

ADDRESSING THE LACK OF BASEBALL CONSUMPTION AMONGST
AFRICAN AMERICANS

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

The African American consumer represents a valuable market segment in the United States. This target market possesses both substantial purchasing power and future growth potential. Yet, baseball marketers have failed to secure the African American target market as a viable consumer base. As such, marketers should understand what factors encourage African Americans to consume sport, and what factors deter African Americans from consuming baseball. Thus, the purpose of my study was to advance the literature by investigating the factors influencing African American baseball consumption.

African American participants were surveyed in order to ascertain the motivational aspects they perceived to be present (or absent) in both a favorite sport and baseball. Results suggest that African American participants believed baseball failed to contain the following motivational factors: skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation. Still, of the factors measured, results suggest that the factors, 'skill' and 'drama' were the two most influential factors motivating participants to consume sport.

The current study utilized a set of focus group interviews to identify what factors, if any, deterred baseball consumption amongst African Americans. Results suggest two broad categories best represent the reasoning for a lack of baseball consumption: perception of baseball and socio-cultural dynamics. Within these two categories, six general dimensions were found that best characterized the reasons for not consuming

baseball: A perceived lack of excitement in baseball, a perceived lack of skill in baseball, a distaste towards baseball's structure, a lack of access for young African Americans, African American player representation, and African American players in pop-culture.

The current study examined African American attitudes towards baseball consumption by investigating the role of perceived fit and its association with the theory of reasoned action. The study utilized an experimental design to investigate if racial identification and identifiable motivational factors would influence perceived fit. Results from the study indicate that advertisement setting (i.e., advertisements containing identifiable motivational factors) was not influential upon perceived fit; yet, endorser race did moderate the relationship between advertisement setting and perceived fit. Subsequently, perceived fit was found to be influential upon attitudes and subjective norms. Furthermore, these factors – attitudes and subjective norms – were significantly related to intentions to consume baseball.

DEDICATION

To my mother, Margaret Brown; this Earth has never seen such a supportive,
kindhearted, loving woman.

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The process of writing a dissertation is both a daunting and humbling experience. It is beyond question that without the help of others, I could not have gotten through it. As this is the case, I would like to use this opportunity to thank those persons who not only made this process possible, but who made this chapter of my life worthwhile. First and foremost, I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Gregg Bennett for being nothing short of a father figure. His support, both inside of academia and in everyday life, will be forever appreciated. I am indebted to you for your constant support and encouragement.

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love and encouragement. Finally, I of course have to thank the woman who I call my mother; though I am certain she is truly an angel in disguise. I cannot express in words how much you mean to me, and how much you inspire me. I love you.

With this being said, I am truly nothing but the Lord's creation. I do all in His name; what I have is truly His. Therefore, in writing this entire dissertation, it goes without saying that I do everything, let alone my work, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Blessed Mother Mary.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

African Americans constitute a viable economic influence in the United States, as they possess a buying power expected to exceed \$1.1 trillion by 2015 ("Black buying power," 2011). Several scholars have not only attested to this target market's economic worth, but have upheld this demographic as a worthwhile market for sport organizations (Akçay, Sable, & Dalgin, 2012; Simpson, Snuggs, Christiansen, & Simples, 2000). In terms of their purchasing power in the United States, reports suggest that 2.4 million affluent African American households possess a household income of \$75,000 or more. Furthermore, in comparison to all other high-income households, African Americans spend 300 percent more in higher end retail grocers ("Black buying power," 2011). According to Miller and Washington's (2011) consumer behavior report, over the last five years there has been a 47% increase in the amount of African American households making more than \$75,000 (p. 161). The same report suggests African Americans possess a 'purchasing power' that exceeds \$900 billion (Miller & Washington, 2011). Schreiber (2001) describes the African American market as being very important to American business, stating, "companies who capture the attention and brand loyalty of this market today will position themselves for security and success in the years to come" (p. ix). According to Oyewole (2007), "two of the factors for market segment selection are size and growth potentials. The African American market segment has both" (p.77). This market is likewise important to sport business. In fact, many professional sports

leagues have large percentages of African American labor and recognize the importance of obtaining African Americans as consumers of sport (Lapchick, 2011). Still, while some have developed tactics to reach this market segment, the ability for sport marketers to continually develop proficient marketing strategies is an ongoing challenge (Simpson, Snuggs, Christiansen, & Simples, 2000; Snuggs, 1991).

Such is the case with baseball, a sport that has witnessed a lack of consumption and participation from the African American community (Fisher, 2012). Over the last decade both player percentages and consumption rates within Major League Baseball (MLB) have declined substantially (Clinkscales, 2013; Egodigwe, 2009). For example, in the 2012 MLB season the African American player population reached an all-time low, as African Americans represented 8.05% of players in the league (Nightengale, 2012). This number is less than half of the 17.25% of African Americans who played in the league when it was only twelve years removed from integrating African Americans (Nightengale, 2012). Though the statistics have fluctuated, MLB has witnessed a consistent decrease in the amount of African Americans playing professional baseball since 1995, when 19% of all Major League players were African American (Gaines, 2013). The under-representation of African Americans playing baseball is particularly evident in college baseball, as African Americans only represented 4.5% of all college baseball players in 2006 (Butts, Hatfield, & Hatfield, 2007). In conferences such as the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC), where each member institution is known as a historically black college and university (HBCU), African Americans still only represent less than 40% of the baseball players in the conference (Butts et al., 2007).

In terms of consumption, the statistics are equally alarming. African Americans constitute less than five percent of spectators at some Major League ballparks (Ogden & Hilt, 2003). In 2002 only 9.5% of fans who watched baseball on television were African American (Armour, 2002), and since this time, the percentage has only decreased (Livingstone, 2011). In college baseball, amidst such conferences as the Southeastern Conference (SEC), fan attendance for African Americans was less than 1% in 2006 (Butts et al., 2007). While the average attendance rate for weekend SEC baseball games in 2006 was over 3,500, these games only averaged seven African Americans attendees (Butts et al., 2007). Of the millions who viewed the most widely consumed MLB event – the most recent 2012 MLB World Series - only 9% were African American (Clinkscales, 2013). In addition, the 2012 Scarborough sports marketing report suggested that only 10% of those who considered themselves ‘fans’ of baseball were African American (“Fan demographics,” 2010). These numbers showcase a stark contrast from reports in 1997, when MLB’s African American fan base surpassed 18% (Egodigwe, 2009).

In seeing such a stark decline in African American participation and consumption rates, Bud Selig, the Commissioner of MLB, has launched a diversity task force for the league to address the lack of interest towards baseball amongst African Americans (Nightengale, 2013). The current study seeks to address the same issue, in that it will seek to investigate the aspects that may be deterring African Americans from consuming baseball. Therefore, in the current study, the author will seek to apprehend and understand the factors influencing baseball consumption among the African American audience.

One particular aspect that is known to influence sport consumption is sport consumer motivation. Several scholars have recognized the importance of sport consumer motivation, in that if certain motivational factors are present in a particular sport, then the sport will likely provoke consumption amongst the individuals who value these motivational factors (James & Ross, 2004; Tokuyama & Greenwell, 2011; Wann, 1995). That is, when certain motivational factors are present (or absent) in a specific sports setting, then individuals will be more (or less) motivated to consume that particular sport. For example, in Kwon and Trail's (2001) study on sport consumer motivation, the authors found 'aesthetic value' to be a significant factor influencing sport consumption for international students. Therefore, Kwon and Trail (2001) suggest that if aesthetic value is present in a sport, then international students are more likely to consume that sport in comparison to other sports that do not contain aesthetic value. This is particularly relevant to African American sport consumption, as Armstrong (2002b) suggests African Americans require a particular set of motivational factors to be present in a sport if they are to consider consumption. The current study will therefore examine the motivational factors influencing African Americans to consume sport, and will determine which of the motivational factors, if any, are perceived by African Americans to be embedded in the sport of baseball.

In the current study, it is also important to understand racial identity; for scholars suggest 'racial identification' to be an important factor influencing African American sport consumption (Armstrong 2002a; Armstrong, 2002b; Hanssen, 2001; Liu, Huand, & Minghua, 2007). In the current study, the reference of racial identification in line with

African Americans will refer to and define the African American audience as a group of individuals who have a common sociopolitical history. Rather than the group being defined upon biological or genetic factors, the African American audience is identified as a social group carrying a common set of social characteristics, and shared cultural values (Harrison Jr & Harrison, 2002). According to Xu, Shim, Lotz, and Almeida (2004), one's racial identification is an integral part of one's social identity and will serve as a key component towards an individual's decision making process. This is particularly relevant for minorities such as African Americans, as Deshpande, Hoyer, and Donthu (1986) state that minorities possess higher levels of self-identification than other ethnic or racial groups. This is important; as Williams and Qualls (1989) state that having high levels of racial identification will encourage behaviors that affirm identity characteristics. That is, individuals will likely consume a product given the product possesses features that are representative of one's race. Put in a sports context, if consumers perceive a sport to contain similar racial characteristics, then they will consider consuming the sport based upon the sport's ability to affirm aspects of their racial identification (Harrison Jr & Harrison, 2002). Thus, if a product (or sport in this case) contains features that endorse racial and cultural values, then a consumer who identifies with those values will be inclined to consider consumption (Xu et al., 2004). Conversely, if a sport does not contain features that affirm an individual's racial characteristics, then the sport will likely be rejected by those with high levels of racial identification.

These notions, in accordance to baseball, can be further translated to the African American consumer. Ogden and Hilt (2003) claim that baseball consumption by the African American community has regressed due to the sport lacking a means to identify with the African American culture. Moreover, Breckenridge and Goldsmith (2009) state that a change in culture by the sport (i.e., unidentifiable players and unidentifiable marketing campaigns), has allowed baseball to become less attractive to African Americans. Rather, African Americans have become more attracted to sports such as football or basketball – sports which simulate familiar racial traits (Reilly, 2003). In the current study therefore, I seek to ascertain the specific aspects of baseball that fail to embody these racial traits, and therefore deter baseball consumption amongst African Americans.

In Study 1, I provide an overview of the body of literature concerning sport consumer motivation and its association with the African American baseball consumer. African American participants are surveyed to identify the motivational aspects they perceived as either being present or absent in the sport of baseball. This was done using a quantitative comparative analysis that compared the perceived motivational aspects present in baseball, a favorite sport and sport in general. Such an examination is meaningful because it allows marketers to understand the motivational traits that influence African Americans to consume sport. Furthermore, it allows marketers to understand the motivational factors that African Americans perceive as being absent in baseball. Thus, in ascertaining these absent factors, sport managers and marketers can capitalize on the utilization of these factors within marketing campaigns and promotions.

In Study 2, I further examined the African American perspective on baseball consumption with the support of racial identification literature. Along with adhering to the motivational factors influencing African Americans to consume sport, I examine the role of racial identification and its influence upon baseball consumption in qualitative form. This was achieved through a set of focus group interviews, where African American participants who did not consider themselves baseball fans were asked about their sport consumption decisions in accordance with their racial identification.

Studies 1 and 2 showcased the importance of certain motivational factors and the importance of one's racial identification. In particular, Study 1 suggests that participants did not consider baseball to uphold the following motivational constructs: skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation. However, participants labeled 'drama' and 'skill' as the two leading motivational factors influencing them to consume a favorite sport. Furthermore, Study 2 suggests that participants are deterred from baseball because of the sport's inability to contain certain motivational factors (particularly, excitement and skill) and racial similarities (both in the way the sport is played, and the players within the sport). Study 3 therefore warrants a need for the inspection of excitement and skill, and their ability to entice sport consumption amongst African Americans. The changeover from utilizing the construct 'excitement,' instead of, or in addition to the construct 'drama,' is warranted by several pieces of literature. According to Rubin and Rubin (1982), who examined the constructs effecting television viewing motivations, both the constructs 'drama' and 'excitement' were found to be statistically correlated with each other. In addition, O'Gara (2008)

states that the psychological learning process of understanding drama, first comes by understanding the excitement construct. Furthermore, in an investigation upon baseball consumption, Hsieh, Wang, & Yoder (2011) specifically define drama as “the extent to which an individual watches games because of the *excitement...*” (p. 141). Therefore, in concern to the aforementioned literature, Study 3 will utilize the construct ‘excitement’ as a representative motivational factor depicting the foundations of both constructs, ‘drama’ and ‘excitement’. The purpose of Study 3 was to therefore examine the African American outlook on baseball given that participants would perceive baseball to contain the abovementioned factors (i.e., racial similarities, and likeable motivational factors, such as skill and excitement) within an advertisement.

In sum, this dissertation research explores African American perspectives on baseball consumption. Through three studies I (a) examine the motivational factors African Americans perceive as being either present or absent in baseball, (b) examine the role of racial identification amongst African Americans in their decisions to consume baseball, and (c) investigate the African American perspective on consuming baseball given that the sport is perceived to contain racial similarities and likeable motivational factors (i.e., skill and excitement). The remainder of this dissertation is prepared as followed. In Chapter II, III, and IV, I discuss the analyses and present the findings from Study 1, 2, and 3 respectively. Lastly, in Chapter V, I provide an overall discussion of the studies, offer academic and practical implications, discuss the limitations of the dissertation, and disclose suggested topics for future research.

Epistemological Paradigm

In seeing that the current study involves understanding a diverse array of opinions, I undertake this study with an interpretive constructive perspective (Haverkamp & Young, 2007). Constructivism is a viewpoint stating that one's reality is fashioned by interacting with others; such that, in understanding the perspective of others, individuals will be able to form their own reality based upon such interaction (Raskin, 2002). In an effort to understand the varying perspectives of other individuals throughout this current study, a constructive standpoint is employed to shape the primary researcher's viewpoint on the current phenomenon. Thus, in utilizing this standpoint, I will obtain my suppositions, and fashion my conclusions based upon my understanding and interpretation of the various participant perspectives.

CHAPTER II

AFRICAN AMERICAN MOTIVATIONS TO CONSUME BASEBALL

African Americans constitute an important economic market in the United States with a purchasing power expected to exceed \$1.1 trillion by 2015 ("Black buying power," 2011). According to a report from Nielson, 2.4 million African American families possess a household income of \$75,000 or more. In addition, African Americans spend 300 percent more in higher end retail grocers in comparison to all other high-income households ("Black buying power," 2011). Schriber (2001) suggests "companies who capture the attention and brand loyalty of" the African American market "will position themselves for security and success in the years to come" (p. ix). Increasing brand loyalty and generating consistent revenue are important objectives of sport businesses. Therefore, it appears that the African American segment has the potential to be a productive market for the sport industry.

Still, this is an issue in the sport marketing field, as baseball has realized a recent decrease in consumption rates from the African American community (Clinkscales, 2013). While in 1997, 18% of MLB fans were African American (Egodigwe, 2009), more recent reports suggest that only ten percent of African Americans consider themselves fans of MLB ("Fan demographics," 2010). In 2002 only 9.5% of fans who watched baseball on television were African American, and since this time the percentage has only decreased (Armour, 2002; Livingstone, 2011). Of the millions of viewers who watched the most recent (2012) MLB World Series, only 9% of total viewers were

African American (Clinkscales, 2013). The decrease of African American consumption of baseball merits inspection. Specifically understanding the motives associated with African American sport consumption seems especially warranted.

In concern to sport consumption, Armstrong (2002b) suggests African Americans are different than other groups in terms of the factors influencing them to consume sports. For example, African Americans are more likely to consume sports that they can identify with racially (Armstrong, 2002a), and are more likely to be attracted to sporting events which offer a sense of family appeal (Armstrong, 2008). Furthermore, Armstrong (2002b) states that African Americans, in comparison to other groups, are enticed to consume sport by an entirely different set of motivational constructs. This is important, as scholars have suggested that when certain motivational constructs are present in a sports setting, these constructs will sway consumption decisions (James & Ross, 2004; Tokuyama & Greenwell, 2011; Wann, 1995). That is, if certain motivational factors are present (or absent) in a particular sports setting, then individuals will be more (or less) motivated to consume that sport. The current study will therefore seek to ascertain the motivational factors African Americans perceive as being present (or absent) in the sport of baseball. A secondary purpose is to investigate the motives central to African American consumption of their favorite sport and to make comparisons between these motives and their motives to consume baseball. Obtaining this information will help marketers deduce the specific factors influencing consumption from each sport (i.e., baseball and a favorite sport). Furthermore, with this information marketers can also determine how each sport differs in terms of the motivational factors

they contain; thus enhancing marketing communications towards the African American audience.

Literature Review

Sport Consumer Motivation

Motivation is an important tool that can be used by sports marketers to understand consumer behavior. Consumer motivation reflects an internal aspiration to take upon behaviors that satisfy needs through the means of acquiring personal benefit (Iso-Ahola, 1982). In seeking to satisfy needs, consumers adhere to certain psychological traits that represent these needs (Ko, Park, & Claussen, 2008). In the sport management literature these traits are represented as specific factors that, if present, can directly influence motivation to consume sport (Armstrong, 2002a; James & Ross, 2002; Wann, 1995). Ko et al. (2008) label these factors as psychographic variables and state, “assessing psychographic variables is essential to understanding consumer behavior.” (p. 114). That is, if a certain sport contains a motivational factor, then consumers are likely to consume the sport because of its containment of that factor. For example, Kwon and Trail (2001) observed that American college students were motivated to consume sport based on its ability to provide a sense of ‘eustress’. Thus, in finding this, Kwon and Trail (2001) suggest that sports will need to offer these consumers a sense of eustress in order to apprehend these individuals as viable consumers.

The majority of sport consumer motivation literature is established upon two types of motivational constructs: utilitarian and hedonic (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Funk, Filo, Beaton, & Pritchard, 2009). Utilitarian motives constitute tangible attributes

of sport products (i.e., venue service, cost, players or coaches, promotions, new arenas, etc.). Hedonic motives are experiential in nature and allude to emotional responses to a product or service (i.e., escape, drama, aesthetics, affiliation, social interaction, etc.). Results from studies alluding to these two motives indicate mixed results; thus, academics call for marketers to employ both hedonic and utilitarian aspects in marketing campaigns (Funk et al., 2009; Kahle, Kambara, & Rose, 1996; Madrigal, 2006). By investigating the matters preceding consumption (motivational constructs), practitioners can utilize these aspects in marketing efforts to attract customers. Still, marketers may need to understand why consumers are interested in seeking these sport motivational factors as a means to become motivated to consume a particular behavior.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow's Theory of Motivation (Maslow, 1970) proposes that there are five categories of human needs. These needs account for human behavior in that individuals will be motivated to partake in certain behaviors that will satisfy their human needs. According to Maslow (1970), the five psychological needs are as followed: physiological (e.g., food, water, air, shelter), safety and security (protection, stability), social (affection, friendship, belonging), ego (prestige, success, self-respect), and self-actualization (self-fulfillment). Maslow (1970) states that individuals must first satisfy basic needs in order to satisfy a further set of needs (e.g., food and water will take precedence over socialization if one was both hungry and alone). Maslow's theory has been applied to a multitude of different settings. For example, Maslow's hierarchy of needs has been applied to health care (Benson & Dundis, 2003), consumer behavior

(Yalch & Brunel, 1996), and even food tourism (Tikkanen, 2007). In accordance to Maslow's hierarchy of needs relating to sport consumer motivation, McDonald, Milne and Hong (2002) state "because each of these five general needs...have been proposed in the sport literature as motivating factors for sport participation and spectatorship, Maslow's hierarchy seems to be an appropriate base upon which to build a theory of sport activity" (p.101). Therefore, the theory assists in lending support towards why certain psychological factors motivate individuals to consume sport.

Sport, in containing certain motivational factors has an ability to satisfy some of the aforementioned psychological needs (Sloan, 1989; Wann, 1995). That is, sport, in being multifaceted in nature, has the ability to fulfill certain needs by presenting consumers with factors that help alleviate these needs. For example, attending a sporting event will offer socialization and will therefore alleviate the social needs aspect of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Furthermore, studies have noted sitting in a stadium's suite as a subconscious sign for supremacy or ego-enhancement (Wakefield & Sloan, 1995). These aspects indicate that sitting in a suite would therefore satisfy the ego need of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Other studies have noted sports' ability to offer a sense of escape from the every-day world (James & Ross, 2004; Kwon & Trail, 2001). In doing this, individuals have the ability to gain a sense of self-actualization; again, fulfilling one of the needs from Maslow's hierarchy. Aspects such as entertainment, drama, and family value are factors that most sports include and that scholars say motivate individuals to consume sport (Armstrong, 2002b; Wann, 1995).

While certain sports may not include motivational aspects that satisfy all of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, they still have the ability to satiate some of these needs. According to Maslow (1970), satisfying at least some of the psychological needs and not all is sufficient enough to motivate individuals to partake in certain behaviors. Therefore, in sport having certain motivational constructs, they are at least able to satisfy some consumer needs, and are therefore able to influence individuals to partake in certain behaviors (i.e., consuming sport). In the sports context, individuals will choose to consume sport due for its ability to include motivational constructs, and therefore its ability to satisfy a set of needs. In seeing the ability of motivational constructs to satisfy needs and induce behaviors, scholars have assembled a variety motivational constructs in scale form to measure a sport's ability to contain certain motivational factors. Furthermore, the scales are used to determine the particular aspects that are more influential in determining motivation to consume sport in comparison to others. The following section will discuss sport consumer motivation scales and their relationship with consumption habits.

Sport Consumer Motivation Scales

Sport consumer motivation scales itemize an array of characteristics (i.e., drama, skill, family value, etc.) specifically intended to rationalize motives for sport consumption. Sport managers therefore create advertisements, promotions and endorsements that embody these characteristics as a means to attract both new and current customers (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2007). Furthermore, and in accordance with the current study's interest, scholars employ these scales to identify certain motivational

factors that encourage consumption from specific demographics (Tokuyama, & Greenwell, 2011; Wann, Grieve, Zaplac, & Pease, 2008).

A variety of sport consumer motivation scales employ a diverse array of hedonic and utilitarian motivational factors (see Funk et al., 2009; Kahle et al., 1996; Madrigal, 2006; Wann, 1995). From the wealth of scales, an ample array of motivational factors has come forth; all of which have been deemed as reliable predictors of sport consumption habits. For example, James and Ross (2004) label empathy, social interaction, family, team effort, team affiliation, achievement, entertainment, skill, drama, and escape as constructs significantly influencing consumption habits. Yet, Kwon and Trail (2001) identify aesthetics, eustress, group affiliation, economic, self-esteem, and identification as motivational characteristics. Both of the abovementioned studies produce significant results, yielding their associated constructs as reliable antecedents towards sport consumption.

