The Impact of On- and Off-Field Sports Scandals on Team Identification and Consumer Behavior Intentions

Jennifer Michael Hamilton
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

THE IMPACT OF ON-AND OFF-FIELD SPORTS SCANDALS ON
TEAM IDENTIFICATION AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR INTENTIONS

By

JENNIFER MICHAEL HAMILTON

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Jennifer Michael Hamilton defended this dissertation on December 9, 2015.
The members of the supervisory committee were:

Jeffrey James  
Professor Directing Dissertation

Amy Guerette  
University Representative

Joshua Newman  
Committee Member

Amy Kim  
Committee Member

The Graduate School has verified and approved the above-named committee members, and certifies that the dissertation has been approved in accordance with university requirements.
In the words of my mother “Don’t dream it…be it”. Anything good that I have become is because of my mother. I dedicate this dissertation to my greatest supporter and my biggest fan, my mother.
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ABSTRACT

A review of sport media on any given day seemingly includes news about an athlete involved in some type of questionable behavior, or what is likely referred to as a “scandal.” For example, consider the numerous stories published about Lance Armstrong’s denial then subsequent admission of using performance-enhancing drugs, or the stories about Tiger Wood’s marital infidelity. Despite what seems to be daily reports in the media about scandals involving athletes, empirical assessment of the impact of knowing about such scandals on sport consumers’ remains limited (Prior, O’Reilly, Mazanov, & Huybers, 2013). With the viability and prosperity of commercially-oriented sport teams dependent on consumption by sport fans and spectators, it is important to ascertain the impact scandals involving athletes have on consumer behavior.

There is anecdotal evidence that sport scandals have a negative impact on sport consumer behavior. There remains limited empirical research, however, examining the direct impact of sports scandals on sport team-related consumption patterns of consumers. This project was an attempt to investigate the impact of reported sports scandals on team identification and sport consumers’ sport team-related behavior intentions. Two objectives guided the research. First, ascertain whether on-field and off-field sports scandals have an impact on sport consumers’ team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. Second, assess whether a sport consumers’ level of team identification moderates the impact of on-field and off-field sports scandals on subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions. A pretest-posttest quasi-experimental research design was used to collect quantitative measures of team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions prior (pretest) and subsequent (posttest) to on-field or off-field sport scandal condition exposure. The results of the investigation are contradictory to anecdotal evidence. It was concluded from the results that irrespective of the type of sports scandal, sport consumers’ team identification levels and sport team-related behavioral intentions remained static subsequent to learning of a scandal. There was no negative spillover effect on the associated sport team.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

From the attempt by players for the Chicago White Sox in 1919 to “throw” the World Series (the “Black Sox” scandal) to the New England Patriots football tampering—referred to as “Deflategate”—in 2014, the sport industry has endured over the years a multitude of what are referred to in the sport media as “sport scandals.” One definition of scandal is “something that offends propriety or established moral codes and brings disgrace on anyone or any organization associated with it” (Finley, Finley, & Fountain, 2008, p. 1). At present, sport scandal is most often defined in the extant literature as an event that is “illegal or unethical, involves multiple parties over a sustained period of time, and whose impact affects the integrity of the sport with which they are associated” (Hughes & Shank, 2005, p. 214).

Scandals in the sport arena are not a contemporary phenomenon, nor are episodes limited to the field or court. Indiscretions or events occurring away from the playing field, referred to as off-field, include criminal misdemeanors such as Michael Vick’s involvement in an illegal interstate commerce dog fighting conspiracy in 2007, Plaxico Burress’ indictment on criminal possession of a weapon and reckless endangerment charges in 2008, and episodes involving athletes’ private relationships, such as Tiger Woods’ marital infidelity that caused an international media frenzy in 2009.

Sports reporters seem to provide daily coverage of athletes’ on-field and off-field scandals; accordingly, it is important to consider the potential impact of these events on sport consumers’, sports teams, leagues, and sport sponsors. Anecdotal reports provide evidence of a negative correlation between athletes involved in or associated with a scandal, and consumer behavior. Negative issues pertaining to an athlete’s character and/or negative behaviors are believed to have a negative impact on consumers’ affinity towards sports teams, sport leagues, and sponsors, as well as consumptive behavior (Sports Business Journal, 2007). Empirical research provides some evidence substantiating the anecdotal contentions, with scholars reporting a negative spillover on sponsors, corporations, and athletic institutions that are aligned
with negative events (Dalakas & Levin, 2005; Hughes & Shank, 2008; Louie, Kulik, & Jacobson, 2001; Louie & Obermiller, 2002; Till & Shimp, 1998).

A spillover effect, defined as the process by which an attitude toward one entity is transferred to an associated entity (Simonin & Ruth, 1998), has been found in some instances to provide a positive impact for corporations that are aligned with athlete endorsers. For example, celebrity-athlete endorsers have been shown to build credibility in advertisements (Kamins, Brand, Hoeke, & Moe, 1989), improve communication function by eliminating background noise (Sherman, 1985), enhance brand recognition (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983), sway consumers towards the endorsed brand (Kamins et al., 1989), and increase corporate stock returns (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995). Researchers also report that negative information and/or events involving celebrity-athlete endorsers negatively impacts corporations’ product evaluations (Till & Shimp, 1998), financial performance (Louie et al., 2001), corporate image (Louie & Obermiller, 2002), and consumers’ affinity towards the corporation (Dalakas & Levin, 2005), outcomes that are not sought after by the corporation.

While the effects of celebrity—including athlete—scandals on corporate sponsors and endorsed corporations are documented in the marketing literature, less appears to be known about the impact that such scandals have on sports teams. According to Doyle (2001), an athlete’s words and/or actions are directly associated with the sport team for which they play. As a consequence, words and/or actions that compromise the image of an athlete, may compromise the image of the athlete’s respective team. In view of Doyle’s (2001) contention, any scandals involving an athlete should raise a concern for sport managers, specifically with regard to the sport team’s financial viability. A sport team’s financial viability is dependent on sport consumers’ consumptive behaviors. The behaviors of sport consumers’ include, but are not limited to: sport event attendance, viewership of sporting events via media outlets, and the purchase of sports merchandise (Prior et al., 2013). It is important to assess the extent to which scandals involving athletes may impact a sport team’s operations, particularly their financial health.

There is emerging interest in the nature of scandal in the sport management literature, and there are numerous other topics to investigate including the potential impact of sports scandals on sport consumption (Prior et al., 2013). The present investigation was undertaken to examine
the impact scandals involving athletes have on team identification and the sport team-related behavioral intentions of consumers in the aftermath of such sports scandals.

**Statement of Problem**

Anecdotal reports illustrate the potential ramifications scandals involving athletes may have on sport teams; unruly or poor character, behaviors, and/or events are believed to negatively impact sport consumers’ team affinity, game viewership, ticket purchases, and sport product merchandise purchases (Sports Business Journal, 2007). Moreover, based on anecdotal evidence, it seems that relative to casual sport consumers’, avid sport consumers’ are less tolerant of athletes with unruly character, those engaging in negative behaviors, and/or involved in unscrupulous events. Avid sport consumers’ seem to be more inclined to decrease their consumption of sport team products after learning of athlete scandals (Sports Business Journal, 2007).

As noted, Michael Vick and Tiger Woods are two athletes whose behaviors have been the subjects of numerous news stories. The extensive media coverage and public attention surrounding these two athletes resulted in both being placed as finalists in the ‘Sports Illustrated top ten sports scandals of the 2000s’ (Prior et al., 2013). While the implications surrounding these scandals remain anecdotal in nature, such discussion provides insight into the consequences that may transpire in the aftermath of a scandal involving a well-known athlete.

In April of 2007, the first media reports were published with the news that Michael Vick, star quarterback with the Atlanta Falcons, a team in the National Football League (NFL), was the subject of an investigation for bankrolling and participating in an illegal interstate dog-fighting ring (Prior et al., 2013). After lengthy legal proceedings, Vick was convicted on federal charges related to animal cruelty, and was sentenced to 23 months in federal prison (Prior et al., 2013).

The Michael Vick dog-fighting scandal resulted in significant implications for a variety of stakeholders. Vick’s major sponsors, despite terminating their contracts with the athlete, reported serious financial problems due to their association with Vick (Prior et al., 2013). For the Atlanta Falcons, it was estimated that season ticket renewals declined more than 25% between 2007 and 2008 (Prior et al., 2013). According to Prior et al. (2013), based on the available public numbers, it was further estimated that ticket revenues declined by 15% to 20% in the year directly following the reporting of the scandal. Moreover, the financial reports indicate the
Atlanta Falcons suffered an overall estimated financial loss of $15 to $30 million in revenues between 2008 and 2010 (Prior et al., 2013). Taken together, the anecdotal evidence put forward by Prior et al. (2013) supports a conclusion that the Michael Vick scandal had a serious impact on sport consumption, specifically between the years of 2007 and 2010.

The reports of Tiger Woods’ adultery serves to further illustrate the impact a sports scandal has on stakeholders. In 2009, in response to extensive media reporting on infidelity allegations, Woods publicly admitted to cheating on his now ex-wife Elin Nordegren. The Tiger Woods infidelity scandal resulted in significant implications for many stakeholders, including Woods’ sponsors and their respective shareholders. In particular, it is reported that the scandal lead to a $12 billion loss to the shareholders of Wood’s sponsors (Goldiner, 2009), while negatively impacting the stock value of Wood’s sponsoring firms (Knittel & Stango, 2009). The negative news coverage surrounding Tiger Woods’ infidelity is reported to have forced some of Woods’ sponsors (e.g. Accenture and AT&T) to terminate their contracts with the athlete in fear they too would be at risk for a financial loss do their association with Woods (Miller & Laczniak, 2011).

The two preceding examples provide anecdotal evidence supporting the notion that scandals involving well-known athletes have potential negative implications for stakeholders in sport. While such evidence illustrates the potential impact on stakeholders, empirical research is warranted to confirm whether such negative impacts do indeed occur. Of particular interest for this study is the impact of such events on sport consumer behavioral intentions.

The existing sport marketing literature includes reports of a significant relationship between team identification and consumer behavior (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Armstrong, 2002; Matsuoka, Chelladurai, & Harada, 2003; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; 1995). In particular, highly identified sport consumers’ have reported greater sport product consumption, specifically game attendance and sport team merchandise purchasing (Kwon & Armstrong, 2002; Gray & Wet-Gray, 2012; Magnusen, Rhee, & Kim, 2010; Matsuoka et al., 2003; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; 1995), compared to sport consumers’ characterized by low identification. With team identification serving as a significant predictor of consumptive behavior, it is important to examine the bearing scandals involving athletes have on levels of team identification, and on subsequent behavioral intentions.
An additional limitation with our understanding of the impact scandals involving athletes have on sport consumer behavior is failure to examine the impact of different types of scandals. At present sports scandal is defined in the extant literature most frequently as an event that is “illegal or unethical, involved multiple parties over a sustained period of time, and whose impact affected the integrity of the sport with which they are associated” (Hughes & Shank, 2005, p. 214). While the Hughes and Shank (2005) definition provides some insight into the concept of sport scandal, the definition fails to capture the distinct between scandals involving athletes arising within the sport arena (e.g. the New England Patriots football tampering) and those events transpiring outside of the sport arena (e.g., Michael Vick’s involvement in illegal interstate commerce dog fighting). We recognize on one hand there are differences in the types of scandals involving athletes, specifically those occurring on the field of play, or on-field, and those occurring outside the field of play, or off-field. As yet, however, scholars have not sought to examine whether there may be a difference in the impact of different types of scandals on sport team-related behavioral intentions.

Hardwicke-Brown (2014) contends, that previous research serves to illustrate that the type of scandal is an important consideration when looking at the impact of a sport celebrity scandal and how it influences consumers. Hughes and Shank’s (2005) findings support this position, by revealing a disparity in sport consumers’ perceptions concerning the severity of performance related and non-performance related athletic transgressions. In particular, Hughes and Shank (2005) report that the magnitude of an athlete’s transgression is heightened when sport consumers’ believe the event impacts on-field athletic performance and/or poses a threat to the integrity of the sport. More specifically, the research findings provide the grounds for challenging the assumption of homogenous consumer responses to scandals that directly influence the on-field sport contest and those that have no influence on the sport contest. Hughes and Shank (2005) report that sport consumers’ are less tolerant when sport scandals directly impact the sport, while more forbearing towards scandals that have no effect on the sport.

The prospect of differential consumer response is also found in other writings dealing with the topic of scandals involving athletes. Sato (2015) writes about the concept of ‘performance relatedness,’ which provides a distinction between types of sport scandals. Performance relatedness refers to “the extent to which the target [scandal] affects the sport entities’ performance in their particular sport” (p. 103). For example, an athlete using
performance-enhancing drugs to enhance their sport performance is considered to be a scandal that is ‘performance related.’ In contrast, an athlete that is charged with sexual assault when off-field would serve as an example of a scandal that is non-performance related. The discussion of such distinctions has led to the contention that a scandal that is believed to directly influence an athlete’s on-field performance will result in a greater degree of negative consumer reaction than if the scandal does not directly influence the on-field performance (Sato, 2015).

Sassenberg (2015) proposed a conceptual model to illustrate consumers’ perceptions toward two distinct classifications of sport celebrity transgressions (SCTs): on-field SCTs and off-field SCTs. On-field SCTs serve to represent transgressions that have a direct influence on the sport contest (e.g., performance-enhancing drugs and match-fixing). In contrast, off-field SCTs are illustrated as transgressions that have no direct influence on the sport contest (e.g., adultery and sexual assault). These on-and off-field classifications are consistent with Sato’s (2015) propositions. Sassenberg (2015) further contends that the impact of a SCT on a consumer’s attitude toward a sport celebrity brand image is dependent on the type of SCT (on- or off-field). Consistent with Sato (2015), Sassenberg (2015) purports that on-field SCTs will more often than not have a stronger ‘negative’ impact on consumer perceptions than off-field SCTs.

The works of Sassenberg (2015) and Sato (2015) contribute important ideas regarding the impact of scandals involving athletes on sport consumer behavior, particularly the notion that the type of scandal may differentially impact such behavior. It is important to acknowledge, however, that to date the work of Sassenberg and Sato—including their respective propositions—remain conceptual in nature. In order to substantiate these contentions, empirical assessment of the potential differential impact of on-field and off-field sport scandals is warranted.

To date, previous research has been limited to investigations examining the impact of scandals involving athletes with no intent to assess whether there is a differential impact of on-field and off-field scandals (Fink, Parker, Brett, & Higgins, 2009; Hughes & Shank, 2008). There remains an assumption that the ramifications of on-field and off-field sport scandals are homogeneous. The propositions of Sassenberg (2015) and Sato (2015) provide a challenge to the assumption of homogeneity, including the suggestion that the different types of scandal may produce dissimilar consumer reactions. The present study was an attempt to provide empirical
evidence as to whether there is a difference in the impact of on-field and off-field sport scandals on sport consumers’ and their sport team-related behavior intentions.

**Purpose of Study**

The purpose of the study was two-fold: (1) to assess whether on-field sports scandals and off-field sports scandals have a differential impact on sport consumers’ team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions; and (2) to ascertain whether a sport consumers’ level of team identification moderates the impact of on-field and off-field sports scandals on subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions. In view of the two-fold purpose, the following research questions were posed.

**Research Questions**

1a. Do on-and off-field sports scandals impact sport consumers’ team identification?
1b. If yes, do on-and off-field scandals impact sport consumers’ team identification in the same way?
2a. Do on-and off-field sports scandals impact sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral intentions?
2b. If yes, do on-and off-field sports scandals impact sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral intentions in the same way?
3a. Does a sport consumer’s level of team identification moderate the effect sports scandals have on subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions?
3b. If team identification level moderates the effect sports scandals have on subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions, to what extent is the effect similar or different across sport scandal conditions?

**Significance of Study**

Expecting there will be future incidents of scandals involving athletes, it is important to ascertain the extent to which such episodes impact sport consumers’ team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. While anecdotal evidence serves to demonstrate the potential ramifications, few empirical studies have been conducted that would allow for analysis
of the direct impact of such scandals. The dearth of empirical literature highlights the potential contribution of the present investigation.

The findings derived from the present study have academic and practical implications. For academics, the empirical research extends prior research by examining the impact that both on-field and off-field sports scandals have on two specific variables, team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. The investigation serves to extend the team identification literature by further exploring scholars’ contentions of team identification as a moderator of sport consumers’ behavioral responses.

From a practical stance, the present investigation provides sport practitioners with knowledge about the potential impact from on-field and off-field scandals involving athletes. Through the current study an effort was made to determine to what extent, if any, on-field and off-field sports scandals impact sport consumers’ team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. As mentioned in the introduction, Doyle (2001) contends that an athlete’s words and/or actions are directly linked to the team they represent. With sport teams relying heavily on sports consumption activities (e.g., ticket sales, viewership of sporting events via media outlets, sport merchandise sales), it is imperative that sport managers better understand the impact sports scandals have on consumers’ sport-team related behavioral intentions. Further, with team identification serving as a significant predictor of behavioral intentions (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Armstrong, 2002; Magnusen et al., 2010; Matsuoka et al., 2003; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; 1995), it is important to ascertain the impact that on- and off-field scandals have on sport consumers’ subsequent levels of team identification.

Another question of interest is the extent to which repercussions from on-and off-field events are homogeneous or heterogeneous. Most professional sport leagues have policies serving as “laws” to control and deter on-field athletic scandals. It is important to ascertain if there is a need to further extend such policies to address unscrupulous off-field behavior. While many professional sport leagues have implemented rules and penalties in response to off-field scandals over the years, the National Football League (NFL) has made it a priority to address off-field behavior issues (NFL.com, 2014).

The NFL introduced a new personal conduct policy in 2007 in an effort to control behavior by its athletes and NFL employees and restore and maintain the public’s confidence in the NFL product. The policy “defines the standards that apply to everyone in the NFL [owners,
coaches, league staff, team employees and players] and the steps the league will take to promote conduct that is consistent with those expectations” (NFL.com, 2014, para 1). In the wake of domestic violence and child abuse cases involving NFL players Ray Rice and Adrian Peterson, the NFL personal conduct policy was further revised in December of 2014 to include higher standards, tougher rules, and new investigatory procedures (NFL.com, 2014). According to Teitelbaum (2008), “the other major sport leagues have yet to develop the equivalent of the NFL personal conduct policy” (p. 176).

The present study aims to contribute to the understanding of the effects of sports scandals on sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral intentions. For sport practitioners, an understanding of the impact of on-and off-field sports scandals will enable a more pragmatic method of dealing with these events (Prior et al., 2013). By ascertaining the effects of on-and off-field sports scandals, sport managers will gain insight as to which types of scandals may require crisis management preparedness and response. For sports scandals associated with negative effects, sport managers should consider proactive crises management to mitigate the potential impact of these events. Proactive crisis management strategies may include, but are not limited to: pre-employment background checks; moral clauses in employment contracts; team and league policies that outline the rules of on-and off-field conduct that employees must adhere to; new employee orientation seminars; and continuing education programs. In contrast, reactive crisis management strategies may include the use of disciplinary actions such as fines, employment suspension, or employment contract termination, to penalize employees that violate team and league policies. By providing an understanding of the impact of on-and off-field sports scandals, sport practitioners have the ability to better navigate the impact of sports scandals. The preceding elements clarify that the present investigation has the potential to make a significant contribution to both sport academics and sport practitioners.

Delimitations

The first delimitation of the study concerns the fictitious nature of the sports scandal scenarios. Fabricated scenarios were used in the experimental investigation to represent the on-and off-field scenario examples identified through pilot study 1. While fabricated events allow for the depiction of on-and off-field scenarios that are consistent with the views of pilot study 1 participants, it is reasonable to expect that a research participant who is highly identified with the
athlete and/or sport team included in the sports scandal scenario may recognize the scenario as fictitious. Consequently, the sports scandal may have less of an impact on sport consumers’ characterized by a high level of team identification compared to sport consumers’ characterized by a low level of team identification.

The second delimitation concerns the midpoint split procedure used to dichotomize the Sport Fandom Questionnaire (SFQ) and team identification scales. In line with previous research (End, Davis, Kretschmar, Campbell, Mueller, & Worthman, 2009), a midpoint split based on the scale points was performed in order to categorize participants as low level sport fans or high level sport fans, and low identified or highly identified, for the SFQ and team identification scales respectively. By not accounting for individuals with moderate levels of sport fandom or team identification, the researcher is unable to provide a comprehensive report of findings that represent each level of classification (i.e., low, moderate, and high).

The third delimitation is that the main experiment was limited to one on-field sports scandal scenario (an allegation of an athlete testing positive for the use of a banned performance-enhancing drug) and one off-field sports scandal scenario (an allegation of an athlete pleading guilty to a sexual assault charge). In order to control for confounding variables, both the on-and off-field sports scandal scenarios were written to depict the misconduct of an unidentified male professional athlete associated with the National Basketball Association (NBA). While holding the contextual factors (i.e., gender of the athlete, sport competition level, type of sport) constant across scandal conditions reduced the influence of confounding variables, it is reasonable to consider that the inclusion of other contextual factors may have led to different results.

The final delimitation concerns the anonymity of the athlete involved in the sports scandal scenario. While participants in the on-field and off-field treatment groups were informed of the sport team associated with the scandal (the Los Angeles Lakers), the name of the involved athlete was never disclosed. By using an unidentified athlete, the researcher had the ability to control for participants preexisting attitudes and/or affinity (or lack thereof) towards a particular athlete, variables that could have potentially confounded the results. It is conceivable that the inclusion of ‘named’ athlete may have led to different results. These delimitations are further discussed in Chapter 5.
Definition of Terms

Behavioral Intentions

Behavioral Intentions are defined as “a person’s intentions to perform various behaviors” (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 12). While a multitude of behavioral intention categories have been identified in the marketing literature, the current study included a focus on three sport team-related behavioral intentions: repeat purchase, merchandise consumption, and media consumption.

Negativity Effect

The negativity effect is a phenomenon by which individuals ascribe higher values to negative information than to positive information in the overall assessment of an entity (Fiske, 1980; Klein, 1996; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987), thus holding negative information as more informative-diagnostic in consumer decision making (Ahluwali, Burnkrant, & Unnava, 2000; Ahluwali, Unnava, & Burnkrant, 2001).

Team Identification

Team identification is defined as the “oneness” an individual feels toward a sport team (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Scholars posit that team identification emerges when an individual internalizes the attributes that are ascribed to the sport organization into their self-concept (Fink, Trail, & Anderson, 2002).

Spillover Effect

The spillover effect is defined as “the extent to which a message influences beliefs related to attributes that are not contained in the message” (Ahluwalia et al., 2001, p. 458). The spillover effect describes the process by which an attitude toward one entity in transferred to an associated entity (Simonin & Ruth, 1998).
Sports Scandal

At present, sports scandal is defined in the extant literature as an event that is “illegal or unethical, involved multiple parties over a sustained period of time, and whose impact affected the integrity of the sport with which they are associated” (Hughes & Shank, 2005, p. 214).

Scandals involving athletes have been further classified into two distinct types: on-field (performance related) and off-field (non-performance related) (Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). On-field scandals (performance related) include transgressions that have a direct influence on the sport contest (e.g., performance-enhancing drugs and match-fixing). In contrast, off-field scandals (non-performance related) include transgressions that have no direct influence on a sport contest (e.g., adultery and sexual assault). A transgression refers to a violation of the implicit and explicit rules guiding relationship performance and evaluation (Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004).

For the purpose of this dissertation the Hughes and Shank (2005) definition was utilized, along with the distinctions of on- and off-field scandals (Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). An on-field scandal is distinguished by performance relatedness, wherein a transgression directly impacts the sport entities’ performance in their particular sport (Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). An off-field scandal is distinguished by non-performance relatedness, wherein a transgression has no direct impact on the sport entities’ performance in their respective sport (Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). A pilot study was conducted to identify commonly discussed cases of on-and off-field sport scandals. These cases served as a base in the development of the fictitious scenarios that were utilized to represent the independent variable conditions (on-field, off-field) included in the main study (see Appendix F). The results of the pilot study are presented in Chapter 3.

The dissertation is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to and an overview of the research project. In Chapter 2, a review of literature pertinent to the eight central elements of the study is provided: business ethics, sport ethics, sport media, sport scandal, negative information, spillover effect, social identity theory, and team identification. Chapter 3 provides a discussion of the methods utilized in the investigation. In Chapter 4, the results of the main experimental investigation are presented. To conclude, research findings, delimitations, limitations, and implications for future research are discussed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature Review Overview

The content in this chapter constitutes a review of the literature pertinent to the elements central to the investigation: business ethics, sport ethics, sport media, sports scandals, negative information, spillover effect, social identity theory, and team identification. The literature review provides background information and empirical evidence to support the hypotheses proposed at the conclusion of the chapter.

The review of literature begins with an introduction to business ethics in order to build a basis from which to contend that sport businesses—specifically sports teams—are accountable for, or at least impacted by, the conduct of individuals affiliated with the business, such as athletes and coaches. The next section includes content pertaining to the extent to which business ethics and sport ethics are interrelated, with an emphasis on the role of ethical theory in the development of what comprises acceptable standards of sport and athlete conduct. The information about ethics and the theory pertaining to ethics is important because such information enables us to understand for instance why some conduct may or may not be considered a scandal, particular in different settings. For example, an understanding of ethics in general and sport ethics more specifically allows us to understand why the physical contact in a football game may be considered “normal,” yet one business man tackling a colleague would be considered “not normal.” An overview of ethical theories is included that may be used to better understand and interpret scandalous conduct in sport.

The next section includes discussion about the role of media promotion and media framing in the development of scandal and scandal perception. This content is considered important because without the publication of actions and conduct, we have to question whether events would really be perceived as scandals. Next, the researcher reviews the literature on sports scandals in order to establish a basis from which to contend that the type of sport scandal is an important consideration when examining the effects of athlete-related sport scandals on consumer behavior.
From the content about sport scandals, there is a seemingly natural transition to a
discussion of the negativity effect theory and the spillover effect theory. The researcher discusses
why these theories are applicable to the proposed study. In brief, while the spillover effect of
information may transpire in both positive and negative contexts, the high diagnosticity of
negative information provides an insight into the potential ‘negative’ impact on-and off-field
sports scandals may have for an associated sports team.

