing activity, the basic premise of sponsorship is a form of cash or in-kind partnership that allows corporate entities to align and leverage the image of a sport entity to achieve marketing objectives (Meenaghan, 1983). Stated another way, a sponsor will either provide cash or in-kind product that allows a sport team to operate, in return, the sport property

will market and leverage the association for the benefit of the brand or product. However, the presence of a sponsor and sponsee relationship does not guarantee the success of a sponsorship campaign.

Often accompanying a sponsorship agreement are the appropriate leveraging and activation strategies that expose the association to the appropriate target audience. For example, the implementation of appropriate leveraging and activation strategies may include tactics such as simple stadium signage containing brand logos, stadium/facility naming rights, or sponsored giveaways (Carrillat, d'Astous, Bellavance, & Eid, 2015). As synonymous terms, leveraging and activation strategies are marketing and communication activities that are crucial to a successful sponsorship campaign (Weeks, Cornwell, & Drennan, 2008). As effective marketing tools, leveraging and activation strategies are the activities that are used to highlight or promote the link between sponsor and event (IEG, 2016). Several studies have commented that sponsorship success relies on the proper utilization of leveraging and activation and maybe more important than simply creating a link between brand and sport property (Weeks et al., 2008).

For example, Weeks et al. (2008) proposes a minimum spending ratio of 2:1 to achieve an effective sponsorship agreement (Weeks et al., 2008; IEG, 2016). In other words, firms should expect successful sponsorship campaigns to spend almost twice the amount on activation and leveraging strategies (e.g. branding, signage, social media activity) when compared to the fees that secure the sponsorship rights. Using a 2:1 ratio, the sponsor/sponsee relationship will be able to achieve the proper level of exposure needed to achieve sponsorship objectives.

Measures of Sport Sponsorship

Early sponsorship research was conducted to not only define and separate sponsorship from other marketing activities, but to develop appropriate measures for sponsorship effectiveness that could confirm or disconfirm sponsorship outcomes. Foundational works were concerned, with measuring sponsorship effectiveness, by measuring consumer awareness levels and sponsor/event image transference (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999; Johar & Pham, 1999; Pham, 1991). Consumer awareness (i.e. sponsor identification) levels are defined as the degree to which consumers can properly link an official partner to an event or organization amid the clutter or noise from other brands (Hickman, 2015; Pham & Johar, 2001; Wakefield, Becker-Olson, & Cornwell, 2007). Image transference is the ability to capitalize on the association between two entities to transfer positive thoughts and feeling from one entity to another (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999; Henseler, Wilson, Gotz, & Hautvast, 2007; Keller, 1993). Previous studies have indicated that increases in exposure to sponsorship material generally cause a positive direct effect in consumer awareness and image transference (Wakefield et al., 2007; Walraven, Koning, & von Bottenburg, 2012). Further, results indicate that increases in awareness and image transference are important precursors to increases in appropriate attitudinal and behavioral measures (e.g. attitude toward sponsor, sponsor perceived sincerity, behavioral intention) (Meenaghan, 2001).

However, when measuring consumer awareness and image transference, it is important to acknowledge that sponsorship does not occur in a vacuum. There is the possibility for ambush activity or simple misidentification due to a number of environmental factors that could bias or influence a consumer's associative memory network (Cornwell, Weeks, & Roy, 2005). The environmental factors that bias a consumer's awareness could include the market prominence or relatedness of competing brands. Johar & Pham (1999) reported the size of market share of

competing brands could bias consumers regarding the association between sponsor and sport entity. The heuristics market prominence may influence the associative memory network that forms links or connections in an individual's memory network (Henseler et al., 2007; Johar & Pham, 1999).

Additionally, despite sport sponsorship generating billions of dollars from companies that vary based on market share, industry professionals and academics lament the lack of tracking sponsorship effectiveness (Garland, Charbonneau, & Macpherson, 2008; Jacobs, Jain, & Surana, 2014; Meenaghan, 2013). For example, a recent article stated that 65% of marketers do not track the effectiveness of sponsorship activities, and 75% do not even collect data (Hartley, 2015). A clear lack of measuring sponsorship effectiveness creates a problem in the industry because sponsors are currently demanding metrics that further provide justification for money spent to sponsor sport entities (Meenaghan, 2013). The author attributes the lack of investing in ROI, and other metrics (e.g. engagement, buzz, etc.) can be attributed to a 'just feels right' attitude or marketers not possessing the knowledge to effectively conduct the appropriate measurements (Hartley, 2015, p. 9).

Even though there is a steady increase in spending both globally and domestically it is partially motivated by corporate partners desire to be associated with sport properties (Walliser, 2003). However, there is still a lack of full understanding concerning the commercial impact sponsor-sponsee relationship. Meenaghan (2013) notes that as commercial financial investments increase, corporate partners are seeking new descriptive and inclusive metrics to judge sponsorship investment. Hartley (2015) noted that gone are the days of corporations aligning with sport properties and expecting little ROI, simple image transference, or brand awareness. Instead, sponsors fully expect concrete measures that will allow for refinement and the crafting

of unique arrangements based on individual sponsor characteristics (Hartley, 2015, Meenaghan, 2013).

Significance of Study

Theoretical significance. The proposed study intended to provide theoretical significance concerning various antecedents and outcomes. Specifically, the proposed study addressed the potential effect market prominence (e.g. level of national prominence) has on salient attitudinal and behavioral factors. While there is considerable literature that has reported effects sponsorship has on consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions (Biscaia, Correia, Rosado, Ross, & Maroco, 2012; Dees, Bennett, & Villegas, 2008; Speed & Thompson, 2000), there is a lack of understanding regarding the consumer attitudes and behaviors when mediated by market prominence. The contribution of this study will develop a possible understanding of sponsorship effectiveness through hypothetical scenarios, which have been called for in previous studies (Meenaghan, 2013).

Practical significance. Finally, from a practical perspective, the proposed study provided further insight that allows industry professionals to have a deeper understanding of consumer's attitude and behaviors toward sponsors. The proposed increase in understanding will be based on differentiating sponsors by level of national market prominence. If consumers hold different attitudes and behaviors toward national brands than local brands, it may inform marketers that campaigns presented by the sponsorship may need to vary based on this difference. Jacobs et al. (2014) noted that brand attributes (e.g. market share) could be a significant predictor of appropriate sponsorship strategy and ultimately success. Therefore, this study will provide industry experts with the potential knowledge to gauge the efficacy of sponsorship agreements and leveraging activities and potentially provide a higher degree of ROI.

Research Questions

RQ1: As a covariate, which level of sponsor prominence is the strongest predictor of involvement?

RQ2: As a covariate which level of sponsor prominence is the strongest predictor of sponsor fit?

RQ3: As a covariate, which level of sponsor prominence is the strongest predictor of a sponsor's perceived sincerity?

RQ 4: As a covariate, which level of sponsor prominence is the strongest predictor of a fan's attitude toward the sponsor?

RQ 5: As a covariate, which level of sponsor prominence is the strongest predictor of a fan's behavioral intent toward a sponsor?

Delimitations

The first delimitation of this study is the collection of data during the 2016-2017 NBA season. During the offseason, when fans experience lower levels of involvement less attention is paid toward the team, and subsequently related information such as sponsor related material (Pham, 1992). However, fan's experience higher involvement during the season which leads to a greater levels of consumption and investment (Pham, 1992). Therefore, because consumption and investment peak during the season, fans become more aware of the effects that sponsors may have in relation to a favorite sport team.

Another delimitation concerned the choice of sponsors within the same industry. The proposed study will use banks or financial institutions that range from the largest 25 banks in the United States to small community banks that operate close to the host city of each NBA team. While a number of companies and industries participate in sponsorship, few industries can be differentiated, based on the level of national market prominence, to the degree that banks can. For example, while Coca-Cola and Pepsi Co. routinely have yearly marketing budgets that exceed $200 million, enough brands do not exist that operate on a purely local level

("Sponsorship's Big Spenders", 2016). Therefore, by using actual banks or financial institutions as hypothetical sponsors, the researcher can control for potential variability that may be associated with using corporations from different industries. The second delimitation concerns the use of a general hypothetical scenario. Using hypothetical sponsors, the study design will control for any pre-existing perceptions or attitudes that already exist with current corporate partnerships. Pre-existing perceptions and attitudes were controlled by exposing participants to different levels of banks, and multiple existing banks were used as examples for each scenario.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A common theme that dominated early sponsorship literature, and today's literature to an extent, was an absence of a consensus regarding a singular definition for sponsorship. Currently, a number of definitions exist that provide scholars a foundation for sponsorship research. According to Walraven et al., (2012) definitions for sport sponsorship can vary by language, country of origin, or research concentration. Concentrating solely on sponsorship definitions created in the English language, the lack of clarity and consensus is provided in Table 2. For example, the definition created by Cornwell (1995), does not clearly establish a difference between sponsorship and a purely philanthropic marketing activity. Subsequent definitions and studies noted that a sponsorship must be driven by altruistic motives in order to be considered a philanthropic activity. For sponsorship to be a true philanthropic activity, there would need to be only altruistic motives behind a sponsorship. This distinction is made clear in a previous definition provided by Meenaghan (1983). Meenaghan (1983) proposed a definition that made clear the distinction between sponsorship, advertising, and philanthropic donations (Walraven et al., 2012). Meenaghan (1983) proposed that sponsorship could be "regarded as the provision of assistance either financial or in-kind to an activity by a commercial organization for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives" (p. 9).

Table 2
Sponsorship Definitions

Citation	Definition
IEG (2000)	A cash and/or in-kind fee paid to a property in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that property.
Meenaghan (1983, p. 9)	Sponsorship can be regarded as the provision of assistance either financial or in-kind to an activity by a commercial organization for the purpose of achieving commercial objectives.
Gardner & Shuman (1988, p. 44)	Sponsorship may be defined as investments in causes or events to support corporate objectives or marketing objectives.
Otker (1988, p. 77)	Commercial sponsorship is (1) buying and (2) exploiting an association with an event, a team, a group, etc. for specific marketing purposes.
Cornwell (1995, p. 15)	The orchestration and implementation of marketing activities for the purpose of building and communicating an association to a sponsorship

Despite a number of early definitions, provided in Table 2, Cornwell & Maignan (1998) noted that all proposed definitions share some commonalities. These commonalities include defining the concept as a market activity to achieve commercial objectives. However, sport management scholars typically adopt a variation of the definition first proposed by Meenaghan (1983). As a marketing activity, sponsorship must include some form of exchange between brand and sport property for the resulting marketing activities that promote the association.

Origins of Sponsorship

The origins of sponsorship research evolved from the need to explain the phenomena of corporate brands leveraging an association with an external entity to promote a product or service. Prior to 1980's, sponsorship was regarded as a small-scale promotional activity, an inexpensive marketing tool, or philanthropic activity that received little support (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Seguin, Teed, & O'Reilly, 2005). Additionally, brands and marketing managers often considered the practice more in-line with similar philanthropic endeavors that were leveraged to generate public goodwill and improve brand image and public perception (Meenaghan, 1983; Walliser, 2003). In a review of sponsorship literature, Cornwell & Maignan (1998) commented that academic interest in sponsorship research began in the 1980's, and for much of the next decade scholarly work attempted to define and describe the nature of sponsorship.

While sponsorship was an established method of marketing before the 1980's, the dramatic increase in sponsorship spending during this decade caused consumer behaviorist and marketing researchers to further investigate sponsorship. As an independent marketing tool, experts began to acknowledge that sponsorship may have advantages over previously established marketing tools. Preliminary investigations of sponsorship outcomes indicated that increases in activity could positively affect brand image and awareness (Meenaghan, 1991). In response, scholars acknowledged a need to study sponsorship further to determine what factors effected sponsorship effectiveness (Meenaghan, 1991).

Sponsorship Effectiveness

The first measures of sponsorship effectiveness (e.g. exposure) were exploratory and implemented to discover what characteristics of sponsorship had the greatest influence on outcome such as awareness, image transference, or behavioral intent (Javalgi, Traylor, Gross, & Lapman, 1994; Johar & Pham, 1999; Meenaghan, 2001). Even though early studies were mainly exploratory in nature, the significant contributions regarding the importance of sponsorship awareness and image transference are foundational constructs that are still used in contemporary research. Industry experts and academicians acknowledged that a consumer's awareness of a sponsorship and image transference are the foundation for more complex measures of effectiveness (Punke, 2015; Meenaghan, 2013; Nanji, 2013)

Image transference. As a measure of sponsorship effectiveness, image transference is described as the degree to which the positive feelings and attributes of a sponsee are transferred to a sponsor. Image transfer is often considered the positive association or transfer of characteristics from a sport entity toward a sponsor (Meenaghan & Shipley, 1999; Seguin et al., 2005; Walraven et al., 2012). As a primary objective, sponsors desire the transfer of attitudes and perception fans possess from a sport team toward the brand (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999; McDonald, 1991). Previous studies do support positive increases such as attitude toward the sponsor and behavioral intent when positive image transference occurs (Gwinner, Larson, & Swanson, 2009; Meenaghan, 2001). Simply, brand attitudes and a fan's future behavioral intention show a desired positive increase to fan attitudes when a sport entities image transfers to a corporate partner.

Awareness. Another essential measure of sponsorship of effectiveness is often referred to as the level of awareness consumers have regarding sponsorship activity. Awareness was developed using an associative memory model and in conjunction with image transference (Cornwell et al., 2005; Keller, 1993). The original associative memory model referred to an individual's (i.e. consumer, viewer, or spectator) ability to use memory storage networks to recall or recognize a specific brand after exposure to marketing material (e.g. stimulus) (Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) postulated that once a consumer can freely recall or recognize an associated brand a brand image is formed. The formation of brand image is completed when the associative links are created between the brand (e.g. sponsor) and the marketing material (i.e. stimulus).

To explain sponsorship awareness, Johar & Pham (1999) first introduced two heuristics that drive consumer awareness. A heuristic is defined as an aid to learning or problem solving by experimental means (Hueristic, 2017). In their seminal work and subsequent studies, the author determined that sponsor/event relatedness (i.e. fit) and the perceived market prominence of the sponsor heavily influences a consumers ability identify sponsors (Johar & Pham, 1999; Speed & Thompson, 2000; Wakefield et al., 2007). However, understanding the mechanisms that allow appropriate retrieval of information concerning sponsorship does not fully investigate the impact market prominence may have on salient measures of sport sponsorship. The primary focus of this study will be the relationship national market prominence has on salient consumer attitudes and behaviors.

Market prominence. The concept of a sponsor's market prominence is regarded as a primary sponsor characteristic that can drive sponsorship measures. Johar & Pham (1999) defined market prominence, as the consumer's perceived brand differences concerning market share, potential marketing budget, or share of voice. Pham & Johar (2001) expanded on the topic by stating that consumers use variations of market prominence of potential sponsors, as a source of information when inferring the identity of event sponsors. When consumers utilize market prominence to identify a sponsor, identification is biased for more prominent brands because these brands are more accessible in memory, therefore, prominent sponsors are more likely to be retrieved or recalled during the sponsors identification process (Pham & Johar, 2001; Wakefield et al., 2007).