It should be noted that of the aforementioned sport consumer motivation scales, the author does not proclaim their constructs to be conclusive in finding irrefutable sport consumption antecedents. Furthermore, the abovementioned motivational constructs are not construed to satisfy motivation towards any particular sport. For example, amongst the various motivational constructs, James and Ross (2004) found softball fans were enticed by the skill construct, whereas wrestling fans were enticed by the drama construct.

The previously mentioned investigations are advantageous towards understanding the motives responsible for influencing expenditure behaviors;

nevertheless, these studies utilize predominately white samples that may fail to express the African American perspective. In seeing that these motivational aspects are significant in fulfilling certain needs, these factors have been tested amongst a predominately Caucasian audience. Therefore, in accordance with the current study, it is important to investigate the motivational factors that are prevalent to the African American audience. For in doing so, marketers may not only find what motivates African Americans to consume sport, but find what motivational factors are able to satisfy the five aforementioned psychological needs.

Factors Influencing African American Sport Consumption

There are a number of factors influencing African Americans and their decisions to consume sport. For example, Armstrong (2001) reveals African Americans are influenced by economic factors when attending university sporting events. Furthermore, Armstrong (2008) suggests promotions, family appeal, entertainment, and social interactions influence decisions to consume sport products. Still, as in the current study, these investigations do not claim to conclude the investigation of factors affecting African American expenditure habits. Rather, as Armstrong (2002a) states, this study is partial and did not provide “an anthology of the manner in which social, cultural, political, historical, psychological, and/or economical constructs interact to influence Black consumers’ sport consumption” (p. 269). Nevertheless, this study still attempts to examine the factors motivating African Americans to consume sports, particularly baseball. Therefore, in order to examine motivational consumption habits, it is important to understand the various aspects influencing African American sport consumption.

In reaction to the wealth of motivation scales that accommodate the Caucasian audience, Armstrong (2002b) created the Black Consumer Sport Motivation Scale (BCSMS) to specifically identify factors that influence African Americans to consume sport. Armstrong's scale development originated from research indicating disparities amongst African Americans and Caucasians who completed Wann's (1995) existent Sport Fan Motivation Sclae (SFMS). The original SFMS contained 9 items, incorporating entertainment, eustress, aesthetics, group affiliation, cultural affiliation, self-esteem, family, escape, and economics as key factors prompting motivation to consume sport. Both theoretical justification and statistical obstructions enabled Armstrong (2002b) to further examine Wann's (1995) SFMS with an African American sample. After the examination of Wann's (1995) original 9 motivation constructs, Armstrong (2002b) created the BCSMS, which included 7 variables: eustress, group recreation, aesthetics, cultural affiliation, group entertainment, escape, and personal investment. These constructs were deemed appropriate for measuring motivation to consume sport for the African American audience. In addition to being statistically reliable, the 7 variables in the BCSMS were significantly correlated with intention to consume sports. According to Armstrong (2002b), these variables are said to be particularly relevant to the African American audience for their ability to specifically speak to the appeal of African Americans when consuming sport.

Holt (1995) furthers the notion of these variables being particularly relevant to certain consumers. Holt (1995) suggests individuals will choose to consume a sport based on their sense of 'appreciation' for a sport's ability to uphold certain values.

Specifically, Holt (1995) claims that individuals may seek to consume baseball as long as they view sports as being aesthetically pleasing, and involving a sense of action.

Furthermore, Holt (1995) claims that individuals will choose to consume a sport based on a sports' ability to allow consumers to integrate. Particularly, this refers to a sport being able to uphold a constitutive element of one's self-identity. Baseball, according to Holt (1995), offers a wide array of factors that may allow spectators to integrate themselves with the sport. For example, Holt (1995) suggests baseball offers a sense of 'assimilation' and 'personalization,' in where viewers of the game are able to become personalized with the game based on it upholding a sense of similarity with consumers. Still, within the current context, African American consumers may find it difficult to personalize with the sport of baseball for it having a low number of African American players. This is an issue raised by Akcay et al. (2012), who state that African American consumers are heavily influenced by 'color' when making a consumption decision. That is, if African American consumers do not perceive a product (or in this case, a sport) to contain racial similarities, they will be deterred from consumption (Akcay et al, 2012).

Furthermore, while Armstrong (2002b) and Holt (1995) highlight the importance of motivational factors such as aesthetics and action, there is a possibility that African Americans may not perceive baseball to carry these factors. It is therefore important in the current study to assess African American motives to consume sport; particularly, baseball and a favorite sport. In finding the motivational factors African Americans value in a sports setting, marketers can utilize these aspects and offer them as mediums to highlight how baseball can serve to 'assimilate' and 'personalize' with the African

American consumer – two factors Holt (1995) notes as being influential upon sport consumption. Therefore, the following research questions are presented:

RQ1 – What motivational factors do African American participants perceive as being present or absent in baseball?

RQ2 – What motivational factors do African American participants perceive as being present or absent in a favorite sport?

Method

Armstrong (2002b) labels a number of motivational factors that culminate to form the Black Consumer Sport Motivation Scale (BCSMS; Armstrong, 2002b). In the current study, Armstrong's (2002b) BCSMS is employed to examine the motivational factors influencing African Americans to consume sport. The scale utilizes a majority of questions from Armstrong's (2002b) Black Consumer Sport Motivation Scale (BCSMS) as well as questions from James and Ross' (2004) sport consumer motivation scale. In the current investigation, the scale is used to examine the African American outlook on both baseball and a favorite sport. To date, no other scales have been constructed on African American motivations to consume professional sport. It is also important to note Armstrong (2002b) encourages the addition of new variables, supports a possibility of re-labeling the variables, and promotes the use of the BCSMS upon a diverse array of sports.

Participants

In the current investigation, I am concerned with finding the motives influencing African American sport consumption. Therefore, the investigation examined only

individuals who were self-labeled as African American. A convenient sample of 141 individuals ($n=141$; 86 females and 55 males, presented in Table 1) self-labeled as African American completed and returned the questionnaire in usable condition.

Procedure and Measures

Upon providing their own consent to participate, subjects were asked to complete a questionnaire packet containing three sections. The first section contained demographic items intended to assess gender and race. The second section included a question inquiring upon favorite sport (i.e., “What is your favorite sport?”). Participants were then asked to respond to the sport consumer motivation scale. As mentioned, the scale utilized a number of questions from Armstrong’s (2002b) Black Consumer Sport Motivation Scale (BCSMS) along with questions from James and Ross’ (2004) sport consumer motivation scale. The 7-point, 21-item scale contained a group of questions inquiring upon the following constructs: skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation. Group entertainment, aesthetics, escape, and cultural affiliation were taken from Armstrong’s (2002b) BCSMS. Due to Armstrong’s (2008) more recent study suggesting family value as a viable construct for African American sport consumption, the investigator included James and Ross’ (2004) ‘family’ construct. Furthermore, while the author utilizes the ‘aesthetics’ construct from Armstrong’s (2002b) BCSMS, James and Ross’ (2004) sentiments are taken into account, which recommends assigning ‘drama’ and ‘skill’ as their own constructs, rather than having the two constructs embedded within the ‘aesthetics’ construct. This scale was completed by participants three separate times,

each under the guise of a different topic: sport in general, a favorite sport, and baseball. For example, the scale was first completed under the guise of sport in general, i.e., “I like sports because they offer a dramatic turn of events.” The scale was then completed under the guise of a favorite sport, i.e., “My favorite sport offers a dramatic turn of events.” Lastly, the scale was completed under the guise of baseball, i.e., “Baseball offers a dramatic turn of events”.

In the current study the primary investigator seeks to not only ascertain the motivational factors African Americans perceive a favorite sport and baseball to contain, but also seeks to identify differences amongst the two categories. Therefore, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) procedure was conducted to examine the difference in the aforementioned motivational constructs (i.e., skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation).

Results

Preliminary analysis. Prior to examining the motivation constructs, several preliminary analyses and calculations were required. Initially, the items encompassing the motivation scale were summed to create a single index level. Cronbach’s alpha analyses were then used to interpret reliability of each scale and subscale. All alpha levels were deemed acceptable, above the $\alpha = .70$ benchmark (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), ranging from .74 to .94.

Motivation to consume sport. All of the motivational factors within the ‘baseball’ category (skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation) were significantly less than ($p < .01$) the scale’s midpoint

level (4), while the majority of the motivational factors within the ‘favorite sport’ category (skill, drama, group entertainment, family value, and escape) were significantly greater than ($p < .05$) the scale’s midpoint level. Though the mean scores for aesthetic value ($M=4.23$) and cultural affiliation ($M=3.9$) were above and below the scale’s midpoint level, results from a one-sample t-test indicate that these scores were not significantly greater or less than the scale’s midpoint level ($p=.1$ and $p=.66$, respectively). To further enhance these findings motivational factors were compared across each sport category (i.e., sport in general, a favorite sport, and baseball)

The comparison examination involved a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) in which ‘sport’ functioned as the independent variable, and the motivation subscale scores functioned as the dependent measures. Means and standard deviations for the motivation subscales by sport are shown in Table 2. The MANOVA revealed a significant multivariate main effect for sport, Wilks’ $\lambda = .642$, $F(14, 828) = 14.7$, $p < .001$, partial eta squared = .199. Given the significance of the overall test, the univariate main effects were examined. Significant univariate main effects for sport were obtained for all of the motivational constructs: skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation. The results are uniform in that all motivational constructs (skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation) displayed a significant difference between a favorite sport and baseball. That is, each motivational factor within the ‘favorite sport’ category was significantly greater than ($p < .05$) its respective motivational factor within the

'baseball' category (see Table 2 for descriptive statistics). The following paragraph will detail the specific univariate effects for each motivational factor.

Significant univariate main effects for sport were obtained for 'skill', $F(2, 420) = 58.657, p < .001$, partial eta square = .218, indicating a significant difference amongst the skill construct between a favorite sport (5.2) and baseball (3.27). Post hoc analyses revealed a favorite sport to contain significantly higher (PP) levels of skill than baseball. Significant univariate main effects for sport were obtained for 'drama', $F(2, 420) = 101.295, p < .001$, partial eta square = .325, indicating a significant difference amongst the drama construct between a favorite sport (5.56) and baseball (3.2). Post hoc analyses revealed a favorite sport to contain significantly higher (PP) levels of drama than baseball. Significant univariate main effects for sport were obtained for 'aesthetic value', $F(2, 420) = 40.54, p < .001$, partial eta square = .162, indicating a significant difference amongst the aesthetic value construct between a favorite sport (4.23) and baseball (2.75). Furthermore, post hoc analyses revealed a favorite sport to contain significantly higher (PP) levels of aesthetic value than baseball. Significant univariate main effects for sport were obtained for 'group entertainment', $F(2, 420) = 20.03, p < .001$, partial eta square = .087, indicating a significant difference amongst group entertainment between a favorite sport (4.69) and baseball (3.51). Post hoc analyses revealed a favorite sport to contain significantly higher (PP) levels of group entertainment than baseball. Significant univariate main effects for sport were obtained for 'family value', $F(2, 420) = 19.8, p < .001$, partial eta square = .086, indicating a significant difference amongst the family value construct between a favorite sport (4.69) and baseball (3.51). Upon the family

value construct post hoc analyses revealed a favorite sport to contain significantly higher (PP) levels of family value than baseball. Significant univariate main effects for sport were also obtained for 'escape', $F(2, 420) = 37.11, p < .001$, partial eta square = .150, indicating a significant difference amongst the escape construct between a favorite sport (4.35) and baseball (2.88). Upon the escape construct post hoc analyses revealed a favorite sport to contain significantly higher (PP) levels of escape than baseball. Significant univariate main effects for sport were obtained for 'cultural affiliation', $F(2, 420) = 35.273, p < .001$, partial eta square = .144, indicating a significant difference amongst the cultural affiliation construct between a favorite sport (3.93) and baseball (2.33). Post hoc analyses revealed a favorite sport to contain significantly higher ($p < .05$) levels of cultural affiliation than baseball.

Overall, the constructs were embodied together to form overall motivational constructs for the two sport topics, a favorite sport, and baseball. Significant univariate main effects for sport were obtained for motivation, $F(2, 420) = 75.16, p < .001$, partial eta square = .264, indicating a significant difference amongst motivation between a favorite sport (4.67) and baseball (3.04).

Discussion and Implications

Motivational constructs are intended to measure the factors that motivate individuals to consume sport. In having certain motivational factors present, fans are able to adhere to these factors and will thus be motivated to consume a sport based on the sport's ability to contain these motivational factors. The current study conveys how a sample of African Americans perceives baseball and a favorite sport, in terms of which

motivational factors they contain. Results suggest all of the motivational factors measured within the baseball category (skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation) were below the scale's midpoint level, while, within the favorite sport category, all of these motivational constructs besides aesthetic value and cultural affiliation were above the scale's midpoint level. These findings indicate that the African American participants perceived baseball to contain low levels of the following factors: skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation. Conversely, these findings suggest that the participants perceived a favorite sport to contain high levels of skill, drama, group entertainment, family value, and escape. The significant difference between baseball and a favorite sport amongst all of the motivational constructs suggests that the current sample of African Americans perceives a difference in how baseball and a favorite sport contain each of the motivational factors. That is, participants did not simply measure motivational constructs as either high or low, but in fact perceived a difference in each sport's ability to contain the aforementioned motivational factors. Consequently, these findings answer RQ1 and RQ2.

It is important to note that the current study's findings do not indicate that baseball in itself fails to feature these motivational constructs; rather the findings suggest there is a *perception* from the current group that baseball does not contain these elements. In terms of why this perception occurs, Armstrong (2002a) suggests that African Americans' perception towards sports may influence consumption patterns. Justification is therefore warranted to enhance the African American perception that

baseball embraces a multitude of likeable motivational constructs. That is, the African American audience must not only be aware of baseball in itself, but should also be aware that baseball may in fact already contain the same motivational constructs found in a favorite sport. Therefore, in order for the African American audience to consider baseball consumption, the audience must first recognize baseball's ability to embrace certain motivational constructs. In other words, baseball must outwardly express its relationship with certain motivational constructs to influence perception when pursuing the African American audience. Accordingly, baseball marketers may need to be charged with the task of acquiring the motivational factors African Americans view as being either absent or present in baseball. It is recommended that, when promoting baseball to African Americans, marketing campaigns should require the deliberate intention of containing the motivational constructs African Americans deem desirable.

Further examination of the results exposes the outlets marketers should specifically cater to when promoting baseball to the African American audience. In accordance with the previous sentiments, baseball marketers should not only generate awareness levels towards motivational constructs embedded in baseball, but create awareness around specific motivational constructs. According to the study's results, participants indicated that of the factors they perceived a favorite sport to contain, drama and skill were given the highest ranking from participants. That is, participants perceived drama ($M=5.55$) and skill ($M=5.2$) as the two factors most embraced by a favorite sport. Furthermore, the results depict cultural affiliation ($M=3.93$) as the motivational factor least embraced by a favorite sport. In accordance with baseball, the participants

indicated they perceived family value ($M=3.51$) as the construct most embraced by baseball, and cultural affiliation ($M=2.33$) as the construct least embraced by baseball. Due to the participants' perception of a favorite sport embracing aspects such as skill and drama, it is recommended that marketing initiatives include these aspects within baseball. That being, marketing campaigns for baseball should specifically entail the skill and drama aspect of the sport (i.e., highlighting base-running skills and close-scoring playoff games).

While cultural affiliation represents a strong factor influencing African Americans to consume sport in the BCSMS (Armstrong, 2002b), the current study found cultural affiliation to be the weakest motivational factor within both baseball and a favorite sport. Nevertheless, as previous studies have suggested (Simpson et al., 2000; Deshpande et al., 1986), cultural and racial identity still bears substantial meaning to the African American community when both relating to and consuming sport. Therefore, there is a suggestion for a presence of African American baseball players within the aforementioned campaigns when specifically catering to aspects such as skill and drama.

Conclusion

Due to a lack of baseball consumption from the African American community, the current study sought to understand why baseball fails to communicate with the African American audience. Armstrong (2008) suggests the African American consumer is vastly different from other consumers in that their perception towards sports encourages their expenditure habits more than other consumers. The current study displays significance in providing insight into the African American baseball

consumption phenomenon; illuminating differences in perception towards a number of motivational factors that are perceived to be embedded in a favorite sport and baseball. Participants revealed a significant difference in the motivational factors they perceived their favorite sport to embrace, and the motivational factors they perceived baseball to embrace. Marketing strategies should therefore aim to not only increase baseball awareness amongst the African American community, but should enhance the perception of baseball's ability to embrace the motivational constructs best suited for the African American audience.

Venkatesh (1995), as cited by Armstrong (2008) asserted, "Consumer researchers, who play a critical role in the study of marketing dynamics, now are in charge to show a genuine interest in understanding ethnic groups and their practices" (p. 229). Further understanding the African American sport consumer will not only enhance efforts for baseball marketing campaigns, but will greatly enhance the field's comprehension of sport marketing theory and practice.

CHAPTER III

EXAMINING THE ROLE OF RACIAL IDENTIFICATION UPON AFRICAN AMERICAN BASEBALL CONSUMPTION: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

While extant literature reveals a difference in expenditure patterns between African American sport consumers and sport consumers of other racial backgrounds (Armstrong, 2002; Harrison Jr., Harrison, & Moore, 2002), these differences reveal distinctions towards an overall sports setting, rather than a sport-specific setting. In particular, little research has been conducted on African American baseball consumption. Consequently, there is a need for scholars to address the situation; for in doing so, sport managers can further an understanding towards both the African American consumer, and the African American baseball consumption phenomenon.

The African American consumer is a viable demographic worth pursuit in the sports industry. According to Miller and Washington's (2011) consumer behavior report, "Black households making \$75,000-plus have increased 47% in the last five years, 1.5 times faster than the general population" (p. 161). The same report suggests African Americans possess a 'purchasing power' that exceeds \$900 billion (Miller & Washington, 2011). According to Oyewole (2007), "Two of the factors for market segment selection are size and growth potentials. The African American market segment has both" (p. 77). Yet, while these figures indicate the importance of the African American audience, Major League Baseball has not obtained this demographic as a sustainable consumer base (Ogden & Hilt, 2003). Reports reveal that less than 5% of

fans at some Major League ballparks are African American, and less than 10% of viewers who watch baseball on television are African American (Armour, 2002; Livingstone, 2011). Thus, the current study seeks to further an understanding towards the low baseball consumption rate amongst African Americans.

In trying to comprehend this phenomenon, Study 1 examined the African American outlook on baseball's ability to contain certain motivational factors. These motivational factors are particularly relevant towards the current study's interest because they have been deemed as reliable predictors of African American sport consumption (Armstrong, 2002b). Study 1 suggests African Americans perceive a difference in the way baseball and a favorite sport contain certain motivational factors. In examining the results, Study 1 reveals that African Americans believe baseball *does not* contain the following motivational factors: skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation. Yet, within the same study, results indicate that African Americans believe a favorite sport *does* contain the majority of these same motivational factors (skill, drama, group entertainment, family value, escape). Findings from this study also indicate African Americans identified 'skill' and 'drama' as the motivational constructs they believe are most embedded in a favorite sport; thus indicating the importance of these two motivational factors.

Findings from Study 1 allow the author to concentrate on specific in-game factors that may motivate African Americans to consume baseball. Still, other intangible factors have been known to influence African American sport consumption. Specifically, scholars believe racial identification can be influential towards African American

consumption (Cunningham & Regan Jr, 2011; Harrison Jr & Harrison, 2002). Research suggests the more an individual identifies with a racial group, the more likely that individual will take part in behaviors that affirm identity characteristics (i.e., consumption; Williams & Qualls, 1989). In concern to sport consumption, these factors allude to an African American's ability to identify with a sport for its racial similarities. Thus, if a product (or sport in this case) contains features that endorse racial values, then a consumer who identifies with those values will be inclined to consider consumption (Wu, Tsai, & Hung, 2012). Conversely, a sport may not contain features that African Americans perceive as being similar to their racial group; thus, the group will not seek to consume a sport based on its inability to affirm racial identity characteristics.

These notions, in accordance to baseball, can be further translated to the African American consumer. Ogden and Hilt (2003) claim that African American baseball consumption patterns have decreased due to the sport lacking a means to identify with the African American culture. Breckenridge and Goldsmith (2009) state that a change in culture by the sport of baseball (i.e., unidentifiable players, marketing campaigns), has allowed it to become less attractive for African Americans in comparison to Caucasians. Rather, African Americans have become more attracted to sports such as football or basketball, which simulate their racial and cultural traits (Reilly, 2003).

In observing the importance of racial identification, and examining the results from Study 1, the purpose of the current study is to ascertain the factors deterring African American baseball consumption upon the basis of motivation and racial identification. That is, the current study will examine how motivation and racial

identification will influence baseball consumption patterns. In concern to investigating African American sport consumption habits, Armstrong (2008) states the following: “...there were inherent challenges in employing quantitative methods to (a) address the complexity of this topic, and (b) objectify and establish the cultural significance of ethnic consumption. Future research could employ qualitative procedures in this regard” (p. 229). In acknowledging this advice, the primary investigator utilizes a set of focus groups to explore the African American viewpoint on baseball consumption. To guide this investigation, three research questions were developed:

R1: What motivational factors might participants perceive as being absent in the sport of baseball?

R2: How might racial identification affect intentions to consume baseball?

R3: How might racial identification affect participant perceptions of motivational factors being present in baseball?