The second part of the literature review includes a discussion of team identification
stemming from the social identity theory, as a means to understand an individual’s psychological
connection to sport and the attitudinal and behavioral consequences of such. In the last section,
the researcher investigates the possible moderating effects of team identification on the
relationship between on-and off-field sports scandals and sport team-related behavioral
intentions. Team identification may influence sport consumers’ evaluations of ‘negative’ sports
scandals, producing heterogeneous responses among high and low identified sport consumers’.
The literature review concludes with a summary section and the presentation of the research
hypotheses.

**Business Ethics**

Business ethics (also known as corporate ethics) is defined as “the principals and
standards that determine acceptable conduct in business organizations” (Ferrell, 2012, p. 30).
Business ethics “applies to all business aspects of business conduct and is relevant to the conduct
of individuals and business organizations as a whole” (Palmer, 2015, p. 401). The principles and
standards of acceptable conduct in business are determined by stakeholders, including
“customers, competitors, government regulators, interest groups, and the public, as well as each
individual’s personal moral principles and values” (Ferrell, 2012, p. 30). With consumers more
aware of business ethics than ever before, ethical business practices are becoming necessary for
organizations to achieve corporate success and a positive corporate image (Velentzas & Broni,
ethics applies to sports [businesses] just as it applies to corporate America” (p. 17). Sport
managers are faced with ethical decisions on a daily basis. If a sport business is to be successful,
sport managers must address ethical dilemmas and implement appropriate strategies in response
to any emergent dilemmas (Thorton et al., 2011).
Scholars and practitioners alike have an interest in the relationship between business ethics and consumer behavior (Creyer, 1997; Elliott & Freeman, 2001; Mason, 2000; Uusitalo & Oksanen, 2004). Cooper-Martin and Holbrook (1993) discuss the concept of ‘ethical consumer behavior’, which is defined as, “decision-making, purchases, and other consumption experiences that are affected by the consumer’s ethical concerns” (p. 277). Scholars suggest that we are experiencing an “ethics era” (see Bohemia, Rieple, Liedtka, & Cooper, 2014 for review), wherein consumers have become more aware of the ethical behaviors associated with businesses and the business products they purchase and/or consume, and have adapted their purchasing and/or consumption behavior accordingly (Harrison, Newholm, & Shaw, 2005; Mason, 2000).

Empirical studies in the area of business management provide evidence that consumers consider the ethical behavior of corporations in their purchase decisions (Creyer, 1997; Elliott & Freeman, 2001; Mason, 2000; Uusitalo & Oksanen, 2004). Results reported from a Market and Opinion Research Institute (MORI) poll commissioned by the Co-operative Bank in the United Kingdom provide evidence that half of the polled consumers reported purchasing a product or recommending a company on the basis of the organization’s ethical reputation (Mason, 2000). Business ethics have also been shown to produce product inelasticity (Creyer, 1997). In particular, researchers suggest that consumers reward corporations for ethical behavior by their willingness to pay higher prices for the organization’s products. In contrast, products from corporations associated with unethical business practices are only considered by consumers if they are offered at a lower price in their respective markets (Creyer, 1997).

Recognizing that ethical business practices do impact consumer behavior (e.g., Creyer, 1997; Elliott & Freeman, 2001; Mason, 2000; Uusitalo & Oksanen, 2004), it is important to acknowledge that with service products ethical practices are reflected or communicated through the service providers, particularly employees. With sport services, particularly professional sports teams, athletes are both employees and the core product (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2014). Moreover, professional athletes have been considered as instrumental business assets for professional sports teams in attracting sport consumers’ (Foster, Greyser, & Walsh, 2006). According to Smith and Stewart (2010), “players and athletes are at the heart of professional sport, and they are a fundamental reason why fans pay good money to attend games and events” (p. 1).
The finding that ethical business practices impact consumer behavior (e.g., Creyer, 1997; Elliott & Freeman, 2001; Mason, 2000; Uusitalo & Oksanen, 2004), in concert with the premise that employees both provide and may be thought of as the service in relation to service products, lead to the question of whether the ethical behavior of employees influence a consumers decision to purchase or consume an organization’s product. The visibility of professional athletes leads to increased reputational risks for sport businesses, often in the form of media scrutiny and heightened public interest (Ketchum, 2015). The popularity of professional athletes has resulted in “an insatiable media [and public] interest in not only what players do on the field, but also what they do off the field” (Smith & Stewart, 2010, p. 9). According to Smith and Stewart (2010),

This development means that players live in a fishbowl existence where their behavior is scrutinized on a daily basis. The pressures on players to behave appropriately, and not to make fools of themselves or undermine the reputation of their clubs are more onerous than in nearly any other occupation. Whereas music, film and television celebrities are almost expected to flaunt illicit drug use, sexual impropriety and financial extravagance, sport stars are expected to be exemplary citizens and solid role models for impressionable children (p. 1).

Due to professional athletes fishbowl existence and integral contribution to the commercial progress and asset growth of sports teams (Smith & Stewart, 2010), it is necessary to ascertain the impact on-and off-field scandals involving athletes may have on sports teams.

For sport managers, there is need to consider the study of business ethics coupled with the study of sport ethics. Sport ethics is “concerned with what is the right thing to do in sports” (Thornton et al., 2011, p. 7). According to Thornton et al., (2011), “one aspect of sport ethics addresses how individuals, and teams conduct themselves when competing or preparing to compete in sporting events” (p. 7). This is where sports ethics intersects with business ethics. As previously discussed, business ethics applies to all aspects of business conduct – including the individual conduct of employees. With athletes serving as both employees and the core product for sport teams, it is necessary to ascertain if unethical athlete conduct negatively impacts the future financial viability for an associated sport team. A starting point for better understanding sports scandals is to consider the topic of sport ethics and the role of ethical theory in the development of what comprises acceptable standards of on-and off-field athlete conduct.
Sport Ethics

Sport ethics is the branch of sport philosophy that addresses ethical questions that arise during and around sport competitions (Borghini, 2015). The study of sport ethics is focused on “the nature of rules, fairness, the normative characteristics of sport, and the role of ethical theory” in the practical field of sport (Loland, 2004, p. 250). A review of contemporary sport ethics literature reveals a multitude of practices that have raised ethical questions in the sport arena, including, but not limited to: performance-enhancing drugs, gambling, and the appropriation of Native American mascots (Eitzen, 2012; Figone, 2012; Hemphill, 2009).

It is argued that sport consumers’ hold a set of expectations and standards regarding the acceptable conduct of athletes, members of sport teams, and those individuals comprising sport leagues (Prior et al., 2013; Robinson, 2006). When an individual—an athlete—“engages in activities that are in conflict with these [standards], this has the potential to create a scandal” (Prior et al., 2013, p. 191). While it is understood that sports scandals amount to a violation of a set of standards held by sport stakeholders, the role of ethical theory in the development of what comprises acceptable standards must be considered. In particular, it is necessary to consider the various ethical foundations to which a sport consumer may ascribe, and how these ethical bases may influence determinations of scandalous actions in sport.

A conclusion from a review of scholarly literature is that sport philosophers and ethicists habitually work within one of three philosophical theses: formalism, conventionalism, and broad internalism. To establish an understanding of the theoretical and philosophical bases of ethics, a review of two theories (internalism and externalism) and three ethical philosophical theses (formalism, conventionalism, and broad internalism) is provided. To better understand the ethical bases, it is necessary to consider two contrasting theories: internalism and externalism. The internalism and externalism theories are two distinct approaches sport philosophers have employed to illustrate the connection between competitive sports and moral values (Simon, Torres, & Hager, 2014). The theory of internalism views ‘sport’ as “a significant source of or basis for ethical principles and values” (Simon et al., 2014, p. 28). Internalists argue that ‘sport’ maintains “a significant degree of autonomy from the wider society, and can support, stand for, and express sets of values of its own that may conflict with the values dominant in the broader society” (Simon et al., 2014, p. 28). Despite a claim of autonomy, it is necessary to understand
that internalists make no contention that “the internal values of sport are unique or have no basis in broader ethical principles such as respect for persons or fairness” (Simon et al., 2014, p. 28).

In contrast, proponents of the theory of externalism deny “that sport is an independent source or basis of ethical principles or values” (Simon et al., 2014, p. 27). Externalists “acknowledge and even emphasize that sports play a significant role in reinforcing values already extant in the culture and in socializing participants and spectators to accept those values as their own” (Simon et al., 2014, p. 27). In view of these assumptions, externalists contend that the values promoted in sport “either express or simply mirror, reflect, or reinforce the values dominant in the wider society” (Simon et al., 2014, p. 27).

The internalism and externalism theories provide two opposing viewpoints regarding the connection between competitive sports and moral values (Simon et al., 2014). From the perspective of internalism, the values of sport may be separate and apart from the values of society at large, and in some instances, may conflict with societal values. For example, running and tackling a person walking down the street would be considered an assault. Tackling a player on a football field is considered part of the game. From an externalism perspective, the values associated with sport mirror or reinforce the values of society at large. For example, punching someone you encounter while walking down a street would be an assault; punching someone during a basketball game would also be considered an assault.

A point we must consider is whether particular behaviors are considered to be scandals will be derived in part from one’s perspective on ethics. How behaviors are framed or portrayed may be considered a scandal in one sense–e.g., a violation of societal values–but not in another sense, not a violation of values associated with participation in sport. To explore the impact of scandal, it is necessary to consider the two opposing views of internalism and externalism, and how the ethical standards of acceptable conduct (based on moral values) associated with each position may lead to dissimilar determinations of scandalous behavior in sport. The extent to which a behavior may be framed or perceived as a scandal may be further influenced by the philosophical thesis one may hold.

As discussed, sport philosophers and ethicists habitually work within one of three philosophical theses: formalism, conventionalism, or broad internalism. Formalism, the “first philosophical lens” through which sport may be studied, is often viewed as the “most stringent and confining” theoretical foundation associated with sport philosophy literature (Pfleegor, 2013,
p. 122). Formalism “is defining a game solely by the rules of that particular game” (Pfleegor, 2010, p.35). As such, formalists believe if “rules are not obeyed, respected, and followed, then an athlete or participant is not actually engaged in the original activity that he or she previously set out to participate in” (Pfleegor, 2010, p. 35). According to Suits (1978) “if the rules are broken the original end becomes impossible of attainment, since one cannot (really) win the game unless he plays it, and (one) cannot (really) play the game unless he obeys the rules” (p. 12). In view of the tenants above, formalists contend that is impossible for a participant to cheat in a sport contest (i.e., violate the formal rules of the game) and be considered a winner of that sport contest. In sport, cheating is described as,

unexpected, undetected competitive acts in the game where either constitutive and/or regulative rules are violated to create favorable conditions for one side or the other in a game, and where such gains are immediately realized and can also produce overall favorable consequences such as winning. (Pfleegor, 2010, p. 36)

The formalism thesis offers a conceptualization and understanding of sport that is based on the formal written rules of a sport contest. Although I do not wish to contest formalism as a viable thesis in the study of sport ethics, it is important to acknowledge the criticisms that have been raised with the formalism thesis. According to Lehman (1981), the tenants of the formalism thesis fail to account for the ever changing and dynamic nature of sport and athletic contests. Formalism is seen to prohibit or limit the presence of innovation and creativity in athletic skill, excellence, and game tactics that are not acknowledged within formal sport contest rules. For example, new and novel feints and jukes that an athlete places into their game repertoire that are not addressed in the formal rules would be discounted as legitimate game tactics and thus assumed cheating (Pfleegor, 2010). Furthermore, formalists are seen to have problems with ethical rule changes and rule formations in sport (Simon et al., 2014). It is argued that by applying a formalist approach to the study of sport, sport is at risk to become more mundane and less aesthetically pleasing by disallowing exciting innovations to exist within sport contests (Hemphill, 2005).

The second philosophical thesis is conventionalism. Conventionalism is often viewed as the least restrictive philosophical thesis in reference to rule obedience. As discussed by Simon (2000) and Simon et al. (2014), the conventionalism thesis was founded on the criticisms and discontent with formalism tenants. Conventionalists contend that formalism fails to acknowledge
conventions that have, and continue, to become a part of particular sports (e.g., innovative coaching strategies, novel player movements, and innovative game tactics). D’Agostino (1981) describes these conventions as “the ethos of games.” The “ethos of the games” are discussed as, “conventions and actions that have become integrated into the game at hand and yet are not necessarily explicitly mentioned as permissible in the formal rules of that game” (Pfleegor, 2010, pp. 40-41). D’Agostino (1981) states:

The ethos of the game in effect provides the basis for making two distinctions where the formal rules of the game provide the basis for making only one such distinction. Thus the formal rules of a game distinguish between behavior, which is permissible (in that game) and behavior, which is impermissible. On a formalist account of games, this distinction is interpreted as a distinction between behavior that is part of the game and behavior that is not part of the game at all. But the ethos of a game distinguishes between behavior that is permissible, behavior that is impermissible yet acceptable, and behavior that is unacceptable. (p. 14)

Conventionalists reject the formalist contention that a strict adherence to formal rules must be used as a singular determination of ethical behavior in sport. On the contrary, conventionalists contend that “the ethos of the game” must also be considered in the study of sport ethics and the determination of ethical behavior. According to Leaman (1995) and Seifried (2004), there are some actions that fall outside of the formal rules that should be considered acceptable in sports, as they represent an opportunity to create a more entertaining and highly skilled sport contest (e.g., bluffing, intimidation). Leaman (1995) contends, that if implemented in an acceptable manner, these acts of rule breaking should not change the fairness of the sport contest.

While conventionalists present a persuasive argument for the inclusion of conventions in sport, the conventionalism thesis does not come without criticism. As discussed by Simon et al. (2014), conventionalists fail to explain where to draw the proverbial line when it comes to cheating in sport and bending the rules and regulations. For example, in which cases are espionage-based practices (e.g., inadvertently overhearing the opposition’s game strategy, hidden microphones worn by defensive players, lip reading on the sidelines to capture the opposition’s game strategy, video recording opponents offensive or defensive signals) in sport acceptable or unacceptable? There is a concern that a conventionalism approach in sport allows for too much
grey area in the determination of ‘right and ‘wrong’ in sport. Furthermore, it has been argued that promoting a conventionalist approach in sport has the potential to create unfair advantages in the sport arena (Pfleegor 2010; 2013). According to Pfleegor (2013)

It remains plausible that some athletes, coaches, and managers, would be willing to bend rules and others may not. In this instance, an otherwise fair playing field would be tilted towards the athlete or organization who was willing to enter the ethical ‘grey area’. (p. 114)

A concern with conventionalism not having the ability to determine “how much is too much” and “where to draw the line” in many cases (Pfleegor, 2010, p. 49). In view of these criticisms, it is understood that conventionalism is unable to provide a stable ethical base to view the wide array of ethical issues in sport (Pfleegor 2010; 2013).

The final thesis to discuss is broad internalism. While formalism and conventionalism represent diametrically opposed viewpoints in regards to rules and regulations, broad internalism is positioned as more a centralized viewpoint. Broad internalism, which may also be referred to as interpretivism,

is the view that in addition to the constitutive rules of sport, there are other resources connected closely – perhaps conceptually – to sport that are neither social conventions nor moral principles imported from outside. These resources can be used to adjudicate moral issues in sports and athletics. (Morgan, 2007, p. 41)

Simon et al. (2014) provides four basic tenants to conceptualize broad internalism: (1) a significant connection to the formal rules is required, (2) social and game conventions are involved in sport, and often intertwined with the formal rules of a contest, (3) an internalist foundation must be maintained, meaning that that sport has a certain degree of autonomy from society and societal norms, and perhaps laws or regulations, and, (4) opponents are viewed in a positive and respectful manner, rather than as obstacles that must be overcome. According to Pfleegor (2010), broad internalism may serve as “a valid and acceptable basis to comprehend the nature of sport and render ethical judgments in certain athletic circumstances” (p. 55).

The broad internalism thesis is seen to combine some of the prominent features of conventionalism and formalism. The main criticism however, is that the broad internalism approach is “presumptive in nature” when it is applied to situations that present challenges in the determination of right or wrong (Pfleegor, 2013). Broad internalists are compelled in times of
uncertainty to accept the ethical decisions of sport governance, even when those decisions conflict with their own ethical viewpoints. For broad internalists, “in [cases] of ambiguity, the perspective is presumptive in nature and refers back to the accepted norm established by the regulatory agents” (Pfleegor, 2013, p. 129). For example, while a broad internalist may believe that American professional sport teams use of Native American names and mascots is dehumanizing, derogatory, and unethical, they must accept this practice and sport tradition as it is permitted and sanctioned by American professional leagues. By employing a presumptive approach in these cases, a broad internalist forfeits all grounds to argue a decision made by a sport governing body that they may deem ethically wrong (Pfleegor, 2010).

A review of two ethical theories (internalism and externalism) and three ethical philosophical theses (formalism, conventionalism, and broad internalism) was provided in this section to help the reader better understand the role of ethical theory in the determination of scandalous actions in sport. It is understood that consumers hold expectations and standards regarding the conduct of individuals and teams associated with sporting competitions (Prior et al., 2013; Robinson; 2006). In cases where adherence to these expectations and standards in not evident, a scandal has the potential to emerge (Prior et al., 2013).

The sport ethics literature includes several theoretical and philosophical bases of ethics. With the variation in ethical viewpoints (e.g., formalism, conventionalism, broad internalism), it is important to understand that expectations and standards held by consumers may vary considerably. The initial recognition of a scandal in sport may be dependent on the ethical foundation to which one ascribes. For example, for a formalist, an action that is not specified in the formal rules of play may be deemed corrupt and scandalous. In contrast, for a conventionalist or broad internalist, that same action may be seen as an acceptable convention that has been integrated into the game, and thus is not deemed scandalous. By considering the role of ethical theory in the determination of ‘scandal’ in sport, it is understood that the perceptions of ‘scandal’ may vary considerably among consumers. Consequently, the actions and events that have the potential to lead to a scandal and impact consumer behavior will likely be different for different sport consumer groups.

At present, much of the writing in sport philosophy seems to have been focused on ethical issues within the sport arena (e.g., gambling, performance-enhancing drug use, sportsmanship), or events that I have previously described as on field. There is a scarcity of
knowledge as to if, and if so, how, the ethical foundations are applied to the assessment of athlete transgressions outside of the sport arena (e.g., sexual assault, animal cruelty, adultery), or an assessment of what I have described as off-field events. As the media and public attention of athletes’ on-and off-field behaviors continues to heighten, it is important to extend the literature to include empirical examinations of ethical issues both on-and off the field. The present investigation advances the scholarship, by providing an examination of the impact of on-and off-field sport scandals on sport consumers’ team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions.

**Sport Media**

Based on the information in the preceding section, it is reasonable to expect that behaviors, particularly the behaviors of athletes, may be viewed differently based on the perspective one applies to making ethical and moral decisions. At the same time, the information a person has access to may also impact ethical decision making, or determining what one considers to be scandalous behavior. With media serving as a vehicle through which sport consumers’ learn about the behaviors of athletes on- and off-field, it is necessary to consider the role of media in the framing of “scandal.”

Contemporary sports media coverage of the modern athlete is no longer limited to on-field athletics, but now has extended to reporting on athletes’ personal matters and lifestyles beyond the field of play. The heightened media exposure of athletes’ on- and off-field activities has transformed the conventional athlete into a ‘sport celebrity.’ According to Teitelbaum (2008), “a hero-hungry public craves a connection to sports icons; the media helps create heroes whose image is larger than life and who are expected to be perfect” (p. 1). Media portrayals of sport celebrities as “god like,” exciting, and glamorous stars create an idealized view of athletes and reinforces the high expectations that the public holds (Summer & Johnson Morgan, 2008). Summer and Johnson Morgan (2008) contend the public expects their sport heroes to not only excel in their respective sport but to also demonstrate high levels of moral conduct. In consequence, athletes face enormous pressure to maintain a positive image with the media and public.

The construction of athletes as heroic sport celebrities has resulted in a greater scrutiny of their behavior, both on-and off-the field (Connor & Mazanov, 2010; Teitelbaum, 2008). Rowe
(1997) contends, scandals involving ‘sport celebrities’ are intriguing to the media and the public due to the heroic status of athletes and duality they must maintain between athlete and celebrity. There are standards of acceptable conduct held by the media and public for sport celebrities, both on-and off-the field (Teitelbaum, 2008). While individuals may ascribe to different ethical paradigms,

there appears to be support for the general notion that sport competitions are fair and there are no corrupt or unconscionable actions. An assumption that sports players, and other associated sports entities, abide by the laws and regulations that are applicable to society. (Prior et al., 2013, p. 205)

As discussed, when a sport celebrity engages in behavior that that does not conform to standards of acceptable conduct, the media and public may respond with criticism (Teitelbaum, 2008).

Rowe (1997) alleges that there has been an increased trend among sport media outlets in providing in-depth coverage of scandals involving sports celebrities. The heightened scrutiny of sport celebrities and commercialization of sport have made it difficult for athletes and sport managers to hide on-and off-field transgressions from exposure. The role of media in the development of a ‘scandal’ is important to consider, as the media is the vehicle through which the public is informed of athlete-related transgressions. According to Zucker (1978), the public largely relies on the media for information on newsworthy issues due to their lack of first-hand experience or involvement with the event. Jacobsson and Lofmarck (2008) contend “without the media there would be no major scandals in modern society. Transgressions would not become known to a large enough norm audience” (p. 210). In the absence of media exposure, an athlete-related transgression would have a low profile, staying at the level of merely a personal mishap (Kozman, 2013). In essence, the shift from a transgression to a ‘scandal’ is only conceivable through the lens of, indeed constituted by, the media (Maier, 2010). An action does not emerge as a scandal without its promotion by the media.

It is necessary to consider the relationship between media and scandal, as the mass media coverage of a transgression has been shown to influence and shape public opinion (Wilson, Stavros, & Westberg, 2008). Huang (2006) claims the media coverage of an event influences the public’s perceptions of the issues, events, and parties associated with the occurrence, including the athlete and the team they play for. Furthermore, by emphasizing the salience of particular
issues in their reporting, members of the media suggest to the public which issues should be considered as more important than others (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Public perception of an event may also be affected by the media’s framing of an event. Framing occurs “when mass media outlets report news items in ways that guide and shape public interpretations” (Sanderson & Hambrick, 2012, p. 387). The personal mishaps or transgressions by athletes rise to become scandals due to reporting of the events through the media.

The evolution of sports media has moved from “traditional” outlets such as television and newspapers, to digital-based outlets including websites, social media, blogs, and smartphone/mobile applications. This new era of media provides sport consumers’ with unlimited real time access to sports information throughout the globe. In the modern era of sports media athlete transgressions, on and off the field of play, are broadcast to a larger global audience than ever before. Media reports frame such events as scandals, which end up being reported through multiple media channels. With the heightened visibility and scrutiny of sport celebrities, combined with new media channels and instantaneous media reporting, the impact of sport scandals on sport teams is predicted to be consequential (Prior et al., 2013; Sports Business Journal, 2007). To better understand the impact of sport scandals, a review of the extant sport scandal literature is provided.

**Sports Scandals**

Despite the pervasiveness of scandal in the sport arena, the subject has received minimal attention within the sport management literature (Prior et al., 2013). Hughes and Shank (2005) explored the phenomena of sports scandals from the perspectives of media representatives and corporate sponsors. They sought to: (1) distinguish the characteristics of a sports scandal that influence individuals’ perceptions of the impact of the event and (2) identify the short and long term effects that sports scandals have on the individuals' affiliation with sports organizations, sponsors, and the athlete involved in the scandal (Hughes & Shank, 2005). Hughes and Shank (2005) defined sports scandal as an event that is: “illegal or unethical, involved multiple parities over a sustained period of time, and whose impact affected the integrity of the sport with which they are associated” (Hughes & Shank, 2005, p. 214). Hughes and Shank (2005) suggest there are four characteristics that influence individuals’ perceptions concerning the impact of a sport
scandal: (1) level of sport, (2) gender of athlete(s), (3) performance implications, and (4) an association with the sport or entity involved in the scandal.

The level of sport in which a scandal transpires was found to hold significant bearing on respondents’ attitude toward the sport scandal (Hughes & Shank, 2005). The researchers concluded that individuals hold higher expectations of maturity and sport integrity for professional athletes, and thus are more inclined to hold a lower tolerance of scandals in the professional sport arena than sport scandals involving amateur athletes (Hughes & Shank, 2005). In addition to level of sport, the gender of an athlete was also found to be an influential factor in respondents’ view of the sport scandal. The researchers discovered that many respondents believed gender differences in sport media coverage create dissimilarities among the media hype surrounding male and female sport scandals, thus positioning male sport scandals as more severe compared to sport scandals involving female athletes (Hughes & Shank, 2005).

Hughes and Shank (2005) also concluded from the research findings that an individual’s attitude towards sport scandals was heightened when the events were believed to impact athletic performance and/or the integrity of the sport, thus speaking to a particular set of ethical considerations. An association with the sport or entity involved in the sport scandal was the fourth and final characteristic shown to hold bearing on respondents’ attitudes toward sport scandals. Hughes and Shank (2005) defined association as:

The extent to which a respondent feels close to either an athlete or a sport which may be influenced by things such as prior experience or degree of familiarity in the sport or organization which is being impacted by the negative information. (p. 214)

Hughes and Shank (2005) discovered that while many respondents that held an association reported an initial restraint in their evaluation of the event, the progression of the scandal caused the individuals to experience a greater sense of betrayal toward the involved parties. Further, the research findings provide evidence that individuals’ perceptions concerning the severity of a sport scandal is significantly heightened when the entire sport entity (i.e. sport league or sport association) is embroiled in the event, compared to a sport scandal that merely involves a single party (Hughes & Shank, 2005).