However, concerning the effects of market prominence, it should be noted that often market prominence is investigated in a manner that does not incorporate the level of market share a company possesses. A 2007 study by Wakefield, Becker-Olsen, & Cornwell measured market prominence in a field setting. Results indicated that 'anchor' level sponsors, that incorporated signage of a sufficient size and in prominent areas, elicited a greater degree of recall and recognition accuracy. Additional studies built on this premise, establishing that premium leveraging activities and activation strategies elicited higher recall and recognition scores (Carrillat & d' Astous, 2012). It is important to note, that often the 'anchor' level sponsors were brand that possessed sufficiently large levels of national prominence (Carrillat & d'Astous, 2012; Wakefield et al., 2007)

Despite the importance of sponsor market prominence, few studies have investigated the impact of market prominence, in any form, on salient attitudinal and behavioral constructs. However, one study by Ko and Kim (2014) used sponsor prominence as a latent endogenous

variable to understand the impact on consumer's perceptions and attitude toward sponsors. Ko and Kim's (2014) results indicated that market prominence, defined as a consumer's perception of the sponsor, is an important indicator of sponsor perceptions and attitude formation. Additionally, in a separate study, results indicated the prominence of event characteristics (e.g. collegiate or professional) was a significant mediator of the relationship between market prominence and attitude toward sponsor (Ko et al., 2016). However, it is important to note that pre-existing sponsor attitudes were not controlled for using hypothetical scenarios

In a 2013 study, Biscaia et al., (2013) introduced a hypothetical two-group sponsorship scenario to fans of a European soccer team. The reported results showed that previous attitudes toward a brand did affect behavioral and attitudinal constructs. It should be noted that the two brands used in the study did not share brand or product characteristics (Biscaia et al., 2013). Market prominence was tangentially measured based on the reported level of marketing activity. While the authors noted that there was a considerable difference in sponsorship expenditure between companies, the level of market prominence was not factored into the reported results.

Research Question Development

Involvement. Throughout sport sponsorship literature, one of primary variables that are measured concerns the fan characteristic of involvement (Walraven et al., 2012). The importance of involvement is highlighted when discussing exposure to sponsored material. Shank & Beasley (1998) noted that when a fan is more involved there exist greater chances for exposure to sponsors. As previously noted, higher levels of sponsor awareness and image transfer are attributed to increase levels of exposure to sponsorship material (Johar & Pham, 1999; Wakefield et al., 2007). Therefore, fans that attend or view more games will be more aware of sponsors and therefore will be able to form attitudes and future intentions toward the sponsor. In sport

sponsorship, involvement is regarded as a casual or motivating state that has the potential to shape consumer communication and purchase behavior regarding a product or brand (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985).

As a primary latent construct of sponsorship effectiveness, involvement is described as an individual factor (Walraven et al., 2012) that serves as the primary antecedent for the majority of sponsorship effectiveness models that are present in the literature (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Tsioutsou, 2007). However, despite the global acceptance of involvement, scholars have long debated not only a definition but also the true impact of involvement (Rothschild, 1984). The primary point of contention regarding involvement was the constant changing of the definition (Rothschild, 1984). As research began to accumulate, a proper definition and conceptualization were able to take hold, at least in sport management literature.

In early literature, scholars could not reach a consensus regarding a definition and what the construct represented (Kapferer & Laurent, 1985; Rothschild, 1984). In a review of previous literature, Rothschild (1984) gives an overview of the problems facing research in involvement. Rothschild (1984) notes that the continued redefining of the construct has not advanced literature in a discernible degree. Rothchild's (1984) contention was supported through the existence of numerous definitions. A sample of various definitions is presented in Table 3.

For example, during the 1980's scholars attempted to provide categories in which consumer involvement could be classified. Three examples of categories of involvement consisted of personal, physical, and situational involvement (Zaichowsky, 1985). The three constructs were developed to attempt to describe different aspects of human behavior. Furthermore, continuing the disagreement, scholars have developed other categories or

definitions for consumer involvement that as Rothschild (1984) noted measure conceptually the

same thing and were at best utilizing the similar definitions.

Table 3
Definitions for Involvement

Resource	Type of Involvement	Definition
Mitchell (1979, p. 194)	General Involvement	An individual level, internal state variable that indicates the amount of arousal, interest, or drive evoked by a particular stimulus or situation.
Rothschild (1984, p 216)	Enduring Involvement	Unobservable state of motivation arousal or interest toward an activity or associated product, and which has drive properties
Stone (1984)	Behavioral Involvement	Time and intensity of effort expended in pursuing a particular activity

Despite the numerous definitions that are present in the literature, Rothschild (1984)

stated that regardless of definition, consumer involvement does exist on a continuum. Therefore,

a consumer's level of involvement is dependent on a serious of internal and external variables

that influence the often-mentioned motivations that consumers experience (Rothschild, 1984).

Finally, when the internal and external variables exhibit a positive influence on the consumer,

levels of involvement will be higher and consumers will have a greater level of product or brand

consumption (Bennett, Ferreira, Lee, & Polite, 2009).

Before a deeper understanding of consumer involvement and sport can be reached, it is

necessary to discuss the similarities and differences involvement has with a conceptually similar

latent construct. Team identification was designed to understand an individual's level of

association with a sport organization (Wann & Branscombe, 1993; Sung, Koo, Dittmore, &

Eddy, 2016). Additionally, team identification is described as the level of attachment an

individual possess concerning, teams, coaches, or other sport organizations (Trail, Anderson, Fink, 2000; Wann & Branscombe, 1993). This is conceptually similar to the definition of consumer involvement provided by Zaichkowsky (1985). Zaichkowsky (1985) defined consumer involvement as "a person's perceived relevance of the object based on inherent needs, values, and interests" (p. 342; Park & Young, 1986)

Even though involvement and team identification conceptually measure similar constructs, the primary difference is the application of each construct. Traditionally, team identification was developed and applied to measure and describe levels of attachment to a sport entity in a variety of settings. For example, team identification has previously been used to investigate the inclusion or exclusion to specific in-groups (i.e. fan bases), season ticket purchase behavior, fan violence, and spectator attendance (Madrigal, 1995; Wakefield & Sloan, 1995; Wann, Peterson, Cothran, & Dykes, 1999). The inclusion of in-group criteria is a primary differentiator with involvement. When measuring involvement, researchers do not typically provide inclusion criteria.

As a measure of in sport sponsorship literature, it is generally accept that consumers possessing higher degrees of involvement are more favorable toward sponsorships (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Olson, 2010; Walraven et al., 2012). Further, studies suggest that higher levels of involvement and acceptance of sponsorship lead to the development of a more positive attitude toward a sponsor, and a better chance that the sponsor is perceived to have a greater degree of sincerity (Speed & Thompson, 2000). For example, Grohs and Reisinger (2014) used involvement as a moderator to determine the impact on several salient constructs. The authors reported that involvement did provide a positive moderation effect on event-sponsor fit and commercialization concerning sponsor image (Grohs & Reisinger, 2014).

Sponsor relatedness. The construct of sponsorship relatedness was first proposed in a seminal work that measured the level of awareness a consumer possessed of sponsorship. Johar & Pham (1999), borrowing from categorization research, suggested that sponsor relatedness was constructed by consumers and used to match the common characteristics sponsors and events share. Through linking common characteristics, consumer's employ an associative memory networks that allowed individuals to correctly recall and recognize event sponsors (Rosch & Mervis, 1975; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008). As a model of explaining associative memory process, the construct of relatedness has been linked to favorable attitudinal and behavioral outcomes in sponsorship literature.

Nevertheless, before the specific impact of fit can be discussed, it is important to understand the nature of the construct. While early studies such as Johar & Pham (1999) depict the construct as the synergy experienced between sponsor and entity, numerous subsequent studies operationalized the term to describe the perceived similarities in attributes between sponsor and event. For example, Speed & Thompson (2000) describe consumer perceptions regarding the similarities of sponsor and event characteristics as sponsor-event fit (Hensler et al., 2007; Mazodier & Merunka, 2007; Mazodier & Quester, 2013; Woisetchlager, Eiting, Haselhoff, & Michaelis, 2010). In addition, there exists a body of sponsorship literature that leverages congruence theory to explain the level of relatedness between sponsor and event (Cornwell, Humphreys, Maguire, Weeks, & Tellegen, 2006; Rifon, Choi, Trimble, & Li, 2004; Weeks et al., 2008). Regardless of the term used by scholars, the constructs are conceptually identical and measure the same consumer perceptions. For the purposes of this study, the construct of fit proposed by Speed & Thompson (2000) was used.

According to several studies, individual differences can influence the level of perceived fit constructed by consumers when exposed to sponsorship activities (Speed & Thompson, 2000; Walraven et al., 2012). For example, results have indicated that the level of involvement a consumer has can positively influence fit (Mazodier & Quester, 2013). The impact toward perceived fit may be indicative of the amount of exposure to a sponsor that is experienced by highly involved fans. However, it has also been indicated that level of involvement may not completely account for perceived fit. According to the associative memory model, consumers rely more on the perceived similarities between objects to form a connection (Pham & Johar, 2001; Rosch & Mervis, 1975). Therefore, the quantity of exposure may not play a crucial role in the formation of perceived fit.

Previous studies have determined that the fit between sponsor and event can affect consumer attitudes and behaviors. Conceptually, as an endogenous variable, the sponsor-event fit is often described as a dichotomous variable (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008). Stated simply, a sponsor is perceived to possess either a high degree or low degree of fit with an event. The literature has indicated that high levels of perceived fit can have a positive direct effect on a consumer's attitude toward the sponsor (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008).

Regarding relationships with attitudinal constructs, fit is often associated with attitude toward sponsor and future purchase or behavioral intention. Primarily, research has shown that fit between sponsor and event is a major indicator of a consumer's attitude toward a sponsor (Speed & Thompson, 2000; Roy & Cornwell, 2003). The relationship between fit and attitude toward a sponsor is reported as positive when there is a perceived level of high fit between sponsor and event (Rifon et al., 2004). Specifically, Rifon et al., (2004) indicated that high levels of fit predisposed consumers to view a sponsor as having altruistic motives.

Perceived sincerity. A third salient attitudinal variable that is often measured concerns the importance that perceived sincerity (e.g. goodwill) has toward the formation of consumer attitudes and behaviors toward of a sponsor. The origins of perceived sincerity, as a salient measure, can be traced back to consumer skepticism regarding advertising and the over-commercialization of sport (Rifon et al., 2004). Scholars noted that if advertisers and sponsors were thought to posses sincere motives (i.e. low commercial motivation) then consumer response was generally more positive (Olson, 2010; Speed & Thompson, 2010).

In a seminal work, Speed and Thompson (2000) described perceived sincerity as the primary influencer of a consumer's attitude toward a sponsor and the perceptions that consumers form toward the nature of the relationship between sponsor and event. Stated another way, do consumer's perceive the nature of the relationship to be more altruistic or is the sponsor clearly motivated to maintain the relationship solely for commercial reasons (Olson, 2010).

In the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) literature, CSR and perceived sincerity are linked to sponsorship and brand outcomes. Yoon, Gurhan-Canli, & Schwarz (2006) discussed the impact of high perceived sincerity might have. The results indicated that when CSR spending exceeded advertising expenses, consumers experienced higher levels of perceived sincerity (Yoon et al., 2006). In Cause Related Marketing literature, when cause congruence (i.e. fit) was high, sponsor sincerity and attitude towards sponsor were positively affected (Roy, 2010). That is to say, when consumers perceived the cause of the sponsor and sponsored property was highly matched (e.g. little commercial motivation), a reciprocal positive increase in attitudinal measures were reported. Therefore, based on the literature, it is important to understand that effective sponsorship, in a variety of settings, relies heavily on consumer perception of a high degree of sincerity toward the sponsored property.

Several studies have indicated or outlined sponsorship characteristics that may have a positive impact on a consumer's perceived sincerity. Speed and Thompson (2000) highlighted the length of the relationship as a significant indicator of perceived sincerity. The authors stated that sponsorships that exists for a prolong periods, or the announcements were for an extend period of time were positively related to higher levels of sincerity. Additionally, higher levels of sincerity were also associated with sponsors that actively engaged with sponsorship activity that spanned all levels of competition for a single sport (Olson, 2010). The perceived sincerity of sponsors acts as a mediator in the relationship between the fit of the sponsor and sponsee concerning attitude toward the sponsor (Meenaghan, 2001). However, Kim, Ko, & James (2011) noted that a direct positive relationship exists with attitude toward sponsor.

Attitude toward sponsor. Before a further review of the literature, an important distinction should be made concerning attitude toward sponsor and attitude towards sponsorship. As an individual perception, attitude toward sponsorship is considered an a priori attitude formed before exposure to sponsorship activation and leveraging strategies (Walraven et al., 2012). In other words, attitude toward sponsorship refers to the sensitivity that consumers have about the over commercialization of sport properties For example, a consumer will form preconceived attitudes based on the motives of the sponsor, and the potential contribution toward the sponsored property (Ko & Kim, 2014). Attitude toward sponsorship does seem to have a positive impact on consumer awareness levels (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998; Johar & Pham, 1999). The a priori attitudes that are formed concerning sponsorship can influence consumer attitudes toward the sponsor (Walraven et al., 2012).

For the purposes of this study, attitude toward a sponsor will be considered an effective outcome that is generated when a positive perception exists of the sponsor. For example, several

studies have suggested that attitude toward a sponsor may be a key predictor of a consumer's behavioral intention (Demirel & Erdogmus, 2016; Filis & Spais, 2012; Speed & Thompson, 2000). Attitude toward the sponsor is positively influenced by the perceived fit of the sponsor. In addition, Filis & Spais (2012) noted that consumers exposed to the consistent presences (e.g. year to year) of a sponsor would be positively influenced by the perception of fit, which is directly linked to positive increases in attitudes.

As a sponsorship antecedent, Walraven et al., (2012) determined the attitude toward a sponsor was an affective antecedent or process that would ultimately influence behavioral outcomes. The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Biscaia et al., 2013) supports this notion. Ajzen (1991) indicated that positive attitude formation for an object or entity is a positive indicator of an individual's future behavioral intention. In a study investigating real sponsors for a Portuguese professional soccer team, Biscaia et al., (2013) revealed that attitudinal loyalty (e.g. involvement and team identification) was a significant indicator of attitude toward the sponsor, which in turn, significantly predicted the future behavioral intentions of the consumer.

Behavioral intention. In previous literature, the salient outcomes most often investigated relate to the ultimate objective of sponsorship, which is a consumer's purchase intention toward a sponsor (Kim et al., 2011; Madrigal, 2000; McDaniel, 1999; Speed & Thompson, 2000). Furthermore, previous studies have reported the vital role a consumer's future purchase intention plays is sponsorship effectiveness (Tsiotsou & Alexandris, 2009; Biscaia et al., 2013; Demirel & Erdogmus, 2016). The construct of purchase intention is defined as the future intention of consumers to actively purchase a brand or product (Spears & Sing, 2004).

The primary antecedents that are often investigated include involvement, fit, attitude toward sponsor, and perceived sincerity (Tsioutsou & Alexandris, 2009; Biscaia et al., 2013;

Demirel & Erdogmus, 2016; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008). Each of the previous constructs is reported to parallel a consumer's purchase intention. The use of a future purchase intention, as an indicator of effectiveness, is often linked to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The Theory of Planned Behavior postulates that intentions are an adequate indicator of a consumer's actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Zaharia et al., 2016).

While a consumer's purchase intention is the most often studied outcome, the design and purpose of this study dictate that simple purchase intention of a sponsor's products is not an appropriate measure. Therefore, the construct of future behavioral intentions (e.g. engaging in a financial service) is a more appropriate measure for this study. Additionally, Alexandris et al., (2012) defined behavioral intentions toward a sponsor as a wide degree of topics that can include future purchase intentions, word of mouth promotion of the sponsor, or actively engaging in a sponsor's services (Alexandris et al., 2012).

Previously, attitudinal constructs are indicated to have positive and significant relationships with behavioral intentions. For example, increases in team trust and attachment toward a team are significant predictors of behavioral outcomes (Tsiotsou, 2013). Additionally, team attachment, brand image, and fit have all been reported to significantly predict consumer behaviors (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Tsioutsou & Alexandris, 2009; Walraven et al., 2012). However, the primary focus of this study will be the sponsors perceived sincerity and a consumer's attitudes toward the sponsor.