Literature Review

Sport Consumer Motivation

Sport consumer motivation is an activated internal state arousing, directing, and leading to sport consumption behavior (James & Ross, 2004). Though many methods are utilized to influence sport consumption, sport consumer motivation is particularly advantageous in persuading consumer behavior (Armstrong, 2002b; James, & Ross, 2004; Mullin et al., 2007; Wann et al., 2008). For in finding the aspects motivating individuals to consume sports, sport managers become acquainted with specific consumer preferences. According to Funk et al. (2009) sport consumer motives can be

categorized as either utilitarian or hedonic. Utilitarian motives represent tangible desires which highlight the attributes of a sport product or service (Funk et al., 2009). Examples of utilitarian motives include venues, coaches and players, pre-game and in-game promotions, scheduling, and admission costs (Gladden & Funk, 2002; Ross, 2007). Hedonic motives however measure the subjective emotional aspects of a sport; aspects being intangible in nature. For example, individuals who are motivated by hedonic aspects would be motivated by aspects such as excitement, escape, drama, entertainment and eustress (Funk, Ridinger, & Moorman, 2004; Madrigal, 2006; Wann, 1995). While both types of motives have been used in a wide array of sport investigations, Funk et al. (2009) note the predominant use of hedonic aspects to measure sport consumer motivation. According to Funk et al. (2009), “the dominance of scales to measure hedonic motives compared to utilitarian motives stems from the subjective nature of the sport experience and the unique aspects of various experiences” (p. 128). Still, while acknowledging this preference, Funk et al. (2009) suggest measuring both aspects; for by doing so, scholars are able to account for the intangibility and tangibility of both sport services and sport products.

Within the sport consumer motivation literature there are a variety of different motivational constructs that have been denoted as specific factors influencing individuals to consume sport (James & Ross, 2004; Ko et al., 2008; Kwon & Trail, 2001). For example, some researchers have investigated the consumer motives influencing individuals to consume different sports (Funk, Mahony, & Ridinger, 2002), while other studies have examined the motivational factors influencing individuals to

consume sports across countries (Mahony, Nakazawa, Funk, James, & Gladden, 2002). Similar to the current study, several investigations have examined the effect demographic characteristics have on the prevalence of motivational constructs. For example, Kwon and Trail (2001) suggest international students and American students differ in terms of the motivational factors influencing them to consume sport. The two groups were different in that international students (more so than American students) were highly intrigued by the 'aesthetic' aspect of sport. Other scholars have taken note of the importance of demographic characteristics and their influence upon the perception of motivational constructs. Specifically, Armstrong (2002b) suggests there is a difference in the motivational factors that influence African Americans in comparison to other individuals. The following section will therefore outline the motivational aspects of sport that are particularly relevant to the African American sport consumer.

Black Consumer Sport Motivation

Research suggests sport has a significant salience to the African American consumer in comparison to other consumers (Armstrong, 2002a; Rudman, 1986; Spreitzer, & Snyder, 1990). Ascertaining the motivational factors that influence African Americans to consume sport is thus an academic and practical challenge for sport managers. According to Armstrong (2002a),

“Mass marketing strategies are becoming less effective in an increasingly ethnically diverse society, such that sport marketers must ascertain the manner in which different practices may influence the sport behaviors and motives of ethnic minority consumers differently than ‘mainstream’ consumers” (p. 310).

Therefore, in an effort to accommodate these needs, several scholars have identified certain factors that are specifically relevant to the African American sport consumption phenomenon.

BCSMS. According to Armstrong's (2002b) Black Consumer Sport Motivation Scale (BCSMS), there are a number of motivational factors that specifically cater to African Americans' preferences towards sports. Armstrong (2002b) labels these factors as aspects that will enable African Americans to either racially identify with a sport, or form a certain perception towards a sport. Study 1 utilized a MANOVA to investigate which of these motivational factors (derived from the BCSMS) are seen as either present or absent in both a favorite sport and baseball. Study 1 also examined which of these motivational factors were prevalent in influencing African Americans to consume sport in general. The study found 'skill' and 'drama' to be the factors influencing African Americans to consume sport more so than other factors. Furthermore, the study's results indicate that these two aspects – skill and drama – were found to be the highest contained motivational factors within a favorite sport. That is, when asked which motivational factors were embedded in a favorite sport, participants revealed that skill and drama were the two highest rated factors contained in a favorite sport.

According to the results of Study 1, baseball however failed to accommodate any of the motivational aspects Armstrong (2002b) put forth as factors influential towards African American sport consumption. Each of the motivational constructs measured in Study 1 (skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation) were significantly below the midpoint level of the motivational scale.

That is, when asked if any of the motivational constructs were contained within baseball, participants indicated that all of the motivational constructs described in the scale were lowly contained in baseball. Results from the MANOVA in Study 1 indicated a significant difference between how participants perceived a favorite sport to contain all of the motivational factors and how participants perceived baseball to contain all of the motivational factors.

Racial identification. Racial identification is defined as one's psychological connection to a social group based on one's race (Sanders Thompson, 1999). Though previous scholars have identified race as a genetic and/or biological construct, recent studies have identified race as being influenced by social structures (Coakley, 2007; Hunter & Joseph, 2010; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998; Shelton & Sellers, 2000). With this information taken into account, an individual is able to develop her/his racial identification based upon having shared social experiences rather than a shared set of genetic characteristics (Harrison et al., 2002). According to Haslam, Oakes, Reynolds & Turner (1999), an individual's tendency to categorize others on the basis of race is not grounded upon aspects such as skin color or other genetic traits; rather this categorization is grounded upon aspects such as views on culture, social surroundings, customs and beliefs. An understanding of these aspects allows individuals to not only understand others, but understand one's own identity.

Individuals who are strongly identified with their race are those whose sense of self is intensely formed by a culture (Donthu & Cherian, 1994; Sanders Thompson, 1995). As such, basic values held by a culture will be strongly supported by individuals

who see themselves as part of that culture. Literature suggests minorities have a stronger sense of identification more so than other ethnic or racial groups (Deshpande et al., 1986). This is significant as Williams and Qualls (1989) state that a strong identity towards one's self will encourage behaviors that affirm identity characteristics. That is, individuals will likely consume a product given the product possesses features that are representative of one's sense of self identification (Xu, Shim, Lotz, & Almedia, 2004). Put in a sports context, if consumers perceive a sport to contain similar racial characteristics, then the sport will allow consumers a chance to affirm their identification by consuming it. For example, Armstrong (2008) suggests African American consumers attend sporting events based on the congruence between the event and its ability to identify with the African American audience. Other studies have furthered this notion of identification influencing sport consumption. According to Armstrong (2002a) one's identification is directly related to, and can inform purchasing behaviors. Identification has also been noted as a factor influencing loyalty (Sloan, 1989; Wann & Branscombe, 1993), the likelihood of sport related purchases, and the likelihood of one attending a sporting event (Fink, Parker, Brett & Higgins, 2009). Therefore, in concern to the current study, if African Americans are to consider consuming baseball, they must first perceive a sense of congruence between their racial identity and the sport of baseball.

Method

Participants and Procedures

A total of 14 African American individuals (eight males and six females, ranging from 18 - 35 in age) were interviewed. The current study's goal was to ascertain factors

preventing African Americans from consuming baseball in accordance with their racial identification and perceptions on baseball's ability to carry relevant motivational factors. In finding these aspects, one can further magnify the specific features that deter African Americans from consuming baseball. Therefore, in the current study it was necessary to interview African Americans who did not consider themselves fans of baseball. In doing so, sport managers and marketers can specifically ascertain consumption barriers; that is, in interviewing individuals who are not fans of baseball, sport managers and marketers will be able to discover the specific factors that discourage baseball consumption. As the study's purpose was to ascertain information and results that would translate to the African American audience, the investigator sought to utilize a set of focus group interviews for the reason that groups uphold the capacity to exhibit a sense of synergy that persons alone do not possess (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Furthermore, according to Krueger and Casey (2009) focus group interviews are an advantageous type of qualitative inquiry, for focus groups can specifically allow investigators to "understand differences in perspectives between groups of categories of people" (p. 19). Subsequently, a criterion purposive sample was utilized to acquire African American participants for a set of focus groups. In order to participate in a focus group, participants adhered to the following criteria: (a) participants should be African American and (b) participants should not consider baseball as a favorite sport.

Before beginning focus group interviews, a short questionnaire was given to participants to identify age and race. Semi-structured interview guides were designed to ensure free-flowing conversation. Focus groups were conducted until common themes

emerged, leading to data saturation (Creswell, 1998). Conversations converged around identification and its ability to influence motivation to consume sport. These conversations also led to asking participants about any motivational aspects that influenced them to consume sport, and seeing their perspective on baseball's ability/inability to cater to these aspects.

Data analysis. The focus group interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Transcripts of the focus groups were coded using Nvivo9 software. The data were coded by the first author to identify any themes pertaining to racial identification and African American motivation (or the lack thereof) to consume baseball. The authors utilized open (raw data themes) and axial (first-order themes) coding to analyze the recorded transcripts (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was employed, where quotations from the transcripts were utilized to represent the themes which were found (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The data were analyzed line by line in order to distinguish emerging themes. First, 72 raw data themes emerged from the open coding process which collapsed into 21 first-order themes (axial codes) that better represented the data. These themes were then grouped together to form six general dimensions which were identified by two overarching categories: 'perception of baseball' and 'socio-cultural dynamics'. As an example, themes such as "complaints of boredom" and "desire to see highlights" were grouped together to form the 'lack of excitement' dimension. Quotations (selective codes) were then chosen to best represent these dimensions and themes.

Results

The central purposes of the study were to (a) ascertain the factors deterring African Americans from consuming baseball and (b) understand the role of racial identification and its influence upon motivational factors and baseball consumption. At the outset of the focus group interviews, the researcher ascertained whether or not participants considered themselves fans of baseball. It was confirmed that of the individuals who were interviewed, none of the participants considered baseball to be a favorite sport. Amidst these results, findings suggest that two broad categories best represent this deterrence from baseball consumption: perception of baseball and socio-cultural dynamics. Each of the two categories encompasses three separate general dimensions. Therefore, in total, six general dimensions were found that best represented the motives for not consuming baseball. The six general dimensions are demonstrated using quotes drawn from the aforementioned focus group interviews.

Perception of Baseball

The following findings represent aspects that deter African Americans from consuming baseball. These particular aspects were found to be specifically representative of the game of baseball itself. The findings provide empirical support for Armstrong's (2002b) BCSMS which states that certain motivational characteristics, if not seen in a sport by African Americans will deter consumption. In the current study participants indicated that a distaste towards baseball stemmed from a perceived lack of skill and a perceived lack of excitement in the sport. Furthermore, participants were

deterred from consuming the sport due to the game's structure (i.e., rules, game length, etc.)

Perceived lack of skill. Armstrong (2002b) labeled skill as a motivational factor that should be embedded in a sport if it is to be consumed by African Americans. The current study furthers the strength of this claim by showing the importance of the skill construct. Participants in the current study were not only appreciative of a favorite sport's ability to highlight skill level, but were deterred by baseball's inability to highlight skill level. Many of the participants claimed they had an interest towards their favorite sport because of its ability to have athletes who possessed superior levels of skill. By most accounts however, participants did not perceive baseball to be a sport requiring athletic ability and/or skill. This theme can be represented by a quote from Andre, a 23 year old male: "As far as like baseball, you don't have to be an athlete to play baseball. I think that's true." This same notion was furthered by Pam (age 26) who stated, "...some people I'm friends with don't even think baseball is a sport. They don't even think that you need to be athletic to play it."

Participants then displayed a sense of disdain towards baseball players because of the perception that professional baseball players were not athletic. This disdain was met with a sense of hostility towards the current players who were considered professional athletes but did not, according to the participants' opinions, possess any athleticism. This disdain eventually led to a disdain towards the sport of baseball itself. For example, Jarred a 32 year old male stated: "If David Ortiz – 360 pounds - excels in a sport, that is not telling me he's an athlete...baseball is wack, I'm tellin' you." Shaless (23) was also

deterred from baseball consumption because of the skill aspect, as her disdain towards the sport stemmed from a perception that baseball players do not possess exceptional athletic ability:

“Yeah, I kind of feel like if I’m going to watch and consume this and if I’m going to be able to say ‘ok these people are getting paid millions of dollars’, I want to see them do something I feel like I can’t. You know? And often, right!? With baseball, they get paid so much, I’m like, half ya’ll sit most of them time! I’m great at sitting! You know, like I can sit!”

Subsequently, during the times when there was a sense of appreciation towards baseball, it was towards the remembrance of an athletic play, highlighting a player’s athletic ability and skill level. Jarred remembers several of Derek Jeter’s plays and claimed that his memories stem from his enjoyment towards the athletic skill the plays required:

“Derek Jeter...when he ran into the stands and he got a bloody face, and also when he ran out to first base. The ball was - it was against Oakland - and he ran from his position to get the cut off...and he threw it to the catcher. Those two plays I remember...like very well. Like those are like - because of the athleticism that was involved not just because Barry Bonds hit a ball out of the park, nah - it was the athleticism that those guys had to do those things.”

Perceived lack of excitement. In explaining the reasoning for their lack of excitement, participants were able to point out baseball’s lack of excitement, a construct which some scholars denote as a specific motivational factor influencing sport

consumption (Funk et al., 2009). This claim was reinforced by participants in the current study, as many of the participants were turned off by the sport's failure to provoke excitement due lacking "action". According to participants, baseball was not considered enjoyable due to its lack of excitement. For example, Gary, a 27 year old male commented on his experience with baseball in accordance to these aforementioned aspects: "...when I went to actual professional games, baseball was like the only game I went to where I did not have fun. Like, sitting there for two hours and just seeing minimal action." Jarred also commented on how baseball's lack of action led to a disinterest towards the sport: "There's no action, people cheer when the guys *can't* hit the ball, and or when you have an amazing catch. That's all...like who wants to watch that? There's no action in baseball. And we're watching a score of 2-1."

Most participants were of the same mindset, and depicted a need for consistent events to occur during gameplay in order to keep their interest. Baseball's events, according to participants, were not enough to keep their attention, and were not labeled as interesting occurrences. As Shaless notes, "I'm always waiting for something to happen. I'm hopin' to God something happens! Nothing ever does. So I'll just watch the highlights...you know, so I can take a phone call, so I can talk to my grandmother."

Other participants had complaints about baseball's excitement in accordance with the actual game play itself. During the interviews individuals discussed their disdain towards watching a baseball player in comparison to a player from a favorite sport. When asked if she liked baseball in comparison to a favorite sport, Tanya, a 33 year old female stated:

“NO! ... I think baseball is boring, and basketball for the most part, there’s excitement... you could shake somebody, you could slam dunk, you could do an alley-oop. There’s so many ways to bring excitement. But when I watch baseball its just hitting the ball...how many ways can you just hit the ball?”

Andre had similar feelings towards baseball’s excitement in comparison to other sports such as basketball or football. Walker alluded to baseball’s lack of excitement by giving an example of how some of his family members felt about the game:

“I know my little cousins – I know that when I tried to watch a Rangers game one time, they were like ‘this is so boring!’. They left the room...they couldn’t bear it. It was only for like 5 minutes. But if I turn on a basketball game its constant action. Football game - constant action. I can leave and use the bathroom and miss out on a touchdown...”

Aspects of the game of baseball. While Armstrong’s (2002b) BCSMS does not particularly cater to the game rules and the structure of the game as a whole, the current study found that participants were deterred from baseball consumption due to the nature of the game itself; particularly the rules, tradition and structure of the game. That is, participants were turned off by both the length of the game itself, and the length of the season. While these aspects may carry over into the excitement category, these aspects are issues of the game rules and the structure and/or make up of the game itself. For example, participants such as Troy (29) had issues with baseball’s length, stating, “If they had a time limit, it would get more of my attention”. Jarred had the same issues with the sport, as he was concerned not only with the length of a game, but also the

length of the season: “Why is baseball so stinking long!? (raised voice) Why do they have to play 162 games (still raised voice) to determine who’s gonna be the best team? And then the team after that isn’t even the best team!” These quotes represent the fact that participants are not only dissatisfied with the game’s rules in terms of its length, but are also dissatisfied with baseball’s decision making process for determining a winner.

Participants mentioned “time commitment” as a factor contributing to the decision of whether to watch a sporting event. Therefore, the dissatisfaction towards baseball’s length ultimately provides a motive for these individuals to avoid watching baseball. These aspects are represented by the following quote from Troy:

“The way I live my life, and my scheduling and the things I do, basketball just fits a lot better. I can see a full basketball game with commercials and half time and everything in a two and half hour block. You might make it to the 7th inning in two and half hours with baseball, maybe, and not even before it really starts to get interesting in the 8th or 9th inning. The baseball games I’ve watched fully have all been playoff games...If it’s a regular season game – I can’t budget the time to watch a regular season game – there’s so many of them. Not that there’s not a lot of NBA games, but it just seems like it’s one of what is it, 162?”

Again, the sense of dissatisfaction not only stems from a distaste towards the rules of the game itself (the length of a single game), but from a distaste towards the rules of the season (the length of an entire season) as well.

In addition to the aforementioned rules, participants noted that baseball was a game “stuck in the past” due to its inability to both change the rules of the game itself,

and change the rules of the game to satisfy the younger generation. In concern to this, Brittany (26) stated the following, “I mean it’s definitely stuck in the past. They still don’t have instant replay; like, I was completely frustrated with that. Baseball is definitely a game stuck in the past”. In another session, Matthew, age 18, voiced the same concern, and compared baseball to a favorite sport, basketball: “Yeah it is kind of stuck in the past. Even like my favorite sport basketball – they changed some rules and stuff...towards the newer generation. So they should probably do that for baseball”

Socio-cultural Dynamics

As the literature concerning racial identification alludes to, the more an individual identifies with a product containing similarities, the higher the chances are for consumption (Hanssen, 2001; Liu et al., 2007). Thus, in baseball having a lack of aspects in which African Americans can relate to, the sport creates a product that is unidentifiable to African American consumers. The following section details the participants’ views on baseball’s inability to adhere to a number of racially identifiable socio-cultural dynamics. Furthermore, the following findings will explain how baseball’s perceived association/handling of these aspects discourage consumption from the African American community. Particularly, participants indicated they would not consume baseball due to a perceived sense that the baseball inhibits access (i.e., ability to play) for young African Americans. Furthermore, participants were deterred from consuming baseball due to a lack of African Americans playing professional baseball, and due to a lack of African American professional baseball players being represented in pop-culture.

Access for young African Americans. Amongst the group there seemed to be dissatisfaction towards baseball's inability to capture the young African American market segment. Many of the participants agreed that baseball, if it were to capture the African American audience, would first have to communicate with the youth. In concern to this, many of the participants voiced a concern towards access. That is, many of the participants noted that baseball was either too expensive to play, or that the style of the game was inconvenient for play (i.e. requiring nine players on each team, or requiring a baseball bat and glove, instead of a ball and hoop). In terms of the sport's relationship with the youth and its financial requirements, Gary stated the following:

“...If you talk about access, now in order for children to excel at baseball these days - if you weren't hitting that youth circuit, so to speak, you know where your parents are paying for a hitting coach or a pitching coach, or you go to play in this league across town, play this league that travels around the country - you know, you're now devoting the money towards it at an early age. A lot of these kids aren't being successful. If you look at all these like Bryce Harpers or whatever - the cat that came out – he's been playing baseball since when? And he was definitely working with coaches, you know, scouts and all that kind of stuff at an early age. And again, going back to what's available in the Black community. You know, a lot of people don't have access to that kind of stuff; parents don't have enough money to pay you know 200 dollars per session for you to go to talk to this man to teach you how to hit a baseball. You know what I'm saying? It's like you can't do that. If we do it it's a one-time thing. You

better get as much as you can outta this! (Laughing all around) And in 2 hours, you know? Your momma talkin' bout', 'get it right boy, you gotta go ahead and do this!'”

Gary makes a point that represents the entire group's sentiments towards baseball; that, in order to play baseball, and to excel in baseball, a financial requirement is needed.

Aside from the financial restrictions, a number of the participants stated that baseball had issues connecting with the African American community due to the fact that its playing structure was inconvenient. Many compared baseball to other sports, and particularly noted that in order to play baseball one would need several pieces of equipment, rather than one piece of equipment (i.e. a ball for soccer or basketball). For example, in concern to baseball's necessities, Troy stated, "...you need so much equipment, you need a minimum amount of people; but you can play basketball by yourself. Even if you're just shooting around...minimum two people to play a game, and you just need a hoop and a ball.”

Several participants noted that this inconvenience served as a reason for baseball's (un)popularity. That is, because baseball is not convenient to access, it's popularity has dwindled. Pam provides a representative quotation which exemplifies this concern:

“...because most popular sports are the ones people can go out and play easily. So, there has to be some sort of correlation because golf is more expensive, and swimming you need a pool. The more popular sports...worldwide are soccer, because I mean kids like in undeveloped nations, they roll up trash bags and play

soccer. Or like football, you just get a bunch of people together and you can play tag football. And basketball originally came about because people hung milk crates. So I think it's because people can participate in the sport at the drop of a dime is why those sports are most popular.”

Aspects such as these allowed the participants to form a perspective that the sport of baseball is dormant in promoting itself to Black America. That is, due to a lack of access, participants feel as if baseball is dormant in pursuing both the African American participant and the African American consumer. Thus, in having the perspective that baseball has not actively ensued the Black community, participants felt that baseball did not care for them as consumers. As a consequence for this perceived lack of care towards African Americans, participants were turned off from baseball and were quick to remove themselves from consuming the sport.

African American player representation. African American player representation came as a significant factor towards why participants were disinterested in consuming baseball. A lack of representation amongst African Americans in professional baseball was a “turn off” for most participants, and was directly associated with a disinterest in the sport. A specific example of this comes from Jay (29), who stated: “...baseball, I don't really like it...one contributing factor, I guess like, I don't see many of us in it as versus other sports. That doesn't really encourage me to even keep up with it at all, or even support it.” This was a common theme amongst most participants, as many individuals stated their dissatisfaction towards not being able to relate with players in Major League Baseball (MLB). When Jay (29) was asked what

baseball must do in order for him to consume the sport, he replied: "...you need some people to show up that look like us in order to get attention – in order for people to really care. Umm like there's not really none of us in hockey, so we don't really care about hockey." When asked the same question, Kim, age 29 replied with a similar statement: "I definitely think having black people...it might interest me more if more black people were doing well in the sport." This lack of African American representation in baseball led participants to believe that baseball is a "white sport", as said by several of the participants. In having such a connotation towards the sport – that baseball is a "white sport" – this disallows participants to gain a sense of identification with the sport in itself

The need for an individual standout African American baseball player. In discussing this, many of the participants had concerns of baseball lacking a key African American individual who would represent the sport, and therefore offer African American fans an identifiable athlete. In concern to this issue, E.J. (33) stated the following:

"...back in my time when we were comin' up you had Black faces, and now that has changed. There's no Lebron in the MLB. A lot of the times you think of the NBA, you think of, you know, basically the Olympic team – all those faces pop up. But in the MLB ... who do you think of?"