While the Hughes and Shank (2005) exploratory investigation has advanced our understanding, there are limitations within the study. First, Hughes and Shank (2005) failed to utilize a psychometrically sound instrument as a means to measure respondents “association”
with the sport organization and athlete; they provided respondents with a definition of “association” as a base to self-measure their own level of association. Consequently, there may be significant variability within the research findings with regard to respondents’ levels of association with sport organizations and athletes. Second, the Hughes and Shank (2005) investigation was limited to a sample of five media representatives and five corporate sponsors. Consequently, the Hughes and Shank (2005) findings have weak external validity.

With the objective of further building the literature on sport scandals, Fink et al. (2009) examined the effects of unscrupulous off-field behaviors of athletes. The purpose of the investigation was to determine if the unscrupulous off-field behavior of athletes’ effected sport fans’ subsequent levels of team identification. Further, the researchers sought to determine if team identification level and the managerial response toward the unscrupulous act moderated the effect created by the off-field behavior. Fink et al. (2009) concluded from the findings that unscrupulous off-field behaviors by athletes and managerial response have an effect on sport fans, particularly for those sport fans characterized by a high level of team identification. More specifically, the researchers found that unscrupulous off-field behavior that was followed by a weak managerial response had a greater negative effect on highly identified sport fans’ subsequent level of team identification than unscrupulous off-field behavior that was followed by a strong managerial response.

While the Fink et al. (2009) investigation provides empirical evidence to suggest that the unscrupulous off-field behavior of athletes when mediated by a weak managerial response negatively affects team identification, it is necessary to recognize that the Fink et al. (2009) investigation is limited to an examination of the effects created by unscrupulous off-field behavior of athletes, and does not provide an understanding of the effects created by athletes’ unscrupulous on-field behaviors. Further, the Fink et al. (2009) investigation was limited to one dependent variable; team identification. Consequently, there remains an absence of knowledge concerning the impact that unscrupulous behaviors of athletes have on sport consumer sport team-related behavior intentions.

Taken together, the Hughes and Shank (2005) and Fink et al. (2009) investigations provide evidence from which we can conclude that sport scandals impact sport consumers’. Considering the limitations noted from both studies, however, additional research on the impact of different types of sport scandals, particularly on sport team-related behavior intentions is
warranted. In later writings, particularly the work of Prior et al. (2013) and Sassenberg (2015), additional conceptual framing of sport scandals and the impact of sport scandals have been proposed, but such works still lack empirical assessment.

Drawing on current literature on sports scandals and sport consumption, Prior et al., (2013) propose a conceptual model of scandal and its impact on sports consumption activities. The consumption of sports is described to include: attendance at major sporting events, the viewership of sporting event via media outlets, the patronage of sports-related publications, and the purchase of sports merchandise (Prior et al., 2013). Prior et al. (2013) contend that sport scandals can have differential effects on consumer behavior (positive, negative, or neutral). In cases where a scandal leads to positive effects, the “scandal may encourage greater sports consumption if [consumers] are curious or excited to witness the elements of the scandal” (Prior et al., 2013, p. 205). In contrast, where a scandal leads to negative effects, the “potential exists for consumers to cease their consumption in disgust” (Prior et al., 2013, p. 205). Scandals may also be met with a neutral consumer response, where “consumers choose not to care or to ignore the scandal” (Prior et al., 2013, p. 205).

The Prior et al. (2013) framework illustrates four dimensions of scandal: (1) scandal breadth, (2) scandal depth, (3) scandal gravity, and (4) scandal duration. According to Prior et al., (2013) each of the four dimensions may affect sport consumers’ consumption behaviors. It is important to note that the magnitude of the effect on consumer behavior (i.e., positive, negative, neutral) associated with each dimension is not specified by Prior et al., (2013).

The breadth of a scandal is defined as “the number of entities that are complicit in the scandal” (Prior et al., p. 2013). The authors claim scandals that involve multiple parties are likely to have greater significance due to the wide breadth of effects associated with multiple entities. Prior et al. (2013) contend, “this is due to the need to involve a greater number of entities in the investigative processes, relevant trials, implementation of punitive actions, as well as a broader range of outlets interested in the outcomes of the scandal” (p. 203).

The depth of the scandal is defined as “the extent of scandalous behavior” (p. 203). Prior et al. (2013) allege that a scandal has the potential to emerge through a single isolated action or multiple actions over time. Furthermore, some scandals receive limited media coverage whereas others attract extensive media attention. Prior et al. (2013) suggest that, in contrast to a single isolated event, scandals that are based on recurrent actions and/or receive extensive media
Scandal depth is also discussed in the context of “the severity of the sport entity’s behavior” (Prior et al., 2013, p. 204). According to Prior et al. (2013), sport scandals may involve illegal actions or immoral violations (i.e., violations of social norms). The authors suggest, a consumers’ reaction may differ in regards to scandals that are perceived to involve illegal actions and scandals that are viewed to involve immoral violations (i.e., violations of social norms) (Prior et al., 2013).

The gravity of the scandal is defined as “the relative impact of the act or acts” (Prior et al., 2013, p. 204). This dimension of ‘scandal’ relates to the seriousness of the scandal. As discussed by Prior et al., (2013) “the degree to which sport consumers’ expectations of the sports entities align with their personal, moral value is likely to have an effect on their approach to sport consumption” (p. 204). The authors suggest that scandals involving serious violations of sport consumers’ values (personal and moral) may produce an immediate consumer response. In contrast, a scandal that involves less serious violations of sport consumers’ values (personal and moral) may not result in an immediate consumer response. Prior et al. (2013) provide an example for each condition: drinking and driving (a less serious violation of personal and moral values) and rape (a serious violation of personal and moral values). The authors note, however, “the seriousness of a scandal may not have a significant impact on consumer behavior if the consumer chooses to ignore the scandal or considers the scandal as not a threat to their ability to enjoy the sports consumption experience” (Prior et al., 2013, p. 204).

The final dimension, scandal duration, is defined as “the length of time that a scandal draws public attention” (Prior et al., 2013, p. 204). According to Prior et al. (2013) some scandals receive media attention for a single news cycle, whereas others attract continuous media attention. Scandals that receive ongoing media coverage are likely to draw consumers’ attention for a longer period of time (Prior et al., 2013). One implication is that scandals that remain prevalent in the media may have a different impact on consumer behavior than scandals that are short-lived.

In summary, Prior et al. (2013) propose four dimensions of a sport scandal construct (scandal breadth, scandal depth, scandal gravity, and scandal duration) that are purported to affect sport consumers’ consumption behaviors. While the Prior et al. (2013) framework contributes to the literature on sport scandals, it is necessary to acknowledge the limitations of the conceptual model. To begin, while the authors contend that the four dimensions of sport coverage are likely to impact consumer behavior over the long term.
scandal may affect consumer behavior, it remains unclear as to what these prospective impacts are. While it is understood that scandal may have differential effects on consumers, the authors fail to discuss the magnitude(s) of the effect(s) on consumer behavior (i.e., positive, negative, neutral) associated with each dimension. Consequently, there remains an absence of understanding in the framework as to the explicit effects that sport scandal (and its dimensions) may have on consumptive behaviors. Finally, to date, the Prior et al. (2013) framework remains conceptual in nature. The present study builds on the conceptual work of Prior et al. (2013), by empirically examining the impact of sport scandals (on-and off-field) on sport consumer behavior intentions. The results of this investigation will provide empirical insight into the explicit impact of on-and off-field sport scandals (positive, negative, or neutral) on three types of sport team-related consumptive behaviors: repeat purchase, merchandise consumption, and media consumption.

In an attempt to advance the understanding of sport scandals, Sassenberg (2015) developed a conceptual model to illustrate the impact of different types of sport celebrity transgressions (SCT) on the sport celebrity brand image. The conceptual model and its respective propositions are based on the results of a series of focus groups that were conducted to explore sport consumers’ attitudes towards ‘real’ sport celebrity transgressions. A review of the model and its propositions is provided.

Sassenberg (2015) contends that SCTs can be classified in two distinct types: on-field SCTs and off-field SCTs. On-field SCTs serve to represent transgressions that have a direct influence on the sport contest (e.g., performance-enhancing drugs and match-fixing). In contrast, off-field SCTs are illustrated as transgressions that have no direct influence on the sport contest (e.g., adultery and sexual assault). Brand image is defined as “the cumulative product of brand associations in the mind of consumer, which consists of brand attributes, brand benefits, and attitudes” (Sassenberg, 2015, p. 79). For the purpose of the model, brand image was illustrated to include two dimensions: brand attributes (sport-related brand attributes and personal brand attributes) and brand benefits (symbolic brand benefits and experiential brand benefits).

The Sassenberg (2015) conceptual model includes four main propositions. First, “the type (off-field or on-field) of the SCT will affect whether and how the consumers adjusts their perceptions of the sport-related brand attributes of the sport celebrity brand image, following that SCT” (p. 87). Second, the type (off-field or on-field) of the SCT will affect whether and how the
consumers adjusts their perceptions of the personal brand attributes of the sport celebrity brand image, following that SCT” (p. 87). Third, “the type (off-field or on-field) of the SCT will affect whether and how the consumers adjusts their perceptions of the symbolic brand benefits of the sport celebrity brand image, following that SCT” (p. 87). Fourth, “the type (off-field or on-field) of the SCT will affect whether and how the consumers adjusts their perceptions of the experiential brand benefits of the sport celebrity brand image, following that SCT” (p. 87).

Sassenberg’s (2015) framework includes the idea that consumers’ attitudes towards the brand attributes (sport-related brand attributes and personal brand attributes) and brand benefits (symbolic brand benefits and experiential brand benefits) would be dependent on the type of SCT. Sassenberg (2015) alleges, in the assessment of an on-field SCT, sport consumers’ are more likely to respond negatively towards: sport-related brand attributes of the sport celebrity brand image and the personal attributes of the sport celebrity brand image. In the assessment of an off-field SCT, sport consumers’ are more likely to respond negatively towards: the personal brand attributes of the sport celebrity brand image, the symbolic brand benefits of the sport celebrity brand image, and the experiential brand benefits of the sport celebrity brand image. Conversely, sport consumers’ respond positively toward the sport-related brand attributes of the sport celebrity brand image in their assessment of an off-field SCT (Sassenberg, 2015).

The Sassenberg (2015) framework provides a meaningful contribution to the literature regarding the impact of scandals involving athletes, particularly the notion that the type of scandal may have differential impacts on sport consumers’. While Sassenberg’s (2015) conceptual model advances our understanding of sport scandals it does not come without limitations. First, the conceptual model and its propositions are based on the results of a series of focus groups that were conducted with 24 sport consumers’ from Australia. Consequently, the Sassenberg (2015) framework has weak external validity. Further, the Sassenberg (2015) framework is limited to an understanding of the impact of sport scandals on one variable (brand image) with two dimensions (brand attributes and brand benefits). Consequently, there remains a scarcity of knowledge concerning the impact that sport scandals (on-field and off-field) have on alternate variables, such as team identification and sport team-related behavior intentions. Finally, at present, the Sassenberg (2015) framework and its propositions remain conceptual in nature. In order to substantiate Sassenberg’s (2015) contentions, an empirical assessment of the potential differential impact of on-field and off-field sport scandals is warranted. The present
study extends the conceptual work of Sassenberg (2015), by empirically examining the impact of on-and off-field sport scandals on team identification and sport consumer behavior intentions.

For the purpose of this investigation the Hughes and Shank (2005) definition of sport scandal was utilized, along with the distinctions of on- and off-field scandals (Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). An on-field scandal is distinguished by performance relatedness, wherein a transgression directly impacts the sport entities’ performance in their particular sport (Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). An off-field scandal is distinguished by non-performance relatedness, wherein a transgression has no direct impact on the sport entities’ performance in their respective sport (Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). A pilot study was conducted to identify commonly discussed cases of on-and off-field sport scandals (discussed in Chapter 3). These cases served as a basis for the development of the fictitious scenarios that were utilized to represent the independent variable conditions (on-field, off-field) included in the main study (see Appendix F). To better understand the impact that negative events, such as scandals, have on consumers, it is important to consider the negativity effect theory.

**Negative Information**

The effect of negative information on consumer behavior has been well-documented in the marketing literature. Researchers have reported that relative to positive information, negative information is more informative-diagnostic in consumer decision-making (see Ahluwali et al. 2000; 2001 for review). Referred to as the negativity effect, scholars theorize that individuals ascribe higher values to negative information than to positive information in the overall assessment of an entity (Fiske, 1980; Klein, 1996; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987). Akin to product evaluations, the negativity effect has also been found to transpire in a person perception context (Herr, Kardes, & Kim, 1991; Wright, 1974). Theorists posit the negativity effect emerges as a result of the positive expectations individuals have of others (Klein & Ahluwalia, 2005). In particular, it is believed that positive expectations compel individuals to trivialize the value of positive information in the presence of negative information (Klein & Ahluwalia, 2005). Scholars conclude that the “asymmetric effects on persuasion” prompt the negative attributes to be held at a higher salience than positive attributes in individuals’ evaluations of an entity (Ahluwalia et al., 2000; 2001, p. 459). Consequently, a negative occurrence may be terminal for an entity, irrespective of any positive attributes that may be present.
Spillover Effect

To understand the bearing that negative information holds on entity affiliates, the negativity effect and spillover effect are considered in tandem. The spillover effect is defined as “the extent to which a message influences beliefs related to attributes that are not contained in the message” (Ahluwalia et al., 2001, p. 458). The spillover effect may be used to describe the process by which an attitude toward one entity is transferred to an associated entity (Simonin & Ruth, 1998). For example, a consumer that is exposed to information concerning an athlete cheating in a sporting competition may infer that the sport team the athlete is associated with condones unethical business practices. If the consumer’s beliefs toward the sport team are altered despite not being mentioned in the information, it can be said that the communication concerning the athlete has ‘spilled over’ to the sport team.

Scholars posit that the spillover effect occurs as a result of consumers’ intuitive notions of inter-attribute correlations (Broniarczyk & Alba, 1994; Kardes, Cronley, Pontes, & Houghton, 2001) and/or consumers’ inferences based on perceived correlated information and missing information (Ahluwalia et al., 2001; Dick, Chakravarti, & Biehal, 1990). While the spillover effect of information may transpire in both positive and negative contexts, the high diagnosticity of negative information may present significant tribulations for associated entities. Consequently, it is important to better understand the impact that negative athletic information/events may have on sport teams.

Negative Information and Spillover Effect

Empirical investigations in the marketing and sport management literature provide evidence of the negativity effect and spillover effect in a sport context. Examinations of deviance in collegiate athletics reveal that academic institutions that receive sanctions for NCAA rule violations suffer a decline in incoming student applications (Goff, 2000), overall student enrollment (Hughes & Shank, 2008), alumni donations (Grimes & Chressanthis, 1994; Rhoads & Gerking, 2000), and overall charitable contributions (Hughes & Shank, 2008). Reminiscent of analyses in higher education, scholars have observed a negative impact on corporations aligned with unfavorable and/or rival athlete endorsers. In particular, an examination of the spillover effect on NASCAR corporate sponsors revealed that sport consumers’ held positive attitudes toward corporations aligned with NASCAR drivers that were perceived to be favorable, and
negative attitudes toward corporations aligned with NASCAR drivers that were perceived as unfavorable and/or a rival (Dalakas & Levin, 2005).

Extending the research, scholars have examined the spillover effect on corporations aligned with celebrity-athlete endorsers involved in some type of scandal. Researchers have demonstrated that negative athletic information/events involving celebrity-athlete endorsers has a negative influence on corporations’ product evaluations (Till & Shimp, 1998), financial performance (as measured by stock returns) (Louie et al., 2001), and corporate image (Louie & Obermiller, 2002). While these analyses provide some evidence there is a spillover of negative information in a sport context, it is important to consider the extent to which organizational identification, specifically team identification, may influence consumers’ evaluations of negative athletic information/events. An understanding of the impact of identification begins with social identity theory.

**Social Identity Theory**

Based on social identity theory the self-concept is comprised of two distinct identities: personal and social (Mael & Ashforth, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). The personal identity encompasses attributes that allow for individual expression, such as personal interests and abilities (Mael & Ashforth, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). A social identity is comprised of salient group classifications (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Group classifications may include categorization by demographic variables (race, sex, nationality, etc.), in addition to an affiliation(s) with a social organization (religious society, political party, sports team, etc.). Scholars posit that while an individual’s social identity may simultaneously embrace a multitude of group associations, an individual’s behavior will be habitually dictated by the norms of the salient group in the given context (Hogg & Terry, 2001).

Individuals strive to build and maintain a positive social identity through associations with favorable group classifications. Dutton, Duikerich, and Harquail (1994) propose that an individual considers two elements in their decision to become aligned with a social organization: perceived organizational identity and construed external image. Perceived organizational identity is described as the perception the individual holds toward the organization (Dutton et al., 1994). Scholars suggest that an individual is more likely to develop an affiliation with an organization they perceive to possess desirable attributes (for reviews, see Ashforth & Johnson, 2001;
Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Pratt, 1998). Further, it is believed that the more attractive the organization appears to the individual, the higher the level of organizational identification the individual will hold (Dutton et al., 1994).

Construed external image is described as the perception that the individual believes others hold regarding the focal organization. Scholars suggest that an individual is more likely to associate with an organization that is perceived by others as favorable and appealing (Dutton et al., 1994). Similar to perceived organizational identity, it is alleged that the more positive others perceive the organization to be, the higher level of organizational identification the individual will maintain. Investigations in the marketing literature provide evidence to support Dutton et al.’s (2004) contention, demonstrating that individuals’ perceptions and responses toward organizations are largely shaped by their beliefs with regard to how others view the organizations (construed external image) (Bhattacharya, Rao, & Glynn, 1995; Hatch & Schultz, 2000).

Also fundamental to social identity theory is the concept of in-groups and out-groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). An in-group is defined as a set of individuals that hold membership in a salient group. In contrast, an out-group refers to a set of individuals that do not share the group association. For instance, an individual that holds an affiliation with the New York Yankees baseball club would consider other New York Yankees fans as in-group members, and fans of rival Major League Baseball clubs as out-group members. In accordance with social identity theory, individuals’ perform social comparisons among in- and out-groups in the quest for positive reinforcement. Scholars posit that individuals perceive in-group members to be superior to out-group members by reason of shared association (Hogg & Terry, 2001). Consequently, individuals are more likely to hold biased evaluations of in-group members and in-group affairs. In a sport context, a particular type of social identification is team identification.

**Team Identification**

Team identification is defined as the “oneness” an individual feels toward an organization (e.g., a sports team) (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Scholars posit that team identification emerges when an individual embodies the attributes that are ascribed to the sport organization into their self-concept (Fink et al., 2002). Individuals strive to build and maintain a high level of self-esteem through favorable group affiliations. Consequently, individuals seek associations with
sport organizations that are perceived to possess desirable attributes in an attempt to create positive self-reflection.

Team identification has been further conceptualized through a multitude of sport consumer attachment classifications. Wann and Branscombe (1990) proposed two categories of sport fans: die-hard sport fans and fair-weather sport fans. Die-hard sport fans are described as individuals that support their sport team through both success and failure. According to Wann and Branscombe (1990), the high levels of devotion make die-hard sport fans resistant to distancing tactics, thus die-hard sport fans are considered to hold high levels of team identification. In contrast, fair-weather sport fans are described as individuals that support a sport team in times of success while disassociating in times of failure. Fair-weather sport fans are considered to be low identified sport consumers’ due to their high inclination to abandon a “losing” team (Wann & Branscombe, 1990).

To extend the sport consumer attachment classifications, Sutton, McDonald, Milne, and Cimperman (1997) proposed three alternative categories of sport fans: social fans, focused fans, and vested fans. Social fans are described as low identified sport consumers’ that rely heavily on sport for socialization opportunities, and have little concern with regard to the outcome of a sport competition. In contrast, focused sport fans are described as moderately identified sport consumers’ that are attracted to some aspect of the sport. Vested sport fans are described as highly identified sport consumers’ that make significant emotional, financial, and temporal investments in following a specific sports team.

Team identification has also been conceptualized through the classifications of sport fans and sport spectators. While the terms sport fan and sport spectator have at times been applied interchangeably, scholars suggest there are affective, cognitive and behavioral distinctions between sports fans and sport spectators (Sloan, 1989; Trail et al., 2000; Trail et al., 2003). In particular, academics posit that sport fans invest both physical and emotional resources in a sport team while sport spectators invest solely physical resources (Sloan, 1989; Trail et al., 2000; Trail et al., 2003). According to Sloan (1989), sport fans are enthusiastic and passionate supporters of a sport team whereas sport spectators merely observe the sport competition. Based on the affective, cognitive, and behavioral distinctions among sports fans and sport spectators, it has been recommended that the terms sport fan and sport spectator be used in isolation rather than as interchangeable terms (Sloan, 1989; Trail et al., 2000; Trail et al., 2003). Moreover, academics
recommend that the term sport fan be utilized to describe highly identified sport consumers’ while the term sport spectator be employed to describe low identified sport consumers’ (Trail et al., 2003).

In an attempt to advance the understanding of sport consumers’ psychological connection to sport teams, Funk and James (2001) proposed the Psychological Continuum Model (PCM). The PCM provides a means to distinguish the strength of sport consumers’ level of psychological connection to a sport object through a progressive continuum of four stages: awareness, attraction, attachment, and allegiance. Awareness is described as the preliminary stage in which an individual becomes cognizant of the team. From awareness, a sport consumer may progress toward attraction, the stage in which an individual develops an affinity for the team. The third phase on the continuum is attachment, described as the stage in which a strong connection toward the team is built. The PCM concludes with allegiance, defined as the final stage in which an individual’s strong loyalty leads to consistent consumption of the sport team product. It is important to note that while an individual may progress forward on the continuum, there is a probability for standstill and backward movement.

Taken together, the sport consumer attachment classifications help us to understand that sport consumers’ may hold various levels of team identification. Further, the classifications reveal that sport consumers’ level of team identification may be used as a means to predict affective, cognitive, and behavior states. Researchers have reported that relative to low identified sport consumers’, highly identified sport consumers’ demonstrate greater team loyalty (Matsuoka et al., 2003; Snyder, Lassiegard, & Ford, 1986) and team performance satisfaction (Matsuoka et al., 2003). Researchers further report that highly identified sport consumers’ hold greater intentions to attend games (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Magnusen et al., 2010; Matsuoka et al., 2003; Wann & Branscombe, 1995) and purchase team memorabilia (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Armstrong, 2002), in addition to demonstrating a greater willingness to spend money and time in support of their favorite sport team (Wann & Branscombe, 1995).

Level of team identification has also been found to be highly correlated with sport consumers’ responses to a team’s performance. Highly identified sport consumers’ demonstrate a greater inclination than low identified sport consumers’ to Bask in Reflected Glory (BIRG) following a sport team’s success (Cialdini, Borden, Thorne, Walker, Freeman, & Sloan, 1976). BIRGing is described as the strategy through which individuals increase their association with a
successful person or group (Cialdini et al., 1976; Wann, Hamlet, Wilson, & Hodges, 1995). BIRGing behaviors may include the display of sport team paraphernalia and/or using the term ‘we’ rather than ‘they’ when referring to the sport team (Cialdini et al., 1976). Scholars posit that BIRGing serves to both maintain and strengthen self-esteem through the “vicarious achievement of successful others” (Parker, 2007, p. 48).

While highly identified sport consumers’ are more disposed to BIRG following a sport team’s success, low identified sport consumers’ have been shown to have a greater inclination to Cut Off Reflected Failure (CORF) following a sport team’s failure (Snyder et al., 1986). CORFing is described as the strategy through which individuals decrease their association with an unsuccessful person or group (Snyder et al., 1986; Wann et al., 1995). CORFing behaviors include the refusal to display sport team paraphernalia and/or using the term ‘they’ rather than ‘we’ (Snyder et al., 1986). Scholars posit that CORFing serves to maintain self-esteem through the disassociation with unsuccessful others (Snyder et al., 1986). Taken together, the BIRGing and CORFing phenomena provide support for the Wann and Branscombe (1995) die-hard sport fan and fair-weather sport fan classifications.

Extending the BIRGing and CORFing literature, Campbell, Aiken, and Kent (2004) proposed the concept of Basking in Reflected Failure (BIRF) as an alternate to the CORFing phenomenon. BIRFing describes the strategy in which individuals reinforce their association with an unsuccessful person or group (Campbell et al., 2004). According to Campbell and colleagues (2004), BIRFing serves to maintain high levels of self-esteem through the internalization and proclamation of team loyalty. Scholars posit that compared to low identified sport consumers’, highly identified sport consumers’ have a greater inclination to BIRF subsequent a sport team failure (Campbell et al., 2004). Consequently the BIRFing phenomenon may be utilized to further elucidate the psychological and behavioral distinctions among die-hard sport fans and fair-weather sport fans.

The results cited from previous research pertaining to team identification provide evidence to buttress scholars’ contentions of the affective, cognitive, and behavioral distinctions among high identified and low identified sport consumers’. Recognizing scholars have reported a relationship between team identification, team performance responses, and consumption behavioral intentions, examining team identification and the negativity effect in tandem does merit consideration.
Team Identification and Negative Information

Adhering to the theoretical tenets of the negativity effect, individuals ascribe higher values to negative information than to positive information in the overall assessment of an object (Fiske, 1980; Klein, 1996; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987). While the high diagnosticity of negative information is well-documented in the literature (see Ahluwali et al., 2000; Ahluwali et al., 2001 for a review) recent empirical examinations of the negativity effect reveal that organizational identification serves to influence consumers’ evaluations of negative group information, thus refuting the assumption of homogeneous consumer responses toward negative information (Cohen & Garcia, 2005; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997; Lickel, Schmader, Curtis, Scarnier, & Ames, 2005). One conclusion from previous research is that highly identified individuals focus on group homogeneity when presented with negative group information, and thus are more inclined to display behaviors that reaffirm group identification and commitment (Cohen & Garcia, 2005; Ellemers et al., 1997). In contrast, individuals characterized by low identification focus on group heterogeneity when confronted with negative group information, and are more disposed to display behaviors of detachment (Cohen & Garcia, 2005; Lickel et al., 2005).