Concerning perceived sincerity, the literature shows that as the perception of the altruistic motives of a sponsor increases an expected positive relationship occurs with future behaviors (Kim et al., 2011). The theoretical foundation for these findings concerns the nature and intentions of the sponsor. For example, previous studies report that as perceived sponsor motives

become more altruistic or as apparent commercial motives decrease, attitudinal response becomes more favorable (Speed & Thompson, 2000; Olson, 2010). Therefore, as the perception of sincerity positively increases, fans and consumers are more willing to participate in behaviors that are considered favorable by the sponsor. Previous studies indicated that when consumers perceived an authentic support of a team and organization, purchase intention and other behavioral aspects were positively affected (Dees et al., 2008)

The final attitudinal construct that theoretically influences behavioral intentions is the attitude toward a sponsor. Previous research concerning individual consumer attitudes toward sponsors shows that as consumers possess more positive attitudes towards sponsors this ultimately leads to increases in behavioral outcomes when compared to non-sponsors that are direct market competitors (Walliser, 2003). Also, Alexandris et al., (2012) reported that attitude toward a sponsor does significantly predict a consumer's behavioral intention. This supports previous findings which indicate the formation of a positive attitude does lead to preferred and positive future behaviors (Biscaia et al., 2013; Speed & Thompson, 2000).
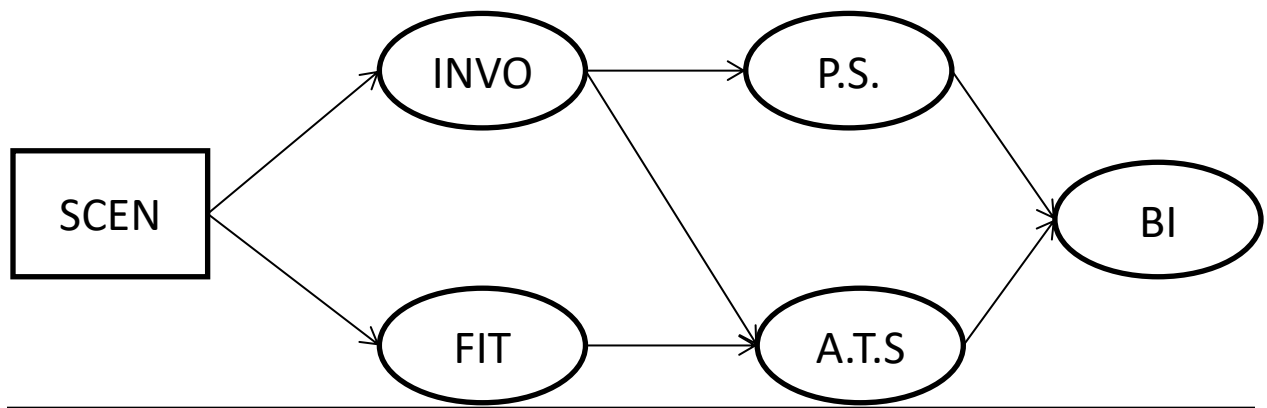
Hypothesized Model

Figure 1. The hypothesize Multiple Indicator Multiple Causes (MIMIC) model includes the latent constructs involvement, fit, perceived sincerity, attitude toward the sponsor, and behavioral intent. Also, the covariate sponsorship scenario.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This study developed a methodology to further the understanding the impact individual sponsor characteristics have on the relationships between salient latent variables. The individual sponsor characteristics used concerned the unique level of national market prominence (i.e. share) that a hypothetical sponsor possesses. Additionally, the study provided greater insight into factors that impact a consumer's attitudes and behaviors, but also may allow sport marketers to construct sponsorship campaigns that could help improve a sponsor's return on investment.

Study Design

The study was an experimental design that incorporated three groups in a post-test analysis. Participants were presented with one of three randomly assigned hypothetical sponsorship agreement scenarios. Individual responses were measured using items related to salient attitudinal and behavioral constructs. The hypothetical scenarios were constructed based on a sponsor's level of national market prominence and paired with the participant's favorite National Basketball Association (NBA) team.

Banks or financial institution were chosen because the financial sector favors the use of sponsorship (e.g. most teams have a bank as a sponsor) in order to enhance a consumer's 'dull image' of the financial sector (Thwaites, 1994). In addition, financial institutions are one of the few types of sport sponsors that can exist independently at a local, regional, or national level. While there are numerous product and brand categories that participate in sport sponsorship (e.g. beverage, airline, automotive), there are few sponsors that can be differentiated based on the level of national market prominence, as required for this study. For example, a common sport sponsor would be the beverage company Coca-Cola. Despite multiple beverage companies

adoption of sponsorship as a marketing strategy, there are few brands that operate on a local and regional market level.

Previous literature has indicated that as consumer consumption and participation increase, the level of exposure to sponsor stimuli increases, thereby, bringing a greater awareness to sponsors (Wakefield et al., 2007; Walraven, et al., 2012). While not unique to the NBA, it is important to collect data during peak levels of consumer consumption and participation. Therefore, data were collected for a 24-hour period from June 11, 2017 to June 12, 2017. The chosen dates coincided with the 2016-2017 NBA season. The date range for the 2016-2017 season was October 25, 2016, and the final play-off game concluded on approximately June 18, 2017.

Hypothetical scenarios. It has been noted that the use of hypothetical scenarios, incorporated into an experimental design, should become a primary focus for a broader range of sponsorship research (Meenaghan, 2013). Additionally, hypothetical scenarios can provide a richer understanding of participants that may not be possible to gather with real sponsorship agreements. While the use of a hypothetical scenario is common in research that investigates facility naming rights (Chen & Zhang, 2012; Eddy, 2014; Reysen, Snider, & Branscombe, 2012), there is a dearth of literature involving hypothetical scenarios, in a non-naming rights setting. This dearth of literature is especially evident when comparing fan attitudinal and behavioral responses to non-naming rights sponsorship.

Currently, there are two accepted methods for constructing a hypothetical scenario. Eddy (2014) implemented a simple scenario that leveraged a fictional corporation in facility naming rights scenario. Congruent with stated limitations in Chen and Zhang (2012), the potential for responses bias was the consideration for a simplified scenario (Eddy, 2014). However, while the

author acknowledges that the use of real companies in a hypothetical scenario may introduce biases created by pre-existing consumer attitudes (Eddy, 2014; Speed & Thompson, 2000), the scenarios used for this study incorporated elements present in the scenario developed by Chen & Zhang (2012). Therefore, the three hypothetical scenarios used possessed characteristics that are common across groups. These commonalities will include the name of three example financial institutions, a monetary value for the agreement, and a brief discription of the insitutions operations. Also, the researcher acknowledges that there exist the potential that participants will have pre-existing biases towards banks used in the hypothetical scenarios. The template for each scenario is found in Figure 2.

National Level Sponsor
Your favorite NBA team, the [insert team name], has entered into a new sponsorship agreement with a national bank (i.e. Bank of America, Citigroup, Chase, Wells Fargo) for the amount of $12 million over the next 4 years. The new sponsor is a financial institution with numerous branches across the country and a number of branches in [insert host city name]. Please use this new sponsorship agreement when responding to the following questions.

Regional Level Sponsor
Your favorite NBA team, the [insert team name], has entered into a new sponsorship agreement with a regional bank (i.e. bank 1, bank 2, bank 3) for $4 million over the next 4 years. The new sponsor is a regional bank with a number of locations in the city of [insert host city name], and the surrounding area. The primary purpose of this sponsor is to serve individuals and businesses in the surrounding region. Please use this new sponsorship agreement when responding to the following questions.

Local Level Sponsor
Your favorite NBA team, the [insert team name], has entered into a new sponsorship agreement with a local bank/credit union (i.e. bank1, bank2, bank3) for $500,000 over the next four years. The new sponsor is a local community bank/credit union primarily located in the city of [insert host city name]. The primary purpose of this bank is to serve the local community and industries. Please use this new sponsorship agreement when responding to the following questions.

Figure 2. National, regional, and local hypothetical sponsorship scenarios.

The focus of this study is the differences in consumer response to a hypothetical sponsorship announcement. Participants were presented with one of three hypothetical sponsorship scenarios. The three scenarios were differentiated based on a sponsor's levels of national market prominence. For the purpose of this study, market prominence was defined as the size of national market share that a financial institution possesses, and an operational definition for bank classification provide by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC, 2017; Johar & Pham, 1999).

The importance of market prominence, in the context of sponsorship research, was first introduced by Johar & Pham (1999) as a significant antecedent of consumer awareness toward a

sponsor. However, as previously noted, a dearth of literature exists applying the concept of market prominence toward salient latent variables that may indicate consumer response to sponsorship. Johar & Pham (1999) suggested that market prominence is a mechanism through which consumers utilize a company's market share, perceived marketing budget, or visibility to identify a sponsor. The proposed study used the amount of national market share a bank possesses to classify each sponsors. National market share was measured using a number of inclusion criteria set forth by the FDIC. These inclusion criteria included the total value of current financial holdings, the number of branches located within the United States, and the overall corporate mission. The description for each level of prominence can be found in Table 4. Additionally, a full list of financial institutions chosen for this study can be found in Appendix A.

Table 4
Level of Prominence

National Sponsor (Large Banks)	A national sponsor will be a financial institution that will have reach, influence, or physical locations throughout the country. Further, the FDIC has determined that 'large banks' are the 25 largest banking or financial institutions in the country (FDIC, 2017). Example: Bank of America, Chase Bank, Citibank
Regional Sponsor (Midsize Bank)	A bank or financial institution will be considered a regional sponsor if the considered reach, influence, or physical location is contained within the home state or does not extend beyond states that border the state that contains the indicated team. Additionally, regional banks will have assets that exceed $1billion, but this excludes the 25 largest banking organizations (FDIC, 2017). Example: Bancorpsouth, Regions Banks, Iberia Bank
Local Sponsor	Considered a community bank. A community or Local bank will have less than $1 billion in assets and will not be under control of a larger holding company. Further, it must be locally owned and operated with a primary focus towards residents and businesses (FDIC, 2017). Example: Bank of Fayetteville, Veritex Community Banks, New York Community Bank

Note: The operational definitions for bank categories were adopted from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) guidelines for bank classification

Procedure

Pilot test. The first step to determine the validity and reliability of the chosen instrument and procedure was to conduct a pilot test. Pilot studies are defined as a method or procedure that allow for a preliminary test or exploration to determine the feasibility of a proposed study (Hertzog, 2008; Jairath, Hogerney, & Parsons, 2000; Prescott & Soeken, 1989). The purpose of the pilot study will be to determine the viability of the proposed instrument and if there are any methodological flaws in the design. Conceptually, a pilot study can be used to determine flaws in item construction, increase response rates (i.e. online survey design), and increase the quality of

responses (Riddick & Russell, 2015). Previous sport management studies have used a pilot phase to determine the reliability and validity of sub-scales that have been modified (Kelly, Ireland, Mangan, & Williamson, 2016; Vinsentin, Scarpi, & Pizzi, 2016).

The pilot study sample consisted of 50 undergraduate students from two Universities in the United States. Data collection for the pilot study occurred from April 20, 2017 to May 26, 2017. Students were provided a Qualtric's survey link, and directed to complete the pilot study survey. The survey used in the pilot study only included the hypothetical scenario for a national level sponsor. The use of a single hypothetical scenario allowed for checks to determine if any reliability or validity concerns occurred due to item rescaling or modification. The results of the pilot study indicated poor factor loadings. However, it was determined that the sample size was not sufficient for the principal components analysis. Exploratory Factor Analysis. While sample size may have been the primary contributor to lack of factor convergence, there was also a potential issue with combining sub-scales from different studies.

Primary Study

Data collection. Primary data collection was conducted through the online survey tool Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). As a subject recruitment tool, MTurk provides the opportunity for researchers to sample a demographically broad and national convenience sample that addresses some of the limitations present in traditional student or geographically restricted samples (Berinsky, Huber, & Lenz, 2011; Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Sears, 1986). Additionally, researchers have highlighted the fact that MTurk participants become more invested in experimental design studies and provide more valid and reliable item responses (Berinsky et al., 2011).

Despite the obvious benefits of an online sample through MTurk, it is necessary to acknowledge the potential limitations of the sampling procedure. Previous studies have noted that demographically, users tend to be on average older, never married, and lease homes rather than own (Berinsky et al., 2011). Further, if the proper precautions are not taken during the initial design of the study (i.e. participant restrictions), there is the possibility that assumption violations could occur through independence violations. However, there are methods to counters the potential concerns when using MTurk through the parameters that are set for worker (i.e. participant) recruitment.

Worker recruitment. The functionality and success of MTurk requires the proper construction of parameters for worker recruitment. The proposed study set parameters that allowed the researcher to control for worker quality and to ensure the completion of the survey. To ensure a high degree of work quality, MTurk allows the researcher to set a minimum worker approval rating needed to participate in the study (Buhrmester et al., 2011). Approval ratings are dictated by whether previous study administrators have accepted or rejected a worker's attempt based on completion and quality (Johnson & Borden, 2012). Stated simply, workers who complete and provide an acceptable quality of response receive a higher approval rating. For this study, only workers that have an approval rating of 90% or higher were used for the study.

An additional worker recruitment parameter used was the inclusion of a completion code at the end of the survey. According to Buhrmester et al. (2011), a completion code is a necessary procedure to ensure several validity concerns are addressed. First, the completion code gives the principle researcher the ability to match the anonymous worker identification number with the completed survey. Second, Qualtrics generated each completion code once and randomly assigned to a worker upon completion of the survey.

Furthermore, additional parameters implemented included only workers over the age of 18. Worker recruitment was restricted to residents that live in the contiguous United States. Also, an internet protocol (IP) address limiter was instituted, that ensured only one attempt per IP address was allowed. IP protocol limiters are an important recruitment parameter because it has been reported that workers may possess multiple worker identification numbers (Chandler, Mueller, & Paolacci, 2013). However, according to Chandler et al., (2013) Amazon actively works to ensure workers create only one account. Further, the MTurk user agreement strictly forbids the possession of multiple work identification codes. If Amazon determines a worker is using multiple accounts, the worker will lose the ability to participate from any future HITs and will be geminately banned from MTurk (Chandler et al., 2013)

The current body of literature suggests conflicting views exist regarding the amount of compensation and quality of worker recruitment. For example, Horton & Chilton (2010) indicated that workers reported payments that were multiples of five were more attractive. Previous studies suggest that higher levels of compensation attract more quality responses (Buhrmester et al., 2011; Horton & Chilton, 2010; Paolacci & Chandler, 2014). However, Paolacci and Chandler (2014) noted that the lacks of work complexity in psychological instruments are an indicator of higher degree of response quality. Additionally, the amount of compensation does not directly correlate with a higher degree of response quality is psychological studies (Buhrmester et al., 2011). Based on conflicted findings, a conservative approach to compensation was taken and workers received $0.50 for a completed Human Intelligence Test (HIT) (e.g. survey). This meets the requirement of being a multiple of five (Horton & Chilton, 2010), and is of sufficient size that if level of compensation does correlate with response quality there will not be a worker quality issue.

Attention checks. Because the proposed instrument is an online survey, there are further concerns regarding reliability and validity violations. Attention checks or member checks are a method to highlight inattentive or 'speed' respondents (Aust, Diedenhofen, Ullrich, & Musch, 2012; Buhrmester et al., 2011). In studies exploring the use of MTurk, research has shown that when attention checks are included there is an increase in the quality of data (Aust et al., 2012; Buhrmester et al., 2011; Peer, Vosgerau, & Acquisti, 2014). Based on previous findings, two attention check questions, which will automatically end the survey if a wrong response is provided, will be included in the instrument. The items are found in Appendix A.