The notion of having a player similar to Lebron James was quite popular, as numerous participants brought James up as a reference point for the kind of African American athlete baseball needed in order to attract an African American fan base. For example, Andre stated, "If we had a Lebron in baseball I feel like it would be looked at!"

Participants were adamant about the importance of a superstar African American athlete involved in baseball. Derrius, age 31 put forth the notion that baseball's popularity would immediately rise if an athlete such as LeBron James were to play professional baseball:

“Look, let LeBron go! Let him go play for the Florida Marlins! Man, you know how many people would be watching? Or Kobe, ‘I’m gonna go play for the Los Angeles Dodgers’ or something, you know? I mean it depends on who the person is, you know?...That’s important because household names will take you a long way...Like ‘man LeBron signed with the Marlins! After basketball is over, he’s gonna go play baseball.’ How many people are gonna be tunnin’ in? (Imitating someone) ‘When do the marlins play!?’ They’d be trying to now see when they play, you know? So, that name because that’s LeBron James. That’s like even Jordon when he went and played for the White Sox. I mean who thought about the White Sox!?’ (makes a funny looking face) But Jordon’s playing; now I’m a white sox fan, cause Jordon’s playing.”

The excitement and passion over the issue of having a sole African American to represent the sport of baseball was shared by most participants, many of whom all shared their thoughts on who the last African American was to represent baseball the way LeBron James represents basketball. In concern to this topic, almost all participants showed their appreciation for Ken Griffey Jr. Many participants talked about their ownership of either Ken Griffey Jr. baseball cards, Ken Griffey Jr. shoes, or even Ken

Griffey Jr.'s video game. As Kim put it, "I mean when Ken Griffey was playing more people were buying stuff"

African American players in pop-culture. In the current study participants exhibited a want to consume a sport that contained professional athletes who commonly present in popular culture. This was very important to participants, as numerous individuals seemed to identify with African American players who were directly involved with pop-culture. In concern to this aspect, the majority of participants stated that their identification with a favorite sport stemmed from the sport containing an African American professional athlete who was commonly present in such aspects as commercials, tabloids, and identifiable music songs. For example, in concern to this subject, Pam stated:

"...like you see like Lebron selling the Samsung Galaxy and then you see um like Dwayne Wade and like his boys selling... You see them and they are tied to major products because they are part of the popular culture right now. There's no baseball player – African American - that is tied to popular culture at that level. There's no one in the music videos with the most popular products in several categories, winning an esp. There's no one doing that all at the same time like you can find in football and basketball."

Subsequently, numerous discussions revolved around the importance of having professional baseball players present in American pop-culture. Some tied baseball's inability to connect with pop-culture to the sport's traditional aspect, claiming that because of its traditional nature, it would not be prevalent in pop culture. For example,

Andre stated, “I feel like baseball hasn’t tried to get in with pop-culture... (there’s) history, past times, traditions, so I feel like baseball is getting lost in the past and it’ll stay there...and music and pop culture is current.”

In discussing pop culture, aspects such as clothing and music were important to participants. Many of the participants felt that if baseball could make a connection to pop culture through these aspects, it may have a chance to connect with the African American culture. For example, E.J. states:

“And I think also too, the culture seeing it, you know? The hats and the jerseys and all that - on figures who do reach the African American community. You know it doesn’t have to necessarily be a player; it could be a hip-hop artist or whatever. Like I was saying, during my time I mean when you’d buy a CD or a tape or whatever, most of the time they were wearing a baseball hat or a jersey of the teams. And I think just seeing it more, within an African American community or setting, would increase it a little bit.”

Pam discussed pop-culture in accordance with a baseball player’s ability to become celebrated amongst the African American fan base. Pam alluded to pop-culture as being “part of the mix”, and stated:

“He would have to be part of the mix...because when Jay-Z and LeBron high five each other at a basketball game - that’s news! So he has to be in that mix because that’s what’s going to propel him to the forefront...He’s in a circle that when *we* say hello to each other – that’s front page news”

Not only is this quote representative of the importance of having an African American baseball player in pop-culture, but in Pam using the term “we”, he showcases that an African American baseball player who is being embedded in pop-culture will automatically create a sense of identification with the African American community.

Discussion

According to Donthu and Cherian (1994), when deciding to purchase a product or service, consumers engage in an active decision making process by which they evaluate the attributes of a product or service and measure them for congruence with one’s self. Subsequently, a consumer who has a strong sense of racial identification will likely choose a product based on the product’s ability to correspond with personal attributes and/or racial values (Armstrong, 2002a). In the current study, results indicate that participants believe baseball does not contain similar racially identifiable characteristics; thus, the sport dissuades African Americans from consumption. Specifically, there were two broad aspects that best represented the participants’ beliefs that baseball failed to become racially relatable: their perception of baseball and socio-cultural dynamics. A strong sense of racial identification allowed participants to be perceptive of how certain aspects of baseball’s structure did not befit their likings. Furthermore, in having this sense of identification, participants were perceptive towards baseball’s influence upon several socio-cultural dynamics which the participants deemed important; thus, in being troubled by the way baseball handles these socio-cultural dynamics, participants were quick to state their disdain towards consuming baseball. Within these two categories – the perception of baseball and socio-cultural dynamics –

six general dimensions evolved that, if present, would influence perception towards the sport and eventually influence consumption habits.

Particular findings of this study convey the importance of baseball's inability to have players with skill and baseball's lack of excitement (according to participants). These aspects reinforce previous sentiments stating that excitement, drama and athletic skill are all motivational aspects that encourage sport consumption (Armstrong, 2002a; 2002b; Funk et al., 2009; James & Ross, 2004). Armstrong (2002b) suggests sports that do carry certain motivational aspects represent a game that is racially relatable. As confessed to by participants, sports such as basketball offer a perceived sense of skill and excitement, whereas baseball does not. If a sport is to be consumed by individuals with a strong sense of racial identification, then the sport must share racial similarities. Thus, in having the perception that baseball lacks these aspects, participants feel as if the sport does not offer racial similarities. That is, the sport, in the nature of its game play, has nothing in which the participants can identify with, and therefore does not incite consumption amongst the African American consumer. This is an issue which can be looked at upon a more grand scale. That is, non-consumers of other sports may find these same issues troubling in that some sports may not offer a sense of excitement or action; therefore, sports not offering these aspects may fail to offer a sense of identification. For example, it may be the case that the low American consumption rate towards U.S. soccer may stem from the sport lacking a sense of excitement and action; thus, failing to identify with the American audience.

In addition to aspects such as excitement and drama, participants voiced concerns over the structure of baseball itself. Many participants agreed that baseball's length and structure deterred them from consumption. As participants revealed a sense of contempt towards baseball's length, they often referred to the sport as being "boring" or "not fun." Conversely, participants indicated that they were able to relate to a sport that was able to change its structure in accordance with consumer needs (e.g., time limit and game rules). This aspect of being relatable can cater to the literature concerning sport consumption and racial identification; that is, the more a consumer is able to relate with a product, the more the consumer will consider consumption (Donthu & Cherian, 1994).

Aside from the above mentioned in-game features, participants voiced a concern towards baseball's connection with several socio-cultural dynamics. Results indicate that participants seek to consume a sport which supports their race and/or culture. This information is congruent with Xu et al.'s (2004) sentiments stating racial minorities, more so than other consumers, must perceive a sense of affiliation or support from a service or product if they are to consider consumption. In concern to this, the current study shows participants having a sense of dissatisfaction towards baseball's inability to show care for both African American consumers and African American youth participants. Complaints towards lack of access and financial restrictions led participants to believe baseball was inactive in promoting itself to African Americans. Thus, in having this perspective, participants felt as if baseball did not show support towards African Americans. In support of Xu et al.'s (2004) findings, a lack of support will most

likely lead to a consumer's lack of identification; thus, eventually causing a lack of consideration towards consuming baseball.

Lastly, the results show participants having a belief that the game of baseball could not depict their race or ethnicity based on the game's lack of African American representation both on and off the field (i.e., professional baseball players playing the sport and professional baseball players in pop-culture). This information is important due to the literature concerning racial identification and purchase intentions. According to Simpson et al., 2000, p. 880) individuals with high levels of identification focus on "racial heuristic cues" (i.e. the race of individual representing the product) more than those who have low levels of racial identification. Given the choice between a product including racial heuristic cues and a product not possessing racial heuristic cues, individuals with high identification levels will chose the former (see Whittler, 1989). In the current context of African Americans and their perceptions of baseball, players can serve as the racial heuristic cue in which African American consumers can identify. Subsequently, it was often found that participants stated baseball was a "white sport", signifying the perception that baseball fails to convey an identifiable representation. Thus, in baseball lacking African American representation both on and off the field, African American consumers do not have a racial heuristic cue in which they can identify with, and are therefore dissuaded from baseball consumption. This overall sense of an inability to identify and/or relate to the sport of baseball may stem from a broader issue coming from the collapse of the Negro Leagues. That is, as the Negro Leagues were disassembled, African American fans were therefore assimilated into a

predominately Caucasian game; one in which the majority of fans and players were not African American. This therefore may have disenabled certain fans to identify with the sport of baseball, eventually causing a lack of consumption.

In concern to the aspect of identifying with the game of baseball through African American players, many times throughout the interviews participants displayed a sense of want for baseball to champion a certain African American athlete. At times, this sense of need for an African American standout baseball player outweighed the other aspects participants deemed influential towards baseball consumption. For example, in stating that baseball would solicit higher consumption rates by inserting LeBron James or Kobe Bryant into the sport of baseball, participants are conveying that they would be willing to forsake the two athletes having no sense of baseball skill; they would simply be pleased by having a championed African American involved with the sport, irrespective of skill level. While Tiger Woods displays a sense of skill in Golf, he is still championed by the African American audience for his racial makeup, and therefore his ability to relate to the African American audience. This serves as an instance where the African American following of a sport (one in which did not include a strong presence of African American players prior to Tiger Woods) increased after championing an African American athlete. Thus, while other motivational factors are significant when considering consumption, the championing of an African American athlete may be the most important aspect of gaining an African American following.

Limitations

Though the study provides insightful findings, limitations must be acknowledged. First, the lack of diversity in age group is an aspect that should be taken into consideration. Being that the oldest individual to be interviewed was 35 years of age, the findings of the study may not properly represent the sentiments of all African Americans and their perspective towards baseball. While the study does shed light upon the marketing implications for a younger generation of African Americans, it still fails to assess the proper marketing channels that can be utilized to reach an older demographic. Furthermore, the study has limitations in that the method which was utilized – a set of focus group interviews – could have been strengthened by utilizing other interview methods (i.e., one-on-one interviews). While the focus groups provided rich description of the aspects deterring baseball consumption, other methods may have allowed individuals to further elaborate on any personal issues that may cause such deterrence. Future studies involving African American baseball consumption should seek to employ a number of different qualitative methods to understand this phenomenon.

Implications and Conclusion

As there has been a decline in the number of African Americans consuming baseball (Livingstone, 2011), sport marketers and managers are charged with the task of identifying the factors responsible for this phenomenon. The current study provides a context for which sport managers can further understand African American consumers and their distaste towards baseball consumption. Particularly, the current study can be

useful for baseball marketers and managers who seek to understand the dynamics influencing African American sport consumption.

The purpose of the study was to identify the factors deterring African Americans from consuming baseball. The study revolved around racial identification and its influence upon both the features of baseball itself, and the motivational features that were influential towards African American sport consumption. In utilizing a set of focus group interviews, the findings suggest that a lack of baseball consumption stems from baseball's inability to identify with the African American audience. This lack of identification emerges from two broad categories: perception of baseball and socio-cultural dynamics. From these two broad categories, six general dimensions were found that best represented the reasoning behind a lack of baseball consumption amongst the participants. Findings indicate participants perceived a lack of skill within the sport of baseball, perceived a lack of excitement included in the sport, and were deterred from consuming baseball due to the games structure (i.e., rules, game length, etc.). Furthermore, findings suggest participants held a belief that baseball inhibits access for young African Americans to play baseball, and were dissatisfied with baseball due to a lack of African American professional baseball players both playing the sport and being involved in pop-culture.

The current study brings light to the aspect of racial identification, signifying its importance amongst the relationship between African Americans and baseball's ability to racially relate to the audience. Baseball marketers and managers, if they seek to increase their African American fan base, should strive to find ways in which the sport

of baseball can relate to this demographic. Specifically, the current study indicates African Americans fail to (racially) identify with baseball due to it being perceived as a sport lacking certain identifiable motivational factors. The implications of this finding are multidimensional as such a perception – that of African Americans perceiving baseball to lack certain motivational factors – can be considered as opinion based. Moreover, this perception could simply stem from a lack of cognizance towards the sport (i.e., a lack of knowledge towards the sport itself could lead to a lack of understanding that baseball may indeed carry such motivational factors). As stated by James and Ross (2004), according to some fans, the sport of baseball does indeed contain such motivational aspects as drama and skill. However, the results of the current study suggest participants do not believe baseball to include such motivational constructs (the very constructs prompting participants to consume their favorite sport). Therefore, sport marketers should not simply create campaigns to ensure African Americans have an awareness of baseball; rather, sport marketers should create campaigns involving an awareness of the fact that may indeed contain the very motivational constructs a favorite sport contains. When marketing baseball to African Americans, campaigns and marketing promotions should require the deliberate intention of containing the motivational constructs African Americans deem desirable.

It is also important for baseball marketers to cater to the African American audience as both fans and players. Participants suggested that their disdain towards baseball stemmed from a perception that baseball does not care for the African American demographic (i.e., barriers towards play, and a lack of interest in specifically marketing

to African Americans). It is suggested that a concentrated effort be made towards showing a greater sense of care and/or interest for the African American audience. This can be done through further grassroots campaigns such as the ‘Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities’ (RBI) Baseball league, or through aspects in which baseball can specifically market itself through mediums that are predominately consumed by African Americans (e.g., Black Entertainment Television). These aspects would display a sense that baseball is, in the very least, showing an effort to cater to the African American audience – something in which participants felt was not being done.

Finally, there is a need for baseball to specifically utilize the current African American professional players to market baseball. In having African American baseball players, African American consumers will perceive a sense of similarity between themselves and the product being offered. Such a sense of similarity is, especially for racial minorities, consequential for sport consumption (Simpson et al., 2000); for individuals with high levels of racial identification will likely consume products containing similar identifiable traits (Armstrong, 2002a; Xu et al., 2004). This sense of similarity is also relevant upon the findings that indicate African American baseball players should not simply be present within the sport, but also outside of the sport, within pop-culture. According to King Watts and Orbe (2002), African Americans have a strong connection to Black pop-culture. Therefore, baseball managers and marketers have available to them a separate medium (i.e., African American baseball players being present in pop-culture) in which they can utilize to promote identification towards African American consumers.

This study stands to serve as a spring board for further studies towards African American sport consumption. Moreover, the current investigation brings forth a new understanding towards the African viewpoint on baseball consumption. The unique aspect of African American sport consumption habits coupled with the current baseball marketing dynamics allows both researchers and practitioners alike to form new ideas towards how this phenomenon can be addressed.

CHAPTER IV
ADVERTISING BASEBALL TO AFRICAN AMERICANS: EXAMINING
PERCEIVED MATCH-UP EFFECTS WITH THE THEORY OF REASONED
ACTION

The African American consumer represents an important segment to the sport industry, as this segment possesses both growth potential and substantial purchasing power (Oyewole, 2007; Simpson et al., 2000). Still, several reports suggest that African Americans, as consumers, are disinterested in the sport of baseball. Recent studies indicate that less than 10% of those who watch baseball on television are African American (Armour, 2002; Livingstone, 2011), and that only 10% of those who consider themselves fans of baseball are African American (Clinkscales, 2013). These numbers demonstrate that there is either a lack of initiative amongst baseball marketers to pursue this demographic, an overall lack of interest amongst African Americans towards baseball, or a combination thereof. Ogden and Hilt (2003) suggest that baseball consumption amongst African Americans has regressed due to the sport lacking culturally comparative traits. That is, scholars suggest baseball lacks a means in which it can identify with the African American audience; suggesting African Americans will need to perceive a sense of similarity between themselves and baseball if the sport is to be consumed (Ogden & Hilt, 2003).

Accordingly, the match-up hypothesis has been offered as one approach to alter consumer attitudes towards particular brands and/or products (McDaniel, 1999). The

match-up hypothesis proposes that an individual will consider consuming a product given that the product endorses itself as one that showcases either a ‘match’ and/or ‘fit’ between the product and the potential consumer (Kamins, 1990). Thus, in order to entice consumption amongst potential consumers, marketers will utilize advertisements which allow consumers to perceive a fit between themselves and the product itself (Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Liu et al., 2007). African American attitudes towards baseball may be negative due to the sport lacking a sense of racial similarity (Breckenridge & Goldsmith, 2009; Ogden & Hilt, 2003); therefore, the match-up hypothesis offers a way in which African Americans may be able to perceive a match between themselves and baseball, and therefore consider consumption.

Along with Study 2, previous studies have shown that African Americans are deterred from consuming baseball because it fails to offer a sense of athletic skill and excitement – two factors that are particularly relevant to African Americans if they are to consider consuming sport (Armstrong, 2002a). Furthermore, according to Study 2, African Americans are turned away from consuming baseball for the sport’s inability to offer a sense of racial identification. In lacking these in-game factors (i.e., skill and excitement) and out-of-game factors (i.e., racial identification), baseball fails to offer a sense of fit and/or a match between itself and the African American sport consumer. Thus, in accordance with the match-up hypothesis, if individuals (particularly in this case, African Americans) are able to perceive a fit through viewing an advertisement for baseball, then they may alter their attitudes towards baseball and subsequently consider consumption.

Whereas the match-up hypothesis may offer an instance in where consumers can alter attitudes amid perceiving a fit, there are additional paths to investigating how marketers can influence sport consumption. According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), the theory of reasoned action suggests an individual's attitudes and subjective norms will influence intentions to partake in certain behaviors (i.e., consumption habits). Studies involving the theory of reasoned action have shown that attitudes in particular are correlated with subjective norms, and will subsequently influence behavioral actions (Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992; Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988). These sentiments aid the current study, as the match-up hypothesis is often utilized as a means to describe the ways in which marketers can influence consumer attitudes (Kamins & Gupta, 1994). Therefore, in the current, I seek to employ the two theories together (the match-up hypothesis and the theory of reasoned action). In utilizing the sentiments of the match-up hypothesis, the current study will seek to contrive a fit amongst African Americans and baseball to consequently alter attitudes and subjective norms (the two main components of the theory of reasoned action). Specifically, I propose that in adhering to the match-up hypothesis, an advertisement portraying a sense of fit between the African American consumer and the sport of baseball will alter attitudes towards consuming baseball. Furthermore, perceiving a sense of fit may also offer additional benefits: possibly the influence upon subjective norms. As such, the purpose of this study is to examine African American attitudes towards baseball by exploring the role of perceived fit and its association with the theory of reasoned action. Specifically, it is expected that in perceiving baseball to contain racially identifiable traits and identifiable

motivational factors through a print advertisement, African American participants will perceive a match and/or a sense of fit. It is proposed that this will therefore influence participants' attitudes, subjective norms and behavioral intentions.

Theoretical Framework

Match-up Hypothesis

The central tenet of match-up hypothesis is that individuals are likely to have positive evaluations towards an advertisement if the advertisement portrays a “match” and/or “fit” between a product and the product’s endorser (Fink, Cunningham, & Kensicki, 2004; McDaniel, 1999). The match-up hypothesis stems from the source attractiveness model, which contends that an advertisement’s effectiveness is dependent upon source familiarity, likability, and similarity to the respondent (Ohanian, 1990). According to the source attractiveness model, the aspect of ‘attractiveness’ does not necessarily refer to physical attraction; rather, the term refers to a perceived sense of similarity between an advertisement itself and the consumer, or an advertisement’s endorser and the consumer (Erdogan, 1999). In this context, as a consumer views an advertisement, she/he will look to see if the advertisement possesses aspects that portray a sense of similarity between her/himself and the product’s advertisement (or the product’s endorser). Literature suggests high source attractiveness (i.e., high levels of familiarity, likability, and similarity) leads to higher advertisement evaluations (Caballero, & Pride, 1984; Khale & Homer, 1985), and even attitude change (Pornpitakpan, 2003).

The majority of studies involving match-up hypothesis involve a “match” or perceived “fit” between an advertisement’s product(s) and the product’s endorsers (i.e., Kahle & Homer, 1985; Khatri, 2006; Till & Busler, 2000). Nevertheless, other studies have focused on the “fit” between the advertised product’s endorser and the consumer (Cunningham, Fink, & Kenix, 2008; Kamins, & Gupta, 1994; Liu et al., 2007). Here, the match-up hypotheses proposes that as a consumer perceives a sense of similarity between themselves and an advertisement (or an advertisement’s endorser), the consumer will likely be satisfied with the advertisement, and will subsequently consider consuming the advertised product (Kamins, 1990; Khale & Homer, 1985). Conversely, if a consumer perceives a lack of similarity between themselves and the advertisement, the consumer will be dissatisfied with the advertisement and will be less likely to consider consumption (Kamins, 1990; Khale & Homer, 1985).

The endorser is a significant aspect within any advertisement setting. Using endorsers as a means to advertise a product is a convenient way to connect with consumers, and one that is used often in sports media (Boyd & Shank, 2004; Bush, Martin, & Bush, 2004; Peetz, Parks, & Spencer, 2004; Ruyhley, Runyan, & Lear, 2010). According to Liu et al. (2007), a successful endorser has the potential to increase purchase intentions, and can influence brand preference. Liu et al. (2007) suggest that for an advertisement to be effective, an endorser should not only match the advertised product (e.g., a muscular man advertising dumbbells), but should also have similar characteristics with the consumer who is viewing the product’s advertisement (e.g., a

muscular consumer will be more inclined to purchase products that are advertised by other muscular individuals).