The dissimilar responses toward negative group information among high and low identified individuals are further elucidated by Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje (2002):

High identifiers see the groups as homogeneous units and are prepared to stand and fight, even when it would pay them in personal terms to abandon their group, but they also maintain group loyalty under less threatening conditions in which group solidarity is not needed. Low identifiers, on the other hand, accentuate the dissimilarity of individual group members and show at best indifference to continued group membership under both threatening and more neutral conditions. (p. 625)

Empirical investigations in the sport management literature provide evidence that organizational identification (i.e., team identification) serves as a moderator of consumers’ responses toward negative group information. In the Fink et al. (2009) investigation of unscrupulous off-field behavior of athletes, both team identification and managerial response were found to have a moderating effect on sport fans responses toward negative information. In particular, Fink et al. (2009) discovered that while the unscrupulous off-field behaviors by athletes and managerial response toward the act impacted team identification, the strength of the
managerial responses was seen to have a greater impact on sport fans that initially held higher levels of team identification. In particular, it was concluded from the findings that the unscrupulous off-field behavior followed by a weak managerial response had a greater negative effect on highly identified sport fans’ subsequent levels of team identification than unscrupulous off-field behavior followed by a strong managerial response. Using social identity theory and balance theory to explain the findings, Fink et al. (2009) suggest that while highly identified sport fans are more resistant to distancing tactics following the unscrupulous off-field behavior of athletes, maintaining a sense of balance through a positively perceived managerial response serves to strengthen and/or intensify subsequent levels of team identification.

Team identification has also been found to have an effect on sport readers’ perceptions of sport publicity. An examination of sport readers’ responses toward both positive and negative sport publicity led to the conclusion that highly identified sport readers demonstrated greater recall of positive information in sport publicity communications, while low identified sport readers reported greater recall of negative information (Funk & Pritchard, 2006). In particular, highly committed sport readers demonstrated a greater propensity to engage in counter-arguments toward negative sport publicity by redirecting the focus towards positive sport team attributes. Funk and Pritchard’s (2006) investigation serves to refute the assumption of homogenous negativity effect outcomes by demonstrating that negative sport communications hold high diagnosticity with low committed sport readers and low diagnosticity with highly committed sport readers.

According to Cohen (2003) the dissimilar evaluations and behavioral responses toward negative information/events among high and low identified individuals may be attributed to an in-group bias. In particular, Cohen (2003) contends that highly identified individuals’ maintain an in-group partiality, and thus are more inclined to engage in a biased processing of negative group information. Cohen (2003) suggests that highly identified individuals process negative information in alliance with group ideals, therefore altering the perception of the information through redefining the object of evaluation (Cohen, 2003). Consequently, Cohen (2003) alleges that highly identified individuals and those characterized by low levels of identification do not perceive the same messages presented within negative group communications. The empirical literature serves to further support Cohen’s (2003) contentions by demonstrating that when presented with negative group information, highly identified individuals demonstrate a greater
propensity to focus on positive group attributes (Cohen, 2005), defend or justify the actions of
the group (Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998), perceive the information as
fictitious, to question information sources, and/or disregard the information altogether (Fujioka,
2005; Ellemers et al., 2002).

Wann and Dolan’s (1994) examination of attributional bias and team identification serves
to illustrate the in-group biased processing of negative group information in a sport context.
Based on the findings, highly identified sport consumers’ were more inclined to attribute
negative sport team performance to bad officiating and/or cheating by the opposing sport team,
while low identified sport consumers’ were more disposed to perceive a sport team failure as a
consequence of poor athletic performance (Wann & Dolan, 1994). In addition to attributional
bias, highly identified sport consumers’ have been shown to demonstrate a greater partiality
toward in-group members of their favorite sport team (Wann, 1995). One conclusion that may be
drawn from previous research is that relative to low identified sport consumers’, highly identified
sport consumers’ perceive in-group members as possessing a greater quantity of positive traits
than negative traits (Wann, 1995). Correspondingly, highly identified sport consumers’ are more
likely to hold greater derogation toward out-group members in comparison to low identified
sport consumers’ (Branscombe & Wann, 1994).

Team identification, has also been found to be significantly correlated with sport
consumers’ willingness to consider anonymous acts of hostile and instrumental aggression
(Wann, Haynes, McLean, & Pullen, 2003; Wann, Peterson, Cothran, & Dykes, 1999). Hostile
aggression is described as aggressions motivated by means of covet to observe one suffering
(Wann et al., 2003; Wann et al., 1999). In contrast, instrumental aggression is described as
aggressions motivated by means of attaining competitive advantage (Wann et al., 2003; Wann et
al., 1999). Researchers have shown there is a positive correlation between team identification
and aggressive behavior, revealing that highly identified sport consumers’ demonstrate greater
consideration of anonymous acts of hostile and instrumental aggression than low identified sport
consumers’ (Wann et al., 2003; Wann et al., 1999). Highly identified sport consumers’ have also
been found to report a greater willingness to consider assisting their sport team in illegal
endeavors, including: athletic cheating, the bribery of officials, playbook theft, the falsification
of drug tests, providing drugs to athletes, and providing the sport team with illegal financing
(Wann, Hunter, Ryan, & Wright, 2001).
Taken together, I conclude from the review of literature that negative group information/events are more diagnostic for individuals with low team identification while less diagnostic for individuals with high team identification. More specifically, it may be concluded that in-group partialities serve to trivialize negative group information/events, thus mitigating the effect of negative group information/events on highly identified individuals.

Summary of Literature

This chapter includes a review of literature concerned with the eight central elements of the study: business ethics, sport ethics, sport media, sports scandals, negative information, spillover effect, social identity theory, and team identification. The review of literature began with an overview of business ethics literature that supports the notion that consumers’ consider the ethical behavior of businesses in their purchase decisions. More specifically, the employees working for an organization and the actions of the employees are thought of by consumers as a reflection of the organization. The review of literature pertaining to business ethics served as a basis to contend that professional sport teams are accountable for the business practices and conduct of individuals, particularly athletes. Also, the researcher put forth the idea that for sport team businesses, business ethics and sport ethics may be to some extent interrelated, specifically in the context of ethical standards relating to individual and team conduct in sport competition. A review of ethical theories that have been applied to the study of sport was provided in an effort to illustrate the role of ethical theory in the development of what comprises acceptable standards of sport and athlete conduct, and how ethical theory may then be used to better understand and interpret scandalous conduct in sport.

To provide a perspective regarding the scandal-formation process, the researcher shifted the discussion towards sports media, focusing on the role of media promotion and media framing in the development of scandal and scandal perception. Extending the understanding of sport scandals, the researcher presented an overview and analysis of the current state of literature on sport scandals. This literature provides evidence to support the contention that the type of sports scandal is an important consideration when examining the effects of athlete-related sports scandals on consumer behavior. The researcher then shifted the discussion towards a review of the negativity effect theory and the spillover effect theory. When considered in tandem, these
theories provide theoretical insight into the potential ‘negative’ impact on-and off-field sport scandals may have for an associated sport team.

The second portion of the literature review was focused on the concept of team identification using the social identity theory as a basis to understand an individual’s psychological connection to sports teams, and the behavioral consequences associated with the different levels of connection (e.g., highly identified and low identified). Previous researchers have reported that team identification serves as a moderator of consumers’ responses toward negative group information, thus producing heterogeneous evaluations and behavioral responses among those characterized by high and low levels of team identification levels (Fink et al., 2009; Funk & Pritchard, 2006; Wann & Dolan, 1994). The dissimilar evaluations and behavioral responses toward negative group information among high and low identified indiviudals are attributed to an in-group bias (Cohen, 2003). While the high diagnosticity of negative athlete-related information/events may spillover to a sport team, it is suggested that team identification may serve to influence evaluations of negative athlete-related information. Consequently, negative athlete-related information is expected to be more diagnostic for individuals with low team identification while less diagnostic for individuals with high team identification. The review of literature serves to buttress the hypotheses proposed in the following section.

Research Hypotheses

Main Effect of Sports Scandals

The results from previous research illustrate the potential ramifications athletic scandals may have for associated entities, a negative spillover effect on corporations aligned with athletes involved in a scandal (Dalakas & Levin, 2005; Louie et al., 2001; Louie & Obermiller, 2002; Till & Shimp, 1998). Negative athletic information and/or events involving celebrity-athlete endorsers were found to have a negative influence on product evaluations (Till & Shimp, 1998), financial performance (Louie et al., 2001), corporate image (Louie & Obermiller, 2002), and consumers’ affinity towards corporations (Dalakas & Levin, 2005).

Scholars have also observed a negative spillover effect on academic institutions that receive sanctions for NCAA violations (Hughes & Shank, 2008). In particular, NCAA sanctions were found to negatively impact universities’ incoming student applications (Goff, 2000), overall student enrollment (Hughes & Shank, 2008), alumni donations (Grimes & Chressanthis, 1994;
Rhoads & Gerking, 2000), and overall charitable contributions (Hughes & Shank, 2008). Taken together, it is reasonable to conclude there is a negative spillover effect on entities associated with scandals involving athletes. It was hypothesized that both on-field and off-field sport scandals will have a negative spillover effect on sport teams, thus significantly impacting sport consumers’ subsequent levels of team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions.

**Hypothesis 1.** On-and off-field scandals will produce a significant reduction in sport consumers’ level of team identification.

**Hypothesis 2.** On-and off-field scandals will produce a significant reduction in sport consumers’ subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions.

**Differential Impact of On-Field and Off-Field Sports Scandals**

Previous research to date has been limited to investigations examining the impact of on-field and off-field sports scandals simultaneously (Fink et al., 2009; Hughes & Shank, 2008). There remains an assumption within the literature that on-field and off-field sports scandals have a homogenous effect on sport consumers’. The Hughes and Shank’s (2005) examination provides a basis to challenge the assumption of homogeneity among sports scandals, revealing that consumer perceptions’ concerning the severity of the sports scandal are heightened when the event is believed to impact on-field athletic performance and/or propose a threat to the integrity of the sport. It may be suggested from Hughes and Shank’s (2005) findings that sport consumers’ hold less tolerance to sport scandals that directly impact a sport, while responding with more lenience towards scandals that have no effect on a sport. Given the information stated above, the following hypotheses are proposed.

**Hypothesis 3.** On-field sports scandals will produce a significantly greater reduction in sport consumers’ level of team identification than off-field sports scandals.

**Hypothesis 4.** On-field sports scandals will produce a significantly greater reduction in sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral intentions than off-field sports scandals.
Moderating Effect of Team Identification on Behavioral Intentions

Adhering to the theoretical tenets of the negativity effect, individuals ascribe higher values to negative information than to positive information in the overall assessment of an entity (Fiske, 1980; Klein, 1996; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987). While the high diagnosticity of negative information is well-documented (see Ahluwali et al., 2000; Ahluwali et al., 2001 for a review), recent empirical examinations of the negativity effect reveal that organizational identification may have an effect on individuals’ evaluations of negative group events, thus producing heterogeneous responses. Cohen (2003) posits that individuals that hold high levels of organizational identification maintain an in-group partiality and thus are more inclined to engage in a biased processing of negative group information. In particular, when presented with negative group information highly identified individuals demonstrated a greater propensity to focus on positive group attributes (Cohen, 2003), defend or justify the actions of the group (Doosje et al., 1998), perceive the information as fictitious, to question information sources, and/or disregard the information altogether (Fujioka, 2005; Ellemers et al., 2002).

According to researchers, highly identified individuals concentrate on group homogeneity when presented with a negative group threat and demonstrate behaviors that reaffirm group identification (Cohen & Garcia, 2005; Ellemers et al., 2002). In contrast, individuals characterized by low identification concentrate on group heterogeneity when confronted with negative group information and are more disposed to demonstrate behaviors of group detachment (Cohen & Garcia, 2005; Lickel et al., 2005). In a sport context, organizational (team) identification has been shown to influence sport consumers’ responses toward negative sport team information (Fink et al., 2009; Funk & Pritchard, 2006; Wann & Dolan, 1994). In particular, the results from previous research reveal that individuals that hold high levels of identification are less affected by negative sport team information than individuals with low levels of identification (Fink et al., 2009; Funk & Pritchard, 2006; Wann & Dolan, 1994).

Taken together, the information presented serves to demonstrate that negative group information is more diagnostic for individuals with low organizational identification while less diagnostic for individuals with high organizational identification. Additionally, highly identified sport consumers’ have stronger behavioral intentions compared to sport consumers’ characterized by low team identification. In particular, relative to low identified sport
consumers’, highly identified sport consumers’ report a greater likelihood to attend games (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Magnusen et al., 2010; Wann & Branscombe, 1995) and purchase team memorabilia (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Armstrong, 2002). Further, highly identified sport consumers’ have been found to report a greater willingness to spend money and time in support of their favorite team (Wann & Branscombe, 1995). Considering the relationship between team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions the following hypothesis is proposed.

**Hypothesis 5.** Regardless of the type of sports scandal, sport consumers’ with a lower level of team identification will report a greater decline in subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions than sport consumers’ with a higher level of team identification.

A discussion of the methods for the research project is provided in the succeeding chapter.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Research Design Overview

According to Doyle (2001), an athlete’s words and/or actions are directly associated with the team for which they play. As a consequence, words and/or actions that compromise the image of an athlete, may potentially compromise the image of the athlete’s respective team. In view of Doyle’s (2001) contention, an athlete-based scandal raises a concern for sport managers, specifically with regard to the sport franchise’s financial health. A sport team’s financial viability is dependent on sport consumers’ sport team-related consumptive behaviors (e.g., game attendance, the purchase of sports merchandise). With the viability and prosperity of sport teams dependent on consumption by sport consumers’, it is important to ascertain the impact scandals involving athletes have on sport consumers’ sport team-related behaviors.

In addition to assessing the impact of sports scandals on sport team-related consumer behavior, it is important to consider team identification as an influential variable. Previous researchers have reported there is a significant relationship between team identification and consumer behavior (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Armstrong, 2002; Magnusen et al., 2010; Matsuoka et al., 2003; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; 1995). In particular, highly identified sport consumers’ have reported greater sport product consumption, specifically game attendance and sport team merchandise purchasing (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Armstrong, 2002; Magnusen et al., 2010; Matsuoka et al., 2003; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; 1995), compared to sport consumers’ characterized by low identification. Team identification has also been found to effect sport consumers’ evaluation of negative sport team information (Fink et al., 2009; Funk & Pritchard, 2006; Wann & Dolan, 1994). Negative sport team information has a greater negative effect on sport consumers’ with low levels of team identification in comparison to sport consumers’ with high levels of team identification (Fink et al., 2009; Funk & Pritchard, 2006; Wann & Dolan, 1994).

Previous research also provides evidence that the type of scandal is an important consideration when looking at the impact of a scandal involving an athlete, and how it influences consumers (Hardwicke-Brown, 2014; Hughes & Shank, 2005). Hughes and Shank (2005) report
that sport consumers’ are less tolerant when sports scandals directly impact the on-field sport contest, while more forbearing towards scandals that have no effect on the sport contest. The prospect of differential consumer response is also found in the work from Sassenberg (2015) and Sato (2015). Their discussions include the contention that a scandal that is believed to directly influence an athlete’s on-field performance will result in a greater degree of negative consumer reaction than if the scandal does not directly influence the on-field performance (Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). It is important to consider the impact of different types of sports scandals on team identification and behavioral intentions, and further, whether the impact on intentions may be different for those characterized by high or low team identification.

For the investigation, I employed a mixed-methods design, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. A pilot study was conducted to identify commonly discussed on-and off-field sports scandal cases. The pilot study involved three face-to-face focus groups in which a single moderator used the same two open-ended questions and discussion facilitation techniques. The results of the first pilot study served as a basis for the development of on-and off-field sports scandal scenarios used to represent the independent variable conditions (scandal type) in the main study. A second pilot study was conducted to verify that the scenarios were interpreted as on- and off-field scandals respectively. A qualitative analysis of online news media content was performed to provide additional evidence that the respective on- and off-field sports scandal cases were framed in a manner consistent with on- and off-field sport scandals previously reported in the popular press media.

For the main study, a pretest-posttest quasi-experiment was used to assess whether on- and off-field sports scandals impact team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. Scandal type was the independent variable, with team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions the dependent variables. The preceding was assessed in the first round of the data analysis. In addition to assessing the direct impact of a sports scandal, the researcher completed a second round of data analysis to ascertain if (pretest) team identification level would impact behavioral intentions. Sports scandal and (pretest) team identification level served as the independent variables in the second analysis, and sport team-related behavioral intentions was the dependent variable.

The main study included two stages of data collection. In the first stage, a questionnaire was used to collect pretest measures of team identification and sport team-related behavioral
intentions. The second stage of the experiment was performed one week subsequent to the collection of pretest measures. In the second stage, participants were presented with one of the three sports scandal scenarios in the form of a news article feature story. After the participants read the assigned news article, a second questionnaire was administered with the posttest measures of team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. Posttest measures provided a means to establish levels of team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions subsequent to condition exposure.

The remainder of the chapter includes four sections. The first section includes the explanation of pilot study 1, along with the results of pilot study 1. The second section includes an explanation of pilot study 2 as well as the results second pilot study. The third section includes an explanation of the online news media content analysis, along with the results of the content analysis. The results of the pilot studies and online news media content analysis are included in this chapter because of their impact on the main study. The information was necessary in order to complete the design of the main study. The fourth and final section includes an explanation of the main study.

**Pilot Studies**

For the purpose of this dissertation, the Hughes and Shank (2005) definition of ‘sports scandal’ was utilized, along with the distinctions of on- and off-field scandal (Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). A pilot study was conducted to explore the most commonly discussed on-and off-field sports scandal cases. The results of the pilot study 1 served as a basis for the development of on-and off-field sports scandal scenarios used to represent the independent variable (sport scandal type) in the main study. A second pilot study was conducted to verify the scenarios were interpreted as on- and off-field scandals respectively Approval to conduct pilot studies 1 and 2 was obtained from the University of California, Santa Barbara Human Subjects Committee and the Florida State University Human Subjects Committee.

**Pilot Study 1**

A pilot study is defined as “a study that is conducted in advance of a planned project, specifically to test aspects of the research design (such as stimulus material) and to allow necessary adjustment before final commitment to the design” (“the association for qualitative
research,” 2015, para. 1). Pilot study 1 was conducted prior to the main study with the objective to explore sport consumers’ perceptions of cases or scenarios that constituted on-field and off-field sport scandals.

Pilot study 1 included three focus group interview sessions. A focus group is a “type of group interview in which a moderator leads a discussion with a small group of individuals to examine, in detail, how the group members think and feel about a topic” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p. 185). Focus groups were utilized because they are an effective method in developing an understanding of how individuals perceive a phenomenon of interest, which may then be later used by the researcher in the design and development of research tools (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

The responses from the focus group member provided the researcher with the requisite information to identify commonly discussed cases of on-field and off-field sports scandals. The results of the focus groups served as a basis for the development of the fictitious sports scandal news articles that were utilized to represent the independent variable conditions (scandal type) included in the main study.

**Pilot Study 1 Population and Sample**

The target population of pilot study 1 was undergraduate students that were believed to be sport consumers’. A sample of undergraduate students was obtained through convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a nonrandom sampling technique by which researchers compose a sample with individuals that are “available, volunteer, or can be easily recruited” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p. 214). A convenience sample of twenty-eight undergraduate sport consumers’ was recruited from the Department of Exercise Science and Sport Studies at the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB).

The focus group participants were recruited via department email. By recruiting a convenience sample throughout the Exercise Science and Sport Studies department, it was expected that there would be some variation based on age, gender, race, and program of study. Johnson and Christensen (2004) suggest that when focus groups are utilized as a means of data collection, there is an accepted standard of two to four focus groups for a single research study, with six to twelve participants assigned to each focus group. These standards were followed in the development of the focus groups.
The Sport Fandom Questionnaire (SFQ) (see Appendix A) was utilized in the preliminary stages of focus group member selection in an effort to provide some evidence that participants were sport fans and presumably sport consumers’. The SFQ contains five Likert-scale items designed to assess an individual’s level of sport fandom. Two of the items include the notion of ‘following a sport’, which implies a level of sport consumption. It is reasonable to conclude that individuals with a high level of sport fandom are sport consumers’. Evidence of the reliability and validity of the SFQ has been reported in previous research (Wann et al., 1999; Wann, 2002).

The SFQ response options ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 8 (Strongly Agree). Consistent with previous research (End, Davis, Kretschmar, Campbell, Mueller, & Worthman, 2009), a midpoint split based on the scale points was performed in order to categorize participants as low level sport fans or high level sport fans. The midpoint score was 22.5; those below a SFQ score of 22.5 were considered low level sport fans and those above 22.5 were considered high level sport fans.

Thirty-four prospective participants completed the SFQ prior to being invited to participate in a focus group. Twenty-eight of the thirty-four individuals reported a SFQ score of 22.5 or higher, with a mean score of 37.3. Six prospective participants were not invited to participate in the focus group. The twenty-eight individuals were invited to attend one of three focus groups; each focus group was scheduled one week apart. The number of participants in each focus group was 10, 7, and 11 respectively. It is important to note that by employing a midpoint split in SFQ classification, there is no accounting for the number of individuals that may have held a neutral level of sport fandom. This limitation is discussed further in Chapter 5.

The final sample of pilot study 1 included 20 males and 8 females. The average age of the participants was 21, and the most frequently cited program of study was Business Economics. Table 3.1 details the demographic and SFQ information of the twenty-eight focus group participants.

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Table 3.1: Pilot Study 1 Focus Group Participant Information
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pilot Study 1 Instrumentation

Data obtained from the focus groups included group member discussion and responses to two open-ended questions. The interview questions are presented in Table 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.2: Focus Group Interview Protocol Pilot Study 1 Interview Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Questions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Name recent on-field sports scandals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Name recent off-field sport scandals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pilot Study 1 Data Collection Procedures

The focus groups were conducted in a classroom at UCSB with the participants assigned to chairs surrounding a round table located in the center of the room. A moderator was used to facilitate discussion for each of the focus groups. The individual selected to moderate the focus group was a research methods teaching assistant who had experience working with focus groups. After obtaining the written consent from participants, the moderator led each focus group discussion by asking participants to discuss their thoughts concerning the two open-ended questions. Utilizing a moderator allowed the primary investigator to attend each of the three focus groups and (1) observe the group process, (2) provide information to the moderator when required, and (3) record notes throughout each focus group session. In addition to the primary investigator’s recorded notes, the focus groups were recorded using an audio and video recorder so the data could be transcribed and reviewed at a later time.

Pilot Study 1 Data Analysis

The focus group data were analyzed in order to identify the on-field and off-field sports scandal examples reported among focus group respondents’. The data analysis included three processes: (1) segmentation, (2) coding, and (3) enumeration. Segmentation is the process by which the researcher divides the focus group data into meaningful analytical units (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). According to Johnson and Christensen (2004) a meaningful unit may include data in the form of a word, sentence, or paragraph. After completing an exhaustive review of the transcribed focus group discussion, meaningful data units were identified and recorded by the
researcher. After identifying the units of data that were perceived to be significant, the researcher organized the units into clusters of data that shared similar ideas. The organization of data units by theme resulted in the development of two data clusters. Each cluster was coded and assigned a code label to typify the theme shared within the cluster: (1) on-field sports scandal examples and (2) off-field sports scandal examples. An inductive coding method was utilized due to the exploratory nature of the research. Inductive codes are defined as “codes that are generated by a researcher by directly examining the data during the process” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p. 508).

In an effort to provide evidence of inter-rater reliability and interpretive validity, a research assistant was trained to carry out the segmentation and coding process. After the assistant completed an independent analysis of the data, a meeting between the primary investigator and the research assistant was held. After comparing and discussing the on-field and off-field sports scandal examples recorded in both analyses it was found that there was a 100% agreement between the researcher and research assistant providing evidence of both inter-rater reliability and interpretive validity.

To check for the accuracy and truthfulness of findings and provide evidence of quality, a member checking procedure was employed. Member checking (also referred to as member validation or respondent validation) is the process of verifying the findings, interpretations, and conclusions with the original respondents (Harper & Cole, 2012). Member checking allows researchers “to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to participants and determining whether these participants feel that they are accurate” (Creswell, 2003, p. 196). To carry out the member checking procedure, the primary researcher met individually with each focus group participant to review the on-field and off-field sports scandal examples. Evidence of accuracy and truthfulness of pilot study 1 findings was confirmed based on the focus group participants’ agreement that the on-field and off-field sports scandal examples uncovered by the researcher in the analysis were accurate interpretations and characterizations of their ideas.

To conclude the data analysis, the primary researcher enumerated the recurrent examples of on-and off-field sports scandal cases. The enumeration process allowed the researcher to identify reoccurring on-and off-field sports scandal cases by assessing the rate of occurrence for each scandal example and the number of focus group participants that mentioned the scandal
example. An on-field or off-field sport scandal case was defined by the researcher as emerging if the on-field or off-field sports scandal example was reported by five or more focus group participants. On-and off-field sports scandal examples reported by five or more of the total focus groups participants translated to an approximate average response representation of 1/5 or more of the research participants. A 1/5 or more participant response rate was deemed appropriate due to the inductive and exploratory nature of the pilot study. The following section presents the emerging on-and off-field sport scandal cases identified through the data analysis.

Pilot Study 1 Emerging On-Field Sports Scandal Cases

On-field sports scandal case scenarios reported by focus group participants included: performance-enhancing substance use, match-fixing, violence between athletes, violence between athletes and sport fans, sport fan interference, videotaping opposing team practices, illegal equipment modifications, and tipping pitches in baseball. Table 3.3 presents the focus group participant response rates for each on-field sport scandal case scenario.