Sample

The sample was chosen through a purposive selection method composed of fans of all 30 NBA teams. A purposive sampling procedure is the deliberate or purposeful selection of a sample in which units within a target population are specifically targeted based on specific characteristics (Kothari, 2004). Expanding on this description, the choice of investigating a population that contains specific or particular characteristics allows researchers to glean information that is central to the study (Richie, Lewis, Elam, Tennant, & Nilufer, 2013). Furthermore, as a homogenous sampling scheme, it allows the researcher to control for the limitations present in other non-probability schemes such as convenience sampling (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007).

The need to employ a sampling strategy that avoids the limitations of traditional sport management sampling techniques is currently necessary for the field of sport management. Historically, studies in sport sponsorship have relied on the convenience sampling of college students (Cianfrone & Zhang, 2006). Noting this over reliance of college students, as a sample, Dees et al. (2008) called for samples that are more representative of fans response to sponsorship

material. Furthermore, previous studies have commented on the over reliance of college athletics as a setting for sponsorship research (Ko & Kim, 2014). By acknowledging previous limitations, another aim of this study is to construct a sampling procedure that may be more representative of consumer attitudinal and behavioral outcomes toward sponsors in professional sport.

After determining the method of sample selection, it was necessary to determine the approximate number of participants or observations necessary to conduct the chosen analysis. The analysis for this study was a Multiple Indicator Multiple Causes (MIMIC) modeling approach to determine group difference on latent paths and variables. For parameter estimates to be valid, a large sample size is necessary (Hoyle & Gottfredson, 2014). As discussed in Kline (2015) a general method to estimate sample size is the use of the free parameter to observation ratio. The hypothesized MIMIC model had 49 free parameters, and the ratio considered the sample sufficient if it reaches a ratio of 10:1 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2009). Therefore, in a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), a sample size of $n = 490$ would be a minimum required sample. Another method for estimating SEM sample size, not used in this study, would be to conduct a Monte Carlo simulation (Wolf, Harrington, Clark, & Miller, 2013). However, a MIMIC model is substantially more complex and requires a significantly larger sample (Hair et al., 2010). Additionally, Wolf et al., (2013) reported that there is not a simple solution to estimating an appropriate sample size for any of SEM. Instead, it is should be noted that a clear method for determining sample size exists for an analysis of this nature, Iacobucci (2009) indicated that due to complexity and demands of the analysis, a larger sample size is recommended (Kline, 2015). The researcher, understanding that sample size estimates may vary, should use caution when estimating the required sample size. Further, through the introduction of

a three-group covariate, the statistical complexity of the model drastically increases. Therefore, the estimated sample size was *n*=1,200 participants.

The original sample consisted of 1493 participants. Data cleaning consisted of removing individual attempts that were not completed. Attempts were not completed because the participant did not complete the survey or incorrectly answered an attention check. After data cleaning, the final sample was 1162 and a response rate of 77.8%. The final sample was predominately male (63.3%) and Caucasian (73.5%). Additionally, the sample was fairly affluent with a reported household income greater than $50,000 a year (56.7%). In terms of the education level, 71.5% of respondents had at minimum an Associate's degree. Finally, 50.6% of the sample was single or never married. All sample descriptive statistics can be found in Table 5. Additionally, the descriptive concerning participant selection of favorite team is found in Appendix D.

Table 5
Sample Descriptives

Characteristic		*n*	%
Gender			
	Male	736	63.3%
	Female	426	36.7%
Household Income			
	$0-$24,999	178	15.3%
	$25,000-$49,999	325	28.0%
	$50,000-$74,999	294	25.3%
	$75,000-$99,999	151	13.0%
	$100,000+	214	18.4%
Ethnicity			
	White/Caucasian	854	73.5%
	Hispanic or Latino	82	7.1%
	African-American	91	7.8%
	Asian/Pacific Islander	113	9.7%
	Other	22	1.9%
Education			
	Some High School	5	.4%
	High School Diploma	75	6.5%
	Some College	250	21.5%
	Associates Degree	128	11.0%
	Bachelor's Degree	514	44.2%
	Master's Degree	148	12.7%
	Doctoral Degree	42	3.6%
Marital Status			
	Single/never married	588	50.6%
	Married	443	38.1%
	Partner	64	5.5%
	Widowed	11	.9%
	Separated	7	.6%
	Divorced	49	4.2%
Avg. number of games attended		2	
Avg. number of games watched		20	

Procedure

After receiving IRB approval, the online survey conducted through Qualtrics, was posted to MTurk. After agreeing to participate, workers were presented with a skip logic question to determine eligibility based on age. All recorded observations were from participants that indicated an age over 18. If a worker indicated an age below the accepted cut-off, the worker was immediately sent to the end of the survey and not provided a completion code. Upon meeting the minimum age requirement, a drop-down menu that contained the 30 current NBA teams was presented to participants. The full list of current NBA teams, mascots, and associated cities may be found in Appendix B or C. From the provided drop down menu, participants were instructed to select their favorite teams. However, if the Toronto Raptors were selected a skip logic was triggered and directed the subject to the end of the survey. The Toronto Raptor selection choice was coded as skip logic because of the differences between the United States and Canadian banking systems. The differences could not be controlled for in the current study design.

After team selection, participants were randomly assigned to one of three hypothetical sponsorship scenarios. The scenarios were constructed based on specific levels of sponsor prominence (e.g. Local, Regional, and National). Next, participants were directed to consider the sponsorship scenario when responding to the provided items. The subscales used in this study are involvement (Dees et al., 2008), fit (Speed & Thompson, 2000), perceived sincerity of sponsor (Speed & Thompson, 2000), attitude toward sponsor (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008), and future behavioral intentions (Alexandris, Tsiotsou, & James, 2012). Finally, workers were instructed to answer demographic questions that include ethnicity, marital status, education level, and household income.

Instrument

The instrument consisted of individual items used to measure the construct of involvement (Dees et al., 2008), sponsor-event fit (Speed & Thompson, 2000), perceived sincerity (Speed & Thompson, 2000), attitude toward the sponsors (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008), and behavioral intention (Alexandris, Tsiotsou, & James, 2012). Overall, the proposed items have all been previously reported as reliable and valid. All items may be found in Appendix A

Involvement. The construct of involvement has been tested through numerous scales and in a variety of settings for sport, consumer behavior, and marketing (Biscaia et al., 2013; Dees et al., 2008; Laurent & Kapferer, 1985; Tsioutsou, 2007). The sub-scale for this study was adapted from Madrigal's (2001) work concerning sponsorship effectiveness through the lens of the belief-attitude-intentions hierarchy. It is important to note that the original scale developed by Madrigal (2001) included different anchors for each item (i.e. not very important/very important, not a fan/very strong fan). Dees et al., (2008) modified the original scale to measure fan involvement more accurately. Dees et al., (2008) reported a Crohnbach's alpha of α= 0.87. The modified items and anchors are provided in Appendix B.

Despite the original structure provided by Madrigal (2001), and modified items present in Dees et al., (2008), item modification was necessary. The modifications for this study were necessary to reflect the sponsors for an individual team and hypothetical sponsorship scenario. An example of the content modification would be "I see myself as a strong fan of this team" (Dees et al., 2008; Madrigal, 2001) was modified to "I see myself as a strong fan of the Atlanta Hawks". Additionally, the original and subsequently modified items were originally 5-point Likert-type questions. However, to address future scaling issues, such as variable transformation

for the analysis, the items were rescaled to a 7-point Likert scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree.

Fit. As an antecedent of sponsorship effectiveness, fit was first introduced as the concept of relatedness between sponsor and sport entity (Johar & Pham, 1999). A high degree of relatedness in external characteristics or perceived motives between the two has been shown to improve consumers' awareness of the sponsorship (Pham & Johar, 2001). Adopting this concept, Speed & Thompson (2000), introduced a sub-scale used as an antecedent for consumer behavioral and attitudinal constructs. The items adopted for this study is the original subscale proposed by Speed & Thompson (2000) that included five Likert-type items using a seven point scale with anchors of (1) Strongly disagree to (7)Strongly agree. Further, Speed & Thompson (2000) used the restriction of item loading to corresponding factors and the resulting significant positive loading were used as an indication of convergent validity (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988). Additionally, the sub-scale was reported as reliable with a Cronbach's alpha of α= 0.95.

Perceived sincerity. The latent construct of perceived sincerity of a sponsor is often used to measure the perceived altruistic motives of a corporate entity (Speed & Thompson, 2000; Walraven et al., 2012). The original sub-scale contained three Likert type questions using a seven-point scale. The anchors for this sub-scale are (1) Strongly Disagree to (7) Strongly Agree. As with Fit, Speed & Thompson (2000) demonstrated validity through the positive and significant factor loading when item loading were restricted (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988). The sub-scale reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha of α= 0.88.

The original items will need to be modified to fit the purpose of this study. For example, item one from Speed & Thompson (2000) stated "The main reason the sponsor would be involved in the event is that the sponsor believes the event deserves support" (p. 231). For the

purpose of this study, the item was modified, and state "The main reason the new bank sponsor would be involved with the [team] is because the new bank believes the [team] deserves support'.

Attitude toward the sponsor. Attitude toward the sponsor is an individual factor that may influence perceptions of sponsorship agreements (Walraven et al., 2012). In addition, the current body of literature supports the potential influence that individual attitudes may have regarding future behavioral intentions toward a sponsor's brand or products (Zhang, Won, & Pastore, 2005; Walraven et al., 2012). The study utilized the sub-scale originally proposed by Gwinner & Bennett (2008) to measure consumer attitude toward sponsor. Gwinner & Bennett (2008) originally proposed a three item seven point Likert-type scale to measure consumer attitudes. The anchors for the scale are (1) Strongly Disagree to (7) Strongly Agree. The items did not require content modification. Gwinner and Bennett (2008) reported the sub-scale as reliable with a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha= 0.89$. Evidence of validity was presented with a composite reliability of CR= .95, and all item factor loadings exceeded the minimum value of 0.69 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008)

Behavioral intentions. The final latent construct and only pure exogenous variable for the proposed model, adopted from Alexandris et al., (2012), was used to measure consumer's behavioral intention toward a sponsor. As a common outcome variable, behavioral intention attempts to determine a consumer's future purchase intention or use of a sponsor's products (Biscaia et al., 2012; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Filo, Funk, & O'Brien, 2010; Speed & Thompson, 2000). However, classical purchase intention or behaviors are typically measured when the sponsor(s) have tangible products for consumers to purchase. In the case of financial institutions, few provide tangible products but instead provide services for consumers to engage with or possibly recommend.

The subscale adopted from Alexandris et al., (2012) contained three items utilizing a five-point Likert scale with anchors of very unlikely to very likely. However, the subscale was modified to three seven-point Likert type questions with anchors (1) Very Unlikely to (7) Very Likely. Additionally, each item was modified to reflect the concept of banks providing a service instead of a tangible product. The sub-scale was reported as reliable with a Cronbach's alpha of α= 0.89. Further, validity was confirmed with an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of 0.59 (Alexandris et al., 2012).

Reliability

Social sciences, such as sport management, use subscales to measure and report on the phenomena of human behavior. However, because subscales are a sum of items, it is important to determine if participants respond to items in the same a manner every time (Santos, 1999). Therefore, the central measure of reliability, in scale development, is the use of Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951; Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). As a measure of internal consistency, Cronbach's

alpha is reported as a value between 0 to 1 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). A subscale is reported as reliable when the reported alpha value exceeds the threshold of 0.70 (DeVellis, 2012).

Validity

Content validity is defined as "the extent to which a specific set of items reflects a content domain" (Devillis, 2012, p. 59). Content validity issues arise when there are concerns regarding the construction or wording of subscale items (DeVellis, 2012). Because there are some items that will necessitate modifications to fit the purpose of this study, a panel of experts will be used to satisfy content validity issues. The panel of experts will consist of two experts in sport management literature, an expert in statistical processes, and a final expert in a field outside of sport management.

Content validity for the pilot study and primary was accomplished through a review by an expert panel. After review, it was determined that several items would need modification for the purposes of this study. The first modification involved replacing a sponsor's name with the term new bank sponsor. This was done because participants were provided with multiple sponsors in all three hypothetical scenarios. The second item modification involved the behavioral intent items. The items were modified to reflect the fact that banks do not offer tangible products. For example, item one was modified to state, "I will recommend the new bank sponsor's services in the future".

The primary analysis, discussed later in chapter three, for the proposed study is a Multiple Indicator Multiple Causes (MIMIC) model. As a form of Structural Equation Modeling, the assessments of convergent and discriminate validity will be necessary. Convergent and discriminate validity measures used to report inter-item and intra-item correlations. Testing for the presence of both convergent and discriminate validity is necessary because the constructs

confirm that the items used are valid and there is little correlation between factors or latent

constructs. (DeVellis, 2012).

Convergent validity is a measure used to determine if the latent factors measured are well

explained by each corresponding observed variable (DeVillis, 2012). For this study, the

researcher will incorporate the use of Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance

Extracted (AVE) to determine if convergent validity is met. According to Hair et al. (2010), to

measure for convergent validity, factor loading is must average to 0.70. If factor loadings

average to be 0.70 then the minimum AVE value of 0.50 is met.

Analysis

The primary analysis for this study was conducted using Multiple Indicator Multiple

Causes (MIMIC) modeling. As an extension of traditional Structural Equation Modeling,

MIMIC modeling gives researchers the opportunity to determine if group differences exist when

a latent variable is exposed to a causal variable. For the purposes of this study, the hypothetical

scenario an individual was sorted into is the casual variable. The groups consisted of those

individuals exposed to a national, regional, or a local financial institution. The indicators for this

study are the individual items that measure the five latent factors. The MIMIC model was

conducted with the multivariate statistical program EQS 6.0.

Assumption violation. While structural equation modeling does not have specific assumption tests (Kline, 2015). Assumption checks were necessary to test the data for item univariate violations and model multivariate normality violations. Item normality violations were tested through reported skewness and kurtosis values. Normality violations were analyzed through reported Mardia's coefficient scores and item kurtosis and skewness scores. If a multivariate normal distribution is violated because the Mardia's coefficient is greater than five a Robust Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation method will be used (Byrne, 1994; Kim, 2013). The use of a Robust estimation method allows the researcher to maintain the original data set without removing outliers.

Multiple Indicator Multiple Causes Modeling (MIMIC)

MIMIC introduces a categorical covariate as a cause variable allowing the researcher to utilize an alternative method of multi-sample SEM (Bentler, 2006; Dunn, Everitt, & Pickles, 1993). The measuring of group differences is achieved through the dummy coding of the categorical cause variable. The dummy coding process is similar to the process used in an Analysis of Variance. Therefore, specific attention should be paid to ensuring the proper coding of the cause variable occurs (Bentler, 2006).

The first step of the analysis was to determine if the proposed latent model converges. An initial assessment for model convergence can be determined using the number of iterations used to show model convergence. Byrne (1994) noted that a low number of iterations (e.g. less than 30) in EQS are indicative of a good start value and model convergence. Also, model convergence or fit will be determined through examining appropriated fit indices. Because the data exhibited a non-normal multivariate distribution, it was necessary to utilize a Robust Maximum Likelihood (ML) method to analyze the data. The fit indices that EQS provides for a

Robust ML output include the Satorra-Bentler Scaled χ^2, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI), Benlter-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), & Root Mean-Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). .