Scholars have found that a conveyed message from an endorser will be evaluated in the same manner the consumer will evaluate the endorser her/himself (Cunningham et al., 2008; Pornpitakpan, 2003). That is, rather than strictly evaluating the advertisement's message itself, consumers have been found to evaluate an advertisement's message based upon attitudes towards the advertisement's features (i.e., the endorser; Walker, Langmeyer, and Langmeyer, 1992). Therefore, in the current study, the match-up hypothesis is used as a guide to assess whether African Americans perceive a "fit" between an advertised product's attributes (i.e., similarity in physical appearance and similarity in racially relatable consumer needs), and how this fit affects their attitudes towards the product.

Armstrong (2002b) suggests African American sport consumers are particularly interested in sports that are not only racially identifiable (i.e., sports that contain players who are similar in racial make-up), but sports that contain certain identifiable motivational constructs (i.e., sports that contain relatable consumer needs). According to Armstrong (2002b), along with racial similarities, if certain motivational factors are present in a sport, then African Americans will gain a sense of personal association with the sport. As this is done, African Americans will subsequently consider consumption based on the sport either containing or omitting relevant motivational factors. Study 1 and Study 2 support these sentiments and indicate that African American participants were interested in sports having racial similarities, and sports containing racially relevant

motivational factors (i.e., excitement and skill). Furthermore, Study 1 and 2 suggest that baseball, because it does not contain these elements (racial similarities and identifiable motivational factors), fails to offer a sense of fit (i.e., match) for African Americans. This lack of fit therefore dissuades consumption amongst the African American demographic. Thus, with the match-up hypothesis taken into account, if African Americans perceive a baseball advertisement to contain (a) an endorser who upholds similar racial characteristics and (b) racially relatable consumer needs (i.e., racially relevant motivational factors), then they will likely consider the baseball advertisement (and therefore baseball itself) to uphold a sense of perceived fit. Therefore, the following hypothesis are put forth:

H1: Excitement and athlete skill (when embedded in an advertisement) will be positively related to perceived fit

In addition to the abovementioned information, several investigations involving social categorization suggest that individuals are likely to uphold favorable appraisals towards individuals who are perceived to be similar to themselves (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Kawakami, 2003; Pettigrew, 1998). Furthermore, Study 2 suggests African Americans are more likely to consume a sport that contains racial similarities (i.e., a sport containing athletes who were similar to themselves in racial make-up) than those that do not. Therefore, it is believed that endorser race in an advertisement will moderate the relationship between excitement and athlete skill and perceived fit. Thus, the following hypothesis is put forth:

H2: Endorser race will moderate the relationship between excitement and athlete skill and perceived fit.

Theory of Reasoned Action

The theory of reasoned action is a social cognitive theory suggesting attitudes and subjective norms will predict an individual's intention to take part in certain behaviors (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Madden et al., 1992). The theory of reasoned action and its components have been used in the sport management and marketing literature as a means to explain certain sport consumption behaviors (Funk & James, 2004; Shoham, Rose, & Kahle, 1998). For example, Cunningham and Kwon (2003) found that attitudes and subjective norms toward hockey were significantly related to intentions to consume the sport. In the current study, the theory of reasoned action is used as a means to better understand the lack of baseball consumption by African Americans. \

The theory of reasoned action posits that an individual's beliefs about certain behaviors will influence her/his attitudes and subjective norms (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Attitude refers to the way in which one views a certain behavior as either favorable or unfavorable (Babiak, Mills, Tainsky, & Juravich, 2012). With attitudes, an individual will evaluate a behavior and consider the attractiveness of the behavior's outcomes. This suggests that individuals will be prone to partake in certain behaviors given the behaviors are favorable and the outcomes are attractive. Subjective norms refer to an individual's intention to take part in certain behaviors based on the social pressure the individual receives from family and/or friends (Hagger, Chatzisarantis, & Briddle, 2001). With subjective norms, an individual will likely take part in a certain behavior if

she/he has the support of friends and/or family. This support could include direct support (e.g., direct verbal support towards the person partaking in the behavior) or indirect support (e.g., friends or family having positive attitudes towards the behavior itself). Numerous studies have shown that that as attitudes and subjective norms towards a certain behavior are influenced, so too will an individual change her/his willingness to partake in a certain action and/or behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Daigle, 2001; Beck & Ajzen, 1991).

In concern to the theory of reasoned action's relation with the current study, African Americans may choose not to consume baseball because of negative attitudes towards baseball, and because of a lack of social support towards consuming baseball. These aspects can be taken into account with the match-up hypothesis. That is, according to match-up hypothesis, if individuals perceive a fit between a product and themselves through an advertisement, they will likely be inclined to change attitudes towards the product (Pornpitakpan, 2003). Therefore, if African Americans perceive a fit between themselves and baseball, there may be a relationship between this fit and their attitudes towards baseball. As such, the following hypothesis is put forth:

H3: Perceived fit will be positively related to attitudes towards baseball

In the current study, a perceived fit signifies a fit amongst African Americans and their perception towards a sport that is shown to match consumer preferences. This match will allow attitudes to change based on the product's ability to match the African American audience (see Hypothesis 1). Such a match therefore, will not only influence personal perceptions of the product, but may also influence personal perceptions of how

others view the product (i.e., subjective norms). That is, as subjective norms refer to “the social expectations a person has from significant others” (Cunningham & Kwon, 2001; p. 129), it is expected that these expectations will be altered amidst both perceiving a fit between themselves and baseball, and having their attitudes altered. Therefore, the following hypothesis is put forth:

H4: Perceived fit will be positively related to subjective norms

Research has suggested that the components of the theory of reasoned action are positively associated with intentions. For example, Cunningham and Kwon (2003) found a positive relationship between attitudes and intentions to attend a hockey game, and subjective norms and intentions to attend a hockey game. Furthermore, other studies have also demonstrated a relationship between these variables and intentions to consume sport (Cheng, Chen, Chen, & Lu, 2012; Lu, et al., 2001). Therefore, in the current study, it is expected that those who carry positive attitudes towards baseball and those who have significant others who positively evaluate baseball consumption will have intentions to consume baseball. Thus, the following hypotheses are presented:

H5: There will be a positive relationship between attitudes and intentions to consume baseball

H6: There will be a positive relationship between subjective norms and intentions to consume baseball

An illustrative summary of the hypothesis is presented in Figure 1.

Method

Participants

As the study sought to investigate African Americans perceptions towards baseball, participants were a random sample of 283 individuals who were self-identified as African American. The entire sample comprised of African Americans; 70.7% male, and 29.3% female. Individuals who were 18-25 years of age made up 36.4% of the sample, 26-34 year-olds made up 49.8%, 35-54 year-olds made up 9.9%, 55-64 year-olds made up 3.2%, and less than one percent of the sample was over 65 years old.

Procedure and Measures

The current study aimed to validate the findings of the first two studies. Findings from Study 1 and 2 show two major aspects that, when absent, deter baseball consumption amongst African Americans: motivational aspects (i.e., skill and excitement) and racial identification. These aspects (i.e., racial characteristics and motivational features) were utilized in a print advertisement to test the legitimacy of their ability to induce a perceived sense of fit, and subsequently to test the advertisement's ability to induce consumption. Particularly, an experimental design was utilized to determine if these aspects, when present in an advertisement, allowed participants to perceive a sense of fit and thus influence the two facets of the theory of reasoned action.

The primary investigator utilized a relatively new online platform, Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to recruit participants to take part in the experiment. According to Berinsky, Huber and Lenz (2012) MTurk is a viable source for the social

sciences. Specifically, Berinsky et al. (2012) tested the online platform for both internal and external validity and found MTurk to be a valid online platform for data collection. Berinsky et al. (2012) recommend MTurk as an appropriate platform for academic research. Furthermore, when examining the MTurk platform for reliability, Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling (2011) stated that MTurk's data quality "met or exceeded the psychometric standards associated with published research" (p. 5).

MTurk utilizes an incentive based platform to recruit participants. Participants visit the Amazon MTurk website as a means to partake in surveys and questionnaires for cash incentives. With the current study, participants were required to be African American in order to participate. In deciding to participate, individuals would be randomly assigned to partake in one of four surveys. Each of the four surveys were identical, except the condition in which they were given

The directions were first to provide information about age, race, gender, and previous baseball consumption history (i.e., "how often do you watch baseball games on television?"). Participants were then asked to view an advertisement which was embedded in the online survey, and were asked to answer several questions in junction with viewing the advertisement. Participants reviewed one of four conditions (self-created advertisements), which varied by the race of the endorser(s) in the advertisement (Black, White) and the advertisement's setting (inclusion of excitement and skill, non-inclusion of excitement and skill). Advertisements can be seen in Appendix C. Specifically, participants were randomly assigned to be shown an advertisement with either a Black baseball player depicting a sense of skill and excitement (Advertisement

A), an advertisement with a White baseball player depicting a sense of skill and excitement (Advertisement B), an advertisement with a Black baseball player *not* depicting a sense of skill and excitement (Advertisement C), and an advertisement with a White player *not* depicting a sense of skill and excitement (Advertisement D).

After reviewing one of four advertisements, participants were asked to respond to several items. Specifically, participants were asked to provide information about the advertisement's ability to induce a perceived sense of fit, their attitudes towards baseball, subjective norms, and intentions to consume baseball.

Fit. Fit was measured with two items adapted from Dahlen's (2005) study (i.e., "in terms of who I am as a person, the above advertisement..."). The items on the scale were assessed upon the range of, "Does not fit well at all - Fits extremely well."

Participants provided responses based on a 7-point Likert-type scale

Attitudes. Taking into account the theory of reasoned action and how it may indicate one's willingness to take part in behaviors (i.e., consuming baseball), the investigator measured attitudes towards baseball. Attitudes were assessed using three different scales upon 1 item (i.e., "After seeing the above advertisement, and taking it into account, I think baseball is..."). The three scales were "Extremely unpleasant – Extremely pleasant", "Extremely dull-Extremely entertaining", and "Extremely worthless-Extremely valuable"; whereas the item was 'attitudes towards baseball.'

Participants provided responses based on a 7-point Likert-type scale. This is similar to the measures used in previous research (e.g., Cunningham, & Kwon, 2003).

Subjective norms. Subjective norms were measured using three items (i.e., “people who are close to me [e.g., friends and family] are likely to consume baseball”), with participants providing responses based on a 7-point Likert-type scale, similar to measures used in previous research (e.g., Cheng et al., 2012; Cunningham, & Kwon, 2003).

Intentions. Participants’ intentions to consume baseball was assessed using four items (i.e., “Based on viewing the above advertisement, I would enjoy consuming baseball”). Participants provided responses based on a 7-point Likert-type scale, similar to measures used in previous research (e.g., Cheng et al., 2012; Cunningham, & Kwon, 2003).

Data Analysis

Hypotheses were examined via the means of structural equation modeling (SEM) using AMOS 19.0. Model fit was assessed using the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), the comparative fit index (CFI), and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI). I adhere to the sentiments of Kelloway (1998) who proposes that RMSEA values of less than .05 would indicate a close model fit, while values between .05 and .08 would indicate an acceptable fit. According to Bentler (1990), CFI and TFI values of .90 or higher will indicate that a model’s fit is acceptable.

Results

Manipulation Check

In order to assess the experiment’s manipulation, participants were asked to indicate whether they thought each advertisement depicted a sense of excitement and

skill, and were asked whether they thought the individuals in the advertisement were African American (Black) or Caucasian (White). A total of 78 participants viewed the advertisement anticipated to display a sense of excitement and skill containing individuals who were African American (Black). Under this condition (Black), 97% ($n = 76$) of the participants believed that the advertisement depicted a sense of excitement and skill, and 94% ($n = 73$) of the participants believed the individuals in the advertisement were African American. A total of 52 participants viewed the advertisement anticipated to display a sense of excitement and skill containing individuals who were Caucasian (White). Under this condition, 94% ($n = 49$) of the participants believed that the advertisement depicted a sense of excitement and skill, and 73% ($n = 38$) of the participants believed the individuals in the advertisement were Caucasian. A total of 72 participants viewed the advertisement anticipated *not* to display a sense of excitement and skill containing individuals who were African American (Black). Under this condition, 92% ($n = 66$) of the participants believed that the advertisement did not depict a sense of excitement and skill, and 97% ($n = 70$) of the participants believed the individuals in the advertisement were African American. A total of 81 participants viewed the advertisement anticipated *not* to display a sense of excitement and skill containing individuals who were Caucasian (White). Under this condition, 83% ($n = 67$) of the participants believed that the advertisement did not depict a sense of excitement and skill, and 94% ($n = 76$) of the participants believed the individuals in the advertisement were Caucasian. Overall, 90% of the participants believed that the advertisements depicted what they were intended to depict (i.e., the advertisements

either including an African American or Caucasian endorser, or depicting a sense of skill and excitement). These results therefore support the experimental manipulation.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 3, where means and standard deviations are presented. In Table 4 bivariate correlations are presented.

Instrument Reliability and Validity

Table 5 displays the Cronbach alpha scores for each of the four scales (fit, attitudes, subjective norms, and intentions). Results reveal that all of the four factors have reliability scores greater than .80. Using the criteria put forth by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), this suggests that all of the scales are reliable in measuring their respective constructs. Further validation of the scale was completed by adhering to the sentiments of Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010), which suggest validity will be satisfied given that composite reliability (CR) scores are greater than the average variance extracted (AVE), or if the AVE from the factors reveals a score greater than .5. These conditions were satisfied, as all of the factors have AVE values greater than .5, and were less than their respective CR scores (these values can be seen in Table 5).

Hypothesis Testing

Results of the structural equation model (SEM) indicate that the model was an acceptable fit to the data: $\chi^2/df = 3.79$; RMSEA (90% confidence interval: .07, .09) = .099; CFI = .933; TLI = .912. An illustrative summary of the tested model is presented in Figure 2. Hypothesis 1 predicted that excitement and athlete skill (when embedded in an advertisement) would be positively related to perceived fit. This was not supported at the

.05 alpha level, as the results indicate endorser race was not significantly related to perceived fit ($\beta = .061, p = .4$). The second hypothesis however, which predicted that endorser race would affect the relationship between excitement and athlete skill and perceived fit, was supported. The excitement and athlete skill x race interaction term was significantly correlated with perceived fit ($\beta = -.178, p < .05$). Hypothesis 3 and 4 predicted a positive relationship between perceived fit and attitudes towards baseball, and perceived fit and subjective norms, respectively. Both hypothesis 3 and 4 were confirmed. Results indicate that perceived fit was positively related to attitudes towards baseball ($\beta = .697, p < .001$) and positively related to subjective norms ($\beta = .667, p < .001$). Hypothesis 5 predicted a positive relationship between attitudes towards baseball and intentions to consume baseball. This hypothesis was confirmed, as the results indicate a positive relationship between the two variables ($\beta = .248, p < .001$). Hypothesis 6, which predicted a positive relationship between subjective norms and intentions to consume baseball was also supported ($\beta = .751, p < .001$).

Discussion

Drawing from the literature concerning the match-up hypothesis, the current study examined whether certain identifiable aspects (i.e., race and identifiable motivational factors) would induce African American participants to perceive a sense of fit and subsequently encourage consumption. The hypothesis predicted that upon seeing an advertisement showcasing similar motivational constructs (H1), participants would perceive a sense of fit between themselves and the baseball advertisement. The second hypothesis predicted that endorser race would modify this relationship, in that an

endorser's race would affect the relationship between the advertisement's setting and perceived fit. While the first hypothesis was not supported, the second hypothesis was supported. These findings are particularly relevant to not only the current study, but to the entire African American baseball consumption phenomenon. While perceived fit may still be a relevant factor towards enticing consumption, the results indicate that the medium of utilizing certain motivational factors (i.e., skill and excitement) were not applicable. That is, viewing advertisements that included identifiable motivational factors (i.e., skill and excitement) did not entice participants to perceive a sense of fit amongst themselves and the baseball advertisement. Thus the findings indicate that while perceived fit in itself was a relevant factor in the model, perceived fit was not particularly caused by advertisement's inclusion (or non-inclusion) of skill and excitement. In taking into consideration some of the other factors that could have possibly influenced this factor, previous studies have shown more simplistic factors such as fan identification to influence a sense of identification with a product or sport (Wann & Branscombe, 1993). Furthermore, aspects that were not measured such as message credibility may have had an influence upon perceived fit. For example, Atkin and Block (1983) found that believability was an influential factor upon perceived fit. Additionally, a number of studies have utilized the match-up hypothesis to investigate perceived fit and have found that aspects such as physical attractiveness were influential upon fit (Debevec & Kernan, 1984; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Patzer, 1985). Fink et al. (2004) not only found attractiveness to be influential upon perceived fit, but also found expertise to be influential upon the factor. Thus, while the measure of advertisement setting (i.e.,

skill and excitement) may influence African Americans to consume sport (see Study 1 and 2), this factors were not found to be particularly relevant upon fit. Still, the confirmation of hypothesis 2 indicates that endorser race is a particularly relevant factor in perceiving a sense of fit. This is to be expected, as research has suggested that individuals are likely to have positive assessments towards individuals who are perceived to be similar to themselves (Dovidio et al., 2003). Furthermore, studies from the racial identification literature suggest that individuals who have a high sense of racial identification are likely to consume products that reinforce and exhibit their own racial traits (Xu et al., 2004). Such was most likely the case with the current study, where participants were likely to perceive the advertisements containing African Americans, as an advertisement containing and upholding racial similarities

Results indicate that perceived fit still found to have an impact upon the facets of the theory of reasoned action. That is, as the confirmation of hypotheses 3 and 4 suggest, perceived fit was found to be predictive of attitudes towards baseball and towards subjective norms. Likewise, both of these factors – attitudes towards baseball and subjective norms – were found to be influential upon intentions to consume baseball (a confirmation of hypotheses 5 and 6, respectively). This information is similar to prior research which shows attitudes and subjective norms to have direct effects upon intentions (Ajzen & Daigle, 2001; Ajzen & Driver, 1992; Lu, Lin, & Cheng, 2011). While both attitudes and subjective norms were significant in their prediction of intentions to consume baseball, results indicate that subjective norms had a greater effect on intentions to consume baseball than did attitudes. This is a significant result,

particularly towards the African American sport consumer. While previous studies have shown the influence of attitudes upon sport consumption (Cunningham & Kwon, 2003; Cheng et al., 2012), relatively few studies have investigated the influence of subjective norms upon sport consumption, particularly with the African American sport consumer. Yet, as Armstrong (2002a) suggests, subjective norms are particularly important to African American sport consumers, as the author refers to the concept of psychosocial sport involvement.

Psychosocial involvement refers to the ability of individuals to be influenced by family, friends, or significant others (Armstrong, 2002). In concern to psychosocial sport involvement, Armstrong (2002a) states that as individuals within the African American culture disengage or engage with a certain sport, they (more so than other ethnic or racial groups) will further promote the disengagement or engagement of the sport with other African Americans. As a result, this will cause a ripple effect, as individuals who are part of the African American culture will adhere to these sentiments and further convey their negative or positive sentiments about a sport to even more individuals. The results of the current study support these sentiments, as subjective norms were highly influential upon intentions. That is, the results suggest that subjective norms, and therefore the concern for significant others (i.e., friends and family), were heavily influential upon African American participants' intentions to consume baseball. This is important as intentions, as was displayed in the conformation of hypothesis 8, are positively related to behavioral intentions.

Limitations and Future Implications

While the study reveals important information for both academics and practitioners, it is not without limitations. First, the way in which data were collected was a relatively new method. Though Amazon's MTurk has been found to be a viable resource for collecting data amidst the social sciences (see Berinsky et al., 2012), the online platform is relatively new, and has not been widely utilized within the sport marketing and sport management field. MTurk was reliable in its ability to provide an ample amount of participants, yet those who completed the online surveys were not representative of the US census. That is, having a predominately male sample (70.7%) may have hindered the results. Additionally, individuals who participated in the survey were mostly within the 18-34 age range; that is, 85% of the individuals who completed the survey fell into this age category. This is contrary to recent reports, which suggest that only 31% of African Americans are between the ages of 18 and 34 (Nielsen, co, 2011). Furthermore, the current study may have been improved if there was (a) a larger sample size and (b) a usage of both African American and Caucasian participants. Though the sample size was relatively large and satisfactory for composing a structural equation model (Bentler, 1990), a larger sample size would have given the researcher a better representation of the population which was sampled, and may have increased the study's statistical significance. Additionally, though the current study was solely focused upon African American baseball consumption, the usage of a Caucasian sample may have served as a reference point for comparison purposes; thus, furthering the investigation towards the African American sample itself.

The study is also limited in the fact that it utilizes a set of fictitious advertisements, without employing any recognizable celebrity endorsers. Previous studies have not only shown expertise to be an important aspect influencing perceived fit and intention (Fink et al., 2004), but have also shown that the usage of celebrity athletes can portray a sense of expertise and influence consumption decisions (McDaniel, 1999; Ruihley et al., 2010). Thus, while the current study's results are helpful, the data may have been amplified if the advertisements displayed a stronger sense of expertise with the usage of celebrity endorsers.

As the current study shows the importance of perceived fit upon the theory of reasoned action, future studies, along with baseball marketers, may want to utilize the presence of celebrity endorsers in advertisements to encourage a sense of perceived fit amongst African American baseball consumers. While the manipulation checks upon the advertisements' ability to portray a sense of excitement and skill (or non-excitement and non-skill) were acceptable, the experiment is limited in that portraying these aspects may have been more straightforward if the advertisements were in commercial form instead of print form. Therefore, future studies may want utilize commercials to better portray a sense of excitement and skill; as these aspects have been deemed as relevant factors influencing African American sport consumption in the past (see Study 1 and Study 2).

While perceived fit has been used upon a multitude of different concepts, the factor has not necessarily been coupled with the theory of reasoned action. As perceived fit was an influential factor upon participants' subjective norms and attitudes towards baseball, future studies may want to combine the two components in an effort to further

the theoretical foundations of both the match-up hypothesis and the theory of reasoned action. Both the match-up hypothesis and the theory of reasoned action have been employed in studies pertaining to sport consumption (Fink et al., 2004; Shoham et al., 1998); yet, relatively few studies have specifically examined African Americans and their association with the two components. As the study at hand signifies the two components to be relevant towards African American sport consumption, future research should revolve around finding different factors that can influence perceived fit and the components of the theory of reasoned action.