Table 3.3: On-Field Sports Scandal Case Scenarios Focus Group Participant Response Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On-Field Sports Scandal Case Scenario</th>
<th># of Focus Group Participants</th>
<th>% of Focus Group Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance-enhancing substance use</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match-fixing</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence between athletes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence between athletes and sport fans</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport fan interference</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videotaping opposing sport teams practices</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal equipment modifications</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tipping pitches in baseball</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: The # represents the number of focus group participants that mentioned the on-field sports scandal case scenario example. The % represents the percentage of focus group participants that mentioned the on-field sports scandal case scenario example. The percentage is calculated based on the number of participants that mentioned the example divided by the total number of focus group participants in pilot study 1.
Pilot Study 1 Emerging Off-Field Sports Scandal Cases

Off-field sports scandal case scenarios reported by focus group participants included: sexual assault committed by an athlete, dog fighting and animal cruelty, performance-enhancing substance use, murder committed by an athlete, criminal possession of a weapon, and driving under the influence. Table 3.4 presents the focus group participant response rates for each off-field sport scandal case scenario.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Off-Field Sports Scandal Case Scenario</th>
<th># of Focus Group Participants</th>
<th>% of Focus Group Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual assault committed by an athlete</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog fighting and animal cruelty</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance-enhancing substance use</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder committed by an athlete</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal possession of a weapon</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving under the influence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: The # represents the number of focus group participants that mentioned the off-field sports scandal case scenario example. The % represents the percentage of focus group participants that mentioned the off-field sports scandal case scenario example. The percentage is calculated based on the number of participants that mentioned the example divided by the total number of focus group participants in pilot study 1.

Summary of Pilot Study 1 Findings

A pilot study was conducted to identify what sports fans perceive as on-and off-field sports scandals. Based on the findings, the conclusion reached was that there are a number of athlete-related transgressions that may constitute on-field and off-field sport scandals. For on-field sports scandals, the most frequently mentioned examples included: performance-enhancing drug use, match-fixing, and on-field violence between athletes. For off-field sports scandals, the most frequently mentioned examples included: sexual assault and dog fighting / animal cruelty.

Performance-enhancing drugs as an on-field sports scandal and sexual assault as an off-field sports scandal have been specifically cited in previous studies (Fink et al. 2009; Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). Previous research also provides evidence that sexual assault and drug-related transgressions are two of the three most frequently reported scandals committed by athletes.
Based on pilot study findings and the evidence from previous research, ‘performance-enhancing drugs’ was selected to represent the on-field sports scandal condition and ‘sexual assault’ was selected to represent the off-field sports scandal condition in the main study (see Appendix F).

Pilot Study 2

The examples of on-field and off-field sports scandals derived from the first pilot study served as the basis to develop the sports scandal scenarios. A second pilot study was conducted to verify that the scenarios were interpreted as on- and off-field scandals respectively. Furthermore, with the second pilot study it was possible to assess the extent to which the on- and off-field sports scandal conditions were perceived as negative. According to Johns, Schmader, and Lickel (2005), the level of perceived negativity influences research participants’ responses with extremely negative information producing homogeneous reactions while low and moderate negative information produce heterogeneous responses. In view of the Johns et al. (2005) research findings, it was deemed necessary to consider the perception of negativity for each scenario.

The second pilot study was conducted using a sample of 50 undergraduate college students from the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB). Undergraduate students were recruited to be consistent with the sample that would be recruited for the main study. Data was collected through a convenience sample on campus at the UCSB Davidson Library. A self-report questionnaire was administered to those recruited. Sample recruitment involved the main researcher soliciting volunteers that were sitting at large tables in the group study room near the university library entrance. The researcher asked each prospective participant his or her status as an active student at the UCSB. Once the researcher confirmed the individual’s status as an active university student, the individual was provided a consent form to complete prior to their inclusion as a research participant in pilot study 2.

Pilot study 2 consisted of two phases. In the first phase research participants read a news article about an allegation that an athlete had tested positive for the use of a banned performance-enhancing drug (on-field scenario). In the second phase, subjects read a news article about an allegation that an athlete had pled guilty to a sexual assault charge (off-field scenario). After reading each respective news article, participants completed a questionnaire which included
items to assess perceptions of each sports scandal’s believability and negativity (see Appendix B). Believability was measured by asking subjects to report on the plausibility of the scenario using a seven-point Likert scale. The perception of negativity was assessed through a four-item negativity scale developed by Johns et al. (2005). In the last section of the questionnaire participants classified the event as an on-field or off-field sports scandal. Participant feedback allowed for an assessment of the accuracy and realism of the scandal scenarios. After completing the questionnaire participants were informed of the fictitious nature of the news articles. Data collection for pilot study 2 concluded by the researcher thanking each participant for their time and participation.

The majority of participants reported the on- and off-field sports scandal scenarios were believable. In particular, 88% of the participants rated the on-field scenario as highly believable, and 92% rated the off-field sports scandal scenario as highly believable. With regard to negativity, the majority of participants perceived the scandal scenarios as moderate to very negative. Sixty percent of the participants rated the on-field scandal scenario as moderately negative, and 40% rated the scenario as very negative. In contrast, 44% of the participants rated the off-field scandal scenario as moderately negative, and 56% rated the scenario as very negative. Last, with regard to the sport scandal classifications, 98% of the participants classified the on-field scenario as an on-field sports scandal, and 94% classified the off-field scenario as an off-field sports scandal.

To summarize, the research participants for pilot study 2 perceived the scandal scenarios as believable and appropriately classified as on- or off-field scandals. The scandal scenarios were also rated as moderate to very negative. As an additional effort to provide support for the use of performance-enhancing drugs and sexual assault as on-field and off-field sports scenarios respectively, an analysis of mainstream online news media was conducted. That information is presented in the next section.

**Online News Media Analysis**

A search of online media publications was performed; the purpose was to identify the manner in which information concerning negative athlete-related events (i.e., the use of performance-enhancing drugs, the involvement in a sexual assault) have been presented-or framed-by the media. The reporting of such events ultimately has the impact of elevating the
events to some type of scandal. By ascertaining the ways in which negative athlete-related events (i.e., the use of performance-enhancing drugs, the involvement in a sexual assault) are framed by the media, the researcher would be able to frame the sport scandal scenario conditions in a manner consistent with what individuals might read in a media outlet. It was the intent of the researcher to frame an event such that individuals would likely interpret the event as a scandal.

The media coverage of events involving athletes has been shown to influence and shape public perception (Huang, 2006; Wilson et al., 2008). Researchers suggest that public perception of an event is greatly affected by the media’s framing of said event (Sanderson & Hambrick, 2012). As discussed in Chapter 2, framing occurs “when mass media outlets report news items in ways that guide and shape public interpretations” (Sanderson & Hambrick, 2012, p. 387). In view of scholars’ contentions, it was deemed necessary to consider the ways in which performance-enhancing drug use by athletes and sexual assaults involving athletes have been framed by the media.

The researcher used Google News to locate articles covering each type of athlete transgression (performance-enhancing drug use and sexual assault) on three widely read news websites: the New York Times, ESPN.com, and NBCSports.com. The New York Times was selected due to its extensive use in traditional mainstream content analyses (Kozman, 2013; Roberts, Wanta, Dzwo, 2002). ESPN and NBCSports were selected due to ESPN.com and NBCSports.com being two of the top visited sports news websites in the United States (Guthrie, 2015; Kozman, 2013). For the initial searches there were no set time parameters.

“Performance enhancing drugs,” “on field,” and “scandal” were used as search terms. The initial search yielded 61,300 articles on performance-enhancing drugs discussed in the scope of both “on field” and “scandal.” When the search results were filtered down to the New York Times, ESPN, and NBCSports websites, a total of 679,439 articles were found respectively. The search was further filtered to include only those articles published between 2007 and 2010. This time frame was selected because this would capture articles mentioned by the focus group participants. In reviewing the articles published between 2007 and 2010 the researcher was able to conclude that the articles were reports of the same on field scenarios mentioned by the focus group participants. The reports included (for example) stories about use of performance-enhancing drugs by Alex Rodriguez, Manny Ramirez, and Marion Jones.
“Sexual assault,” “off field,” and “scandal” were also used as search terms. The initial search yielded 115,000 articles on sexual assault discussed in the scope of both “off field” and “scandal.” When the search results were filtered down to the *New York Times*, ESPN, and NBCSports websites, a total of 1,340,301 articles were found respectively. The search was further filtered to include only those articles published between 2007 and 2010. This time frame was selected because this would capture articles mentioned by the focus group participants. In reviewing the articles in this set time period the researcher was able to conclude that the articles were reports of the same off field scenarios mentioned by the focus group participants. The reports included (for example) stories about Kobe Bryant and the University of Duke lacrosse players.

The results of the online news media analysis provided additional evidence to support the use of a scenario based on an athlete’s use of a performance-enhancing drug, and a scenario based on a sexual assault involving an athlete. The next step in the project was to evaluate how negative athlete-related events have been framed by the media. The goal of this step was to be able to write scenarios in a manner similar to actual accounts of events involving athletes pertaining to the use of performance-enhancing drugs and sexual misconduct.

News articles were reviewed and analyzed by the researcher in an effort to identify framing practices used by the media when reporting on athletes involved in two types of sport scandals: performance-enhancing drug use (on-field sport scandal) and sexual assault (off-field sport scandal). The researcher found that for many of the news articles reviewed there were common framing practices related to the presentation sequence of information. The following paragraph has content about the type of information presented, and the sequence in which information has been presented in news articles. Examples of the framing of the news stories are drawn from two sample news articles—the full articles are included in Appendix E—and are included in Table 3.5 to illustrate the framing of the respective information.

The news publications reviewed included a header at the top of the article displaying the name/title of the news media source (ESPN.com, NBCSports.com, etc.). Nearly all news articles reviewed were found to be titled in a manner that concisely highlighted the central ‘newsworthy’ event and/or issue at hand (e.g., *Marlon Byrd Banned 50 Games For Positive Test, Two Providence Players Being Investigated For Sexual Assault*, etc.). The news articles typically opened with information in the first paragraph establishing what was the ‘newsworthy’ event.
and/or issue, and followed with a body paragraph that included the details of the particular event and/or issue. By reviewing the details of the event and/or issue reported in the news articles, the researcher found some form of reference to a credible information source as an attempt to establish a level of news content credibility for the story (e.g., Major League Baseball, Providence Police, etc.). For news articles that reported on an event involving the use of a banned performance-enhancing drug, the proprietary name of the banned substance (also called the brand name) was typically included, coupled with a brief discussion of drug uses and drug effects. For news articles that reported on an event involving a sexual assault, details of the sexual misconduct were provided including but not limited to: event dates, event location, and involved parties. The researcher also found the news articles typically closed or concluded with, information relating to the involved athlete(s) on-field performance (e.g., performance statistics, team win/loss record, etc.) and/or performance-related accolades (e.g., rookie of the year ranking, college recruit ranking, all-star award, etc.).

**Table 3.5: Framing of Articles Pertaining to On-Field and Off-Field Scandals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation Sequence of Information</th>
<th>On-Field Sport Scandal News Article</th>
<th>Off-Field Sport Scandal News Article</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance-Enhancing Drug Use</strong></td>
<td><strong>Outfield Marlon Byrd, who admitted to working with the man whose center triggered a federal investigation of steroids use and distribution among athletes, has tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Marlon Byrd banned 50 games</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Off-Field Sport Scandal</strong></td>
<td><strong>Header at top of article displaying the name/title of the news media source.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Two Providence players being investigated for sexual assault</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Article Body Text</strong></td>
<td><strong>The league announced on</strong></td>
<td><strong>Brandon Austin and Rodney Bullock are being investigated by Providence police for an alleged sexual assault of a student...Austin and Bullock were both suspended on November 6th for what head coach Ed Cooley said at the time was a result of the two</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By determining the ways in which negative athlete-related events (i.e., performance-enhancing drug use, involvement in a sexual assault) are framed by the media, the researcher was able to frame the sport scandal scenario conditions in a manner consistent with what participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.5 - continued</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Event/Issue Details</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source and Content Credibility</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Athletic Performance</strong></td>
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</table>
might read in sports media news outlet. In particular, the framing practices related to the presentation sequence of information (as discussed in the preceding paragraph) and the type of information were closely mirrored in the development of the fictitious sports scandal news articles that represented the independent variable conditions (type of scandal) included in the main study.

It is important to note that many of the sample news articles reviewed by the researcher did include information identifying the player(s) embroiled in an event/issue. In stories where an athlete was identify, the content typically included a quote or statement from the athlete and/or a representative of the athlete-in reference to the event/issue. In some articles the information presented also included “reaction” from team and/or league personnel regarding the scandal and/or punishment (suspension, fine, etc.). While the on-field and off-field sports scandal news articles developed for the main study were framed to inform the reader (research participant) of the sport team associated with the scandal (the Los Angeles Lakers), the name of the involved athlete was never disclosed. By using an unidentified athlete, the researcher sought to control for participants preexisting attitudes and/or affinity (or lack thereof) towards a particular athlete, variables that could have potentially confounded the results. The on-field and off-field sports scandal news articles were also framed to exclude any discussion of a team and/or league reaction towards the scandal and/or punishment (suspension, fine, etc.). By framing the news articles to exclude content related the team and/or league reaction towards the scandal and/or punishment, an attempt was made to control for confounding variables related to team-related and league-related scandal response. Table 3.5 presents the presentation sequence of information used to frame the on-field and off-field sports scandal news articles for the main study. In the following section the design for the main study is presented.

**Main Study**

The purpose of the main study was to ascertain the extent to which sports scandals have an effect on sport consumers’ team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. In addition to assessing the direct impact of sports scandals, it is important to consider whether the strength of one’s team identification may moderate the impact of sports scandals on behavioral intentions. Approval for the quasi-experimental study was obtained from the University of
California, Santa Barbara Human Subjects Committee and the Florida State University Human Subjects Committee.

**Main Study Research Design**

A pretest-posttest quasi-experimental research design was used in the main investigation (see Figure 3.1). The main study is classified as quasi-experimental because while participants were assigned to a particular scandal group, one of which was a control (no scandal) group, individuals could not be assigned to a particular level of team identification. A matching control technique was used to establish comparative condition groups that were similar on matched variables (i.e. low levels of team identification and high levels of team identification). The condition assignments came from non-random preliminary team identification levels. Following is a discussion of the elements included in the main study.

![Diagram of Main Study Research Design](image)

**Figure 3.1: Diagram of Main Study Research Design**

**Manipulation**

Manipulation, defined as “an intervention studied by an experimenter,” is a fundamental characteristic of experimental research (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p. 39). The process involves manipulating one or more independent variables with the objective of developing a number of independent variable conditions. For the purpose of the present investigation, manipulation was limited to one independent variable: sport scandal. The independent variable was manipulated through a type technique, defined as “manipulating the independent variable by varying the type of variable presented to the different comparison groups” (Johnson &
Three conditions of sport scandal were identified for the manipulation: on-field sports scandal, off-field sports scandal, and no sports scandal/irrelevant information (control). Respondents were exposed to one of three variations of the sport scandal independent variable.

**Observation**

Experimental observation is described as the outcome and/or measurement of the dependent variable(s) (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2002). For behavioral research, the outcome may often be observed through an instrument such as a questionnaire or scale designed to measure the dependent variable (Ary et al., 2002). Team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions measures included in the questionnaire served as the means to observe the outcomes/measures of the dependent variables.

**Main Study Population and Sample**

The target population of the investigation was undergraduate sport consumers’. A sample of undergraduate sport consumers’ was obtained through convenience sampling. The convenience sample included 165 undergraduate sport consumers’ enrolled in sport management academic courses offered by the Department of Exercise Science and Sport Studies at UCSB. With UCSB residing in close proximity to several large metropolitan areas with professional sport teams, (i.e. Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento) it was anticipated that participants would represent various levels of team identification. In particular, it was expected that while some participants would identify with the sport team included in the scandal conditions (Los Angeles Lakers), others would hold allegiance to rival teams in close proximity (i.e., Los Angeles Clippers, Golden State Warriors, Sacramento Kings).

Participants were required to complete the SFQ in the preliminary stage of data collection (see Appendix A). The SFQ was included to assess levels of sport fandom, and provided some evidence that participants were sport consumers’. In line with previous research (End et al., 2009), a midpoint split was performed to establish two sport fan groups: low level sport fans and high level sport fans. The midpoint score for the scale was 22.5; those below a SFQ score of 22.5 were considered low level sport fans while those above a SFQ score of 22.5 were considered high level sport fans. An analysis of the SFQ scores revealed that 144 of the 165 research
participants reported a SFQ score above 22.5, thus indicative of higher levels of sport fandom. The final sample included 144 undergraduate students (108 males and 36 females). A description of the sample is provided in Chapter 4.

As previously discussed, by employing a midpoint split in SFQ classification, there is no account for the number of individuals that may have held a neutral level of sport fandom. Consequently, there may have been some individuals that held a neutral level of sport fandom that were excluded from participating in the quasi-experimental study due to reporting an overall SFQ score below 22.5.

**Sample Size**

To determine an appropriate sample size, it was necessary to establish the effect size, desired power, and alpha level. Following the work of Cohen (1992) effect sizes were defined as follows: .20 = small, .50 = medium, and .80 = large. According to Cohen (1992) a medium effect size is considered to be one large enough to be visible to the naked eye. In consideration of Cohen’s (1992) contention a medium effect size (0.50) was selected for the calculation of effect size. The power level of .80 was selected, and the alpha level was set at .05.

The G*Power statistical computer program was utilized to compute the sample size. The present investigation was limited to one independent variable: sport scandal. The independent variable was composed of three conditions: on-field sports scandal, off-field sports scandal, and no sports scandal/irrelevant information (control). Based on the effect size, power, and alpha level, it was determined that a minimum of thirty subjects must be included within each of the three sport scandal condition groups. The sample size was also found to satisfy Gratton and Jones (2010) recommendation of thirty subjects per group for detailed inferential statistics. The final sample included 144 subjects. The number of subjects per condition group were: (1) on-field sports scandal, 46; (2) off-field sports scandal, 51; and (3) no scandal/irrelevant information (control), 47.

**Main Study Instrumentation**

A questionnaire was used for the pretest and posttest data collection (see Appendix D). The questionnaire was composed of three sections: (1) a measure of team identification (1
subscale), (2) measures of sport team-related behavioral intentions (3 subscales), and (3) a demographic section.

Strength of team identification was assessed with four items from the measure used by Trail and James (2001): (1) ‘Regardless of whether the [sport team] win or lose, I will continue to support them’, (2) ‘I would experience a loss if I had to stop being a fan of [the sport team]’, (3) ‘I consider myself to be a real fan of the [sport team]’, and (4) ‘Being a fan of the [sport team] is very important to me’. The four items were measured utilizing seven-point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (7). Evidence of the reliability and validity of the Trail and James (2001) team identification measure has been previously reported (e.g., Fink et al., 2009; Parker, 2007). Participants whose mean score across all four items was 4.5 or higher were classified as highly identified sport consumers’. Those who had a mean score across all four items of less than 4.5 were classified as low identified sport consumers’. The classifications were based on the rationale that those with a mean score at or above 4.5 expressed agreement with two or more of the team identification items. Conversely, those with a mean score below 4.5 did not express agreement with two or more of the items.

By employing a midpoint split to create two levels of team identification, there is no consideration for the number of individuals that may have held a moderate level of team identification. This is an important to note as there may have been some individuals that were classified as possessing a low level or high level of team identification, despite being more moderate in their identification with the team.

Sport team-related behavioral intentions were assessed with three subscales measuring repeat purchase intentions, merchandise consumption intentions, and media consumption intentions. Repeat purchase intentions were measured using four items: (1) I will attend another game being played by this sport team in the near future, (2) I will attend more games being played by this sport team in the next few years, (3) I will attend a game being played by this sport team in the next home series/game, and (4) I will attend another game being played by this sport team this season. Merchandise consumption intentions were measured with three items: (1) I will purchase this sport team’s clothing (T-shirts, caps, etc.) in the future, (2) I will purchase this sport team’s merchandise, and (3) I will purchase this sport team’s souvenirs. The media consumption intentions were measured with three items: (1) I will read about this sport team in the daily sport pages, (2) I will visit this sport team’s website for information on the team, and
Participants responded to the 10 items using seven-point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (7). To finish, the questionnaire included a series of items concerning respondents’ demographic characteristics (i.e., gender, age, race, and program of study).

Stimuli for the experiment were short news stories (see Appendix F). Three fictitious news articles representing the three conditions of the independent variable (on-field sports scandal, off-field sports scandal, and no sports scandal/irrelevant information - control) were utilized. Based on the results of the first pilot study, the most frequently reported examples of on- and off-field sports scandals were used as the basis for the scenarios in the main study: (1) an allegation of an athlete testing positive for the use of banned performance-enhancing drug (on-field scandal), (2) an allegation of an athlete pleading guilty to a sexual assault charge (off-field scandal). The control scenario was a weather update.

While each news article serves as a depiction of the respective scandal type no specific athlete was identified. By referring to an unidentified athlete, an attempt was made to control for confounding variables such as preexisting player issues and player partiality. The third condition, no scandal/irrelevant information, was designed to exclude any sport-related information and events that were provided as examples of on-field and off-field sports scandals in pilot study 1 that could potentially confound the results.

**Main Study Data Collection Procedures**

The investigation included two stages of data collection. In the first stage, participants received a questionnaire that included pretest measures of team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. Research subjects were also instructed by the researcher to record a self-selected code name on back of the questionnaire. The pretest measures collected in the first stage of the experiment allowed the researcher to establish participants’ team identification levels and sport team-related behavioral intentions prior to condition exposure.

By using participants’ code names and preliminary team identification mean scores, the researcher was able to assign a comparable amount of high and low sport team identified subjects to the three sport scandal groups. A matching control procedure allowed the researcher
to make certain there was equal representation of high and low identified sport consumers’
exposed to the treatment and control variables introduced in the second stage.

The second stage of the experiment was performed one week subsequent to the collection
of pretest measures. In the second stage the participants read one of the three scenarios that were
presented in the form of a news article feature story. The news articles were assigned to subjects
using the code names provided in the initial stage of data collection. Table 4.1 reports the
number of high and low identified sport consumers’ per condition group.

After the participants read the assigned news article, a second questionnaire was
administered with the posttest measures of team identification and sport team-related behavioral
intentions. Posttest measures provided a means to establish levels of team identification and sport
team-related behavioral intentions subsequent to condition exposure. Following the completion
and collection of the posttest measures, participants were instructed to complete a second
questionnaire that was included to assess perceptions of the news story’s believability and
negativity (see Appendix B). Believability was measured by asking subjects to report on the
plausibility of the scenario on a seven-point Likert scale. The perception of negativity was
assessed through the Johns et al. (2005) four-item negativity measure. In the last section of the
questionnaire subjects were directed to classify the event included in the news article as either an
on-field sport scandal or an off-field sport scandal.

The researcher debriefed the participants on the true purpose of the project and the
fictitious nature of the three news articles. A debriefing session served to ameliorate ethical
problems that may have been created by the use of deception in the experiment.

Main Study Data Analysis

The data for the main study were analyzed using the Statistical Package from the Social
Sciences (SPSS). The data analysis included descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive
statistics were computed to obtain a general description of the sample and research variables.
Inferential statistical procedures were utilized as a means to measure the associations and
differences between the research variables.

The analysis included the following inferential statistical procedure: one-way repeated
measures analysis of variance (ANOVA). For the purpose of this study, one-way repeated
measures ANOVAs were used to assess: (1) the impact of on-and off-field sport scandals on
team identification, (2) the impact of on-and off-field sports scandals on sport team-related behavioral intentions, and (3) the impact of pretest team identification on sport team-related behavioral intentions within each sports scandal condition.

Internal consistency reliability, using Cronbach’s alpha, was calculated for all multi-item scales (team identification pretest, team identification posttest, behavioral intentions pretest, and behavioral intentions posttest). Cronbach’s alpha is “a measure of internal consistency, that is, how closely related a set of items are as a group; it is considered to be a measure of scale reliability” (‘institute for digital research and education,” 2015, para 1). Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for all multi-item scales are reported in Chapter 4.

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted in an effort to determine if the behavioral intention subscales represented three independent components of behavioral intentions. An EFA is a statistical approach that is used to analyze interrelationships among a number of variables and “to explain these variables in terms of a smaller number of common underlying dimensions” with a minimum loss of information (‘real-statistics,” 2015, para 1). The results of the EFA demonstrated that the ten behavioral intention items that comprised the three subscales reflected a single underlying component. Based on the evidence from the EFA, the decision was made to collapse the ten items into a single composite scale. The EFA is further discussed in Chapter 4.

ANOVA

A one-way repeated measures ANOVA is a statistical test that measures the effect of a single independent variable on one dependent variable at multiple times. Two separate repeated measures ANOVAs were performed to determine if sports scandals had an impact on subsequent team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions, and if so, to what extent was the effect similar or different across sports scandal conditions, while controlling for level of team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions reported in the pretest. The three conditions of sports scandal served as the independent variable while team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions were the dependent variables.

Additionally, three separate repeated measures ANOVAs were performed in each respective sports scandal condition (on-field sports scandal, off-field sports scandal, and no scandal - control), to determine if preliminary team identification level (pretest) had an effect on
subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions, and if so, to what extent was the effect similar or different across sports scandal conditions, while controlling for sport team-related behavioral intentions reported in the pretest. The pretest team identification level (low and high) served as the independent variable while sport team-related behavioral intentions was the dependent variable. In total, the analysis for the main study included five separate one-way repeated measures ANOVAs.

One-way repeated measures ANOVAs were utilized to explore the following research questions:

1a. Do on-and off-field sports scandals impact sport consumers’ team identification?
1b. If yes, do on-and off-field scandals impact sport consumers’ team identification in the same way?
2a. Do on-and off-field sports scandals impact sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral intentions?
2b. If yes, do on-and off-field scandals impact sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral intentions in the same way?
3a. Does a sport consumer’s level of team identification moderate the effect sports scandals have on subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions?
3b. If team identification level moderates the effect sports scandals have on subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions, to what extent is the effect similar or different across sport scandal conditions?

The one-way repeated measures ANOVAs allowed the researcher to determine if the following hypotheses were supported:

**Hypothesis 1.** On-and off-field scandals will produce a significant reduction in sport consumers’ level of team identification.