The chosen fit indices for this study were Satorra-Bentler (SB)-$\chi 2$, Comparative Fit Indices (CFI), Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Normed Fit Indices (NFI), and Non-normed Fit Indices (NNFI). Previous studies have suggested cut-off values that are representative of excellent data model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2015). In regards to RMSEA it is recommended that the value be less than or equal to .08 then the model is considered parsimonious (Kline, 2015). The first incremental fit index reported is the CFI. A CFI value greater than .95 results in an excellent model fit. However, the low range of acceptable fit for CFI is a value greater than or equal to .92. The final indices reported will be the incremental fit indices of NFI and NNFI. The literature suggests that NFI values should exceed 0.90, and NNFI values should exceed 0.95 (Hu & Bentler, 2015; Kline, 2015).

If either the latent or MIMIC model exhibit poor data model fit, a number of steps that can be taken to improve fit. For example, the EQS output provides both a Lagrange Multiplier Test (LM Test) or a Wald's Test. The LM Test recommends the addition of parameters to the model. The provided Wald's Test recommends potential model constraints. However, caution should be used when consulting either test because some recommendations do not provide a significant change in data-model fit. Additionally, while some recommendations will provide a significant improve, but the change is not supported by underlying theory.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect a sponsor's level of national market prominence has on consumer attitudes and behaviors. In order to test the proposed research questions, a full Multiple Indicator Multiple Causes (MIMIC) model was used. The primary analysis was conducted using EQS 6.2. Before the MIMIC analysis was completed, it was necessary to determine is the underlying latent structure would converge and exhibit appropriate data model fit.

The first step in the analysis was to test for univariate and multivariate normality. Kline (2015) noted that extreme skewness and kurtosis values could affect factor loadings that may influence model convergences (Biscaia et al., 2013). Additionally, because the studies method of measurement (i.e. Likert Scale) the data is ordinal in nature and may possess a non-normal distribution (Byrne, 1994). For the purposes of this study, items were considered normally distributed when skewness and kurtosis scores are ±5 (Hair et al., 2009). Preliminary analysis indicated that all item were normally distributed. The reported item skewness values ranged from 2.1354 to -1.2556. Item kurtosis scored ranged from 2.1354 to -1.2804. Item skewness, kurtosis, means, and standard deviations can be found in Table 9.

Table 6
Item Descriptives (n = 1162)

	Mean	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Involvement				
I1	5.83	1.21	-1.36	2.38
I2	4.84	1.56	-0.57	-0.29
I3	5.26	1.34	-0.98	0.99
I4	5.57	1.37	-1.27	1.75
Fit				
FIT1	4.16	1.47	-0.21	-0.53
FIT2	3.71	1.60	0.18	-1.27
FIT3	4.01	1.54	-0.10	-0.73
FIT4	4.23	1.55	-0.28	-0.59
FIT5	4.73	1.40	-0.72	0.31
Perceived Sin.				
PS1	4.34	1.45	-0.36	-0.46
PS2	4.10	1.57	-0.19	-0.81
PS3	4.01	1.62	-0.07	-0.81
Att. Tow. Sp.				
ATT1	4.76	1.22	-0.49	0.86
ATT2	4.55	1.26	-0.45	0.34
ATT3	4.62	1.33	-0.57	0.48
Beh. Intent				
BI1	3.90	1.47	-0.20	-0.46
BI2	4.24	1.49	-0.42	-0.38
BI3	4.03	1.50	-0.23	-0.40

Note: Items are identified by the number used for the analysis. The item and wording that corresponds to the identification number maybe found in Appendix A.

Multivariate normality, specifically kurtosis values, is reported using Maridia's coefficient and a normalized estimate value in EQS. In the initial analysis of the latent structure, the reported Mardia's coefficient was 120.7205 and a kappa of 0.3353. Based on the reported multivariate kurtosis values, the data possess a non-normal multivariate distribution. Therefore, a Robust Maximum Likelihood (ML) method was used to analyze the data. Byrne (1994) stated that the use of a ML method to analyze non-normally distributed data could lead to an inflation of type I errors when interpreting parameter estimates and model fit indices (Dunn et al., 1993). The use of the Robust ML also allows the researcher to maintain the integrity of the full dataset. Previous studies indicated that the use of a Robust estimate method, in the presence of non-

normal data, negates the needs to remove outliers (Bentler, 2006; Wilcox, 1998). In addition, the

removal of outliers may affect mean scores and distributions, therefore, potentially influencing

results (Benlter, 2006).

After determining that the data required a robust estimation method, the data input file for

the following study utilized the raw input file for computation. The raw input file consisted of

the individual item response values from each participant. EQS converts the raw input into a

useable format of a covariance matrix for all subsequent analysis. The values for the covariance

matrix can be found in Table 7.

Table 7
Variance-Covariance Matrix

	I1	I2	I3	I4	FIT1	FIT2	FIT3	FIT4	FIT5	PS1	PS2	PS3	ATT1	ATT2	ATT3	BI1	BI2	BI3
I1	1.46																	
I2	0.79	2.42																
I3	1.03	1.03	1.80															
I4	1.08	1.09	1.42	1.87														
FIT1	.30	0.68	0.43	0.30	2.15													
FIT2	0.07	0.88	0.16	0.13	0.77	2.57												
FIT3	0.22	0.61	0.38	0.25	1.32	0.79	2.37											
FIT4	0.23	0.62	0.43	0.23	1.39	0.83	1.32	2.40										
FIT5	0.26	0.51	0.38	0.29	1.06	0.78	1.01	1.42	1.97									
PS1	0.27	0.51	0.46	0.28	1.37	0.68	1.13	1.16	0.99	1.1								
PS2	0.26	0.31	0.39	0.26	1.09	0.23	1.14	1.16	0.98	1.05	2.63							
PS3	0.31	0.67	0.50	0.35	1.28	0.64	1.24	1.31	0.96	1.34	1.14	1.63						
ATT1	0.35	0.56	0.39	0.29	0.96	0.73	0.92	0.97	0.86	0.99	0.85	0.92	1.48					
ATT2	0.28	0.56	0.55	0.37	1.01	0.77	1.13	1.27	1.19	1.07	0.85	0.92	1.50	1.60				
ATT3	0.26	0.57	0.45	0.31	1.16	0.77	1.13	1.27	1.19	1.07	1.05	1.20	1.13	1.23	1.77			
BI1	0.24	0.66	0.57	0.37	1.22	0.73	1.17	1.27	1.03	1.17	1.06	1.37	1.04	1.17	1.36	2.17		
BI2	0.29	0.62	0.51	0.38	1.13	0.68	1.04	1.20	1.11	1.07	1.02	1.11	1.01	1.19	1.33	1.78	2.23	
BI3	0.24	0.63	0.52	0.38	1.12	0.71	1.11	1.23	1.05	1.10	1.02	1.24	0.97	1.15	1.29	1.83	1.97	2.24

Before the full MIMIC model could be tested, it was necessary to determine if the proposed latent structural model would converge and meet the minimum model fit indices. The proposed latent model consisted of the latent constructs involvement, fit, perceived sincerity, attitude toward sponsorship, and behavioral intention. The proposed latent model is found in Figure 3.
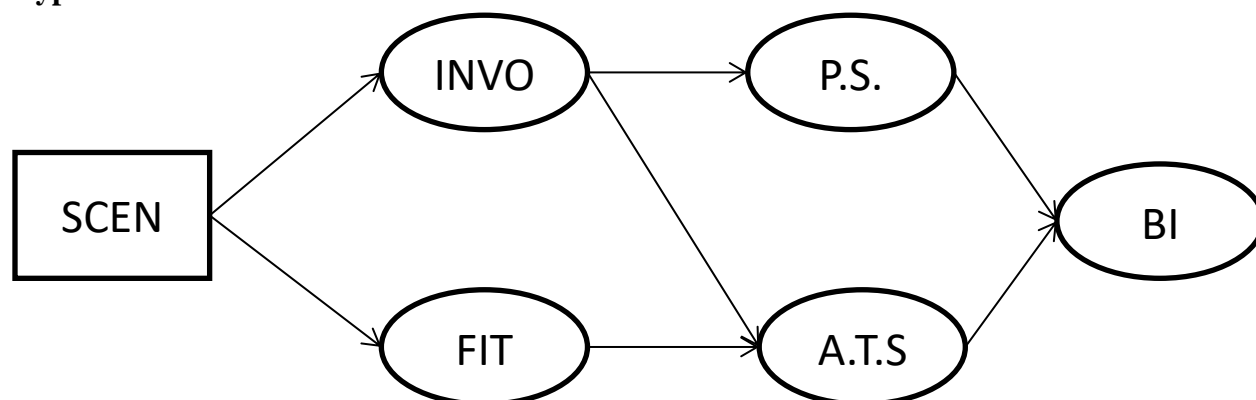
Hypothesized Model

Figure 3. The hypothesize Multiple Indicator Multiple Causes (MIMIC) model includes the latent constructs involvement, fit, perceived sincerity, attitude toward the sponsor, and behavioral intent. The covariate sponsorship scenario.

Latent Path Model

The initial latent model consisted of 43 free parameters and 28 fixed non-zero parameters. It should be noted that the latent model does not include the scenario covariate, therefore, the number of free parameters is less. The final sample of 1162 indicated that the minimum recommended ratio of observations to free parameters was met (Bentler & Chou, 1987; Eddy, Reams, & Dittmore, 2017; Wolf, et al., 2013). Also, the model showed convergence in 10 iterations, which is below the number recommended in by Byrne (1994). According to Byrne (1994) if the number of iterations is below 30, the proposed model and data are indicative of a good model specification and start values.

The initial analysis yielded a model with poor fit to the data based on the robust goodness of fit indices (SB-χ^2=1394.63, *df* = 128, *p*<.001, SB- χ^2/df=10.90, CFI= 0.87, RMSEA= .09

(90%CI = 0.088, 0.097) (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996). The sensitivity of the SB-χ^2 to sample size would explain the significant result. Due to poor data-model fit, item loadings were consulted to determine if removing an item(s) or factors would improve data model fit. Additionally, the Lagrange Multiplier Test (LM Test) was consulted to determine if adding parameters would improve data model fit.

Through consulting the item loadings, it was determined that the latent factor of involvement and corresponding items would be removed from the model. Factor loadings for Involvement ranged from 0.377 (I2) to 0.5663 (I3). Previous literature has recommended that items loading below .6 are representative of poor factor convergence (DeVellis, 2012; Hair et al., 2009). Further, because involvement loadings did not average .7, the convergent validity (AVE) cannot meet the minimum required value .5. Therefore, all four items that represented involvement were removed from the model. Consulting other factor loadings it was determined that item Fit2 would be removed from the model as well. Fit2 exhibited a poor factor-loading equal to 0.3471. The removal of the involvement variable and item Fit2 resulted in 13 items remaining in the model.

According to the LM test, the first recommended modification was to add a parameter between the latent variables of fit and perceived sincerity. Because the addition of this parameter would significantly improve data model fit, it was added to the model. Previous studies have indicated that fit can have a statistically significant effect on perceived sincerity (Olson, 2010). Subsequent review of the LM Test proposed an additional 10 possible parameters that could be added to the model. However, none of the potential parameters were added to the model because there was not a significant improvement to model fit.

The modified latent model consisted of 31 free parameters and 20 non-fixed zero parameters. The final latent construct exhibited good to almost excellent data model fit (SB-χ^2=

330.93, *df* =60, *p*< .001, SB-χ2/*df*= 5.52, CFI= 0.964, NFI=0.96, NNFI=0.95, RMSEA= .06 (90%CI = 0.056, 0.069). The CFI was greater than 0.95 and therefore indicated acceptable parsimonious data model fit. Additionally, the RMSEA, NFI, and NNFI fit indices all met the minimum requirements for good data model fit.

Reliability and Validity

The reliability for the final model was reported through Cronbach's alpha. The reported value was α=0.94. Additionally, EQS provides the value for the reliability coefficient rho. The rho coefficient value for the final model was ρ=0.95. Both reported values are above the minimum accepted value and are evidence of an appropriate level of model reliability (Kline, 2015).

Another important measure of model acceptance is the appropriate model validity measures. The primary measures of validity for this study were content, discriminant, and convergent validity. Discriminant and convergent validity were measured by calculating Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Content validity was determined by providing the instrument for review to an expert panel.

The CR and AVE values for fit, perceived sincerity, and behavioral intention were all above the accepted minimum values. Therefore, convergent and discriminant validity concerns were met for those factors. The only validity issue concerned the attitude toward sponsorship. The CR value was above the accepted minimum on .7. Therefore, convergent validity concerns were met. However, the AVE value was slightly below the accepted cut-off of .5. Even though the AVE value was below the accepted cut-off, the CR value was at an acceptable level, therefore, it might it reasonable to keep the Perceived Sincerity items (Eddy et al., 2017).

Table 8

Factor Loadings, Factor Means, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Constructs/Items		μ			λ	CR	AVE
		Local	Regional	National			
Fit		4.57	4.34	3.96			
	Fit1				0.75	0.81	0.52
	Fit3				.068		
	Fit4				0.76		
	Fit5				0.69		
Perceived Sincerity		4.34	4.37	3.74			
	PS1				0.72	0.71	0.45
	PS2				0.60		
	PS3				0.68		
Att.Tow. Sponsors		4.86	4.68	4.45			
	ATT1				0.73	0.83	0.62
	ATT2				0.77		
	ATT3				0.85		
Behavioral Intention		4.27	4.07	3.84			
	BI1				0.78	0.85	0.66
	BI2				0.82		
	BI3				0.83		

MIMIC Model

The proposed MIMIC model consisted of 37 free parameters and 22 fixed non-zero parameters. The model also exceeded the ratio of sample size to free parameters for proper model convergence (Bentler & Chou, 1987; Eddy et al., 2017; Wolf et al., 2013). Further evidence of proper model convergence was presented in the iterative summary. The EQS output presented seven iterations for convergence. The MIMIC model can be found in Figure 4.
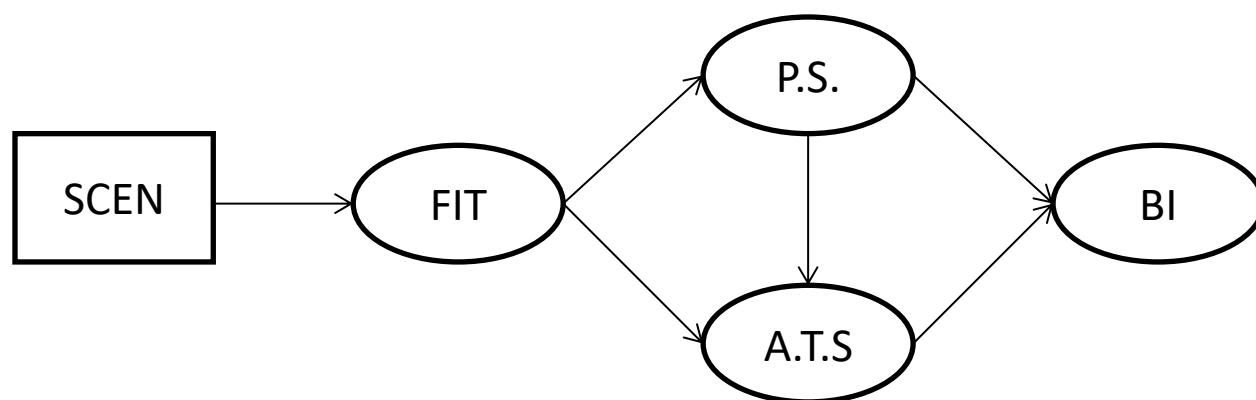
Figure 4. Modified MIMIC model

The model presented a non-normal multivariate distribution with a Mardia's coefficient normalized estimate of 49.46. When the normalized estimate is greater than five, the literature recommends the model use an estimation method that takes into consideration the underlying non-normal distribution (Byrne, 1994, Chou, Bentler, & Satorra, 1991). Therefore, MIMIC model estimations considered the underlying non-normal distribution and through the Robust ML method. The Robust estimation method will recalculate the χ^2 statistic report the Satorra-Bentler chi-square (SB- χ^2) (Byrne, 1994; Satorra & Bentler, 1988). In addition, because the CFI fit indices is χ^2 based, a modified CFI was reported.