The results of the current study reveal the importance of subjective norms amongst African Americans. Previous research supports these findings as aspects such as family values, family appeal, and the value of significant others are particularly relevant for African American sport consumers (Armstrong 2002a; Armstrong 2002b; Armstrong, 2008). Therefore, it is suggested that baseball marketers specifically capitalize on campaigns that focus on family appeal, or a sense of socialization. Furthermore, as the current study conveyed the importance of perceived fit, baseball marketers should also focus on ways in which African American sport consumers can perceive a sense of fit based on baseball upholding family values, or a sense of socialization.

In conclusion, the purpose of the study was to examine African American attitudes towards baseball and consumption intentions by exploring the role of perceived fit and its association with the theory of reasoned action. While, the current study reveals an overall implication towards consumer attitudes and intentions, it should be noted that

a single advertisement is not likely to change long-term attitudes. There is a call therefore to continue along with a consistent set of advertisements that may influence consumer attitudes and intentions in the distant future. Still, the study does display a sense of significance in that it was able to bring forth certain factors that were influential towards participants' willingness to consume baseball. Findings indicate that an advertisement's setting (i.e., the inclusion or non-inclusion of excitement of skill), was not influential upon perceived fit. Thus, the findings of the study at hand may have been negatively affected by the mediums which were used to influence perceived fit. Nevertheless, the study found that an endorser's race moderated the relationship between the advertisement's setting and perceived fit. Successively, perceived fit in itself is influential upon attitudes towards baseball and subjective norms. Furthermore, in line with the theory of reasoned action, both attitudes towards baseball and subjective norms were important in explaining intentions to consume baseball. These findings contribute both to practitioners and academics by showcasing the theoretical and practical significance of perceived fit and the theory of reasoned action upon baseball consumption by African Americans.

CHAPTER V

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The African American demographic is a valuable target market in the United States (Miller & Washington, 2011). Scholars not only emphasize to this target market's economic worth, but endorse this demographic as a worthwhile market for sport organizations (Akçay et al., 2012; Simpson et al., 2000). Nevertheless, baseball consumption rates amongst African Americans have reached an all-time low (Clinkscales, 2013). Less than 10% of those who watch baseball on television are African American, and less than 5% of those who attend Major League baseball games are African American (Fisher, 2012; Livingstone, 2011; Ogden & Hilt, 2003). It is therefore important to understand the factors influencing the African American community's deterrence from baseball consumption. In finding the factors that may be causing this low consumption rate, sport marketers may be able to specifically hone in on these factors to evoke consumption from this target market.

Much of the research on African American sport consumption has revealed that African American sport consumers are different from other consumers (Armstrong, 2008; Williams & Qualls, 1989). According to literature, African American sport consumers are, in comparison to other consumers, more intrigued by family values, are more captivated by racial similarities, and have an overall different set of motivational facets that influence them to consume sport (Armstrong, 2002b; Armstrong, 2008; Ogden & Hilt, 2003; Spreitzer & Snyder, 1990). While these investigations are helpful

to the current study, most of these investigations are in concern to the African American standpoint on sports in general, and seldom emphasize the African American perspective on specific sports (i.e., baseball consumption). Understanding what factors can influence African American baseball consumption is therefore important, as it can help sport managers and marketers identify future research endeavors.

As such, the purpose of my dissertation was to advance the African American sport consumer literature by examining the African American outlook on baseball consumption. I did this by conducting three studies. In Study 1, I examined African American motivations to consume sport. Within Study 1, African American participants were surveyed to identify the motivational aspects they perceived to be either present or absent in the sport of baseball. This was done using a quantitative comparative analysis that compared the perceived motivational aspects present in baseball, a favorite sport, and sport in general. The results were significant in that all of the motivational construct measured (skill, drama, aesthetic value, group entertainment, family value, escape, and cultural affiliation) displayed a significant difference between a favorite sport and baseball; that being, each motivational factor within the ‘favorite sport’ category was significantly greater than ($p < .05$) its respective motivational factor within the ‘baseball’ category (see Table 2 for descriptive statistics). Furthermore, Study 1 revealed that the two most influential factors which motivated participants to consume sport were skill level and drama. Thus, according to participants, the study suggests baseball was not perceived to contain aspects such as skill and drama; the very factors that were most

influential towards consuming a favorite sport, and towards sport consumption in general.

In Study 2, I examined the role of racial identification and its influence upon the perception of baseball in qualitative form. This was achieved through a set of focus group interviews, where African American participants who did not consider themselves baseball fans were asked why they chose not to consume baseball. The central purposes of Study 2 were to (a) ascertain the factors deterring African Americans from consuming baseball and (b) understand the role of racial identification and its influence upon motivational factors and baseball consumption. The findings suggest two broad categories best represent this deterrence from baseball consumption: perception of baseball and socio-cultural dynamics. Each of the two categories includes three separate general dimensions. Therefore, in total, six general dimensions were found that best represented the motives for not consuming baseball in accordance with participants' ethnic identification: A perceived lack of excitement in baseball, a perceived lack of skill in baseball, a distaste towards baseball's structure, a lack of access for young African Americans, African American player representation, and African American players in pop-culture.

The aim of Study 3 therefore was to build upon the findings of the first two studies. In accordance with participant responses from both Study 1 and 2, baseball fails to connect with participants for two reasons: it has an inability to contain certain identifiable motivational characteristics (i.e., skill and excitement), and it fails to uphold similar racial traits. Study 3 therefore utilized these aspects (identifiable motivational

characteristics and racial identification) as a means to contrive a sense of perceived fit between baseball and African American participants. Specifically, the study sought to utilize print baseball advertisements to provoke a sense of perceived fit based on the advertisements upholding racial similarities and/or identifiable motivational characteristics (the very factors found to be influential upon consumption in Study 1 and 2). Additionally, in utilizing the literature of both the match-up hypothesis and the theory of reasoned action, I assessed how perceived fit was influential upon the theory of reasoned action's components (i.e., attitudes towards baseball and subjective norms), and subsequently intentions to consume baseball. Results suggest that while a print advertisement depicting a sense of skill and excitement was not influential upon perceived fit, an endorser's race within these advertisements did moderate the relationship between the advertisement's setting (i.e., an advertisement containing skill and excitement) and perceived fit. The study also suggests that perceived fit was significantly influential upon both attitudes and subjective norms. These factors – attitudes and subjective norms – were in themselves significantly influential upon intentions to consume baseball.

Contributions

This body of research makes several contributions to the literature. First, it expands the African American sport consumer literature by revealing the motivational factors African Americans favor in a sports setting. The current study suggests that African American consumers favor skill and excitement, more than other factors. Furthermore, while previous figures indicate African Americans are not easily willing to

consume baseball (Ogden & Hilt, 2003; Nightengale, 2013), the results of the current dissertation suggest that baseball fails to uphold a sense of racial identification and fails to embody the same motivational factors which are preferred to be present within a sports setting. In addition to Study 1 and Study 2 upholding these sentiments, Study 3 indicates that an endorser's racial make-up will have a moderating affect upon an individual's appraisal towards an advertisement (i.e., perceived fit). This information in itself is helpful towards contributing to the match-up hypothesis literature.

According to the match-up hypothesis, individuals are likely to have positive evaluations towards an advertisement if the advertisement portrays a "match" and/or "fit" between themselves and the product being advertised (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins & Gupta, 1994; McDaniel, 1999). The current study contributes to the match-up hypothesis literature by upholding its sentiments within a sports setting, and employing the match-up hypothesis with a sample made up of all African Americans. The study adds to the literature in that it not only brings forth factors that are (non)influential towards perceived fit, but suggests a relationship between perceived fit and the components of another theory altogether. Specifically, the current dissertation suggests that advertisement setting (i.e., an advertisement depicting a sense of skill and excitement) is not significantly influential upon perceived fit. Still, the dissertation indicates that there is a positive relationship amongst perceived fit and attitudes and perceived fit and subjective norms. While previous literature has suggested perceived fit to be effective upon attitudes (Till & Busler, 2000), the current study brings forth new findings in revealing perceived fit's significant relationship with subjective norms. By

indicating a positive correlation with both factors (attitudes and subjective norms), the current study presents new findings amidst the sport management and marketing literature. That is, very few studies, if any have presented a specific relationship between the match-up hypothesis and the theory of reasoned action.

With these findings taken into account, the current study also contributes to the literature concerning the theory of reasoned action. While several studies highlight a number of different factors that can affect the theory of reasoned action's components (i.e., alternative choices, past purchase decisions; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), the current study brings forth a unique perspective in that it suggests perceived fit has a positive effect upon both attitudes and subjective norms. In having perceived fit as part of the study's model, the study at hand also indicates that attitudes and subjective norms were positively related to intentions, which subsequently was positively related to behavioral intentions. Thus, by presenting these new aspects, the current study helps develop a more complete knowledge of the theory of reasoned action.

Finally, the aspect of utilizing an African American sample both amongst the match-up hypothesis and the theory of reasoned action is helpful towards advancing both pieces of literature. Additionally, the current dissertation furthers the literature concerning African American sport consumers. Particularly, the findings suggest that African American sport consumers are particularly influenced by subjective norms. While, previous studies have alluded to these sentiments (see Armstrong, 2002a; Armstrong, 2008), the findings of the current study reinforce these views. In addition, the dissertation at hand supports previous positions of the theory of reasoned action and

the match-up hypothesis (i.e., perceived fit being influential towards attitudes, and attitudes and subjective norms being positively related to intentions). However, the current investigation presents the discoveries with an African American sample; thus giving the study an ability to contribute to the literature by translating the theories' sentiments towards African American consumers.

Implications

The current study offers a number of practical implications that can benefit sport organizations (specifically baseball organizations) in their pursuit to obtain the African American demographic as a stable target market. For example, baseball marketers should understand the importance of racial identification. This aspect (racial identification) was salient throughout the first two studies, as participants not only revealed their desire to consume a sport that was racially identifiable, but to consume a sport that had racially relevant motivational characteristics. Participants revealed a desire to consume a sport that contains aspects such as skill, drama, and excitement. While some individuals do consider baseball to contain these aspects (see James & Ross, 2004), it was found that African American participants did not believe baseball embodied these characteristics. Therefore, baseball marketers, in speaking to the African American audience, should highlight these factors in a way in which African American consumers can recognize that baseball may indeed have the ability to contain such factors.

Additionally, in concern to racial identification, baseball organizations should utilize current African American players in marketing campaigns when trying to reach

the African American demographic. The study at hand reveals that African American participants were not only dissuaded from consuming baseball because it's lack of African American representation, but were motivated to consume other sports for the inclusion of African American athletes. Likewise, participants stated that there was a need for baseball to not only have African American baseball players present in the sport, but to have the athletes well-recognized in African American pop-culture. According to these results, if baseball is to speak to the African American audience, organizations and baseball teams should (a) recruit more African American players, (b) utilize current African American players to promote the sport, and (c) market current African American players via the means of pop-culture.

As the study's results found attitudes and subjective norms to be influential towards African American baseball consumption intentions, baseball organizations should promote features that would influence these factors. For example, as a means to influence subjective norms, baseball organizations can offer specials that would specifically attract family outings. Also, baseball can further market itself as a family sport. Where baseball may already be known as a sport that promotes father-son relationships, these aspects should be specifically catered to the African American audience.

Future Research

In concern to the African American baseball consumption phenomenon, there are a number of avenues for future research. First, additional research should examine the associations amongst the current study's variables amidst a different sport setting. That

is, while the current study measures motivational aspects, racial identification, perceived fit, and the theory of reasoned action within the context of baseball, future researchers should investigate these aspects amongst other sports (i.e., football or basketball). Doing so may reveal that some of these factors are indeed either more or less important to African American sport consumers than the current study reveals. In addition, future studies might also delve into comparisons between African American sport consumers and non-African American sport consumers. While this dissertation reveals that certain factors are important towards the African American audience (e.g., subjective norms), these same factors may stand to be either more or less relevant to the African American audience once compared to other consumer groups.

To date, most of the work related to African American sport consumption (particularly baseball consumption) has been quantitative. The current study calls for future studies to investigate not only baseball consumption, but African American sport consumption in general via the means of qualitative methods. In doing so, researchers may be able to triangulate their findings with the current study's results and discover new ways in which baseball marketers can reach the African American baseball consumer. As subjective norms were found to be a particularly relevant factor influencing consumption, future research on this topic should be considered via the means of qualitative research. That is, future investigations may want to interview a group consisting of African American friends, or African American families.

Finally, the results of the third study may have been limited in that print advertisements were utilized over commercial advertisements. That is, several of the

attributes (i.e., identifiable endorsers and identifiable motivational factors), may not have been portrayed accurately given the limits of print advertisements. Future researchers should therefore consider examining the same factors amidst the utilization of commercial advertisements as a medium.

Conclusions

The results of this investigation offer helpful insight into the African American baseball consumption phenomenon. The findings speak to the increased understanding of both African American sport consumers and their outlook on baseball consumption. Specifically, the results presented in this dissertation provide new discussion on consumer motivation, racial identification, perceived fit, and reasoned action. Additionally, given the shortage of investigations on African American baseball consumption, I have brought forth several new notions that can contribute to the sport marketing and management field.

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APPENDIX A
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Consumption

It should be noted that in the current study, the term ‘consumption’ is used as would be in the marketing field. As cited by Gonzalez, Korchia, Menuet, and Urbain (2009), Heilbrunn (2005) suggests consumption is an overarching activity that can be classified into three categories: acquisition (purchases, donation, receiving gifts, etc.), use (actual usage and various functional interactions), and disposal (the practice of disposing objects, such as recycling or throwing a product away for the consideration of a new product). Moreover, the current study agrees with Gonzalez et al.’s (2009) sentiments, that consumption “can appear variously as an experience, as play, as classification and as integration” (p. 27). Therefore, throughout the current study sport consumption will refer to activities such as watching sports on television, attending a sporting event, participating in online sports activity, or purchasing sports related material.

Sport Consumer Motivation

Motivation is a tool that can help marketers understand the factors influencing consumption. Consumer motivation has been defined as a consumer’s internal ambition to partake in behaviors that will satisfy certain psychological needs (Iso-Ahola, 1982; Maslow, 1970). Research suggests consumers have a certain set of psychological needs that should be attained in order for an individual to perceive a sense of well-being (i.e.,

self-esteem, self-actualization, value development, etc.; Is-Ahola, 1982; Maslow, 1970). These needs are often represented within the confines of a product or service. That is, a product or service has the ability to include attributes that would allow a consumer to increase one's sense of self-esteem or obtain a sense of self-actualization. Thus, a consumer will be incited to purchase a product or service based on its ability to contain attributes that can satisfy certain psychological needs. Within the confines of sport management, scholars state that an individual's psychological needs are represented as psychological traits, which if present in sport, will influence sport consumption (Ko et al., 2008; Wann, 1995).

Sloan (1989) has categorized several sport motivational theories as being relevant to the understanding of sport consumption habits. That is, according to Sloan (1989), five separate categories of theories describe the human psyche in accordance to its needs, and subsequently its needs for sport consumption. The first category, *salubrious effect theories* suggest that individuals must fulfill the human need of health and/or well-being. Subsequently, individuals will be motivated to partake in behaviors that will likely increase one's sense of well-being or health (Sloan, 1989). Therefore, according to Sloan (1989), an individual's involvement/participation in sport (as a physical activity) fulfills needs such as health and well-being. Sloan (1989) also proposes *stress and stimulation seeking* as an overarching category of theories explaining motivation to consume sport. Individuals, in needing a sense of risk and arousal associated with their life, will seek to partake in behaviors that will increase arousal intensity. Individuals are therefore motivated to consume sport (by watching or

participating) based on its ability to increase arousal intensity (McDonald, Milne & Hong, 2002). The third category, *catharsis and aggression*, assumes human beings need an outlet for emotional release (Sloan, 1989). Individuals will therefore be motivated to either partake in actions in which they can directly release their emotions (e.g., an act of kindness, or an act of aggression), or partake in actions that will serve as a medium in which they indirectly release their emotions (e.g., crying after watching an emotional movie). Sport therefore, according to Sloan (1989), serves as a medium in which individuals can release their emotions; thus, individuals will be motivated to consume sport for its ability to serve as this medium. *Entertainment theories* are concerned with a human being's want to be entertained (i.e., amused). Sloan (1989) suggests that in their want for entertainment, individuals will seek to consume sport for its ability to offer an aesthetic and appealing platform in which they can be entertained. Lastly, *achievement seeking theories* suggests individuals are prone to accomplish a set of tasks and/or goals. That is, individuals are motivated to partake in a behavior if the behavior offers an opportunity for goal achievement. Sloan (1989) proposes that individuals will be motivated to partake in sport opportunities in which they can directly achieve a goal (e.g., finishing a marathon), or indirectly achieve a goal (e.g., watch a favorite team win a championship game).

Hansen and Gauthier (1989) further the sentiment that sport has the ability to offer attributes that can satisfy human wants and/or needs. Specifically, the authors suggest sport offers four aspects that will motivate individuals to consume sport: team attractiveness, opposing team attractiveness, economic issues, and audience preference

(Hansen & Gauthier, 1989; Zhange, Pease, Hui & Michaud, 1995). Team attractiveness refers to a number of different aspects that influence motivation to consume a sport based on the various features representing a sports team. Aspects such as team record, league standing, and star players are examples of aspects that represent team attractiveness and therefore influence sport consumer motivation (Zhang, Pease, Smith, Lee, Lam & Jambor, 1997). In Greenstein and Marcum's (1981) study on Major League Baseball (MLB) attendance, the authors found that team performance (e.g., win-loss record) caused 25 percent of the variance in attendance. In a similar study, Jones (1984) showed that National Hockey League (NHL) attendance was dependent upon factors such as winning, playoff drive, and superstar player.

Aside from team attractiveness, other factors have been shown to be prevalent towards sport consumption. Specifically, opposing team attractiveness has been noted as a factor inducing sport consumption (Zhang et al., 1997). Opposing team attractiveness refers to the fact that individuals will likely consume a sporting event based on their favorite team competing against a team that has likeable players and an attractive win-loss record (Zhang et al., 1997). The third factor representative of attributes that will influence sport consumption is economic issues (Hansen & Gauthier, 1989; Zhang et al., 1995). Economic issues refer to one's motivation to consume sport based upon her/his financial situation and/or the purchasing capacity one has to consume sport. In terms sport consumption, there has been a variety of concepts that have worked towards motivating individuals to consume sport based on their financial prowess. For example, promotions and income have been cited as being positively related to game attendance

(Armstrong, 2008), whereas ticket costs, and alternative forms of entertainment have been cited as being negatively related to game attendance (Baade & Tiehen, 1990). Lastly, audience preference is a factor influencing sport consumption. Factors such as stadium quality, stadium location and team history in a community have been highlighted as factors that specifically motivate an individual's choice to consume a sporting event (Drever & MacDonald, 1981).

While these four aspects are representative of the various attributes that motivate individuals to consume sport, these aspects are broad in nature, and may not wholly represent micro-level motivational features. That is, while these four attributes are satisfactory in representing motivation, there are other more particular attributes that influence one's motivation to consume sport. Ko et al. (2008) specifically label these traits as psychographic variables, which if present in a sport setting, will induce consumption. Ko, et al. (2008) signify the importance of these variables, as they suggest that assessing these variables is "essential to understanding consumer behavior" (p. 141).

In an attempt to identify these micro-level psychographic variables, Wann (1995) created the Sport Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS). The SFMS consists of eight motivational factors that will motivate individuals to consume sport based on their presence within a sport. These factors are as followed: eustress, self-esteem benefit, diversion from everyday life, entertainment value, economic value, aesthetic value, need for affiliation, and family needs. Wann (1995) used a sample of college students to examine this scale, and found these factors to be relevant towards sport consumption. Still, the investigation revealed differences amongst men and women in terms of which

factors were more prevalent towards sport consumption motivation. Specifically, the study provides information showing men to have a higher need for eustress, self-esteem, escape, entertainment, and aesthetic value present within a sport setting. Alternatively, women showed a higher need for the family aspect to be present in a sports setting. Furthermore, the investigation indicates no gender differences on the economic and group affiliation aspects of sport motivation features.

In order to further investigate the SFMS, Wann, Schrader & Wilson (1999) conducted a set of three studies to examine the scale's validity and reliability. First, the investigators examined the scale's factor structure through telephone interviews. The results were supportive of the scale in that its factor structure remained. The second study was concerned with the investigation of fans' favorite type of sport (i.e., individual versus team sports, and aggressive versus nonaggressive sports) and their respective score on the SFMS. Results from this second study indicate that those who preferred individual sports ranked the aesthetic aspect of sport higher than the other motivational features, whereas those who preferred team sports ranked eustress and self-esteem higher than the other motivational features. Fans who favored aggressive sports ranked economic value as the highest motivational factor, whereas fans who favored nonaggressive sports ranked aesthetic value as the highest motivational factor. Lastly, in the third study, the authors reported a connection between an individual's motivation to participate in sport and an individual's want to consume sport as fans.

In a separate investigation by Wann et al. (2008), the authors examined motivational profiles of fans of different sports. That is, the authors assessed which

motivational factors were present and/or absent amidst different sports. Specifically, the authors assess 13 sports: professional baseball, college football, professional football, figure skating, gymnastics, professional hockey, boxing, auto racing, tennis, professional basketball, college basketball, professional wrestling, and golf. Over 800 participants provided their input as to which of the following features were present and/or absent in the abovementioned sports: escape, economics (i.e., gambling), eustress (i.e., positive arousal), self-esteem, group affiliation, entertainment, family, and aesthetics. According to Wann et al. (2008) the abovementioned sports were classified into three different dichotomies: individual (e.g., figure skating) versus team (e.g., professional baseball, college basketball), aggressive (e.g., professional wrestling, professional football) versus nonaggressive, and stylistic (e.g., figure skating) versus non-stylistic (e.g., tennis).

Results from this study indicate individuals suggest that professional wrestling contains the ‘escape’ construct more so than the other 12 sports. Analyses also showed boxing to have a higher economic value than the other sports. That is to say boxing, more so than the other 12 sports, involved the highest sense of ‘economic’ motivation. Wann et al.’s (2008) investigation also showed that the ‘self-esteem’ motivational factor was highest within the sports of college football, college basketball, professional basketball, and professional baseball, while the ‘eustress’ motivational factor was highest within the sports of professional football, hockey and boxing. Furthermore, the study suggests that golf was the sport least likely to include ‘entertainment’ while professional hockey was most likely to contain the ‘entertainment’ factor. Lastly, the

‘family’ construct was rated lowest amongst gymnastics and tennis, while ‘aesthetic value’ was ranked highest amongst gymnastics and figure skating.