**Hypothesis 2.** On-and off-field scandals will produce a significant reduction in sport consumers’ subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions.

**Hypothesis 3.** On-field sports scandals will produce a significantly greater reduction in sport consumers’ level of team identification than off-field sports scandals.
**Hypothesis 4.** On-field sports scandals will produce a significantly greater reduction in sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral intentions than off-field sports scandals.

**Hypothesis 5.** Regardless of the type of sports scandal, sport consumers’ with a lower level of team identification will report a greater decline in subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions than sport consumers’ with a higher level of team identification.

**Assumption Testing**

Preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality and homogeneity of variances. The assumptions for ANOVA are as follows:

**Normal Distribution**

Normal distribution refers to “a particular form for the distribution of a variable which, when plotted, produces a bell-shaped symmetrical curve, rising smoothly from a small number of cases at both extremes to a large number of cases in the middle” (Andrews, Klem, O’Malley, Rodgers, Welch, & Davidson, 1998, p. 91).

To test for normality, the skewness and kurtosis for each variable is examined. Skewness refers to the degree of symmetry or asymmetry of the distribution (Salkind, 2010). Kurtosis refers to the degree of peakedness or flatness of the distribution (Salkind, 2010). According to Warner (2008), the assumption of normal distribution is met if the skewness and kurtosis for each variable is within an appropriate range of plus or minus 3.

**Homogeneity of Variances**

Homogeneity of variances refers to “the assumption that the variance of one variable is stable at all levels of another variable” (Field, 2007, p. 443) A Box’s test and Levene’s test of equality were used to assess the homogeneity of variances. A Box’s test is “a test that is used to determine whether two or more covariance matrices are equal” (“real-statistics,” 2015, para 1). A Levene’s test of equality is used “to test the null hypothesis that multiple population variances (corresponding to multiple samples) are equal” (“Prophet Statguide,” 1997, para 1). The results of ANOVA assumption testing are presented in Chapter 4.
The results from the main study are presented in the succeeding chapter.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the main study. The results are presented in five sections. The first section includes a description of the matching control procedure used in experimental and control group assignments. In the second section the characteristics of the sample are reported along with the correlations, means, and standard deviations for all research variables. This section also includes discussion of the EFA. The third section includes the results concerning the perception of believability and negativity of the sport scandal scenarios. In the fourth section, preliminary assumption testing is reported. To conclude, the fifth section includes the results of the statistical analyses that were used to test the research hypotheses.

Experimental and Control Group Assignment

Preliminary data (pretest) was collected from research participants one week prior to the introduction of the treatment and final data collection (posttest). In the pretest phase participants completed a questionnaire that included measures of team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. The pretest measures allowed the researcher to establish participants’ team identification levels prior to condition exposure. The mean scores for the team identification items were summed, and an average team identification score was calculated.

In line with previous research (End et al., 2009; Fink et al., 2009), a midpoint split based on scale points was computed to establish two categories of team identification: low identified sport consumers’ and high identified sport consumers’. Following the work of Fink et al. (2009), 4 served as the midpoint on the scale. Participants that held a mean score in the range of 5 – 7 were labeled as highly identified sport consumers’. Participants with a mean score below 4 were labeled as low identified sport consumers’. It is important to note that 8 participants reported a mean score ranging between 4.0 and 4.9. From this group, those with a score between 4.0 and 4.49 were coded as low identified sport consumers’ (n=3). Those with a score equal to or greater than 4.5 were coded as high identified consumers (n=5).
A matching control technique was used to establish comparative condition groups that were similar on matched variables (i.e. low levels of team identification and high levels of team identification). By using participants’ preliminary team identification mean scores, the researcher was able to assign a comparable number of high and low identified subjects to the three sport scandal conditions: (on-field sports scandal, off-field sports scandal, and no sports scandal - control). Table 4.1 shows the number of participants in the experimental and control group assignments.

**Descriptive Statistics**

The SFQ score was used to verify sport fan (and ostensibly sport consumer) status. Consistent with previous research (End et al., 2009), a midpoint split based on scale points was computed to identify two sport fan groupings: low level sport fans and high level sport fans. Those with a score below 22.5 were considered low level sport fans; those with a score above 22.5 were considered high level sport fans. Based on an analysis of the scores, 144 of the 165 participants reported a SFQ score above 22.5 (high level sport fans). Data collected from the 21 participants that reported a score below 22.5 were omitted from further analysis.

The final sample included 144 students enrolled in undergraduate sport management academic classes offered by the Department of Exercise Science and Sport Studies at UCSB. The participants had an average SFQ score of 6.7, demonstrating an overall high level of sport fandom. The sample consisted of 108 males and 36 females. With regard to race, the sample included 88 Caucasians, 4 African Americans, 17 Asians, 15 Hispanics, and 20 other. The average age was 21 (20.97), and the four most frequently cited programs of study were Business Economics, Communications, Psychology, and Sociology. There were a total of 46 participants in treatment group one (on-field sport scandal), 51 participants in treatment group two (off-field sport scandal), and 47 participants in the control group (no sport scandal). The high identification group included 55 of the participants while the low identified group included 89 of the participants (see Table 4.1).
Table 4.1: Research Participants by Team Identification Level and Treatment/Control Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>On-Field</th>
<th></th>
<th>Off-Field</th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High ID</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low ID</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: High ID = High Team Identification
Low ID = Low Team Identification

Correlation, Mean, and Standard Deviation Scores for the Main Study Variables

Internal consistency reliability, using Cronbach’s alpha, was calculated for all multi-item scales (team identification pretest, team identification posttest, behavioral intentions pretest, and behavioral intentions posttest). The reliability estimate for all multi-item scales exceeded the .70 cut off recommended by Robinson, Shaver, and Wrightsman (1991). Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for the scales are as follows: team identification pretest ($\alpha = .97$), team identification posttest ($\alpha = .98$), behavioral intentions pretest ($\alpha = .96$), and behavioral intentions posttest: ($\alpha = .96$).

In order to determine if the behavioral intention subscales represented three independent components of behavioral intentions, an EFA of the ten items that comprised the three subscales was conducted. The results of the EFA analysis demonstrated the ten behavioral intention items reflected a single underlying component; which captured 74.99% (pretest) and 75.94% (posttest) of the variance among the items. Based on the results of the EFA the decision was made to collapse the three subscales into a single composite scale. The EFA eigenvalues and percentages of explained common variance (associated with each scale item - pretest and posttest) are presented in Table 4.2 and Table 4.3. The EFA Scree plot is included in Figures 4.1 and 4.2 for the pretest and posttest respectively. Scree plots are used in factorial analyses as a tool to assess the fraction of total variance in the data and to illustrate “the number of factors that explain most of the variability in the data set” (Tavakoli, 2012, p. 572). In this study, the Scree plots demonstrate that for pretest and posttest, one behavioral intention item (factor) explains most of
the variability (with the line beginning to straighten after this single item). This type of Scree plot pattern demonstrates that the remaining items do not contribute substantially to the underlying structure of the variables (Cramer, 2004).

Table 4.2: Eigenvalues and Percentages of Explained Common Variance Associated with Each Pretest Behavioral Intention Item

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Eigenvalue</th>
<th>Percentage of Explained Common Variance</th>
<th>Accumulated Percentage of Explained Common Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.499</td>
<td>74.991</td>
<td>74.991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>7.996</td>
<td>82.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.553</td>
<td>5.534</td>
<td>88.521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.365</td>
<td>3.653</td>
<td>92.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>.210</td>
<td>2.101</td>
<td>94.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>1.912</td>
<td>96.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>1.407</td>
<td>97.594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>1.229</td>
<td>98.823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.721</td>
<td>99.544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.456</td>
<td>100.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.1: Scree Plot of Pretest Behavioral Intention Items
Table 4.3: Eigenvalues and Percentages of Explained Common Variance Associated with Each Posttest Behavioral Intention Item

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Eigenvalue</th>
<th>Percentage of Explained Common Variance</th>
<th>Accumulated Percentage of Explained Common Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.594</td>
<td>75.938</td>
<td>75.938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.859</td>
<td>8.595</td>
<td>84.533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>.553</td>
<td>5.535</td>
<td>90.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.328</td>
<td>3.279</td>
<td>93.346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>1.909</td>
<td>95.255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>1.459</td>
<td>96.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>1.307</td>
<td>98.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.847</td>
<td>98.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.795</td>
<td>99.664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.336</td>
<td>100.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.2: Scree Plot of Posttest Behavioral Intention Items

The correlations between the three behavioral intention subscales in the pretest and posttest are presented in Tables 4.4 and 4.5 respectively.

Table 4.4: Correlations of Behavioral Intentions Pretest Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. PreRPM</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. PreMCM</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PreMEM</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: PreRPM = Pretest Repeat Purchase Intentions
PreMCM = Pretest Merchandise Consumption Intentions
PreMEM = Pretest Media Consumption Intentions
Table 4.5: Correlations of Behavioral Intentions Posttest Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. PstRPM</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. PstMCM</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PstMEM</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: PstRPM = Posttest Repeat Purchase Intentions
      PstMCM = Posttest Merchandise Consumption Intentions
      PstMEM = Posttest Media Consumption Intentions

The overall mean score on the pretest team identification measure was 3.35; the mean score for the high and low identification groups respectively were 6.23 and 1.57. The overall mean score for the posttest team identification measure 3.34; the scores for the high identification and low identification groups were 6.00 and 1.70 respectively.

The overall mean score on the pretest behavioral intentions measure was 3.50. The mean scores for the behavioral intentions measure across the high and low identification groups were 5.68 and 2.16 respectively. The overall mean score for the posttest behavioral intentions was 3.39. The mean scores for the high and low identification groups respectively were 5.43 and 2.13. The means, standard deviations, and correlations for the variables are reported in Table 4.6 and Table 4.7.

Table 4.6: Correlations Among the Research Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pretest ID</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Posttest ID</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pretest BI</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Posttest BI</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Pretest ID = Pretest Team Identification
      Posttest ID = Posttest Team Identification
      Pretest BI = Pretest Behavioral Intentions
      Posttest BI = Posttest Behavioral Intentions
Table 4.7: Means and Standard Deviations of the Research Variables by Level of Team Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>High ID</th>
<th>Low ID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Pretest ID</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Posttest ID</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pretest BI</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Posttest BI</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Pretest ID = Pretest Team Identification
Posttest ID = Posttest Team Identification
Pretest BI = Pretest Behavioral Intentions
Posttest BI = Posttest Behavioral Intentions

Believability and Negativity of Sports Scandals Variables

Before administering the post-test measures, participants completed a questionnaire with items used to assess perceptions about whether the sport scandal scenarios were believable, and the negativity rating of the scenarios (see Appendix G). Believability was gauged by having participants report on the plausibility of the scenario/event included in the news article using a seven-point Likert scale. The perception of negativity of a scenario/event was assessed with the Johns et al. (2005) four-item negativity measure, also using a seven-point Likert scale. Participants were also asked to classify the scenario/event depicted in the news article as either an on-field sports scandal or an off-field sports scandal.

The results are consistent with the findings from the pilot study. The majority of participants reported the on- and off-field sports scandal scenarios were believable. Specifically, 92% of the participants in the on-field scandal group rated the scenario as highly believable; 94% of the participants in the off-field scandal group rated the scenario as highly believable.

With regard to negativity, a majority of subjects rated the on- and off-field sport scandal scenarios as moderate to very negative. Among subjects in the on-field scandal group, 62% of the participants rated the scenario/event as moderately negative; the remaining 38% rated the scenario/event as very negative. In contrast, 58% of participants in the off-field scandal group rated the scenario/event as moderately negative; the remaining 42% rated the scenario/event as very negative. For the sport scandal classification 98% of the participants in the on-field scandal group classified their scenario as an on-field sports scandal; 96% of the participants in the off-field scandal group classified their scenario as an off-field sports scandal.
The perception across the groups was that the scandal scenarios were believable and appropriately classified as on- or off-field scandals. The scandal scenarios were also rated as moderate to very negative. It is important to note that while the majority of participants reported the scandal scenarios as highly believable, the use of fictional sports scandal events may have prompted participants to question the truthfulness of the information. With each participant reporting a SFQ score of 22.5 or higher (indicative of a high level of sport fandom), it is conceivable that research participants were knowledgeable about current professional sports scandals in comparison to the general consumer population. Consequently, it is plausible that participants with up-to-date knowledge of current professional sports scandals may have doubted the truthfulness of the events, thus impacting the responses provided on the posttest measures. This delimitation is further discussed in Chapter 5.

**Preliminary Assumption Testing**

Preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality and homogeneity of variances. No assumptions were found to have been violated. follows:

**Normal Distribution**

The assumption of normal distribution/normality was met after confirming that the skewness and kurtosis for each variable was within an appropriate range of plus or minus 3 as recommended by Warner (2008). The skewness and kurtosis for team identification and behavioral intentions are reported in Table 4.8 and Table 4.9 respectively.

| Table 4.8: Skewness and Kurtosis for Team Identification |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Variable       | Skewness    | Kurtosis    |
|                | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| 1. Pretest ID  | .36 | .20 | -1.63 | .40 |
| 2. Posttest ID | .35 | .20 | -1.58 | .40 |

Note: Pretest ID = Pretest Team Identification  
Posttest ID = Posttest Team Identification
Figure 4.3: Distribution of Scores for Pretest Team Identification
Note: PRETM = Pretest Team Identification

Figure 4.4: Distribution of Scores for Posttest Team Identification
Note: PSTTM = Posttest Team Identification

Table 4.9: Skewness and Kurtosis for Behavioral Intentions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Skewness Mean</th>
<th>Skewness SD</th>
<th>Kurtosis Mean</th>
<th>Kurtosis SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pretest BI</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>-1.46</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Posttest BI</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>-1.27</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Pretest BI = Pretest Behavioral Intentions
      Posttest BI = Posttest Behavioral Intentions
Homogeneity of Variances

A Box’s test and Levene’s test were used to assess homogeneity of variances. The tests were non-significant, thus revealing homogeneity of variances.

A repeated measures ANOVA for sports scandals (IV) and team identification (DV). The Box's M test was non-significant: $F(6,471276.62) = 1.56, p = .15$. In addition, Levene's test was non-significant for both the pretest ($F(2,141) = 1.24, p = .29$) and posttest ($F(2,141) = .64, p = .53$) team identification variable. The results of these tests are an indication that the repeated measures ANOVA assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated.
A repeated measures ANOVA for sports scandals (IV) and behavioral intentions (DV). The Box's M test was non-significant: $F(6,471276.62) = .54, p = .78$. In addition, Levene's test was non-significant for both the pretest ($F(2,141) = 2.01, p = .14$) and posttest ($F(2,141) = .75, p = .48$) behavioral intentions variable. The results of these tests provide evidence that the repeated measures ANOVA assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated.

A repeated measures ANOVA for pretest team identification level (IV) and behavioral intentions (DV) in the on-field sport scandal condition. The Box's M test was non-significant: $F(3,36258.569) = 3.15, p = .24$. In addition, Levene's test was non-significant for both the pretest ($F(1,44) = 1.68, p = .20$) and posttest ($F(1,44) = 1.42, p = .24$) behavioral intentions variable. The results of these tests provide evidence that the repeated measures ANOVA assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated.

A repeated measures ANOVA for pretest team identification level (IV) and behavioral intentions (DV) in the off-field sport scandal condition. The Box's M test was non-significant: $F(3,73415.20) = .48, p = .72$. In addition, Levene's test was non-significant for both the pretest ($F(1,49) = .03, p = .86$) and posttest ($F(1,49) = .27, p = .61$) behavioral intentions variable. The results of these tests provide evidence that the repeated measures ANOVA assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated.

A repeated measures ANOVA for pretest team identification level (IV) and behavioral intentions (DV) in the no sport scandal condition/control. The Box's M test was non-significant: $F(3,49914.84) = 2.21, p = .09$. In addition, Levene's test was non-significant for both the pretest ($F(1,45) = .594, p = .20$) and posttest ($F(1,45) = .75, p = .39$) behavioral intentions variable. The results of these tests provide evidence that the repeated measures ANOVA assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated. The results of the statistical analyses performed to test the hypotheses are discussed in the succeeding section.
Inferential Statistics

Hypotheses Testing

**Hypothesis 1.** On-and off-field scandals will produce a significant reduction in sport consumers’ level of team identification.

**Hypothesis 3.** On-field sports scandals will produce a significantly greater reduction in sport consumers’ level of team identification than off-field sports scandals.

A one-way repeated measures ANOVA was used to compare the mean scores for team identification, for the pretest and posttest scores across the three scandal conditions (on-field, off-field, and no scandal - control). Sports scandal served as the independent variable and pre- and post-test team identification scores served as the repeated measures dependent variable.

The results of the one-way repeated measures ANOVA demonstrate that there was no significant difference in the pre- (M = 3.35, SD = 2.46) and post-test (M = 3.34, SD = 2.37) measures of team identification, ignoring the three scandal conditions (within-subjects effect): $F(1,141) = .054, p = .82$, partial $\eta^2 < .001$. Additionally, there was no significant difference in the mean levels of team identification across the three scandal conditions (between-subjects effect): $F(2) = .21, p = .81$, partial $\eta^2 = .003$. Finally, there was no significant difference in the magnitude of pretest to posttest change in team identification between the three scandal conditions (interaction effect): $F(2,141) = 1.74, p = .18$, partial $\eta^2 = .024$). The level of team identification did not change significantly from the pre- to post-test measure in any of the three scandal conditions (on-field, off-field, and no scandal - control). Further, the mean levels of team identification in each scandal condition were not significantly different from each other. Therefore Hypotheses 1 and 3 were not supported. The means and standard deviations of team identification across sports scandal conditions are reported in Table 4.10.
Table 4.10: Means and Standard Deviations of Team Identification Across Sports Scandal Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>On-Field Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Off-Field Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Control Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Overall Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pretest ID</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Posttest ID</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Mean</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Pretest ID = Pretest Team Identification
Posttest ID = Posttest Team Identification

**Hypothesis 2.** On-and off-field scandals will produce a significant reduction in sport consumers’ subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions.

**Hypothesis 4.** On-field sports scandals will produce a significantly greater reduction in sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral intentions than off-field sports scandals.

A one-way repeated measures ANOVA was used to compare the pre- and post-test mean scores for behavioral intentions across the three scandal conditions (on-field, off-field, and no scandal - control). The three subscales of behavioral intentions were collapsed into a single composite scale based on the results of the EFA. Sports scandal served as the independent variable and behavioral intentions pre- and post-test served as the repeated measures dependent variable.

The results of the one-way repeated measures ANOVA demonstrate that there was no significant difference in the pre- (M = 3.50, SD = 2.06) and post-test (M = 3.39, SD = 1.96) measures of behavioral intentions, ignoring the three scandal conditions (within-subjects effect): $F(1,141) = 3.60, p = .06, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .025)$. Additionally, there was no significant difference in the mean levels of behavioral intentions across the three scandal conditions (between-subjects effect): $F(2) = .40, p = .67, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .006)$. Finally, there was no significant difference in the magnitude of pretest to posttest change in behavioral intentions across the three scandal conditions (interaction effect): $F(2,141) = .18, p = .84, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .002)$. The level of behavioral intentions did not change significantly from the pre- to post-test measure in any of the three scandal conditions (on-field, off-field, and no scandal - control). Further, the mean levels of behavioral intentions in each scandal condition were not significantly different from each other.
Therefore Hypotheses 2 and 4 were not supported. The means and standard deviations of behavioral intentions across sport scandal conditions are reported in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Means and Standard Deviations of Behavioral Intentions Across Sports Scandal Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>On-Field</th>
<th>Off-Field</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Pretest BI</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Posttest BI</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Mean</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Pretest BI = Pretest Behavioral Intentions
Posttest BI = Posttest Behavioral Intentions

**Hypothesis 5.** Regardless of the type of sports scandal, sport consumers’ with a lower level of team identification will report a greater decline in subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions than sport consumers’ with a higher level of team identification.

Three separate one-way repeated measures ANOVA tests were used to compare the pre- and post-test mean scores for behavioral intentions across the pretest team identification levels (low and high) in each of the sports scandal condition groups (on-field sport scandal, off-field sport scandal, and no scandal – control). Based on the results of the EFA, the three subscales of behavioral intentions were collapsed into a single composite scale. The pretest team identification level (low and high) served as the independent variable and behavioral intentions pre- and post-test served as the repeated measures dependent variable.

**On-field sports scandal condition.** The results of the one-way repeated measures ANOVA demonstrate that there was no significant difference in the pre- (M = 3.31, SD = 2.11) and post-test (M = 3.15, SD = 1.97) measures of behavioral intentions, ignoring the pretest levels of team identification (within-subjects effect): $F(1,44)= 3.84, p = .06$, partial $\eta^2 = .080$.

Additionally, there was no significant difference in the magnitude of pretest to posttest change in behavioral intentions across the pretest team identification levels (interaction effect): $F(1,44) = 2.34, p = .13$, partial $\eta^2 = .050$. The level of behavioral intentions did not change significantly in either of the pretest levels team identification groups (low and high). Further, there were no significant differences in pretest and posttest change for sport team-related behavioral intentions
between low and high identified sport consumers’. The means and standard deviations of behavioral intentions across pretest team identification levels in the on-field sport scandal condition are reported in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Means and Standard Deviations of Behavioral Intentions Across Pretest Team Identification Levels in the On-Field Sports Scandal Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Low ID Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>High ID Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Overall Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pretest BI</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>5.59</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Posttest BI</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Mean</td>
<td><strong>1.96</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5.41</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3.23</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Pretest BI = Pretest Behavioral Intentions  
Posttest BI = Posttest Behavioral Intentions

**Off-field sports scandal condition.** The results of the one-way repeated measures ANOVA demonstrate that there was no significant difference in the pre- (M = 3.56, SD = 2.21) and post-test (M = 3.49, SD = 2.06) measures of behavioral intentions, ignoring the pretest levels of team identification (within-subjects effect): $F(1,49) = .62, p = .44$, partial $\eta^2 = .012$). Additionally, there was no significant difference in the magnitude of pretest to posttest change in behavioral intentions across the pretest team identification levels (interaction effect): $F(1,49) = .65, p = .43$, partial $\eta^2 = .013$). The level of behavioral intentions did not change significantly in any of the pretest levels team identification groups (low and high). Further, there were no significant differences in pretest and posttest change for sport team-related behavioral intentions between low and high identified sport consumers’. The means and standard deviations of behavioral intentions across pretest team identification levels in the off-field sport scandal condition are reported in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Means and Standard Deviations of Behavioral Intentions Across Pretest Team Identification Levels in the Off-Field Sports Scandal Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Low ID Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>High ID Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Overall Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pretest BI</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Posttest BI</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Mean</td>
<td><strong>2.11</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5.73</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3.53</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Pretest BI = Pretest Behavioral Intentions  
Posttest BI = Posttest Behavioral Intentions
No scandal condition/control. The results of the one-way repeated measures ANOVA demonstrate that there was no significant difference in the pre- (M = 3.63, SD = 1.86) and post-test (M = 3.51, SD = 1.84) measures of behavioral intentions, ignoring the pretest levels of team identification (within-subjects effect): $F(1,45)= 1.75, p = .19$, partial $\eta^2 = .038$). Additionally, there was no significant difference in the magnitude of pretest to posttest change in behavioral intentions across the pretest team identification levels (interaction effect): $F(1,45) = .80, p = .38$, partial $\eta^2 = .017$). The level of behavioral intentions did not change significantly in any of the pretest levels team identification groups (low and high). Further, there were no significant differences in pretest and posttest change for sport team-related behavioral intentions between low and high identified sport consumers’. The means and standard deviations of behavioral intentions across pretest team identification levels in the no sport scandal (control) condition are reported in Table 4.14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Low ID</th>
<th>High ID</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Pretest BI</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>5.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Posttest BI</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Mean</td>
<td><strong>2.38</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.57</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Pretest BI = Pretest Behavioral Intentions
Posttest BI = Posttest Behavioral Intentions

Taken together, the results of the three separate one-way repeated measures ANOVAs indicate there were no significant differences in pretest and posttest change for sport team-related behavioral intentions between low and high identified sport consumers’ for each sport scandal condition (on-field sport scandal, off-field sport scandal, no scandal - control). Therefore Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Summary of Main Study Findings

To summarize, the data analysis did not provide support for the research hypotheses. Hypotheses one and two were not supported in that on-field and off-field sports scandals did not have an impact on sport consumers’ subsequent levels of team identification or sport team-related behavioral intentions. Since there was no change in team identification level, and no
difference in sport team-related behavioral intentions in general, there was no difference in the impact of an on-field scandal compared to an off-field scandal. Hypotheses three and four were not supported. Hypothesis five was not supported; there were no significant differences in pretest and posttest sport team-related behavioral intentions between low and high identified sport consumers’ in each of the sport scandal condition groups (on-field sports scandal, off-field sports scandal and no scandal – control). The research findings and implications will be discussed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Discussion Overview

Despite what seems to be a growing incidence of scandals involving athletes, the subject has received limited attention within the sport management literature. The present investigation served to advance our knowledge by examining the impact that both on-field and off-field sports scandals have on two specific variables, team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. The purpose of the study was two-fold: First, to determine if on-field sports scandals and off-field sports scandals have an impact on sport consumers’ team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. Second, to ascertain whether a sport consumers’ level of team identification moderates the impact of on-field and off-field sports scandals on subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions. The content in this chapter includes a discussion of the research findings relevant to each research question and research hypothesis, as well as details about the delimitations, limitations, and implications for future research.

Main Effect of Sports Scandals

As their incidence continues, there is a need to determine the effects that on-and off-field sports scandals have on associated entities. While the effects of athlete-based scandals on corporate sponsors and academic institutions are documented in the extant literature, less appears to be known about the impact that such scandals have on sports teams. Recognizing that sports teams depend to some extent on sport consumers’ sport team-related behaviors, an experimental study was conducted to examine the main effect of on-and off-field sports scandals on sport consumers’ strength of connection to a sports team (team identification) and sport team-related behavioral intentions.