The original MIMIC model showed adequate to good fit (SB- χ^2= 391.46, *df*= 84, *p* < .001; SB- χ^2/*df*= 4.66, CFI= 0.96, NFI= 0.95, NNFI= 0.95, RMSEA= 0.056 (90%CI=0.061, 0.072)). In order to improve data model fit, the LM Test and Wald's test were consulted. The first statistical significant parameter to be freely estimated was between the error terms for items 17 and 18. Theoretically, freely estimating the errors terms for two items Behavioral intent is appropriate modification (Byrne, 1994; Dunn et al., 1993). The final covariance to be added was between error terms for items 16 and 18. Finally, the LM Test recommended the added parameter between the disturbance terms for Behavioral Intent and Fit. The added parameters resulted in a significant improvement to data model fit (SB- χ^2= 316.26, *df*= 82, *p* < .001; SB-

$\chi^2/df=$ 3.86, CFI= 0.97, NFI= 0.96, NNFI= 0.96, RMSEA= 0.05 (90%CI= 0.44, 0.055)). Despite

the nested model showing marginal improvement, the model now exhibits good to excellent data

model fit. In Table 9 below, shows the significant change in data model fit between the proposed

and nested model. Additionally, the standardized path loading can be found below in Figure 4.

Table 9
Model Fit Indices

	SB-χ^2	*df*	SB-χ^2/df	CFI	NFI	NNFI	RMSEA
MIMIC Model	391.46	84	4.66	0.96	0.95	0.95	0.056
Nested Model	316.26	82	3.86	0.97	0.96	0.96	0.050

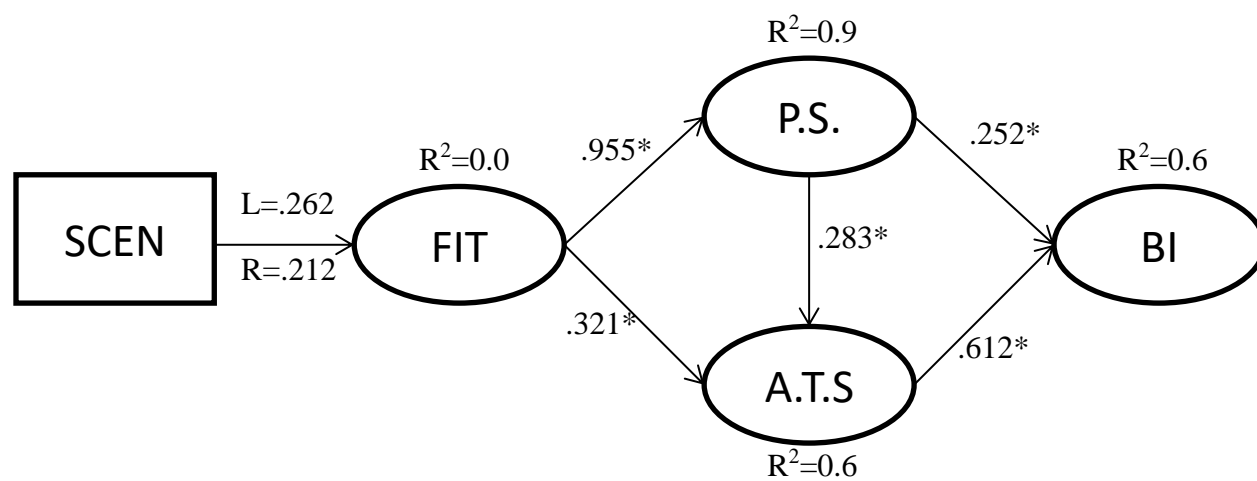*Figure 5.* Total parameter effects for the final MIMIC model.
Note: * indicates significance at p p≤.05.

In Figure 5, the standardized coefficients (β) are listed. Kline (2015) noted that SEM

regressions coefficients are effects sizes and are typically smaller than standard regression

coefficients. For example, β > .5 are considered a large effect size, β > .30 are medium, and β <

.10 are small effects sizes (Kline, 2015; Diemer & Li, 2011). The β for fit to perceived sincerity

and attitude toward sponsor to behavioral intent are the only reported large effect sizes. The

remaining paths would be classified as medium effects sizes.

Research Question 2

As the only purely endogenous variable, the construct of fit was significant and positively predicted by a sponsor's level of market prominence. The control variable for the two dummy variables contained the observations for the national sponsor group. The predictor variable local sponsor and regional sponsor had positive direct of effects of $\beta = .262$ and $\beta = .212$ with an explained variance of $R^2 = .06$. Because both direct effects were in a positive direction, the mean for both dummy variables were greater than the control (e.g. National Level of Prominence). Therefore, both local and regional sponsors were shown to possess higher levels of fit. Further, the higher direct effect score for the local sponsor indicates a greater degree of explanation for the explained variance.

Research Question 3

The third research question investigated the effect level of national prominence has on the relationship between fit and consumer perceived sincerity. As an exogenous variable, the latent construct of fit had a positive direct effect of .955 on perceived sincerity. A 1 standard deviation score increase of fit was accompanied by a .955 unit increase in Perceived Sincerity's score. Additionally, the local sponsor was a significant positive predictor of perceived sincerity B=.619 ($z = 6.65$, $SE = .093$, $p \leq .05$). In addition, the regional sponsor was a significant positive predictor of perceived sincerity B=.501 ($z = 5.57$, $SE = .09$, $p \leq .05$). In total, the indirect and direct effects for Perceived Sincerity explained a total variance of $R^2 = .912$. Based on the reported regression coefficients (B), the local hypothetical sponsor was the strongest predictor of perceived sincerity. The second strongest predictor was the regional sponsor.

Research Question 4

For research question four, the effect on Attitude toward Sponsorship (ATS) was explored. The effect from fit had a positive direct effect on ATS of β=.590. For every one standard deviation unit increase of fit, ATS experienced a .594 standard deviation unit increase. The next direct effect for ATS was from Perceived Sincerity. For every one standard deviation unit increase of resulted in a .283 standard deviation unit increase in ATS.

Additionally, ATS was regressed on the covariates Local and Regional sponsorship. The local sponsor was a significant positive predictor of ATS B=0.389 (z= 5.51, *SE*= .071, p≤.05. Further, the regional sponsor was a significant positive predictor of ATS B=.315 (z= 4.81, *SE*= .066, p≤.05). Because both dummy variables were significant and positive, both dummy variables possessed a mean score higher than the control. Finally, the total direct and indirect parameter effects explained approximately 75% (R^2=0.748) of the explained variance.

Research Questions 5

The exogenous variable Behavioral Intention was the final latent construct measured. Behavioral Intention had two direct effects from Perceived Sincerity and ATS. The indirect effect was composed of the path from Fit. Finally, behavioral intent was regressed on the two dummy variables Local and Regional sponsorships. The two direct effects and three indirect effects were positive and significant.

The first direct effect that was investigated was from Perceived Sincerity to Behavioral Intention. The direct effects from perceived sincerity and ATS were β=.425 and β=.612 respectively. The indirect effect for fit was β=.702 (t=9.751, p≤.05). Local sponsor was a significant positive predictor of behavioral intent B=.460 (z= 6.31, *SE*= .073, p≤.05). Finally, the regional sponsor was also a significant positive predictor of behavioral intent B=.372 (z= 5.34,

SE= 0.07, p≤.05). The mean values for the local and regional dummy variables had higher mean scores than the control and are stronger predictors of behavioral intent. The strongest predictor was the local sponsorship scenario. In total, the direct, indirect, and covariate for behavioral intent explained approximately 70% (R^2=0.699) of the variance.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role national market prominence has on salient sponsorship antecedents and outcomes. The study design incorporated the use of three hypothetical sponsorship scenarios that were constructed to expose fans to a local, regional, or national financial institution. The chosen financial institutions were classified based on the level of national market prominence, as outlined by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) (FDIC, 2017). The hypothetical scenarios were presented to fans of 29 of the 30 teams associated with the National Basketball Association (NBA). Participant recruitment occurred using the online sample enrollment tool Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Once randomly assigned to a hypothetical scenario, participants completed subscales for the latent constructs of involvement, fit, perceived sincerity, attitude toward the sponsor, and behavioral intention toward the sponsor. Once data were collected and cleaned, a MIMIC analysis was conducted.

One of the limitations of previous sponsorship research involves sample selection. Previously, studies have commented on the over reliance of convenience samples, a single team sample, or the use of a single sponsor to test sponsorship models (Dees et al., 2008; Olsen, 2010; Walraven et al., 2012). Previous sponsorship studies typically gather data concerning a small number of teams, or a convenience sample of college students (Biscaia et al., 2013; Dees et al., 2008).The current study addressed this limitation through the recruitment of a national convenience sample that consisted of participants that resided in every state, including Hawaii.

The sample demographics were somewhat consistent with previous sponsorship studies. Overall, the sample was predominately Caucasian, male, and of a higher socio-economic status (e.g. educated and affluent) (Dees et al., 2008; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). Additionally, a 2015 industry article noted that 70% of NBA fans were male and 53%

earned more than $45,000 per year ("NBA Fan Demographics", 2015). Therefore, the sample, recruited through MTurk, was roughly similar to current NBA fan demographics. Finally, the average number of games attended during the 2016-2017 season was two, and the average number of televised games viewed was 20.

Theoretical Implications

Previously, sub-scales such as fit, perceived sincerity, and attitude toward the sponsor have been exhaustively measured and applied toward a single team or sponsorship setting (Biscaia et al., 2013; Demirel & Erdogmus, 2016; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Speed & Thompson, 2000). As a whole, the literature supports the notion that as fit between sponsor and team increases, the effect on attitudinal measures will be direct and positive. The findings of this study support these claims while potentially providing greater context.

When exposed to one of the three hypothetical scenarios, consumers indicated that local ($M=4.57$) and regional ($M=4.34$) financial institutions possessed a greater degree of fit than the hypothetical national sponsor ($M=3.96$). Kim et al., (2015) indicated that the degree of fit experienced is directly attributed to the sponsor's mission or image. Therefore, the greater degree of fit experienced by local and regional banks may be directly related to a banks mission and perceived values. For example, local financial institutions are motivated by serving their home communities. The reported findings support the idea that fit, attitude, and behavioral outcomes are driven by the perceived alignment of values between sponsor and team (Pham & Johar, 2001).

However, the current findings should be viewed with some caution. The findings of this study only explained 6% ($R^2= 0.06$) of the variance between the covariate and fit. Previous literature has indicated that a wide array of factors could explain the level of fit consumers

attribute to a sponsor. For example, Becker-Olsen & Simmons (2002) posited that greater levels

of fit could often develop through long term sponsorships. In other words, even though national

banks had the lowest perceived fit, theoretically fit could improve over the length of the

sponsorship agreement.

The next theoretical implication the model tested concerned the perceptions and attitudes

fans have toward a sponsor. Previous literature does support the direct influence of market

prominence and fit on these attitudinal constructs (Demirel & Erdogmus, 2016; Roy & Cornwell,

2003; Speed & Thompson, 2000). The findings of this study further substantiate these claims

with significant differences between hypothetical sponsors.

When a consumer develops the perception that a sponsor is sincere, the high level of

sincerity is developed by a perceived lack of commercial motivation. In the context of this study,

the results explained approximately 91% (R^2=0.912) of perceived sincerity's variance when

covaried by level of market prominence. When comparing sponsor differences the results

indicated that local sponsors (*M*=4.57) were perceived to have more altruistic motives followed

by regional sponsors (*M*=4.34). The greater degree of sincerity experienced by local sponsors

may be due to the hypothetical scenario announcing a new sponsorship and the perceived

similarities between sponsor and team. The high levels of sincerity could be explained by a local

bank's sole focus and asset investments are directed toward the city that host an NBA team.

Eastman, Denton, Thomas, & Denton (2010) explained that this focus affects consumers by

generating higher levels of comfort through consistent consumer interaction with community

banks that may not occur in larger financial institutions. Therefore, while participants may not

live in their favorite teams host city, the participant may have transferred perceptions and

attitudes of their local banks to the hypothetical sponsors used in this study.

The second attitudinal measure incorporated in this study was attitude toward sponsorship. Koo, Quarterman, and Flynn (2006) noted that a high degree of congruence between the event's image and the sponsor increases the level of attitude toward the sponsor. The indirect and direct effects helped explain approximately 68% ($R^2=0.676$) of the variance of attitude toward the sponsor. As with perceived sincerity, participant's had a significantly higher attitude toward local sponsors ($M=4.86$) when compared to regional sponsors ($M=4.68$) and national sponsors ($M=4.45$). While all three hypothetical sponsors experienced positive attitudes, the higher mean score for the local sponsor could reflect the influence of perceived altruistic motives possessed by sponsors of a lower level of national market prominence. Finally, the significant effects of fit, perceived sincerity, and attitude toward the sponsor, in the absence of the covariate, supports previous results (Rifon et al., 2004; Speed & Thompson, 2000).

The final concept investigated was the latent variable of behavioral intent. The final MIMIC model explained 70% ($R^2=.699$) of the participant's behavioral intent. The positive and direct effects from perceived sincerity and attitude toward the sponsor support earlier findings (Alexandris et al., 2012; Biscaia et al., 2013). As expected when fans felt that sponsors were motivated by altruism then behavioral intent experienced a positive increase. However, the interesting portion of this result stemmed from the significant level local banks predicted behavioral intent.

The findings suggested that the local bank sponsor ($M=4.27$) had the highest degree of behavioral intent toward the sponsor when compared to regional sponsor ($M=4.07$) and national sponsor ($M=3.84$). From a global view, these findings seem counterintuitive. The vast majority of the sample did not live in the area where many of the local banks are located. An explanation for this finding may be found in the theory describing behavioral intent. Alexandris et al., (2012)

described behavioral intent as a future intent to engage in services or promoting the brand through word of mouth. The findings are unclear whether participants indicated intended to engage in the services of local banks or promote, through word of mouth, the bank due to the association with their favorite team. In addition, it should be understood that intent does not always lead to behavior. Zaharia et al. (2016) reported, that in a sport sponsorship setting, intention was not an indicator of actual behavior. Rationale for this finding was attributed to the time between forming of a behavioral intent and actually performing a behavior (Zaharia et al., 2016). Therefore, despite the sample indicating a desire to engage in a local bank's services in the future, the actual behavior may never happen.

Globally, these results may be indicative of the role brand familiarity, not measured in this study, in sponsorship effectiveness. Brand familiarity is defined as the pre-existing perceptions of a brand that a consumer constructs (Keller, 1993; Woisetchlager & Michaelis, 2012). Theoretically, the findings of this study support previous sport sponsorship literature because it supports the idea that less familiar brands may have a greater effect concerning consumer attitudes and intentions (Carrillat, Lafferty, & Harris, 2005). Because the potential exists that participants were more familiar with the national sponsor, outside of a sport sponsorship context, the announcement may have had little effect on attitudes and intentions. However, due to the lack of familiarity with most local banks, the formation of positive perceptions and attitudes lead to the results reported for behavioral intention.