The next set of analyses within this study compared motivational patterns across sport (i.e., individual versus team, aggressive versus nonaggressive, and stylistic versus non-stylistic). The study found that individualistic sports contained aesthetic value more so than team sports, while team sports contained eustress, self-esteem, group affiliation, entertainment and family value more so than individualistic sports. Results also indicate that nonaggressive sports contained aesthetic value more so than aggressive sports, while aggressive sports contained economic value, eustress, group affiliation and entertainment more than nonaggressive sports. Finally, analyses revealed that stylistic sports contained aesthetic value more than non-stylistic sports, and non-stylistic sports contained economic value, eustress, self-esteem, group affiliation, entertainment and family value more than stylistic sports.

In terms of attendance motivation, Wakefield and Sloan (1995) examined the effect of team loyalty, stadium parking, stadium cleanliness, perceived crowding, food service, and fan behavior control on motivation to attend a sporting event. Wakefield and Sloan (1995) suggest each of these factors were prevalent in affecting attendance patterns. According to Wakefield and Sloan (1985), these factors possess a set of dynamic characteristics, which in turn influence one’s motivation to attend sporting events. Parking, based upon availability and proximity, will not only influences feelings for a current sporting event (i.e., the respective game in which the consumer parks to attend a sporting event), but will also influence decisions to return to the same sporting

event. Cleanliness will influence one's motivation to attend a sporting event based on aspects such as sanitation and the stadium's architectural design (i.e., a stadium being artistically pleasing or displeasing). Here, fans will most likely notice aspects such as trash overflow and restroom cleanliness. Wakefield and Sloan (1985) also state perceived crowding will affect motivation to attending a sporting event. That is, fans will take into consideration crowding, aisle space, hallway space and seat dimensions. If these factors are appealing, fans will most likely continue to attend sporting events at these venues. Food service will also influence motivation to attend a sporting event. With this aspect of motivation, fans will consider the variety of food offerings, food taste and freshness. Finally, fan behavior control refers to the stadiums ability to maintain security and limit unpleasant situations.

The abovementioned studies are unique in that they present an overview of sport motivations across several different sports. Still, other studies have focused on specific sports and their ability to contain certain motivational constructs. For example, Ko et al. (2008) sought to examine which motivational factors were present in action sports (i.e., skateboarding, BMX bicycling, inline skating, and motocross). The authors measure a total of 13 constructs derived from 4 motivational conditions. Amidst the first motivational condition, growth, the authors measure achievement, self-actualization, self-esteem and value development. Social facilitation and affiliation were measured within the relatedness condition, whereas fun, physical fitness, skill mastery, and stress release were measures within the existence condition. Lastly, aesthetics, aggression, competition, and risk taking were measured within the sport characteristics condition.

Of the factors considered to be included in action sports, results indicate that growth factors were ranked lowest. That is, amidst responses, participants revealed that they were not inclined to consume action sports for growth related motivational conditions. Specifically, value development, self-esteem, achievement and self-actualization were ranked lowest amongst motivational factors present in action sports. Conversely, fun, risk-taking, aesthetics, and affiliation were ranked first, second, third and fourth, respectively. Ko et al.'s (2008) study also revealed differences across gender. That is, males (in comparison to females) were motivated to consume action sports due to its inclusion of risk taking, aesthetics, skill mastery, competition, affiliation, and social facilitation.

Andrew, Kim, O'Neal, Greenwell, and James (2009) provide another example of a study measuring motivational factors present in a specific sport, as the study investigated spectator motivations and their association with media consumption for mixed martial arts events. The authors found drama to be the construct most influential for motivating individuals to consume a mixed martial arts event. On the contrary, social interest was ranked as the factor least influential for motivating individuals to consume a mixed martial arts event. The study suggests that the motivational factors, drama, vicarious achievement, crowd experience, and knowledge were significant predictors of male merchandise consumption. The motivational constructs, violence, aesthetics, drama, and knowledge were significant predictors of male media consumption, whereas adoration was the only significant predictor for female merchandise consumption.

Furthermore, knowledge and drama were the only significant predictors for female media consumption.

Aside from examining sports themselves, other scholars have examined the effect of motivational constructs upon certain demographics. Rather than examining which motivational factors are most present in a specific sport, studies have instead decided to study which motivational factors influence particular groups of people. In 2001, Kwon and Trail investigated differences amongst international and American students to see which motivational factors were more influential towards sport consumption. The study measured aesthetic value, eustress, group affiliation, economic value (i.e., gambling), self-esteem, and identification and found that the two groups differed in their value of only one of the five motivational items. Of the five items, international students rated aesthetic value significantly higher than American students.

The exploration of motivational factors having a different effect upon certain demographics is significant for the study at hand. Particularly, the current study focuses upon African Americans and their motivation to consume particular sports (i.e., baseball). Therefore, it is beneficial to look upon studies which have conducted sport consumer motivation research upon the African American demographic. Due to the predominate use of sport consumer motivation scales upon Caucasian consumers, Armstrong (2002b) created a scale specifically intended to measure African American motivations to consume sport. Specifically, Armstrong (2002b) created the Black Consumer Sport Motivation Scale (BCSMS) as a rebuttal to the many scales which were previously catered to the Caucasian audience. In creating the scale, Armstrong (2002b)

had both African American and Caucasian participants complete Wann's (1995) SFMS. In seeing differences amongst the two groups, as well as seeing statistical obstructions amongst the results, Armstrong (2002b) recreated the scale to measure seven items that would better represent factors that were particularly relevant to African American sport consumers. The scale's seven items, eustress, group recreation, aesthetics, cultural affiliation, group entertainment, escape, and personal investment were deemed as being statistically reliable and were significantly correlated with intention to consume sport amongst African Americans.

Racial Identification

Racial identification refers to one's psychological connection to a social category based on one's race (Sanders Thompson, 1999). While past studies have defined race as a genetic and/or biological trait (Dole, 1995), more recent studies have used the term as a social factor revealing a common socio-cultural dynamic (Coakley, 2007; Harrison Jr & Harrison, 2002). Having a high sense of racial identification therefore involves individuals having shared social experiences rather than shared genetic material (Harrison Jr et al., 2002). According to Haslam et al. (1999), a tendency to categorize individuals on the basis of race is not based on one's view of skin color or other genetic traits, but rather one's view on culture, social surroundings, customs, beliefs, and political associations. Views on such aspects allow individuals to not only gain an understanding of others, but also allow individuals to gain an understanding of one's self (i.e., one's own identify).

According to Carter and Helms (1988), racial identification is the extent to which a person has “positive, negative, or mixed attitudes toward their own racial or cultural group and their place in it” (p. 23). Individuals begin to develop attitudes towards their identity based on relatable social aspects such as family, friends, community, and school (Harrison Jr et al., 2002). This development undergoes a series of trials to make the individual either affirm or disconfirm identity characteristics (Hunter & Joseph, 2010). As an individual identifies her/himself as a member of a certain racial group, the individual will likely rely on the group for a sense of self evaluation (Hunter & Joseph, 2010). Furthermore, these individuals will likely uphold feelings of attachment with in-group members and will tend to have different evaluations of the group in comparison to other individuals who are not considered to be members of the group (Hunter & Joseph, 2010). The more an individual internalizes racial identification as part of her/his self-concept, the more an individual will partake in behaviors that affirm position within that racial group (Sanders Thompson, 1999). Still, it is important to note that not all possible members of a racial group will identify with the group equally (Sanders Thompson, 2001); members may in fact differ in their perspectives on specific group issues

Sanders Thompson (2001) proposes that having a strong sense of racial identification is important towards an individual’s well-being, as high levels of identification are associated with positive psychological outcomes. Specifically, individuals possessing high levels of racial identification have been known to possess higher levels of tolerance towards frustrations, have a stronger sense of purpose, and have greater scrutiny towards one’s self (Sanders Thompson, 2001). Racial

identification also allows individuals to form a distinct bond with others, eventually leading to a further enhanced sense of well-being. Taking this into account, certain macro (societal) and micro (specific individual) social experiences will not only affect identity salience, but will subsequently affect an individual's decision to take part in certain behaviors (Hogg & Turner, 1987). That is, factors such as family, friends, and societal beliefs will affect an individual's decision to participate in certain behaviors given that an individual desires to have a strong sense of identification. Research suggests other variables such as governmental policies, economic conditions, and political ideologies will affect racial identity to the extent that individuals will either decrease or increase one's own depiction of social categorization (Sanders Thompson, 1999). Furthermore, these aspects – governmental policies, economic conditions, and political ideologies – are known to influence socialization aspects such as intragroup contact, competition, and social comparison (Sanders Thompson, 1999).

Racial identification is also developed based upon one's interactions with other racial groups (Sellers et al., 1998); particularly, interactions with a mainstream racial group (i.e., Caucasian Americans). In this context, individuals who are part of a minority racial group will look to other mainstream racial groups and compare each group's societal receptivity. According to Gurin, Miller, & Gurin (1980), if a minority racial group perceives a mainstream group being embraced more positively than the minority racial group, then the minority racial group will likely increase identification with their racial group. Gurin et al. (1980) also suggest identification level is based upon the amount of contact an in-group member has with an out-group member. Low levels of

out-group interaction will lead to higher levels of interaction with in-group members which will subsequently lead to higher sense of identification with the in-group (i.e., higher levels of identification with one's racial group). Conversely, if out-group interaction is relatively frequent, then individuals will likely decrease in-group interaction and eventually decrease group identification (Pettigrew, 1998). Therefore, due to the significance of the out-group, scholars emphasize the importance of understanding the dynamics of both the in-group and out-group when examining racial identification (Gurin et al., 1980).

African American Racial Identity

Racial identification has been heavily researched amongst the psychological aspects and experiences of African Americans (Carter & Helms, 1988; Harrison Jr & Harrison, 2002; Shelton & Sellers, 2000). Early research on African American racial identification suggested that such identification was formed upon very few constructs and was not deemed multidimensional (Sanders Thompson, 2001). In rebuttal to this viewpoint, scholars emphasized the importance of African American racial identification being multi-layered, having a number of separate dimensions influencing the formation of one's identity based on being African American in the United States (Smith, 1989). A number of these theories proposed that African American racial identification is developed in stages. That is, African Americans develop their sense of racial identification based upon a process of social exploration and discovery (Harrison Jr et al., 2002).

Initially, research on African American racial identification consisted of little focus on individual culture; rather research emphasized African Americans being stigmatized in American culture (Sellers et al., 1998). This line of research is known as the ‘mainstream’ approach (Gaines & Reed, 1995). The mainstream perspective highlights universal aspects of group identification and uses specific groups as examples of these aspects. That is, mainstream research on identity is concerned with universal social processes and their effect upon groups of individuals (not necessarily African Americans). Such effects impact groups to the point where groups will develop a common set of attributes. Members within these groups will therefore then take upon these attributes and partake in behaviors exemplifying these attributes (Crocker, Lutanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994).

Due to its widespread nature, the mainstream approach involves assessing identity based on common social or psychological structures (Crocker et al., 1994). These structures are universal and can be applied to a number of different groups based upon the groups having a common set of social or psychological traits (i.e., ethnicity, gender, occupation, etc.). Therefore, scholars who utilize the mainstream approach to evaluate African American racial identification will simply immerse African Americans into a collective group assessment (Shelton & Sellers, 2000). For example, Luhtanen and Crocker’s (1992) scale, intended to measure group association, was utilized amongst groups of individuals who shared group characteristics such as gender, race, ethnicity, and occupation. Still, having a mainstream approach, the scale was tested upon African Americans and the results were utilized to assess African American racial identification.

While the mainstream approach sees positive benefits, its universal nature (when used to assess African American racial identification) fails to take into account aspects such as unique historical experiences.

Scholars who do seek to take into consideration unique cultural experiences will likely utilize the ‘underground’ approach to assess African American racial identification (Shelton & Sellers, 2000). The underground perspective recognizes that an African American’s racial identity is not only formed by status within society, but is also formed by specific historical and cultural experiences within American (Baldwin, 1984; Smith, 1991). According to Sellers et al. (1998), within the underground perspective, “the focus has been on providing a description of what it means to be Black” (p. 21). That is, the underground perspective understands African American racial identification as an individual’s personal association with the “Black race” (p. 21). Still, because the underground approach emphasizes the development of identification based on personal experience, the development of one’s African American identity can differ from person to person (Shelton & Sellers, 2000). Research suggests that this development will differ based on social experiences in the United States and exposure to other individuals who are considered to be part of the same racial group (McGuire, McGuire, Child, & Fujioka, 1978). Shelton and Sellers (2000) suggest that the majority of those who research African American racial identity with an underground perspective believe that an African American’s racial identity is a relatively stable construct. While theorists tend to believe African American attitudes and beliefs will change over time, those who support

the underground perspective believe that attitudes and beliefs will stay relatively consistent (Shelton & Sellers, 2000).

One of the most common cited underground models is that of Cross's (1991) Model of Psychological Nigrescence. The model suggests that African Americans go through four stages in which they develop their racial identity. The first stage, pre-encounter, suggests that African Americans uphold a belief in where they do not consider race to be an important aspect in their lives and/or identity. African Americans in the second stage, encounter, experience several events that are directly associated to their race. These experiences are most likely social in nature and can be either positive or negative. The third stage is immersion, where African Americans, based upon their previous encounters, choose to either immerge themselves into Black culture or disengage from the culture. While the Nigrescence model emphasizes immersion or disengagement, it should be noted that individuals do not have to fall directly into one category or another, and in fact can be slightly immerged or slightly disengaged (Shelton & Sellers, 2000). The fourth and final stage is internalization, where African Americans will carry a sense of inner security and satisfaction towards their decision.

Regardless of model or approach, it stands to say that African Americans have a specific identity; and based upon this specific identity they are different from other (racial) groups. Such differences allow African Americans to perceive issues and decision making processes differently than others. In having such different perspectives, African Americans are therefore likely to have different consumption patterns than other

racers. Thus, in looking towards African Americans behaviors, the author takes this into account when examining sport consumption behaviors.

The Theory of Reasoned Action

The theory of reasoned action is a social cognitive theory designed to explain motivational influences upon a human being's behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

According to Conner and Armitage (1998), the theory of reasoned action is considered a processing model, as the theory assumes that individuals will make decisions after carefully reviewing relevant information. The theory of reasoned action itself stems from studies on the psychological processes of attitudes and behavioral decisions (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The theory of reasoned action suggests that one's decision to partake in a certain behavior is dependent upon one's intention to engage in that behavior.

Intentions are an important aspect of the theory of reasoned action, as they have been strongly associated with behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Fishbein and Ajzen (1988) suggest intentions are representative of an individual's desire to form a conscious plan to partake in a particular behavior. Intentions also play a role in attitude formation, as an individual's attitude towards a certain behavior will change via the desire (or lack of desire) to partake in said behavior (intention).

The theory of reasoned action states that behavioral intentions stem from an individual's beliefs upon the likelihood that partaking in a certain behavior will lead to a particular outcome (Madden et al., 1992). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) state that these beliefs are divided into two separate distinct categories: behavioral and normative. Behavioral beliefs are said to influence a personal's attitude towards partaking in a

particular behavior, while normative beliefs influence an individual's subjective norms. Thus, an individual will intend to partake in a particular action given that her/his attitudes and subjective norms are influenced accordingly.

Attitudes

In the current context, attitude refers to the way in which an individual will evaluate a certain behavior as being either favorable or unfavorable (Babiak et al., 2012). As an individual encounters the prospect of partaking in a certain behavior, the individual will not only consider the attractiveness of the behavior itself, but will consider the attractiveness of the behavior's possible outcome. Therefore, the theory of reasoned action suggests that if a perceived behavioral outcome will provoke favorable attitudes, then an individual will likely partake in said behavior. Conversely, if partaking in a certain behavior reveals the possibility of an unfavorable outcome, then an individual will most likely not participate in the behavior.

Subjective Norms

The theory of reasoned action also suggests that subjective norms will be influential upon an individual's decision to partake in a particular behavior. Subjective norms refer to the external social pressure one receives from significant others. In this domain, significant others are those whose opinions are valuable to the individual making a behavioral decision. In the majority of studies involving the theory of reasoned action, significant others are often referred to as close friends and/or close family members. Thus, as an individual looks to partake in a particular behavior, she/he will take into consideration the values in which family and/or friends hold towards that

particular behavior. As with attitudes towards a behavior, subjective norms will influence an individual's intention to participate in or abstain from performing a behavior. That is, an individual will likely perform a behavior if the individual views the behavior as being supported by significant others. Conversely, an individual will abstain from performing a behavior if the individual realizes a lack of support from significant others.

The Theory of Planned Behavior

While the theory of reasoned action in itself has been utilized as a viable framework to predict intentions (Miller, Wikoff, & Hiatt, 1992), several scholars have noted its shortcomings. That is, as the theory of reasoned action primarily consists of two facets (attitudes and subjective norms), scholars note that the addition of more variables may better predict behavioral outcomes (Madden et al., 1992). To address these shortcomings, Ajzen (1991) brought forth the theory of planned behavior. The theory of planned behavior seeks to account for behaviors that are not considered to be 'desired' and therefore those that are not associated with strong intentions (i.e., nonvolitional). Thus, the theory of planned behavior also takes into account perceptions of control over the ability or inability to perform a behavior. Specifically, the aspect of 'perception' is important because of its reference towards the perceived prospect of a behavior, rather than simply viewing the behavior as a direct action. Therefore, one's *perception* of a behavior takes into account any associated outcomes or complexities that may be related to the behavior. In having this aspect - perceived behavioral control – the theory of planned behavior differentiates itself from the theory of reasoned action.

Nevertheless, there are other facets of the theory of planned behavior which establish its makeup.

Perceived behavioral control. In total, the theory of planned behavior suggests that together, perceived behavioral control, attitudes, and subjective norms predict an individual's intentions to partake in certain behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). As stated previously, perceived behavioral control refers to a person's perception of the ease in which a behavior can be performed (Ajzen, 1991). Being interpreted differently, perceived behavioral control can refer to the amount of control one has over a certain situation. For example, an individual living in Florida would find it difficult to attend a sporting event in California. While this individual's intentions to attend may be high, there is a sense of perceived difficulty in attending this sporting event (i.e., the ease in which she/he could attend is low). Furthermore, with the current example, the individual has little control over her/his ability to partake in the behavior (e.g., she/he cannot postpone the sporting event, nor can she/he change airfare or gas prices). The aspect of perceived behavioral control therefore links the gap between intention and behavior. Such a linkage suggests that individuals are therefore more likely to partake in a certain behavior, given that control is high and ease of difficulty is low. Conversely, this linkage suggests that if control is low, and ease of difficulty is high, then an individual will be less likely to partake in a behavior. Still, as scholars have suggested, it should be noted that perceived behavioral control may not be applicable in some cases, as some individuals possess the proper resources to complete a task given their intentions stay constant (Lu et al., 2011). For example, an individual who owns a pool would possess

the proper resources to go swimming. Here, the relevancy of perceived behavioral control would be minimal; instead, this individual would simply need a strong intention to go swimming.

Additional Attributes

While the current three abovementioned constructs have been used within the majority of studies associated with the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior, many scholars have suggested adding additional variables to help support the models. Indeed, Ajzen (1991) describes a disposition in which the theory of planned behavior is open for further development:

“The theory of planned behavior is, in principle, open to the inclusion of additional predictors if it can be shown that they capture a significant proportion of the variance in intention or behavior after the theory’s current variables have been taken into account” (p. 199).

Therefore, several aspects will be outlined that have been noted for their ability to possibly aid the theory of reasoned action or the theory of planned behavior.

Belief salience. Several scholars have noted the importance of belief salience and its ability to amplify either the theory of reasoned action or the theory of planned behavior (Sutton et al., 2003). Salient beliefs are convictions held by individuals that are specifically important and/or significant to one’s value system (Sutton et al., 2003). According to Conner and Armitage (1998) salient beliefs are assumed to influence an individual’s attitude towards a certain behavior. While the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior take into account beliefs, scholars have suggested that

salient beliefs are important due to their prominence amongst certain cultures or populations (Plight & Vries, 1998). That is, certain salient beliefs may or may not be prominent in one culture/population in comparison to another; therefore, by taking into account certain salient beliefs, individuals will adjust their attitudes accordingly. For example, members of the Hindu religion do not believe in eating meat from a cow. As a result, these individuals will uphold a salient belief towards eating cow meat. Therefore, such a salient belief will influence attitudes and decisions to partake in certain behaviors more so than it would members of other populations/cultures. Thus, while regular beliefs are influential towards attitude formation, scholars suggest taking into account salient beliefs for their specific ability to formulate attitudes based upon differences amongst certain individuals (Sutton et al., 2003).

Past behavior and habit. In accordance with the theory of reasoned action, researchers suggests studying past behavior and habit as a way to further predict one's behavioral intentions (Sutton, 1998). Those who support the usage of these constructs most likely base their arguments upon previous studies which have shown these constructs to be reliable predictors of behavior (Towler & Sheppard, 1991). For example, in 1987, Mullen, Hersey, and Iverson examined past behavior's impact upon future behavior and found it to be a significant predictor towards future behavioral actions such as food consumption and cigarette smoking. Still, while a number of scholars uphold past behavior as a viable predictor of future behavior, it does not stand alone as a sole predictor. That is, in addition to past behavior, other variables have been influential in predicting future behaviors. For example, some scholars have cited

‘frequent performance’ as a factor that must be present if past behavior is indeed going to predict future behavior (Conner & Armitage, 1998).