Given the literature available at the time the present study was conducted, it was hypothesized that both on-field and off-field sports scandals would have a negative spillover effect on sports teams, significantly impacting sport consumers’ subsequent levels of team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions (Hypotheses 1 and 2). It was concluded from the results that there was no significant change in team identification levels and
sport team-related behavioral intentions among participants that learned of an on-field sports scandal and those that learned of an off-field sports scandal. In this study, the sport consumers’ team identification levels and sport team-related behavioral intentions remained static after reading about a sports scandal (on-field and off-field). Based on these findings, it is concluded that there was no negative spillover effect on the associated sport team. Given the results, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were not accepted.

The findings of this investigation are not consistent with previous empirical studies. Much of the existing research provides evidence of a negative spillover effect on entities aligned with scandals involving athletes (Dakas & Levin, 2005; Hughes & Shank, 2008; Goff, 2000; Grimes & Chressanthi, 1994; Louie et al., 2001; Louie & Obermiller, 2002; Rhoads & Gerking, 2000; Till & Shimp, 1998). Researchers have demonstrated that for corporations, scandals involving athlete endorsers have a negative effect on product evaluations (Till & Shimp, 1998), financial performance (Louie et al., 2001), corporate image (Louie & Obermiller, 2002), and consumers’ affinity towards corporations (Dakas & Levin, 2005).

For academic institutions, researchers have found that NCAA sanctions negatively effect universities’ incoming student applications (Goff, 2000), overall student enrollment (Hughes & Shank, 2008), alumni donations (Grimes & Chressanthi, 1994; Rhoads & Gerking, 2000), and overall charitable contributions (Hughes & Shank, 2008). In contrast with previous research that focused on corporate sponsors and academic institutions, the results of the present study provide evidence to suggest on- and off-field scandals may not produce a negative spillover effect for the associated sports team, as measured by sport consumers’ team identification levels and sport team-related behavioral intentions.

The results of this study may be explained in part by the conclusion of Prior et al. (2013), that sports scandals can have differential affects on consumer behavior (positive, negative, or neutral). Prior et al. (2013) suggested that in cases where a scandal leads to a positive effect, the “scandal may encourage greater consumption if [consumers] are curious or excited to witness the elements of a scandal” (p. 205). In contrast, where a scandal leads to negative effects, the “potential exists for consumers to cease their consumption in disgust” (Prior et al., 2013, p. 205). Sports scandals may also be met with a neutral consumer response, where

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1 The work of Prior, O’Reilly, Mazanov, and Huybers (2013) was not published at the time of research hypothesis development and testing.
“consumers choose not to care or to ignore the scandal” (Prior et al., 2013, p. 205). One interpretation is that the results of the present study provide evidence of the neutral effect that sports scandals (on-field and off-field) may have on consumer behavior. With behavioral intentions remaining static after reading about either an on- or off-field scandal it seems that the participants discounted the scandals and/or were indifferent towards the events.

Prior et al. (2013) suggest that the characteristics of a scandal are an important consideration when examining the effects of scandal and how it influences consumer behavior. They propose a conceptual framework with four dimensions they contend affect consumptive behaviors: scandal breadth, scandal depth, scandal gravity, and scandal duration. Scandal breadth refers to the number of entities that are involved in a scandal. Scandal depth refers to the extent of scandalous behavior, wherein scandals may emerge through a single isolated action or multiple actions over time. Scandal depth is also discussed in the context of the severity of the scandalous behavior, more specifically, the perceived severity of illegal behavior compared to immoral behavior (i.e., behavior that violates of social norms). Scandal gravity refers to the seriousness of the scandal as it relates to a violation of sport consumers’ values (personal and moral). The final dimension, scandal duration, refers to the length of time that a scandal draws public and media attention.

Prior et al. (2013) contend that the dimensions of a scandal have the potential to produce differential effects on consumer behavior (positive, negative, or neutral). While two types of sport scandals (on-field and off-field) were included in the present study, these scandals were similar in breadth (involving one sport entity – an athlete), depth (an isolated event of illegal behavior), and duration (a current event with one known media publication – the newspaper article). By using two scenarios with similar scandal dimensions, it was not possible to test whether different scandal dimensions would lead to dissimilar consumer behavior. If future researchers desire to test the contentions of Prior et al., it will be necessary to test different scenarios that present scandals characterized by varying dimensions. For example, future researchers may consider assessing the effects of a scandal involving a single athlete versus a scandal involving multiple athletes, the effects of a scandal involving illegal behavior versus a scandal involving non-illegal immoral behavior, or the effects of a scandal involving a single isolated event/occurrence versus a scandal involving a series of multiple events/occurrences over time).
The results of the present study may be further explained by considering the idea that scandals have seemingly become more commonplace in professional sports, and consumers may not react to such “common incidents.” Hardwicke-Brown (2014) contends that the overwhelming number of professional athletes involved in scandal coupled with new media channels and heightened media coverage of sport celebrities, has led to consumers becoming desensitized to the level of severity of scandal in sport. Scholars allege, that once a scandal becomes recurrent within an institution the unscrupulous actions of individuals associated with that institution come to be expected (Lull & Hinerman, 1997). It is suggested that scandals that transpire in institutions where the scandalous actions are to be expected, the desensitization may produce minimal social reaction (Hardwicke-Brown, 2014; Lull & Hinerman, 1997; Tumber & Waisbord, 2004).

With the incidence of scandal in professional sports (Hardwicke-Brown, 2014) combined with the heightened media coverage of athletes’ on-and off-field behaviors (Hardwicke-Brown, 2014), it is plausible that research consumers have become desensitized, and are more likely to ‘expect’ such negative behaviors-or at least allegations of negative behaviors-from professional athletes. If participants have become desensitized to the use of performance-enhancing drugs, and allegations of sexual misconduct, it is not surprising to find no change in strength of team identification or behavioral intentions. In particular, it is conceivable that the repeated incidence of performance-enhancing drug use (Lance Armstrong, Alex Rodriguez, Floyd Landis, etc.) and sexual assault allegations lodged against athletes (e.g., Kobe Bryant, Ben Roethlisberger, Drew Doughty, etc.) have desensitized sport consumers’ to the point that these on-and off-field events are ‘expected,’ thus producing minimal–particularly negative–consumer responses.

A question to consider in relation to the notion of “desensitization,” is whether such an effect may be associated with particular types of scandal scenarios. When presented with other types of scenarios, the results may be different. One suggestion for future research is to examine the effects of alternate on-field sports scandal scenarios (e.g., match fixing, illegal equipment modifications, etc.) and off-field sports scandal scenarios (e.g., animal cruelty, driving under the influence, etc.), to determine whether such events do (negatively) impact strength of connection to a sports team and sport team-related behavioral intentions.

The research findings in the present investigation may be further explained by considering the relationship between team identification and sport consumer behavioral intentions. Scholars have reported that relative to low identified sport consumers’, highly
identified sport consumers’ demonstrate greater team loyalty (Matsuoka et al., 2003; Snyder, Lassegard, & Ford, 1986) and satisfaction with team performance (Matsuoka et al., 2003). Scholars further report that highly identified sport consumers’ convey a higher likelihood to attend future games (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Magnusen et al., 2010; Matsuoka et al., 2003; Wann & Branscombe, 1995) and purchase team memorabilia (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Armstrong, 2002), in addition to demonstrating a greater willingness to spend money and time in support of their favorite sport team (Wann & Branscombe, 1995).

It was concluded from the results that irrespective of sports scandal type, there were no significant differences between the pretest and posttest measures of team identification. Recognizing that team identification can serve as a significant predictor of behavioral intentions (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Armstrong, 2002; Magnusen et al., 2010; Matsuoka et al., 2003; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; 1995), it is not surprising that there were no significant differences found between the pretest and posttest measures of behavioral intentions, irrespective of the type of sports scandal (on-field or off-field). With team identification levels remaining static, it is understandable that behavioral intentions correspondingly remained unchanged. One implication from this finding is that the psychological connection with a sport team may have a particular effect on sport consumers’ team-related behavioral intentions regardless of the presence of negative athlete-related behaviors.

Lastly, it is important to emphasize that the findings of the investigation reflect participants’ attitude and behavioral responses towards a single exposure to fictitious news articles representing two sport scandal cases that involved an unidentified athlete allegedly at fault: an allegation of an unidentified athlete testing positive for the use of a banned performance-enhancing drug (on-field sports scandal), and an allegation of an unidentified athlete pleading guilty to a sexual assault charge (off-field sports scandal). In “real life” the public is exposed to many news reports and event details. Consequently, it is reasonable to consider that ‘real’ on-and off-field sports scandals reported with greater frequency and involving an ‘identified’ athlete would have a higher level of believability and greater impact on identification and/or behavioral intentions. The fictitious on-and off-field sports scandal scenarios and athlete anonymity are further discussed in the limitations section.
Differential Impact of On-Field and Off-Field Sports Scandals

Much of the empirical literature to date is limited to investigations examining the impact of on-field and off-field sports scandals simultaneously (Fink et al., 2009; Hughes & Shank, 2008). Consequently, there is an assumption seemingly held by researchers that the effects produced by on-and off-field scandals are homogenous. The research findings of Hughes and Shank (2005) and conceptual propositions of Sassenberg (2015) and Sato (2015) provide a challenge to the assumption of homogeneity, including the suggestion that different types of scandals (on-field and off-field) may produce dissimilar consumer reactions. The present study was an attempt to provide empirical evidence as to whether there is a difference in the impact of on-field and off-field sports scandals on sport consumers’ levels of team identification and their sport team-related behavioral intentions.

Given the existing literature, it was hypothesized that on-field sports scandals would have a greater negative impact on subsequent levels of sport consumers’ team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions than off-field scandals (Hypotheses 3 and 4). It was concluded from the results that there were no significant differences in subsequent team identification levels and sport team-related behavioral intentions among participants that read the on-field sports scandal scenario, compared to those that read the off-field sports scandal scenario. In this study, the sport consumers’ team identification levels and sport team-related behavioral intentions remained static irrespective of the type of sports scandal (on-field or off-field). For the associated sport team, the on-and and off-field sports scandals did not produce a negative spillover effect; team identification and sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral intentions were not threatened. Based on these findings, Hypotheses 3 and 4 were not accepted.

The results of this investigation are not consistent with the findings reported by Hughes and Shank’s (2005) and the propositions of Sassenberg (2015) and Sato (2015). Hughes and Shank’s (2005) research findings provide evidence disputing an assumption of homogeneity among on-and off-field sports scandals, revealing that consumers perceptions’ concerning the severity of the sport scandal are intensified when the event is believed to effect on-field athletic performance and/or threaten the integrity of the sport. Hughes and Shank’s (2005) research findings provide evidence to suggest that consumers have less tolerance of sports scandals that directly impact a sport, while responding with more tolerance towards scandals that have no effect on a sport.
The prospect of differential consumer response is also found in later writings dealing with the topic of sports scandals. Sassenberg (2015) and Sato (2015) contend that a scandal that is believed to directly affect an athlete’s on-field performance (referred to as a ‘performance related scandal’ or ‘on-field sport celebrity transgression’) will result in a greater degree of negative consumer response than if the scandal does not directly affect the on-field performance (referred to as a ‘non-performance related scandal’ or ‘off-field sport celebrity transgression’). In contrast to previous literature, the results of the present study provide evidence to suggest that the impact of on-field and off-field sports scandals on sport consumers’ (as measured by team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions) is homogenous; no significant differences were found between the on-field sports scandal condition group and off-field sports scandal condition group.

In this study two fictitious news articles representing two types of sports scandal cases (on-field and off-field) were used as the experimental treatment conditions. As discussed, prior research provides evidence to suggest that consumers are less tolerant of sports scandals that directly impact a sport, while responding with more forbearance towards scandals that have no effect on a sport (Hughes & Shank, 2005; Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). In an effort to capture the ‘threat to sport integrity’ in the experimental study, the on-field sports scandal scenario was a story about an allegation of an athlete testing positive for the use of a banned performance-enhancing drug, representing a ‘threat to the integrity of sport.’ In contrast, the off-field sports scandal scenario was a story about an allegation of an athlete pleading guilty to an off-field sexual assault charge.

While the on-field sports scandal scenario depicted an event that compromised the integrity of a sport through athletic performance enhancement, the ‘effects’ were not explicitly stated in the news article. The absence of explicit ‘effects’ must be considered, as prior research reveals dissimilar reactions towards sports scandals that effect athletic performance and sport integrity, and sports scandals that have no effect on athletic performance and sport integrity (Hughes & Shank, 2005; Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). The lack of significant differences may be the result of consumers not recognizing a “direct effect” of the purported scandal. It is recommended that future researchers examine on-and off-field sports scandals in scenarios where the ‘effects’ from the scandal depictions/scenarios are clear and implicit.
Lastly, the results in the present study may be further explained by considering the relationship between team identification and sport consumer behavioral intentions. In this study, it was concluded from the results that irrespective of sports scandal type, there were no significant differences between the pretest and posttest measures of team identification; team identification levels were not threatened by on-and off-field sports scandals. As previously discussed, recognizing that team identification can serve as a significant predictor of behavioral intentions (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Armstrong, 2002; Magnusen et al., 2010; Matsuoka et al., 2003; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; 1995), it is not surprising that with no change in team identification that there were no significant differences found between the pretest and posttest measures of behavioral intentions in the on-field and off-field sports scandal condition groups. With team identification levels remaining static, it is understandable that behavioral intentions correspondingly remained unaltered.

**Moderating Effect of Team Identification on Behavioral Intentions**

In addition to assessing the impact of on-and off-field sports scandals, it is important to consider whether the strength of one’s team identification may moderate the effects of on-and off-field sports scandals on behavioral intentions. The present study was an attempt to provide empirical evidence as to whether sport consumers’ levels of team identification moderate the effect sports scandals have on subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions.

Given the literature, it was hypothesized that sport consumers’ with a low level of team identification would report a greater decline in subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions than sport consumers’ with a high level of team identification, irrespective of sport scandal type (Hypothesis 5). It was concluded from the results that there were no significant differences between the pretest and posttest measures of sport team-related behavioral intentions among highly identified participants and low identified participants, irrespective of type of sports scandal (on-field or off-field). In this study, the participants reported homogenous reactions toward negative sport team information (on-field and off-field sport scandals), whether they were characterized as high or low identified sport consumers’. Furthermore, the homogenous reactions toward negative sport team information (on-field and off-field sports scandals) remained constant across the scenario conditions. The results of the investigation provide evidence that irrespective of team identification level, sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral
intentions did not change even after learning of a sports scandal; team identification did not moderate the impact of on-and off-field sports scandals on subsequent behavioral intentions. Based on these findings, Hypothesis 5 was not accepted.

The results of this investigation are not consistent with the findings reported from previous studies. The empirical research to date provides evidence of the moderating role of team identification on sport consumers’ evaluation of negative sport team information, reporting heterogeneous responses among high and low identified sport consumers’ (Fink et al., 2009; Funk & Pritchard, 2006; Wann & Dolan, 1994). The findings from previous studies provide evidence to suggest that negative sport team information has a greater degree of negative consumer reaction on sport consumers’ with low levels of team identification in comparison to sport consumers’ with high levels of team identification (Fink et al., 2009; Funk & Pritchard, 2006; Wann & Dolan, 1994). In contrast with previous research, the results of the present study provide evidence of homogenous reactions towards negative sport team information (on-field and off-field sports scandals) among high and low identified sport consumers’. The findings of this investigation provide evidence to refute the assumption of heterogeneity in previous literature by demonstrating that irrespective of preliminary levels of team identification (high or low), sport consumers’ sport team-related behavioral intentions did not significantly change after learning of a sports scandal (on-field or off-field).

As previously discussed, the results of the present study may be explained by considering the idea that scandals have seemingly become more commonplace in professional sports, and sport consumers’ (highly identified and low identified) may not react to such “common incidents.” By considering the incidence of scandal in professional sports (Hardwicke-Brown, 2014) together with the heightened media coverage of athletes’ on-and off-field behaviors (Hardwicke-Brown, 2014), it is conceivable that sport consumers’ (highly identified and low identified) have become desensitized, thus are more likely to ‘expect’ such negative behaviors (or allegations of these negative behaviors) from professional athletes. If participants (highly identified and low identified) have become desensitized to allegations of the use of performance-enhancing drugs, and allegations of sexual misconduct involving professional athletes, it is not surprising to find no change in behavioral intentions for high and low identified sport consumers’.
The findings in the present investigation may also be explained by considering the relationship between team identification and sport consumer behavioral intentions. In this investigation, irrespective of sports scandal type, there were no significant differences between the pretest and posttest measures of team identification. As previously mentioned, recognizing that team identification can serve as a significant predictor of behavioral intentions (Gray & Wert-Gray, 2012; Kwon & Armstrong, 2002; Magnusen et al., 2010; Matsuoka et al., 2003; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; 1995), it is not surprising that with no change in team identification there were no significant differences found between the pretest and posttest measures of behavioral intentions irrespective of the type of sports scandal (on-field or off-field). With team identification levels remaining static, it is understandable that behavioral intentions correspondingly remained unchanged.

The results may be further explained by the fictitious nature of the sports scandal conditions used in the quasi-experiment. As previously discussed, the findings of the investigation reflect participants’ (highly identified and low identified) behavioral responses towards a single exposure to fictitious news articles representing two sports scandal cases that involved an unidentified athlete allegedly at fault: an allegation of an unidentified athlete testing positive for the use of a banned performance-enhancing drug (on-field sports scandal), and an allegation of an unidentified athlete pleading guilty to a sexual assault charge (off-field sports scandal). As previously discussed, in “the real world” the public is exposed to several news reports and event details. Therefore, it is reasonable to consider that ‘real’ on-and off-field sports scandals reported with greater frequency and involving an ‘identified’ athlete would have a higher level of believability and greater impact on behavioral intentions for high and low identified sport consumers’.

In this section, a discussion of the research findings relevant to each research question and research hypothesis was provided. In the succeeding sections, the delimitations, limitations, and implications for future research are discussed, including directions for future research.

**Delimitations**

**Scenarios**

The use of fictional scenarios was a delimitation of the investigation. It is likely that some research participants may have questioned the truthfulness of the information about the scandals.
With the research sample limited to students enrolled in academic courses offered by the Department of Exercise and Sport Studies, it is conceivable that many possessed up-to-date knowledge of professional sport-related events/scandals in comparison to the general consumer population. The former is more plausible in light of the finding that each participant reported a SFQ score of 22.5 or higher, confirming the participants overall had a high level of sport fandom. Taken together, it is reasonable to conclude that up-to-date knowledge of professional sport-related events/scandals may have fostered a sample bias and led participants to doubt the truthfulness of the events, thus impacting the responses provided on the posttest measures of team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions.

**Scale Dichotomization**

The midpoint split procedure used to dichotomize the SFQ and team identification scales may also be considered a delimitation. Dichotomization is “the practice of splitting individuals measured on a continuous (or ordinal) scale into two groups” (Osborne, 2013, p. 233). In the midpoint-split procedure, “scale scores above the midpoint on Likert scales are taken to indicate agreement with the scale construct and are classified high on the scale, while scores below the midpoint refer to disagreement and are classified low on the scale” (Arends-Toth & Van De Vijver, 2007, p. 1466). In line with previous research (End et al., 2009; Fink et al., 2009), a midpoint split based on scale points was computed in order to classify participants as low level sport fans or high level sport fans, and low identified sport consumers’ or high identified sport consumers’, for the SFQ and team identification scales respectively. The decision to use a midpoint split was a choice made by the researcher.

By employing a midpoint split to create two levels of sport fans or sport consumers’, there is no consideration for the number of individuals that may have held a moderate level of sport fandom or team identification. It is likely there were some individuals in this study that were classified as possessing a low level or high level of sport fandom or team identification, despite being more moderate in their position. By not accounting for individuals with moderate levels of sport fandom or team identification, the researcher is unable to provide an accurate report of findings that represent each level of classification (i.e., low, moderate, and high).

A midpoint split forces individuals into artificial categories that may or may not be truly reflective of what is considered high and low. For example, is it accurate to label a consumer as
‘low’ in their team identification that shows strong disagreement with scale items by reporting an overall scale rating (mean) of 1 or 2 on a seven-point Likert scale? Similarly, is it accurate to label a consumer as ‘high’ in their team identification that shows moderate agreement with scale items by reporting an overall scale rating (mean) of 4.5 to 5 on a seven-point Likert scale? It is understood that while a midpoint split procedure provides simplicity in scale categorization, it is limited in its ability to provide true category representation. To overcome this limitation future researchers could use a fully anchored scale, wherein every scale point on the scale item signifies a different level or type of classification. In addition, it is recommend that each scale include a ‘not applicable’ option. A ‘not applicable option’ will enhance the validity of the findings, as it provides an alternate response option for individuals that would otherwise be forced to agree or disagree with a scale item that they do not believe is applicable to their position or view.

The dichotomization of the scales has also raised issues regarding the comparison and aggregation of results across studies (MacCallum, Zhang, Preacher & Rucker, 2002). MacCallum et al. (2002) contend, “the point of dichotomization may vary considerably between studies, thus making groups not comparable” (p. 29). Scholars have raised caution with this practice, specifically if the point of dichotomization is data dependent (e.g., the median, the mean) (MacCallum et al., 2002). Taken together, the delimitations associated with the dichotomization of scales must be considered in future research.

**Limited Contextual Factors**

Another delimitation is that the experiment was only included one on-field sports scandal scenario (an allegation of an athlete testing positive for the use of a banned performance-enhancing drug) and one off-field sports scandal scenario (an allegation of an athlete pleading guilty to a sexual assault charge). Researchers suggest the type of scandal is an important consideration when examining the impact of a scandal and how it affects consumers’ attitudes (Hardwicke-Brown, 2014; Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). As discussed earlier, not every scandal may be viewed the same, and previous researchers have found the type of scandal may impact consumers’ attitudes (Hardwicke-Brown, 2014; Prior et al., 2013; Sassenberg, 2015; Sato, 2015). Future researchers should consider examining different types of on-and off-field sports scandal scenarios in order to determine if the effects produced are homogenous or heterogeneous among sports scandal types.
In an effort to control for confounding variables, both the on-and off-field sports scandal scenarios were written to depict the misconduct of an unidentified male professional athlete associated with the National Basketball Association (NBA). While holding the contextual factors (i.e., gender of the athlete, sport competition level, type of sport) constant across scandal conditions reduced the influence of confounding variables, the inclusion of other factors may have led to different results. For example, Hughes and Shank (2005) found that the severity of a sport scandal is heightened when the scandal involves male athletes and/or professional sports. In contrast, consumers demonstrate more forbearance towards sports scandals involving female athletes and/or college sports (Hughes & Shank, 2005). It is recommended that future researchers explore the impact of on-and off-field sports scandals involving both male and female athletes at various levels of sport competition (high school sports, college sports, professional sports, etc.).

With different sports having different codes of conduct and different expectations of acceptable behavior, the type of sport is also an important consideration in determining the magnitude of the impact that a [scandal] might have (Sassenberg & Johnson Morgan, 2010). For example, a consumer may respond with more tolerance towards a professional football player that is involved in a physical altercation with another player during a stoppage in play, given the level of on-field aggression associated with the sport. In contrast, a consumer may respond with less forbearance towards a physical altercation between two professional tennis players during a stoppage in play, as it violates society’s expectations of acceptable behavior in that sport (Sassenberg & Johnson Morgan, 2010). These examples serve to illustrate the importance of examining sports scandals in alternate contexts (baseball, hockey, soccer, football, baseball, golf, tennis, etc.). With this investigation limited to an examination of on-and off-field sports scandals in one sport setting (basketball), it is necessary that future researchers ascertain if the effects produced by on-and off-field sports scandals are homogenous or heterogeneous among different types of sports (baseball, hockey, soccer, football, baseball, golf, tennis, etc.).

**Anonymity of Athlete**

The anonymity of the athlete involved in the sports scandal is also a delimitation to consider. While participants in the on-field and off-field treatment groups were informed of the sport team associated with the scandal (the Los Angeles Lakers), the name of the involved athlete was never revealed. This allowed the researcher to control for participants preexisting
attitudes and/or affinity (or lack thereof) towards a particular athlete, variables that could have potentially confounded the results. The attitude and/or affinity towards a particular athlete could act as a moderator in sport consumers’ responses towards sports scandals. For instance, it is conceivable that an individual may demonstrate greater forbearance towards sports scandals involving an athlete for whom they have strong affinity, while showing less tolerance of sports scandals involving athletes they do not have a strong affinity for. It is recommended that future researchers test attitude towards an athlete and athlete affinity as moderators of the impact of sports scandals on behavioral intentions.

Limitations

Participant Recall

The pretest and posttest measures for the experiment were collected one week apart. It is conceivable that research participants may have recalled the scores they reported on the preliminary (pretest) measures when presented with the sports scandal scenario and posttest measures. If research participants questioned the truthfulness of the sports scandal conditions and/or became suspicious of the true nature of the experiment, they may have intentionally reported scores on posttest measures that were consistent with pretest measures.

To address this limitation, future researchers could wait longer between the pre- and posttest data collection. A longer time between the data collection points could reduce the strength of a participant’s recall. Another option is to include filler tasks between the collection of pretest and posttest measures in the experiment. A filler task is unrelated to the experimental task, and is used “to engage the participant’s attention between trials to prevent memory or performance effects from one trial being carried over to the next” (Purchase, 2012, p. 66). In order to be used effectively, research participants must not know that the filler task is not part of the experiment (Purchase, 2012). By including filler tasks in future studies, the researcher may reduce the chance of memory recall-based responses between pretest and posttest measures.

Filler tasks may also be used to lengthen the processing time between exposure to experimental treatment and posttest data collection. In the current study, posttest measures were collected immediately subsequent to exposure to experimental treatments (sports scandal conditions). Consequently, it is conceivable that participants may have not had the time needed to process the sports scandals and their respective effects/consequences in their entirety. The
results of the investigation may have been different had participants received more time to process the sports scandal treatment and the effects/consequences surrounding the event. This limitation may be addressed in future studies by including a series of unrelated filler tasks that lengthen the time between treatment exposure and posttest data collection.