Managerial Implications

The results of this study potentially highlight the need for increased focus toward proper communication of a new sponsorship agreement. For example, the result of this study indicated consumers perceived a lower degree of fit for national sponsors local ($M=3.96$). While mean

scores indicated a slightly positive perception of fit for national sponsors, this should be of concern for sport teams and bank sponsors because fit is regarded as a driver of perceived sincerity and consumer attitudes (Speed & Thompson, 2000). However, marketing professionals can improve a perceived lack of fit through consistent communication efforts with fans that promote the new partnership (Olson, 2010; Zaharia et al., 2016)

In the context of sponsorship, the mechanism often used to emphasize the association between sponsor and team is the use of appropriate activation and leveraging strategies (Carrillat & d'Astous, 2012). Previously, sport teams have utilized strategies such as stadium signage or social media posts to advertise the association between sponsor and team. However, literature shows that consumers have evolved and now respond more favorably toward sponsor branded experiences or experiential activation (O'Reilly & Horning, 2013).

In a recent industry article, Bashford (2016) discussed the shift toward activations strategies that are immersive and provide entertainment value for fans. For example, during the 2016 NBA All-Star game, fans participated in a virtual reality viewing experience sponsored by Mountain Dew. Additionally, Mountain Dew and PepsiCo sponsored a number of immersive branded experiences before and during the event that allowed fans to interact with one another (Bashford, 2016). For national banks, this is an important implication because it does indicate that the linking of immersive and experiential branded experiences could improve the perceptions of fit that will ultimately lead to positive changes in perception, attitudes, and intentions.

While addressing the low fit issues, there is still exits the concern of low perceived sincerity and attitude toward national sponsors. Ko et al. (2011) indicated that an increase in general communication, outside the context of sponsorship promotions, could improve

relationships with fans. Further, Ko et al. (2011) noted that when fans and teams are in continual communication an additional benefit could relate to the fans experiencing positive increases in perceived sincerity and attitude toward sponsors. This is an important consideration, because a fan's perceptions of sincerity and attitudes do directly influence any future behaviors towards a sponsor.

In regards to tracking behavioral intent, it may be necessary to be more concerned with measuring actual behaviors. Zaharia et al. (2016) reported that previous behaviors were a better indicator than intent when predicting future behaviors. Additionally, an industry article promotes the tracking of actual behaviors through coupon codes or online hyperlinks (Smith, 2016b). Wide spread use of technologies such as the internet and social media will make tracking actual behaviors much simpler. Through tracking previous or actual behaviors, teams and sponsors may be able to gain a more solid insight toward activation strategies that influence sponsorship effectiveness.

In conclusion, the results of this study highlight the effect level of sponsor market prominence has on salient sponsor antecedents and outcomes. From a team perspective, the findings show that fans are more receptive to the announcement of smaller banks, by national market share, as a team sponsor. Further, teams should immediately begin to promote the new sponsorship in order to improve fan perceptions of national sponsors. From a national sponsor's perspective, there needs to be considerable investment toward immersive branded activation strategies that promote the association with the team. Further, the sponsorship communication strategies, especially for national banks, need to highlight the benefits of sponsorship. This may allow national sponsors the ability to overcome perceived commercial motives.

Limitations

A primary limitation of this study was the possibility of previous exposure or pre-existing attitudes towards the banks used as examples. The study's design attempted to control for pre-existing conditions by providing more than one bank per scenario. However, the possibility still exists that a participant may have a pre-existing relationship with a bank. Additionally, the possibility exists of a prior relationship between a bank, used as an example, and team. The researcher performed due diligence and confirmed that none of the local and regional banks were current sponsors. However, the current sponsorship climate almost guarantee the possibility that any of the 25 largest banks in the country currently, or at one time, have a relationship with an NBA team.

The lack of convergence of the involvement sub-scale was the second limitation of this study. As a previously reliable and valid subscale, the study design may have caused the lack of factor convergence (Madrigal, 2001). Previous studies that have investigated sport fan involvement applied the construct toward fans of a single team or event (Dees et al., 2008). In this study, data was collected from fans of an entire league grouped by favorite team, but the covariate, level of sponsor market prominence, does not directly influence a fan's degree of involvement. Meengahan (2001) noted that involvement is intended to capture the impact a fan's passion has for a specific team, and how that affects response to sponsorship. However, the study's central focus was the effect sponsor prominence levels have on salient sponsorship antecedents and outcomes. Therefore, the influence of sponsor's prominence level, presented through a hypothetical scenario, may have contributed to the latent variable not converging.

An additional weakness of this study concerned the low validity score for the perceived sincerity scale. The reported AVE value, after model modifications, did not meet the minimum

cut-off value appropriate for convergent validity. Based on the low AVE value, it is apparent that the use of the Speed & Thompson (2008) sub-scale did not transfer well to the current study. Therefore, the reported findings for perceived sincerity need to be viewed with some caution.

A final limitation of this study was the application of the perceived sincerity, attitude toward sponsor, and behavioral intent scale. Previous sponsorship studies have measured each construct through the perspective of product category (Close, Finney, Lacey, & Sneath, 2006). However, this study viewed sponsor differences through the lens of brand category. In other words, the possibility of unaccounted variability, in the findings, may exist because the context of the original subscales does not account for brand differences.

Future Research

After consulting financial and banking literature, there exists a potential new path for future research. As previously mentioned, Eastman et al., (2010) noted that consumers typically trust and have more positive attitudes toward smaller or local banks. However, the authors provided a caveat to that statement; this positive trend only exists during a robust economy (Eastman et al., 2010). During the most recent financial crisis, consumers became unsure of the viability of local banks; consequently, consumer trust and attitudes were negatively affected. Therefore, future research should investigate how a country's financial health affects consumer's attitudes and behaviors toward financial sponsors.

Another area of future research should apply a sponsor's level of national market prominence to additional latent constructs. For example, it was noted, in the theoretical implications, that brand familiarity may have played a confounding role in the reported differences between hypothetical sponsors. This is one of many latent variables that should be

incorporated into future models. Additional latent variables could include brand loyalty, attitude toward sponsorship, and trust.

Finally, sponsorship research should continue to use hypothetical scenarios to investigate factors that influence sponsorship effectiveness and outcomes. Future hypothetical scenarios could be used to determine if there are league differences between fan responses to salient sponsorship antecedents and outcomes. Further, as stated by Walraven et al., (2012) the length of a sponsorship agreement can positively affect salient attitudinal and behavioral constructs. Therefore, the researcher proposes the development of a research design that incorporates a longitudinal aspect into a hypothetical scenario.

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Appendix A: Instrument

Informed Consent

You are being asked to participate in a study about NBA fans response to a new hypothetical sponsorship scenario. The purpose of this confidential survey is to better understand how you feel about new corporate sponsors of a professional sport team. Despite many projects concerning this topic very few have attempted to understand how participants feel towards sponsors when differentiated by market share. Therefore, your insights and opinions are extremely valuable.

Please take your time to participate in this survey, and think about each question carefully. Some of the questions may seem similar to you, or may not be worded exactly the way that you would like them to be. Even so, give your best estimate and continue working through the questionnaire. There are no "correct" answers to any question. The data collected in this study may be published; however, any identifying information will remain anonymous. By completing the survey, you give consent to participate in the study. Your participation is very important to the researcher. Thank you for your assistance.

Participation requires the completion of the online survey; it should take you 15 minutes or less to complete. While there are no direct benefits to you, the information you provide will help sport organizations better understand how sponsorship is received by fans. There are also no foreseeable risks to participating in this study, beyond those in your normal everyday life.

Respondents must be at least 18 years old in order to participate in this study, and your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study and if you begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decisions will be respected; however, not completing the survey will result in the loss of benefits guaranteed through participating in an MTruk HIT. Having read the above information, please proceed by indicating your age and continuing with the questionnaire if you would like to participate in this research. You may request a copy of this form to retain for future reference.

If there is anything about the study that is unclear or you do not understand, or if you wish to report a research-related problem, you may contact the researcher by email at bccork@email.uark.edu. For questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Ro Windwalker, the University's IRB Coordinator, at (479)575-2208 or by email at irb@uark.edu.

Instrument

Please assume you favorite National Basketball Association team has entered into a new sponsorship agreement company x. Use this new sponsorship agreement when responding to the following questions.

Skip Logic Question 1:

Are you over the age of 18?

Yes/No

Question 2:

From the list provided, please choose your favorite National Basketball Association Team.

*List will include all 30 NBA Teams

*Participants will be provided with one of three sponsorship scenarios at this point. The scenario will ask for the new hypothetical relationship to be considered when responding to the provided subscales.

Latent Variable							
Involvement (Madrigal, 2001)	Strongly Disagree Agree				Strongly		
I3-It is important to me to be a part of [NBA Team Mascot] basketball	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I2-My friends view me as a strong fan of [NBA Team Mascot] basketball	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I1-It is very important to me that [NBA Team Mascot] basketball games are played.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I4-I see myself as a strong fan of [NBA Team Mascot] basketball	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fit (Speed & Thompson, 2000)							
FIT3-There is a logical connection between [team] and the new bank sponsor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

FIT4-*The image of the team and the image of the sponsor are similar*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FIT2-*The new bank sponsor and the team fit together well.*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FIT1-*The new bank sponsor and the [team] stand for similar things.*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FIT5-*It makes sense to me that this company sponsors this event.*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Percieved Sincerity (Speed & Thompson, 2000)							
PS3-*The main reason the new banks sponsor would be involved with [team] is because the new banks sponsor believes the [team] deserves support.*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PS1-*The new bank would be likely to have the best interests of the [team] at heart*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PS2-*The new bank sponsor would probably support the [team] even if it had a much lower profile*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Attitude Toward Sponsor (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008)							
ATT3-*I like the [Sponsor] brand*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

ATT1-The new bank sponsor is a very good brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ATT2-I have a favorable disposition toward the new bank sponsor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Behavioral Intention Toward Sponsor

	Very Unlikely					Very Likely	
BI1-I will recommend [sponsor] services in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BI2-I will consider purchasing the services from the [sponsor] in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BI3-I will buy [sponsor] services in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Attention Check

	Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree						
Please check Strongly Disagree to continue with the survey.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
What is the primary industry of the sponsor?	Financial Automobile Beverage Sporting Goods Insurance						

Demographics

Please indicate your Gender	Male Female
Please indicate your Household income range	$0 - $24,999 $25,000 - $49,999 $50,000 - $74,999

	$50,000 - $74,999
	$75,000 - $99,999
	$100,000 +
How would you classify yourself?	White/Caucasian
	Hispanic or Latino
	African American
	Asian/Pacific Islander
	Other
Which best describes your marital status?	Single, never married
	Married
	Widowed
	Divorced
	Separated
Please provide the number of games you attended this season	
Please provide the number of games you watched on Television this year.	
Please provide your zipcode.	

Appendix B: Local Banks

Teams and Sponsors			
Teams	Local Sponsor		
Atlanta Hawks	Delta Community Credit Union	Georgia Primary Bank	Private Bank of Buckhead
Boston Celtics	Commonwealth Bank [2]	Boston Community Capital	Eastern Bank
Brooklyn Nets	Dime Community Bank	Popular Community Bank	Progressive Credit Union
Charlotte Hornets	Aquesta Bank	New Dominion Bank	Paragon Bank
Chicago Bulls	Amalgamated Bank of Chicago	Central Valley Community Bank	Community Savings Bank
Cleveland Cavaliers	Century Federal Credit Union	Faith Community Bank	United Credit Union
Dallas Mavericks	Dallas Capital Bank	Pegasus Bank	Veritex Community Bank
Denver Nuggets	Denver Community Credit Union	The Bank of Denver	Vectra Bank of Colorado
Detroit Pistons	First Independence Bank	Level One Bank	MemberFocus Community Credit Union
Golden State Warriors	Community Bank of the Bay	Golden 1 Credit Union	UNIFY Financial Credit Union
Houston Rockets	Chasewood Bank	Members Choice Credit Union	Independent Bank
Indiana Pacers	NorthPark Community Credit Union	Salin Bank	The National Bank of Indianapolis
LA Clippers	Broadway Federal Bank	USC Credit Union	Opus Bank
Los Angeles Lakers	Broadway Federal Bank	USC Credit Union	Opus Bank
Memphis Grizzlies	Bank of Bartlett	InSouth Bank	Triumph Bank

Miami Heat	Continental National Bank	Florida Community Bank	Sabadell Bank
Milwaukee Bucks	Bank Mutual	Park Bank	Town Bank
Minnesota Timberwolves	Bridgewater Bank	Park State Bank	Sunrise Bank
New Orleans Pelicans	Fidelity Bank	Home Bank	United Community Bank
New York Knicks	BCB Community Bank	New York Community Bank	Popular Community Bank
Oklahoma City Thunder	Community Bank of Oklahoma	First Enterprise Bank	First Liberty Bank
Orlando Magic	Axiom Bank	Florida Community Bank	Harbor Community Bank
Philadelphia 76ers	Hyperion Bank	Port Richmond Savings	United Bank of Philadelphia
Phoenix Suns	Alliance Bank of Arizona	Arizona Bank & Trust	First Community Bank
Portland Trail Blazers	Albina Community Bank	First Republic Bank	Union Bank
Sacramento Kings	California Community Credit Union	Central Valley Community Bank	First Northern Bank
San Antonio Spurs	Pioneer Bank	Texas Capital Bank	Texas Community Bank
Utah Jazz	Brighton Bank	First Utah Bank	Holladay Bank & Trust
Washington Wizards	City First Bank	Industrial Bank	The National Capitol Bank of Washington

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Appendix C: Regional Banks

Teams and Sponsors			
Teams	Regional Bank		
Atlanta Hawks	BankSouth	Fidelity Bank	Regions Bank
Boston Celtics	Commerce Bank	First Republic Bank	Radius Bank
Brooklyn Nets	First Citizens Bank	First Republic Bank	People's United Bank
Charlotte Hornets	Bank of North Carolina	First Citizens Bank	Regions Bank
Chicago Bulls	Associated Bank	Comerica Bank	First MidWest Bank
Cleveland Cavaliers	Dollar Bank	Third Federal Savings and Loan	Woodforest National Bank
Dallas Mavericks	Comerica Bank	Independent Bank	Prosperity Bank
Denver Nuggets	BBVA Compass	First Bank	TCF Bank
Detroit Pistons	Comerica Bank	Flagstar Bank	Huntington Bank
Golden State Warriors	Comerica Bank	Bank of the West	Union Bank
Houston Rockets	Independence Bank	Prosperity Bank	Woodforest National bank
Indiana Pacers	Huntington Bank	Old National Bank	Woodforest National Bank
LA Clippers	East West Bank	First Republic Bank	Pan America Bank
Los Angeles Lakers	First Republic Bank	Pan America Bank	Union Bank
Memphis Grizzlies	Cadence Bank	Independent Bank	Renasant Bank
Miami Heat	Interamerican Bank	OneUnited Bank	Regions Bank
Milwaukee Bucks	Associated Bank	First Citizens Bank	Great MidWest Bank
Minnesota Timberwolves	Associated Bank	BMO Harris Bank	Bremer Bank
New Orleans Pelicans	IBERIA Bank	Liberty Bank	Regions Bank
New York Knicks	First Citizens Bank	First Republic Bank	People's United Bank

Oklahoma City Thunder	Arvest Bank	Commerce Bank	Prosperity Bank
Orlando Magic	IBERIA Bank	Regions Bank	TrustCo Bank
Philadelphia 76ers	Beneficial Bank	M&T Bank	Republic Bank
Phoenix Suns	BBVA Compass	Comerica Bank	MidFirst Bank
Portland Trail Blazers	Bank of the West	Pacific Continental Bank	Silicon Valley Bank
Sacramento Kings	California Bank & Trust	East West Bank	Umpqua Bank
San Antonio Spurs	Bank of the Ozarks	First National Bank of Texas	Prosperity Bank
Utah Jazz	Bank of the West	Banner Bank	Washington Federal Bank
Washington Wizards	HSBC Bank	M&T Bank	United Bank

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APPENDIX D: LIST OF FAVORITE TEAMS

Teams and Sponsors			
	Local	Regional	National
Teams	*n*	*n*	*n*
Atlanta Hawks	7	14	9
Boston Celtics	27	33	33
Brooklyn Nets	3	6	1
Charlotte Hornets	11	5	14
Chicago Bulls	39	35	39
Cleveland Cavaliers	33	44	28
Dallas Mavericks	12	12	7
Denver Nuggets	5	3	4
Detroit Pistons	15	7	14
Golden State Warriors	54	40	45
Houston Rockets	2	8	10
Indiana Pacers	5	8	5
LA Clippers	9	4	7
Los Angeles Lakers	30	29	35
Memphis Grizzlies	15	1	5
Miami Heat	11	11	16
Milwaukee Bucks	11	4	12
Minnesota Timberwolves	8	4	8
New Orleans Pelicans	8	5	7
New York Knicks	23	26	23
Oklahoma City Thunder	9	3	2
Orlando Magic	6	6	10
Philadelphia 76ers	12	16	8
Phoenix Suns	4	11	6
Portland Trail Blazers	11	8	12
Sacramento Kings	1	3	5
San Antonio Spurs	19	15	14
Utah Jazz	1	7	7
Washington Wizards	8	14	8
Total	387	382	394

UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS

April 28, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: B. Colin Cork
                                Terry Eddy

FROM: Ro Windwalker
                                IRB Coordinator

RE: New Protocol Approval

IRB Protocol #:   17-04-660

Protocol Title: *An Investigation of Sponsorship Antecedents and Outcomes through
                                Levels of Sponsor Prominence*

Review Type: ☒ EXEMPT   ☐ EXPEDITED   ☐ FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date: 04/28/2017 Expiration Date: 04/27/2018

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year.
If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a
request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This
form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website
(https://vpred.uark.edu/units/rscp/index.php). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in
advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the
request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of
continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in
Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

This protocol has been approved for 1,200 participants. If you wish to make *any* modifications in the
approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to*
implementing those changes. All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and
must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 109 MLKG Building, 5-
2208, or irb@uark.edu.