Within the confines of the theory of reasoned action, academics have argued for and against the term ‘habit’ being synonymous with past behavior. Scholars have researched the term independently and found it to be a substantial predictor of behavioral intention (Towler & Shepherd, 1991). According to Godin, Valois, & Lepage (1993), habit was deemed the most important predictor of exercising behavior over the original three constructs included within the theory of planned behavior (i.e., perceived behavioral control, attitudes, and subjective norms). Those who argue for the use of habit within the model of the theory of reasoned action or the theory of planned behavior state its importance; that habit will simplify one’s decision to partake in certain behaviors. For example, Verplanken, Aarts and van Knippenberg (1997) found that individuals who had frequently performed a certain behavior in the past (utilizing a certain mode of transportation), when provided with the opportunity, chose not to search for different options that could aid their behavioral outcome (e.g., individuals chose not to search for different forms of transportation even though they were provided with the opportunity to do so). Furthermore, according to Verplanken et al. (1997) in comparison to others who had the same options available (e.g., the choice to utilize different modes of transportation), individuals who had performed the behavior less often were more likely to search for these options. Subsequently, scholars such as Aarts, Verplanken, and van Knippenberg (1998) suggest an inclusion of habit (whether it be relevant or not) as a

mediator between the aforementioned constructs included within the theory of reasoned action or the theory of planned behavior.

Self-efficacy. There have been arguments made for the inclusion of self-efficacy within the theory of reasoned action and/or the theory of planned behavior. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence in their own ability to perform a certain behavior (Bandura, 1982). While some have suggested that the factor is too similar to perceived behavioral control to warrant its usage as an independent variable within the theory of planned behavior, others have described its differentiation against perceived behavioral control. Bandura (1992) argues for the latter, as he states that behavioral control and self-efficacy "bear little or no relation to each other" (p.124). Furthermore, other studies have supported this distinction with the usage of empirical evidence (see Dzewaltowski, Noble, & Shaw, 1990; McCaul, Sandgrem O'Neill, and Hinsz, 1993). Consistent across the studies that do support this distinction is self-efficacy's strong relationship with behavioral intention. That is, studies have shown that individuals are likely to engage in a particular behavior given that they are confident in their ability to execute the behavior (White, Terry, & Hogg, 1994). Therefore, this sense of confidence distinguishes self-efficacy from perceived behavioral control; for, ease of difficulty may be looked upon differently by certain individuals who may have dissimilar levels of confidence. In terms of future investigations upon this construct and its relationship with the theory of planned behavior, Conner and Armitage (1998) suggest investigating antecedent beliefs in order to "determine whether conceptualizations of control beliefs are adequate to capture the milt-dimensional perceived behavioral control construct" (p. 1441).

Moral norms. Azjen (1991), the creator of the theory of planned behavior, has himself argued for the investigation of moral norms, as they may prove to be useful in aiding the theory's development. Moral norms are viewed as a person's perceived sense of moral incorrectness or correctness in partaking in a certain behavior (Azjen, 1991). Such an aspect takes into account personal feelings, and is said to influence behavioral decisions (Ajzen, 1991). Subsequently, as individuals contemplate their personal feelings, they may find some behaviors more difficult to perform than others. That is, if individuals are emotionally invested in a certain behavior (whether positively or negatively) then they will find that executing the behavior with either be that much more difficult or simple (according to their level of emotional attachment). Thus, as this construct – moral norms – takes into account personal feelings, it may therefore influence perceived behavioral control. In analyzing moral norms, Beck and Azjen (1991) found that moral norms were significant in their prediction of behavioral intention. Nevertheless, some academics have suggested that moral norms will only affect an individual's decision making process when the individual is put in a situation in where they are expected to make a moral or ethical decision (Beck & Ajzen, 1991). Therefore, while the construct may influence an individual's decision making process, its ability to be included within the theory of planned behavior still warrants further investigation.

Theory of Reasoned Action in Sport

The theory of reasoned action has not been widely utilized in the sport management or sport marketing literature. While several scholars in the past have

investigated the factors that can influence sport consumption (see Ferreira & Armstrong, 2004; Zhang et al., 1995), these factors were not taken into consideration along with the theory of reasoned action. Thus, it stands to say that though the theory itself is used within a variety of different fields, its presence within the sport management and sport marketing fields is limited. Still, several scholars have composed studies which take into account fan perceptions, attitudes and behaviors in accordance with the theory of reasoned action. For example, Papadopoulos, Vlouhou, & Terzoglou (2008) examined the theory of reasoned action's components in accordance with intentions to engage in recreational sport programs. The authors indicate that the theory of reasoned action offers a significant model for predicting intention, and claim that the theory of reasoned action is a viable source for marketing implications. Specifically, Papadopoulos et al (2008) suggest utilizing the attitudes component as a means to market sporting events. That is, according to Papadopoulos et al. (2008), a "marketing strategy should attempt to create and communicate a set of salient beliefs about the positive consequences of the behavior (participation)" (p. 136).

While the theory of reasoned action is a relatively underutilized concept in sport marketing, the theory of planned behavior has been utilized slightly more often within the field. This is important as the key facets of the theory of reasoned action (i.e., attitudes and subjective norms) are still prevalent within these investigations. Therefore, it is beneficial to look into these investigations, for many of these studies provide insight into understanding the individual components of the theory of reasoned action. For example, Cunningham and Kwon (2003) measured individual intentions to attend a

hockey event based on attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and previous behavior. Within the perceived behavioral control factor however, the authors took into account several different facets; that is, the authors measured one's ability to attend the event based on the time they had and the cost of the game. The study found that attitudes, subjective norms, and previous behavior all carried significant, positive relationships with intentions to attend a sporting event (i.e., a hockey game). Though the perceived behavioral control-time factor was also significant in its positive relationship with intention, the perceived behavioral control-money factor was not significant. In addition, Cunningham and Kwon (2003) found that attitudes and subjective norms were more prevalent in their ability to predict intentions than were perceived behavioral control and past behavior.

In a recent study conducted by Cheng et al. (2012), the theory of planned behavior was employed to assess fan participation behavior in baseball. The authors utilized a sample of over 600 individuals who were considered to be fans of a professional Chinese Baseball League in Taiwan. Results from the study indicate that all of the three factors – attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control – were positively correlated with each other. While the authors found that attitudes and perceived behavioral control were significant predictors of game attendance (behavior), the study reveals that subjective norms were not. Additionally, the authors report that though perceived behavioral control was a significant predictor of game attendance, it was a stronger predictor when behavioral intention was utilized as a mediator. Of the

three factors in the study, the authors found that perceived behavioral control was the strongest predictor of behavioral intentions.

Lu et al. (2011) focused on individual intentions to attend a volleyball game, and focused on the theory of planned behavior's main three factors having a direct affect upon behavior without any type of mediation (i.e., behavioral intention). Their results suggested that all three aspects – attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control – were significant in their ability to predict behavioral intention, but not predict behavior itself. That is, of the three factors, only attitudes and subjective norms were reliable predictors of behavior.

These examples are highlighted due to their ability to provide an eclectic array of results. While all of the studies utilized the theory of planned behavior, each brought forth different results. For example, while Chen et al.'s (2011) study found perceived behavioral control as the most viable predictor of game attendance, Lu et al. (2011) found that perceived behavioral control was not predictive of behavior. Thus, the current study agrees with Lu et al.'s (2011) sentiments, who state that the sport management field will be benefited by investigating the various components of both the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior.

The Match-Up Hypothesis

According to the match-up hypothesis, consumers will evaluate an advertisement as being more effective when they perceive a match, or “fit” between a product and the product's endorser (Kamins, 1990). Though the majority of investigations involving the match-up hypothesis involve a “match” between a brand's product and the brand's

endorser (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Khatri, 2006; Till & Busler, 2000), other studies have focused on the “match” amongst a brand’s product and the intended consumer (Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Liu et al., 2007). Nevertheless, the current literature review will detail aspects of both, and will describe an advertisement’s effectiveness based upon each of these perspectives. The match-up hypothesis stems from two previous models which, in themselves, pertain to the effectiveness of an advertisement based upon the advertisement’s source: the source credibility model and the source attractiveness model. Here, both models will be discussed to gain a deeper understanding of the match-up hypothesis.

The Source Credibility Model

The source credibility model proposes that an advertisement’s message, and its effectiveness upon consumers, will be dependent upon the message’s perceived level of expertise and trustworthiness (Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977; Ohanian, 1991). As consumers perceive an advertisement to contain a sense of expertise and trustworthiness, they will not only be influenced to consume the advertised brand, but will have their beliefs, opinions, and attitudes influenced as a result (Erdogan, 2010). While some believe the model’s proposition to be an overall contention towards advertisements in general, there are scholars who still support the source credibility model as a way to evaluate endorsements (Erdogan, 2010). That is, rather than consumers evaluating an advertisement itself for expertise and trustworthiness, they will instead evaluate the advertisement’s endorser(s) for expertise and trustworthiness.

According to the source credibility model, trustworthiness refers to the “honesty, integrity and believability” of an advertisement or its endorser (Erdogan, 2010, p. 297). Therefore, advertisements will take into account their targeted demographic, and will put forth an endorser within their advertisement who characterizes trustworthiness. Subsequently, if advertisements put forth endorsers who portray a set of characteristics that are untrustworthy, consumers will likely be dissuaded from consuming the product (Ohanian, 1990). Smith (1973) contends that even if a celebrity endorser carries other valuable characteristics (e.g., being physically attractive), consumers will still be dissuaded from consuming a product if the celebrity endorser is untrustworthy. Friedman, & Friedman (1978) suggest that trustworthiness is the most dominant of several factors that determine source credibility. In investigating the factors that formulate trustworthiness, Friedman & Friedman (1978) suggested that likability was the most important attribute of trust, and was heavily influential upon consumption intentions.

Aside from trustworthiness, an advertisement and its endorser’s sense of expertise is said to be influential upon consumer evaluations (Fink et al., 2004). Expertise in the current setting is defined as the extent to which an advertisement (and/or the advertisement’s endorser) is perceived to be a valid source for reliability (Ohanian, 1990; Till & Busler, 1998). Expertise in this setting does not necessarily refer to an advertisement’s endorser being an ‘expert’ in the field; rather, expertise simply relies on the consumer perceiving an advertisement’s endorser to be credible and/or professional (Ohanian, 1991). An endorser that is proclaimed to uphold a sense of expertise has been

found to be more persuasive (Ohanian, 1990) and has been found to influence intentions to consume the advertised brand (Ohanian, 1991). Furthermore, according to Erdogan (2010), endorsers who were considered to be experts by consumers yield higher levels of brand recall in comparison to endorsers who are not considered to be experts by consumers.

The Source Attractiveness Model

In addition to the source credibility to model, the match-up hypothesis was also derived from the source attractiveness model. Whereas the source credibility model only took into account aspects such as trustworthiness and expertise, the source attractiveness model takes into account an endorser's attractiveness (Singer, 1983). Here, the model does not simply refer to attractiveness as psychological attractiveness; rather, attractiveness is dependent upon the advertising endorser's familiarity, likeability, similarity, and physical attractiveness (Pornpitakpan, 2012). Familiarity of an endorser involves the consumer possessing a sense of prior knowledge to the source through experience. This experience can either be that of having a direct experience with the advertised brand, or a direct experience having seen one of the brand's previous advertisements. Likeability alludes to a consumer's affection for an endorser, based on the endorser having pleasant physical and/or behavioral characteristics. Similarity involves the consumer perceiving a sense of likeness between either the advertisement itself and/or the advertisement's endorser. Lastly, physical attractiveness refers to an endorser's physical charm, allure or desirability. Therefore, if a consumer perceives a sense of familiarity, likeability, similarity and/or physical attractiveness from an advertisement or an advertisement's

endorser, the consumer will likely be inclined to consider consumption (Pornpitakpan, 2012). Conversely, the opposite is true, that if a consumer perceives an advertisement (or an advertisement's endorser) to lack either familiarity, likeability, similarity and/or physical attractiveness, then the consumer will likely be dismayed from consuming the advertised brand (Till & Busler, 2000).

While some studies will take into account several of these constructs, other studies have focused solely on physical attractiveness as a measure for source attractiveness (Baker & Churchill Jr, 1977; Dzewaltowski et al., 1990; Kahle & Homer, 1985). According to Pornpitakpan (2012), advertisers,

“prefer using physically attractive spokespersons/models to using unattractive ones, based on the belief that physically attractive persons are more liked, and thus should be more effective in inducing favorable responses to the advertised brand” (p. 181).

Not only are attractive individuals likely to influence the effectiveness of an advertisement, but are also said to influence attitudes towards the advertisement (Erdogan, 2011). For example, Caballero, Lumpkin, & Madden (1989) found that male consumers changed their attitudes towards an advertisement based on the advertisement possessing a female endorser who was considered to be attractive. Furthermore, Kahle and Homer (1985) examined physical attractiveness and likeability in accordance with attitudes towards an advertisement, and purchase intentions towards the advertised brand. The study found that attractive endorsers (in comparison to endorsers who were not considered attractive) created higher purchase intentions towards the brand and

greater attitudes towards the brand. Conversely, in this study, likeability was not significant in its ability to influence attitudes towards an advertisement.

The Match-up Hypothesis

Taking into account both the source credibility model and the source attractiveness model, the match-up hypothesis maintains that an advertisement must convey some type of match and/or fit; whether the fit be between the product and the product's endorser, or the product's advertisement and the consumer (Kamins, 1990). While the majority of studies involving the match-up hypothesis focus on the former (i.e., a match between the product and the product's endorser; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Khatri, 2006; Till & Busler, 2000), studies have focused on the latter (i.e., a match between the product's advertisement and the consumer; Kamins, & Gupta, 1994; Liu et al., 2007). That is, with this line of thought, the match-up hypothesis accounts for the 'fit' a consumer perceives between themselves and the product's advertisement (or the individuals within the advertisement). As the hypothesis stems from both the source credibility model and the source attractiveness model, individuals will therefore seek to discover a "fit" between themselves and the advertisement's credibility, trustworthiness, and attractiveness (Khatri, 2006). Individuals will not only seek to discover a fit amongst the advertisement itself, but will seek to discover a fit amongst themselves and any individuals who are endorsing the product (Liu et al., 2007). The higher the level of fit between the consumer and these aspects, the more likely a consumer is to value an advertisement and therefore consider consuming the advertised product (Till & Busler, 2000). Conversely, a lack of similarity between the consumer and the aforementioned

traits, will lead to a lack of fit, and therefore a poor evaluation of the advertisement. For example, if an individual (a potential consumer) who exercises on a regular basis views an advertisement that contains an individual seeming non-athletic, than the potential consumer will perceive a lack of fit between the product and themselves. This will therefore lead to a poor evaluation of the advertisement, and subsequently a lack of desire to purchase the advertised product.

As mentioned previously, the majority of studies concerning the match-up hypothesis involve a match between the advertised product and the advertised product's endorser (Kamins & Gupta, 1994). These studies thus place a significant amount of importance on the endorser and her/his role within an advertisement. Liu et al. (2007) state that a successful endorser has the ability to increase purchase intentions, attitudes, and brand preferences. In realizing this, a number of advertisements utilize celebrity endorsers for their reputability and prominence amongst popular culture. According to Kamis and Gupta (1994) celebrities have the ability to be successful endorsers due to their sense of familiarity with consumers. This sense of familiarity leads potential consumers to form a relationship with the celebrity, and therefore the celebrity endorsed product. Research also suggests that celebrities, due to their reputation within pop-culture, inherit a sense of credibility, which alters attitudes amongst consumers (Kamis and Gupta, 1994; Khatri, 2006; Ohanian, 1991).

As potential consumers build a relationship with celebrity endorsers, the potential consumers go through a psychological internalization process whereby they form a sense of congruence between the celebrity and themselves (Ohanian, 1991). Potential

consumers will not simply adhere to the messages portrayed by celebrity endorsers, but due to their formation of credibility and trustworthiness, will take upon an endorser's ideals and hold them as their own (Pornitakpan, 2003). In other words, "information from the spokesperson is internalized with an individual's own attitudes and values." (Kamins & Gupta, 1994, p. 573). Thus, the greater the congruence amongst the endorser and the potential consumer, the more easily can the endorser transfer attitudes and values onto the potential consumer (internalization).

A common concern towards using celebrities as endorsers is that of a belief factor. Studies have revealed that though celebrities are believed to be more likeable and attractive than non-celebrities, they are still at times considered to be less believable than non-celebrity endorsers (Walker et al., 1992). Subsequently, a lack of believability will influence the credibility of a spokesperson – a critical factor within the match-up hypothesis (Kamins, 1990). Therefore, scholars suggest using a series of advertisements with a sense of reiteration, as reiteration influences a consumer's sense of credibility (Kirmani, 1997).

Match-up Hypothesis in Sport

The match-up hypothesis is particularly relevant to the sports field in that sport marketers will utilize the hypothesis to study advertising effectiveness based on the presence of celebrity athletes. Furthermore, the sports field and its connection to the match-up hypothesis are particularly relevant due to the number of studies pertaining to fan identification. According to Wann and Branscombe (1993), fan identification refers to an individual's psychological connection with a sports team or athlete. Several studies

suggest that individuals who carry high levels of fan identification form a sense of personal attachment to either their favorite sports teams or favorite athletes (Fink et al., 2009). Thus, if an individual has a level of fan identification towards a specific athlete and sees the athlete as an endorser within an advertisement, then the fan will be more likely to form a sense of familiarity and/or likability. Therefore, the match-up hypothesis takes upon a different dynamic when pertaining to sports. This is prevalent in McDaniel's (1999) study, which utilized the match-up hypothesis to show that consumers were more comfortable with advertisements containing a favorite sport celebrity.

Other sport studies have utilized the match-up hypothesis to examine the role of athletes amongst an individual's perception of 'fit'. For example, Fink et al. (2004) found that a perceived fit between an athlete endorser and the endorser's respective sporting event was influential towards attitudes towards the sporting event and intentions to purchase tickets to the sporting event. Within this study however, the authors found that expertise was more significant towards influencing fit than was attractiveness. That is to say, consumers were more prone to decipher a match and/or fit between the athlete and the sporting event based upon the athlete's expertise, and not the athlete's attractiveness. These findings were furthered by Cunningham et al. (2008), who also highlighted the importance of expertise amongst fit/match formation. These studies are relevant because they not only display the unique nature of sport within an advertising context, but also reveal the multifaceted nature of the match-up hypothesis.

APPENDIX B
FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1. Proposed Hypotheses

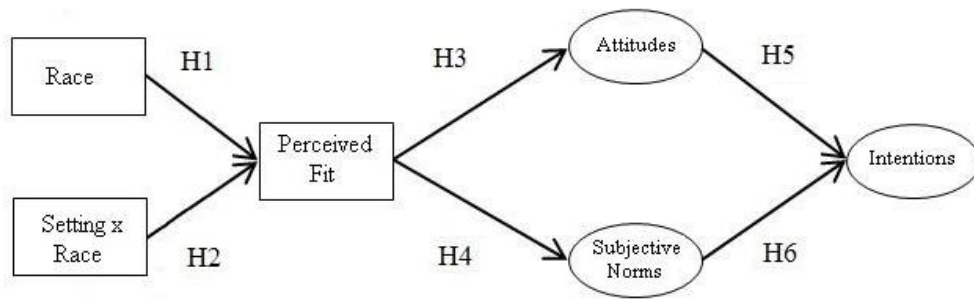


Figure 2. Outcome of Hypotheses

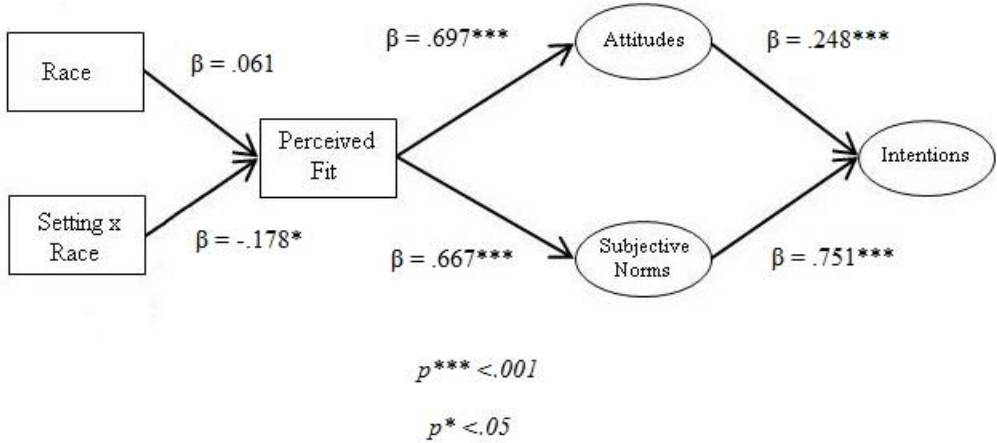


Table 1. Gender Results

Gender	
	N
Female	86
Male	55
Total	141

Table 2. Motivation Statistics

Descriptive Statistics			
	Sport	Mean	Std. Deviation
Skill	General	4.9090	1.49622
	Favorite	5.2116	1.53438
	Baseball	3.2695	1.81130
Drama	General	5.4669	1.45668
	Favorite	5.5532	1.46593
	Baseball	3.1891	1.79861
Aesthetics	General	4.2730	1.62291
	Favorite	4.2317	1.70524
	Baseball	2.7494	1.52292
Group Entertainment	General	4.3097	1.83340
	Favorite	4.6879	1.73718
	Baseball	3.3806	1.78289

Table 2. Continued

	Sport	Mean	Std. Deviation
Family Value	General	4.6052	1.69387
	Favorite	4.6974	1.72051
	Baseball	3.5106	1.86597
Escape	General	4.4693	1.72558
	Favorite	4.3511	1.72915
	Baseball	2.8972	1.66424
Culture Affiliation	General	3.7317	1.86634
	Favorite	3.9303	1.87042
	Baseball	2.3345	1.44509
Motivation	General	4.5378	1.18063
	Favorite	4.6662	1.17462
	Baseball	3.0473	1.33566

Table 3. Advertising Statistics

Descriptive Statistics		
	Mean	Std. Deviation
Fit	5.0159	1.30422
Attitudes	5.3192	1.14811
Subjective Norms	5.1731	1.16026
Intentions	5.1331	1.32680

Table 4. Advertising Correlations

Correlations				
	Fit	Attitudes	Subjective Norms	Intentions
Fit	1	.642**	.589**	.637**
Attitudes	.642**	1	.727**	.689**
Subjective Norms	.589**	.727**	1	.782**
Intentions	.637**	.689**	.782**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5. Advertising Reliability Scores

Scores			
	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Fit	.805	.809	.680
Attitudes	.851	.852	.657
Subjective Norms	.839	.839	.635
Intentions	.905	.906	.763

APPENDIX C
PRINT ADVERTISEMENTS

Advertisement A



Advertisement B



Advertisement C



Advertisement D