**Implications for Future Research**

Despite the pervasiveness of scandal in the sport arena, there is a limited amount of research to help us better understand what are sports scandals and the impact of sports scandals. The present investigation builds upon prior research by examining the impact of on-field and off-field sports scandals on team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. In this study alleged on-and off-field sports scandals had no effect on sport consumers’ subsequent team identification levels and sport team-related behavioral intentions. While the present investigation produced no significant findings to suggest on-and off-field sports scandals have a negative ‘spillover’ effect for a sports team, it is important to recognize that the research findings are limited to the contextual factors within this investigation (the on-and off-field sport scandal scenarios, gender of athlete, sport competition level, type of sport, etc.).

Moving forward, sport academics should continue to undertake research that will advance our understanding of sports scandals. In particular, it is imperative that sport academics determine if, and if so, in what ways different types of on-and off-field sport scandal scenarios cause similar or dissimilar effects. Future researchers should explore alternate on-and off-field sports scandals characterized by various dimensions (scandal breadth, scandal depth, scandal gravity, and scandal duration) and contextual factors (sport competition level, type of sport, gender of athlete, etc.) while addressing the research delimitations and limitations discussed above. It is also recommended that future researchers examine the effects of ethical theory, media framing practices, perceived intentionality, and an athlete’s race/color (discussed in the next section) on perceptions of sports scandals and any subsequent public/consumer response. Future research on the topic of sports scandals will provide sport practitioners with a better understanding of sport scandals and will enable a more pragmatic method of dealing with these events (Prior et al., 2013).
Directions for Future Research

Ethical Theory

As discussed in Chapter 2, the sport ethics literature includes several theoretical and philosophical bases of ethics. It is understood that a sport consumer’s ethical base will influence their perceptions as to what constitutes scandalous actions in sport. However, with such variation in ethical viewpoints (e.g., formalism, conventionalism, broad internalism), it is reasonable to consider that the perception of an event as a ‘scandal’ may vary considerably among consumers. While this study did not examine the moderating role of ethical theory, it is recommended that future researchers incorporate this variable in future studies. For example, future researchers may attempt to ascertain if a consumers’ ethical base (e.g., formalism, conventionalism, broad internalism) moderates the impact of negative on-field and off-field events on consumer behavior, and if so, how these effects may be similar or different across different types of negative on-field and off-field events and sport contexts (e.g., professional sport versus amateur sport, male sports versus female sports, football versus golf)?

Media Framing

Previous research provides evidence supporting the contention that the public perception of a scandal is greatly affected by the framing of the event in the media (Sanderson & Hambrick, 2012). Framing is concept that is commonly used to understand the role of media in shaping public opinion (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Sanderson & Hambrick; Wilson et al., 2008). Media framing occurs “when mass media outlets report news items in ways that guide and shape public interpretations” (Sanderson & Hambrick, 2012, p. 387). It is argued that reporters “consciously or unconsciously frame news stories by using certain words, factors, depictions, metaphors, sources of information, and pictures” (Carver, Waldahl, & Breivik, 2008). Media framing may also involve “strategically emphasizing certain aspects of a story to promote particular definitions, interpretations, evaluations, or recommendations” to the public (Sanderson & Hambrick, 2012, p. 387). There are also instances where media representatives have influenced the salience of issues surrounding events (Ghanem, 1997; Kozman, 2013). By emphasizing the salience of particular issues in their reporting, members of the media suggest to the public which issues should be considered more important than others (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). In the
context of sports scandals, the media coverage and framing of athletes’ on-and off-field transgressions is regarded as a powerful persuader in public opinion (Wilson et al., 2008).

The media is believed to have a central role in furthering and modifying the public’s understanding of sports scandals. While it is understood that media framing plays an active role in scandal, these aspects of the media are beyond the scope of this work. To better understand the relationship between the media coverage of sport scandals and public opinion, future researchers must explore the effects of various media framing practices (e.g., the use of certain words, factors, depictions, metaphors, sources of information, and pictures) on sports scandal perception and public response. Future researchers must also ascertain if the effects of different media framing practices on public opinion and public response are similar or different across different types of on-field and off-field sports scandals and sport contexts (e.g., professional sport versus amateur sport, male sports versus female sports). With an increased trend among media outlets providing in-depth coverage of on-and off-field scandals involving sport celebrities (Rowe, 1997), there is a need to better understand the relationship between media framing practices (e.g., the use of certain words, factors, depictions, metaphors, sources of information, and pictures), sports scandals, public opinion, and public response.

**Perceived Intentionality**

Future researchers should also consider the perception of ‘intentionality’ as an influential element in understanding the impact of sports scandals. A scandal with ‘intentionality’ may include an athlete testing positive for a league-banned anabolic steroid that was used solely for enhancing on-field performance. In contrast, an athlete testing positive for a league-banned antihistamine that was used solely for seasonal allergy relief is likely to be perceived as a scandal that lacks ‘intentionality.’ Sato, Ko, Park, & Tao (2015) has reported that consumers are less likely to evaluate athlete-related crises harshly unless the ‘intentionality’ of the behavior is salient. Sato et al. (2015) contends, the “negative actions of [athletes] [are more likely to] provoke more negative responses if the detrimental actions are deliberately created” (pp. 5-6). With the present investigation limited to intentional-based scandals (i.e. an allegation of an athlete testing positive for the use of a banned muscle-enhancement drug and an allegation of an athlete pleading guilty to a sexual assault charge), no insight can be offered regarding the differential impact that may exist between intentional-based and unintentional-based sports
scandals. To better understand the role of intentionality, future researchers should examine the effects of a variety of cases that represent both intentional and unintentional scandalous acts.

**An Athlete’s Race/Color**

Previous investigations provide evidence to suggest that there is differential consumer racial reaction to negative publicity/events related to professional athletes (Stanton & Johnson, 2012). Researchers exploring the impact of negative publicity/events—athletes mentioned in the Major League Baseball Steroids ‘Mitchell Report’—on the price of baseball cards reported that negative publicity/events devalue the baseball cards of non-white players but not of white players (Stanton & Johnson, 2012). This research finding provides evidence to suggest that consumers display more tolerance toward negative publicity/events involving white athletes than scandals involving non-white athletes. To better understand the differential consumer racial reaction, one may consider the work of Johnson, Adams, Hall, and Ashburn (1997). According to Johnson et al. (1997) “information tends to have the greatest effects on judgments of social groups that are stereotypically associated with that information” (p. 82). The scholars argue that given the strong stereotypical association between non-white (black) males with crime/misconduct and violence, it is likely that crime/misconduct involving a non-white (black) male will be evaluated more negatively than crime/misconduct involving a white male.

Leonard (2007) argues “it is clear that both academic and media discourse have shown a greater propensity toward panic and inquiry for those incidents involving Black male athletes” (p. 26). In a comparison of two MLB scandals—Mark McGwire’s steroid use and Sammy Sosa’s corked bat—Finder (2003) claims, “When Andro was found in Mark McGwire's locker that 1998 Summer of Swat, there was nowhere near the outrage and bile as with Sosa” (p. 2). Echoing a similar sentiment, Wade (2003) contends, “The baseball landscape…is ever taking on more color. And the media routinely, if mostly innocently and ignorantly, continues to cast players in stereotypical roles based on race” (p. 1).

Taken together, the literature provides evidence to suggest there are dissimilar consumer reactions to negative events involving athletes of different race/color (Johnson et al., 1997; Stanton & Johnson, 2012). While the present investigation did not measure the moderating role of race/color (i.e., race/color of athlete) it is recommended that future researchers incorporate this variable to explore its impact.
Conclusion

In summary, the present study extends previous research on sports scandals. Two objectives guided the research. First, ascertain whether on-field and off-field sports scandals have a differential impact on sport consumers’ team identification and sport team-related behavioral intentions. Second, assess whether a sport consumers’ level of team identification moderates the impact of on-field and off-field sports scandals on subsequent sport team-related behavioral intentions. The findings of the main study demonstrate that irrespective of sports scandal type, sport consumers’ team identification levels and sport team-related behavioral intentions remain static subsequent to learning of a sports scandal, thus demonstrating no negative spillover effect on the associated sport team. Future researchers should build upon this investigation in an effort to further advance the knowledge and understanding of sport scandals.
APPENDIX A

SPORT FANDOM QUESTIONNAIRE

Wann (2002) Sport Fandom Questionnaire - Pilot Study 1 and Main Study

Please answer each of the following questions being completely honest in your responses. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers -- we simply want you to indicate the most accurate response by writing the appropriate answer in the space next to each item.

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<tr>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
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1. I consider myself to be a sport fan.
2. My friends see me as a sport fan.
3. I believe that following sport is the most enjoyable form of entertainment.
4. My life would be less enjoyable if I were not able to follow sports.
5. Being a sport fan is very important to me.
6. Please indicate your favorite sport: ________________________
APPENDIX B

PILOT STUDY 2 QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer each of the following questions, and be completely honest in your responses.

Johns et al. (2005) Negativity Effect Items

1. How do you view the events in this news article?
   Not Negative At All       Extremely Negative
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

2. How severe do the events in this news article seem to you?
   Not Severe At All       Extremely Severe
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

3. How much damage or harm is caused by the events in this news article?
   Not Harmful At All      Extremely Harmful
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

4. Regardless of what other people might think, what do you think of these events?
   Not Wrong At All        Extremely Wrong
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Scandal Classification

The news article regarding the Los Angeles Lakers player is a:
   On-Field Scandal       Off-Field Scandal

Assessment of Scenario Believability

1. How realistic is the on-field sport scandal presented in the news article?
   Not Realistic At All       Extremely Realistic
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

or

1. How realistic is the off-field sport scandal presented in the news article?
   Not Realistic At All       Extremely Realistic
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
APPENDIX C

PREVIOUS CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Main Study Questionnaire (Pretest)

Please answer each of the following questions, and be completely honest in your responses.

Merchandise Consumption Behavior

1. I have purchased Los Angeles Lakers clothing (T-shirts, caps, etc.).

   Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

2. I have purchased Los Angeles Lakers merchandise.

   Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

3. I have purchased Los Angeles Lakers souvenirs.

   Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Media Consumption Behavior

1. I have read about the Los Angeles Lakers in the daily sport pages.

   Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

2. I have visited the Los Angeles Lakers website for information on the team.

   Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
3. I have watched sports broadcasts on the local TV news for information about the Los Angeles Lakers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
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APPENDIX D

MAIN STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

Main Study Questionnaire (Pretest and Posttest)

Trail and James (2001) Team Identification Items

1. Regardless of whether the Los Angeles Lakers wins, I will continue to support them.
   
   Strongly Disagree           Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

2. I would experience a loss if I had to stop being a fan of the Los Angeles Lakers.
   
   Strongly Disagree           Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

3. Being a fan of the Los Angeles Lakers is very important to me.
   
   Strongly Disagree           Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

4. I consider myself to be a ‘real’ fan of the Los Angeles Lakers.
   
   Strongly Disagree           Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Behavioral Intentions Items

Please answer each of the following questions, and be completely honest in your responses.

Repeat Purchase Intentions

1. I will attend another game being played by the Los Angeles Lakers in the near future.
   
   Strongly Disagree           Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

2. I will attend more games being played by the Los Angeles Lakers in the next few years.
   
   Strongly Disagree           Strongly Agree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
3. I will attend a game being played by the **Los Angeles Lakers** in the next home series/game.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. I will attend another game being played by the **Los Angeles Lakers** this season.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Merchandise Consumption Intentions**

1. I will purchase the **Los Angeles Lakers** clothing (T-shirts, caps, etc.) in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. I will purchase the **Los Angeles Lakers** merchandise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. I will purchase the **Los Angeles Lakers** souvenirs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Media Consumption Intentions**

1. I will read about the **Los Angeles Lakers** in the daily sport pages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. I will visit the **Los Angeles Lakers** website for information on the team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. I will watch sports broadcasts on the local TV news for information about the **Los Angeles Lakers**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Demographic Items

Please answer each of the following questions, and be completely honest in your responses.

1. Gender: Male ________ Female ________
2. Date of Birth: _____ / _____ / _____
3. Major Program of Study: ________________________________
4. Race: African American _____ Hispanic _____
        Native American _____ Caucasian _____
        Asian American _____ Other _____
APPENDIX E

SAMPLE NEWS ARTICLES

News Article Framing of Main Study Independent Variable Conditions

The framing practices in the two sample articles related to the presentation sequence of information were closely mirrored in the development of the fictitious sports scandal news articles that serve to represent the independent variable conditions (type of scandal) included in the main study.
Outfielder Marlon Byrd, who admitted to working with the man whose center triggered a federal investigation of steroids use and distribution among athletes, has tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs.

The league announced on Monday that the free agent has received a 50-game suspension after testing positive for Tamoxifen. He will be put on the restricted list and will remain there until Aug. 20.

Tamoxifen -- its brand name in the United States is Nolvadex -- is a medicine that blocks the effects of the estrogen hormone in the body. It is used to treat breast cancer in women or men and is used by steroid users to prevent the growth of breast tissues in men and to stop post-cycle crashes.

Byrd issued a statement through the Major League Baseball Players Association Monday.

"I made an inexcusable mistake," the statement said. "Several years ago, I had surgery for a condition that was private and unrelated to baseball. Last winter, I suffered a recurrence of that condition and I was provided with a medication that resulted in my positive test. Although that medication is on the banned list, I absolutely did not use it for performance-enhancement reasons."

"I am mortified by my carelessness and I apologize to everyone who loves this game as I do. I will serve my suspension, continue to work hard and hope that I am given an opportunity to help a club win later this season."

" -- Marlon Byrd on positive test

"I am mortified by my carelessness and I apologize to everyone who loves this game as I do. I will serve my suspension, continue to work hard and hope that I am given an opportunity to help a club win later this season."
Byrd started the season with the Cubs and was dealt to the Red Sox on April 21. He was designated for assignment by Boston on June 9 and released four days later.

Red Sox general manager Ben Cherington was asked if Byrd had failed any drug tests while with Boston. He said: "Not to my knowledge."

Red Sox manager Bobby Valentine was surprised as well.

"He played here and he played well," Valentine said. "I had no indication or I don't think anyone did."

While with the Cubs in spring training, Byrd admitted that he was the only player in baseball who still worked with Victor Conte. Conte's Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative was at the center of the steroid scandal surrounding Barry Bonds, among others.

Byrd, however, insisted that he wasn't breaking any rules. He did say that commissioner Bud Selig had asked him to sever ties with Conte.

"[The pressure from MLB] does bother me sometimes," Byrd said to ESPNChicago.com in spring training. "But I think there should be pressure on everybody.

"I'm always going to watch what I take. I'm not going to say I have a bull's-eye on my back, but I think a lot of people are waiting for me to get my first positive test and miss 50 games. They'd like that just so they can say, 'We told you so.' I know that won't happen. I know I'm clean. I know the supplements I take are clean. I'm going to make sure of that."

On Monday, a post on Conte's Twitter account said he had nothing to do with the positive test.

"I did not give Marlon Byrd tamoxifen or provide him with consultation regarding his use of this drug," the tweet read.

Byrd is a career .278 hitter with 82 homers and 445 RBIs over 11 seasons with the Phillies, Nationals, Rangers, Cubs and Red Sox.

He hit .210 in 47 games with the two teams this year, though he hit .270 with a homer and seven RBIs in 34 games with Boston. The Red Sox picked him up when they had a shortage in the outfield after a rash of injuries.

"It's just unfortunate that it's another notch in baseball's belt as far as the drug policy and steroids has to do
with the game" Cubs manager Dale Sveum said. "It's unfortunate those things keep happening."

Byrd finished fourth in the National League Rookie of the Year voting in 2003 with the Phillies and was a National League All-Star with the Cubs in 2010.

*Information from ESPNBoston.com's Gordon Edes, ESPNChicago.com's Bruce Levine and The Associated Press was used in this report.*
Brandon Austin and Rodney Bullock are being investigated by Providence police for an alleged sexual assault of a student, according to a report from the Wall Street Journal on Tuesday night.

Austin and Bullock were both suspended on November 6th for what head coach Ed Cooley said at the time was a result of the two freshmen “not upholding their responsibilities as student-athletes.” In December, the school announced that the suspensions would be for the entire season. Bullock is still a member of the team, but Austin transferred out of the program over winter break and has since enrolled at Oregon. He’s eligible to play this December.

The report states that the alleged victim approached the Providence police department “a couple of weeks ago”, but that the incident itself occurred in November before the basketball season had started. It also states that the victim, who knew the players, went to campus police immediately after the alleged assault occurred.

Austin was unable to be reached for comment, but Bullock’s attorney told the Journal that the school carried out an investigation by a former Rhode Island state police officer, and that the police have not spoked to his client.

Austin, a 6-foot-7 point guard, was a top 50 recruit in the Class of 2013. Bullock was a top 150 recruit.
APPENDIX F

SPORTS SCANDAL NEWS ARTICLES

Main Study Independent Variable Conditions

The recurrent on-and off-field sport scandal case examples identified in the focus group pilot study were utilized in the development of the fictitious sport scandal news articles that serve to represent the independent variable conditions (type of scandal) included in the main study.
On-Field Sport Scandal News Article: Los Angeles Lakers Player Tests Positive for Performing-Enhancing Drugs

The Los Angeles Times has learned an unidentified Los Angeles Lakers player is alleged to have tested positive for an elevated testosterone level.

According to league sources, the unnamed Lakers team member was taking nutritional supplements throughout the 2010/2011 regular season that contained a substance commonly known as DHEA (Dehydroepiandrosterone) – a chemical compound made naturally in the human body but also found in several over-the-counter supplements at nutritional stores. DHEA increases muscle size through its ability to increase levels of a compound called insulin-like growth factor-1. IGF-1 is critical for muscle growth and strength gains in men and women. DHEA is a prohibited substance under the World Anti-Doping Code by the World Anti-Doping Agency and is banned by most sport leagues, including the NBA.

This news comes less then six months after the Dallas Mavericks ended the Los Angeles Lakers' NBA reign, sweeping the two-time defending champions out of the playoffs with a 122-86 Western Conference second-round victory.
Off-Field Sport Scandal News Article: Los Angeles Lakers Player Charged with Sexual Assault

The Los Angeles Times has learned an unidentified Los Angeles Lakers player is alleged to have pled guilty to the sexual assault of a twenty-four year old woman from Los Angeles that happened October 18, 2011.

According to Los Angeles police, after spending time in a Los Angeles bar, the unnamed Lakers team member and three male friends invited a group of four females to an after hours party held at the Sheraton Universal Los Angeles Hotel.

Police said the alleged assault took place in a room at the hotel.

The unidentified Lakers player was arrested, then was released on the morning October 19, 2011 after posting a $50,000 cash bond.

The news comes less then six months after the Dallas Mavericks ended the Los Angeles Lakers' NBA reign, sweeping the two-time defending champions out of the playoffs with a 122-86 Western Conference second-round victory.
APPENDIX G
MANIPULATION CHECK

Please answer each of the following questions, and be completely honest in your responses.

Johns et al. (2005) Negativity Effect Items

1. How do you view the events in this news article?
   Not Negative At All     Extremely Negative
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

2. How severe do the events in this news article seem to you?
   Not Severe At All      Extremely Severe
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

3. How much damage or harm is caused by the events in this news article?
   Not Harmful At All     Extremely Harmful
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

4. Regardless of what other people might think, what do you think of these events?
   Not Wrong At All       Extremely Wrong
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Scandal Classification

The news article regarding the Los Angeles Lakers player is a:

On-Field Scandal  Off-Field Scandal

Assessment of Scenario Believability

1. How realistic is the on-field sport scandal presented in the news article?
   Not Realistic At All     Extremely Realistic
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

or

1. How realistic is the off-field sport scandal presented in the news article?
   Not Realistic At All     Extremely Realistic
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
APPENDIX H

FSU HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Approval to conduct the main study was obtained from the Florida State University Human Subjects Committee on August 13, 2010. A renewal of approval for continuation of the main study project was obtained from the Florida State University Human Subjects Committee on September 16, 2011.
Use of Human Subjects in Research - Approval Memorandum

From: Human Subjects (humansubjects@magnet.fsu.edu)
Sent: Fri 8/13/10 2:22 PM
To: *****
Cc: *****

Office of the Vice President For Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 8/13/2010

To: Jennifer Hamilton

Address: *****
Dept.: *****

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
The Impact of On-and Off-Field Sport Scandals on Team Identification and Consumption Intentions

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the research proposal referenced above has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Committee at its meeting on 08/11/2010. Your project was approved by the Committee.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting research subjects.

If the project has not been completed by 8/10/2011 you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.
You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the Chair of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc: Jeffrey James, Advisor
HSC No. 2010.4779
Use of Human Subjects in Research - Approval Memorandum

From: Human Subjects (humansubjects@magnet.fsu.edu)
Sent: Fri 9/16/11 9:40 AM
To: *****
Cc: *****

Office of the Vice President For Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392

RE-APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 9/16/2011

To: Jennifer Hamilton

Address: *****
Dept.: *****

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Re-approval of Use of Human subjects in Research

The Impact of On-and Off-Field Sport Scandals on Team Identification and Consumption Intentions

Your request to continue the research project listed above involving human subjects has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee. If your project has not been completed by 9/12/2012, you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the committee.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your renewal request, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this re-approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting of research subjects. You are reminded that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report in writing, any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the Chair of your department and/or your major professor are reminded of their responsibility for being informed concerning
research projects involving human subjects in their department. They are advised to review the protocols as often as necessary to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

Cc: Jeffrey James, Advisor
HSC No. 2011.6808
APPENDIX I

APPROVED STAMPED CONSENT FORMS

The proposed consent form that would be used to recruit research subjects received stamped approval and reapproval from the Florida State University Human Subjects Committee on August 12, 2010 and September 15, 2011 respectively.
Appendix B

Experiment Information Sheet and Consent Form

Team Identification and Behavioral Intentions: A Case in Professional Sport

You are invited to be in a research study on team identification and consumer behavior. You were selected as a possible participant because you have been identified as a sport consumer. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Jennifer Hamilton, a faculty member in the Department of Exercise and Sport Studies at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to explore team identification and consumer behavior in the arena of professional sport.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

The experimental investigation will include two stages of data collection. In each phase of the experiment, research participants will be administered a questionnaire that is designed to measure and explore two concepts of interest: team identification and behavioral intentions. The second phase of the experiment will be performed one week subsequent to the collection of pretest measures.

Risks and benefits of being in the Study:

Risks: There are no foreseen risks in participation.

Benefits: Research participation will provide the researcher with information that will be used to build knowledge and understanding on sport team identification and sport consumer behavior.

Compensation:

No compensation for participation will be provided.

FSU Human Subjects Committee Approved 8/12/10. Void after 8/10/11 HSC# 2010.4779
Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private and confidential to the extent permitted by law. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records and questionnaires will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to research materials. All research materials will be used for educational purposes and will be destroyed one year after the researcher’s (Jennifer Hamilton) successful completion of the doctoral dissertation defense.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of California at Santa Barbara or other cooperating institution, Florida State University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Jennifer Hamilton under the supervision of Jeffrey James, PhD. You may ask any question you have now. If you have a question later, you are encouraged to contact Jennifer Hamilton at [jennifer.hamilton@essr.ucsb.edu](mailto:jennifer.hamilton@essr.ucsb.edu)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the FSU IRB at 2010 Levy Street, Research Building B, Suite 276, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742, or 850-644-8633, or by email at humansubjects@magnet.fsu.edu. You may also contact the UCSB Office of Research at 3227 Cheadle Hall, University of California, Santa Barbara 93106-2050, or by phone 805-893-4188.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

_________________________  _______________________
Signature                  Date

FSU Human Subjects Committee Approved 8/12/10. Void after 8/10/11 HSC# 2010.4779
Appendix B

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If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the FSU IRB at 2010 Levy Street, Research Building B, Suite 276, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742, or 850-644-8633, or by email at humansubjects@magnet.fsu.edu. You may also contact the UCSB Office of Research at 3227 Cheadle Hall, University of California, Santa Barbara 93106-2050, or by phone 805-893-4188.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

__________________________  __________________________
Signature                  Date

Signature of Investigator       Date

REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

JENNIFER MICHAEL HAMILTON (VITA)

EDUCATION

Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL
Ph.D. in Sport Management
2005 - 2016

Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL
M.S. in Sport Management
2005

Brock University, St. Catharines, ON
B.A. Honors in Sport Management
2004

University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
International Student Exchange Program (ISEP) – Sport Management
2003

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA

Lecturer - Sport Administration - ESS 130
2011 - 2015

Lecturer – Sport Management – ESS 140
2008 - 2015

Lecturer – Research Methods in Sport Studies – ESS 160
2008 - 2015

Lecturer – Current Issues in Sport – ESS 160
2008 - 2014

Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

Lecturer – Sport Diversity – PET 4930
2008
Lecturer – Sport Law – PET 4491  
2007

Lecturer – Current Issues in Sport – PET 4471  
2007

Lecturer – Sport Marketing – PET 4461  
2006

Teaching Assistant – Sport in Society – PET 4930  
2006

Teaching Assistant – Sport Marketing – PET 5455  
2006

**Brock University, St. Catharines, ON**

Teaching Assistant – Research Design and Evaluation – SPMA 2P07  
2003

**INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE**

**UCSB Recreational Sports, Santa Barbara, CA**  
Fundraising Coordinator  
2011 - 2012

**PowerBar Canada, Toronto, ON**  
Event Staff  
2004 & 2006

**Seminole Athletic Ticket Office, Tallahassee, FL**  
Graduate Assistant  
2004 - 2005

**Toronto Maple Leafs - Maple Leafs Sports & Entertainment Ltd., Toronto, ON**  
Community Relations Intern – Go Kids Go! The Leafs Fund  
2003

**Tennessee Fury - National Women’s Basketball League, Knoxville, TN**  
Promotions Coordinator  
2003

**Knoxville Ice Bears – Atlantic Coast Hockey League, Knoxville, TN**  
Marketing and Public Relations Intern  
2002 - 2003