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The University of Arkansas is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.

Education
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Ph.D. in Health, Sport, and Exercise Science (Expected August, 2017)

Emphasis: Sport Management
Cognate: Communication
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas
Advisor: Dr. Terry Eddy
Dissertation: *An Investigation of Sport Sponsorship Antecedents and Outcomes through Levels of Sponsorship Prominence.*

M.S. Kinesiology, Emphasis in Sport Administration (2014)
Mississippi State University
Advisor: Dr. Alan Morse

B.S. Kinesiology, Emphasis in Teaching and Coaching (2010)
Mississippi State University

Awards
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2017 Outstanding Ph.D. student in Recreation and Sport Management

Doctoral Academy Fellowship (July 2014 – Present)
- $10,000 per academic year

2013 Sport Marketing Association Graduate Student Case Study Winner

Teaching Experience
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Graduate Assistant (University Arkansas)
RESM 4083: Research in Recreation and Sport (Spring 2017)
RESM 4083: Honors Research in Recreation and Sport (Spring 2017)
RESM 4083: Research in Recreation and Sport (Fall 2016)
RESM 2063: Commercial Recreation, Sport, and Tourism Enterprise (Fall 2016)
RESM 3843: Recreation and Sport Facilities (Spring 2016: two sections)
RESM 3843: Recreation and Sport Facilities (Fall 2015)
RESM 2063: Commercial Recreation, Sport, and Tourism Enterprise (Fall 2014, Spring 2015)
Graduate Assistant (Mississippi State University)
KI 2213: Emergency Health Care
PE 1371: Advanced Strength and Conditioning
PE 1171: Strength and Conditioning

PE 1071: Soccer
PE 1021: Volleyball

Ripley High School Teacher (Ripley, Mississippi)
Science Skills and Reasoning
Ecology
Physical Education

Higher Education Experience

Graduate Assistantship (July 2014 - July 2017)
- Graduate Assistant for the Recreation and Sport Management Program
- University of Arkansas
- Faculty Advisor: Dr. Terrance Eddy

Graduate Assistantship (August 2013 - May 2014)
- Graduate Assistant for the Department of Kinesiology
- Mississippi State University
- Faculty Advisor: Dr. Heather Webb
- Graduate Assistant for: Dr. Alan Morse, Dr. Stanley Brown, Dr. Heather Webb

Guest Lecturer

Cork, B. C. (2017). Sport Management as a Career. Exercise Science Seminar. Guest Lecturer for Mr. Matthew Stone.

Cork, B. C. (2016). Sport Sponsorship: Leveraging and Activation. RESM 3883: Marketing and Promotion in Recreation and Sport Management. Guest lecturer for Dr. Sarah Stokowski.

Cork, B. C., (2016). The Major Games in Amateur Sport. RESM 4003: Management in Recreation and Sport. Guest lecturer for instructor Bo Li.

Cork, B. C., (2016). College Sports. RESM 3023: Sport Management Fundamentals. Guest lecturer for Dr. Terry Eddy.

Cork, B. C., (2015). Survey Instrument Development and Methodology. RESM 4083: Research in Recreation and Sport. Guest lecturer for instructor Bo Li.

Cork, B. C., (2014). Facilities in Sport and Future Revenue Generation. RESM 3023: Sport Management Fundamentals. Guest lecturer for Dr. Terry Eddy.

Refereed Publications
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Eddy, T., & Cork, B. C. (in second review). Sponsorship Antecedents and Outcomes in
    Participant Sport Setting. Submitted to *International Journal of Sports Marketing
    and Sponsorship.*

Cork, B. C., & Eddy, T. (2017). Athlete Endorsement Activity on   Twitter and the Retweet
    Function as a Measure of eWOM. *International Journal of Sport Communication. 10*(1),
    1-16

Eddy, T., & Cork, B. C. (2016). Sponsor and Team Related Intentions of Salient
    Market Segments in a Naming-Rights Sponsorship Scenario. *Journal of Issues in
    Intercollegiate Athletics, 9*, 142–162.

Reams, L., Eddy, T., & Cork. B. C. (2015).   Points of Attachment and Sponsorship
    Outcomes in an Individual Sport. *Sport Marketing Quarterly, 24*(3), 159–169.

Scholarly Activity in progress
_____

Cork, B. C., & Li, B. (manuscript in progress). Reebok and the UFC: Athlete Social Media
    Brand Promotion. Intended for *Global Sport Business Journal.*

Cork, B. C., Eddy, T., & Li, B. (manuscript in progress). Peyton Manning and
    Budweiser: Fan Sentiment through the Lens of Twitter. Intended for *International
    Journal of Sport Communication.*

Eddy, T., Cork, B. C., & Lebel, K. L. (manuscript in progress). Assessing the Implementation of
    Sponsor Activity by Activation Type on Twitter. Intended for *Sport Management Review.*

Cork, B. C., & Eddy, T. (manuscript in progress). The Price of Victory: The Impact of
    Construction in Major College Football. Intended for *Journal of Sport
    Economics.*

Refereed Abstracts/Conference Presentations
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Eddy, T., Lebel, K.L., Reams, L., & Cork, B. C. (Oral Presentation). UFC 205
    and a Study of League and Fighter Self Presentation. Intended for NASSM 2017,
    Denver, CO.

Cork, B. C., Eddy, T. (advisor) (poster). Peyton Manning and Budweiser: Fan
    Sentiment through the Lens of Twitter. Intended for NASSM 2017, Denver,
    CO.

Cork, B. C. (2016). Positioning a Sport Facility to Generate Revenue. 2016 SMA
    Pedagogy Symposium, Indianapolis, IN.

Eddy, T., Cork, B. C., & Lebel, K. (2016). Assessing the Implementation of Sponsor
    Activity by Activation Type on Twitter. Oral presentation for 2016
    SMA conference, Indianapolis, IN.

Cork, B. C., & Eddy, T. (advisor). (2016). Investigating Sponsorship Processing,
    Attitudes, and Outcomes Associated with a New Community-Level Race Series.
    Poster for 2016 SMA conference, Indianapolis, IN.

Cork, B. C. (2016). Facility Crisis and Avoiding Future Issues. Oral presentation
    presented at the 2016 NASSM Teaching and Learning Fair, Orlando, FL.

Cork, B. C., & Eddy, T. (advisor). (2016).The Power of the Retweet: Athlete Twitter
    Endorsement Activity. Poster presented at the 2016 NASSM conference, Orlando,
    FL.

Lebel, K., Eddy, T., & Cork, B. C. (2016). Show and Tell? How Sport
    Manufacturers are Re-Defining their Self-Presentation on Digital Platforms. Oral
    presentation presented at the 2016 NASSM conference, Orlando, FL.

Eddy, T., Lebel, K., & Cork, B. C. (2016). An Investigation of the Impact of Sponsor
    Activation on Twitter. Oral presentation present at the 2016 American Marketing
    Association Winter Conference, Las Vegas, NV.

Malmo, J., Rolfe, D., & Cork, B. C. (2016). UFC and Marijuana: The Fight over
    Policy. Oral presentation presented at the 2016 Sport and Recreation Law
    Association conference, New Orleans, LA.

Cork, B. C., Malmo, J., & Stine, G. (2016). Reebok and the UFC: Athlete Social Media
    Brand Promotion. Oral presentation presented at the 2016 Applied Sport
    Management Conference, Baton Rouge, LA.

Rolfe, D., Cork, B. C., Li, B., Malmo, J., & Stine, G. (2016). Beyond Doping: Analysis
    of Professional Sports' Recreational Drug Policies. Poster presented at the 2016
    Global Sport Business Association conference, Miami, FL.

Cork, B. C., & Eddy, T. (2015). A Conceptual Framework for Understanding College Athletic Donor Motivation and Behavior. Oral presentation presented at the 2015 Southern Sport Management Conference, Baton Rouge, LA.

Cork, B. C., Pfleegor, A., & Morse, A., (2014). A Happy Marriage? The Honeymoon Effect and the new wave of Sport Facility Construction. Poster presented at the 2014 NASSM Conference, Pittsburgh, PA.

Pfleegor, A., Morse, A., & Cork, B. C. (2014). The Past, Present, & Future of Davis Wade Stadium: A Historic Structure Report. Poster presented at the 2014 CSRI Conference, Columbia, SC.

Non-Refereed/Invited Presentations

Cork, B. C., Canan, S. (2017). Professional Development Series "The Interview Process: What you need to know". 2017 HHPR Department Research Seminar.

Cork, B. C. (2017). An Investigation of Sport Sponsorship Antecedents and Outcomes Through Levels of Sponsor Performance. 2017 HHPR Department Research Seminar.

Eddy, T., & Cork, B. C. (2016). Assessing the Implementation of Sponsor Activity by Activation Type on Twitter. 2016 HHPR Department Research Seminar.

Eddy, T., & Cork, B. C. (2016). Corporate Partners' Social Media Activation in Professional Sports. Oral presentation presented at the 2016 HHPR department seminar. Fayetteville, AR.

Cork, B. C. (2015). A Preliminary Study of Athlete Endorsement Related Activity and Fan Response. Oral Presentation presented at the 2015 HHPR department seminar. Fayetteville, AR.

Cork, B. C., & Eddy, T. (2014). A Conceptual Framework for Understanding College Athletic Donor Motivation and Behavior. Oral presentation presented at the 2014 HHPR department seminar. Fayetteville, AR.

Cork, B. C., & Eddy, T. (2014). A Comprehensive Conceptual Framework for Understanding the College Athletic Donor. Poster presentation presented at the 2014 University of Arkansas Abstract to Contract graduate student competition.

Technical Reports
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Eddy, T., & Cork, B. C. (2016). Frozen Toes Participant Sponsor Response.

- Sport Consumer Research Lab

Eddy, T., Cork, B. C. (2016). Run for the Parks Participant Sponsor Response.

- Sport Consumer Research Lab

Eddy, T., & Cork, B. C. (2016). Lady DU Fayetteville Participant Sponsor Response.

- Sport Consumer Research Lab

Service
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Oral Presentation Moderator for the 2016 NASSM Conference, Orlando, FL.

Graduate Student Panel: Dinner & Dialogue. University of Arkansas (2015), Fayetteville,
Arkansas

Professional Development
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Co-Founder and Assistant Director of the Sport Consumer Research Lab
- Collaborate with the Director on current research project
- Coordinate and direct graduate student research assistants

Grants
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2016 - 2017 *Doctoral student travel grant University of Arkansas*
- Awarded: $1,000
- One of 75 awarded for the fall semester

2016 - 2017 *HHPR department doctoral student travel grant*
- Awarded: $100

2015 - 2016 *Doctoral student travel grant University of Arkansas*
- Not funded

2015 - 2016 *HHPR department doctoral student travel grant*
- Not funded

2014 - 2015 *Doctoral student travel grant University of Arkansas*
- Awarded $1,000

2014 - 2015 *HHPR department doctoral student travel grant*
- Awarded $100

Media

Featured: "Sport Sponsorship is Topic of Research Presentation Today". *University of Arkansas Newswire, February 10, 2017.* http://news.uark.edu/articles/37768/sport-sponsorship-is-topic-of-research-presentation-today.

Quoted: "UA Professor to Establish Lab" *The Arkansas Traveler, April 20, 2016.* http://www.uatrav.com/news/article_08e066f6-0685-11e6-985a-63c6567eeec8.html

Featured: "Graduate Students to Present Research Today in Health, Human Performance and Recreation Series. *University of Arkansas Newswire, September 26, 2016.* *http://news.uark.edu/articles/35466/graduate-students-to-present-research-today-in-health-human-performance-and-recreation-series.*

Featured: "U of A Lab Created to Research Behavior of Sport Consumer" *University of Arkansas Newswire. April 06, 2016. https://news.uark.edu/articles/34187/u-of-a-lab-created-to-research-behavior-of-sport-consumers.*

Featured: "Graduate Students to Present Research on Sport Management Topics". *University of Arkansas Newswire, February 12, 2016. http://news.uark.edu/articles/33577/graduate-students-to-present-research-on-sport-management-topics.*

Featured: "Graduate Students to Present Research on Martial Arts, Athletic Donors. *University of Arkansas Newswire, February 26, 2015.* http://news.uark.edu/articles/26744/graduate-students-to-present-research-on-martial-arts-athletic-donors.

Featured: "Research by Professor, Student Looks at Sports Sponsorship in New Way" *University of Arkansas, February 03, 2016. https://news.uark.edu/articles/33475/research-by-professor-student-looks-at-sports-sponsorship-in-new-way.*

Featured: "Former Sport Admin Students Offer Perspective on New PhD Program" *Mississippi State University Department of Kinesiology Headlines and Highlights, December 07, 2014. http://www.kinesiology.msstate.edu/headlines/headline/phdprogram.php*

Professional Organizations

(2016 - 2017) American Marketing Association
(2014 - Current) North American Society for Sport Management
(2016 - Current) Sport and Recreation Law Association
(2015 - Current) Applied Sport Management Association
(2014 - 2015) College Sport Research Institute

Industry Experience
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June 2013 – August 2013
- Operations Intern for Sanderson Farms Championship
- Liaison and director for various vendors
- Staff contact for PGA rules officials
- Oversaw the distribution of equipment to volunteers

August 2010 – July 2012
- Assistant High School football coach
- Assistant High School baseball coach

May 2004 - May 2007
- Instructor for Universal Cheerleading Association

Other Skills and Experience
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- Proficient in the following data collection and statistical analysis programs: SPSS, SAS, EQS, Mplus, Qualtrics, & Survey Monkey.
- Received training in the online classroom program Blackboard Academic Suite.