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Finding the Perfect Match: Dimension Analysis and Development of the External Sponsorship Congruence Scale

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FINDING THE PERFECT MATCH: DIMENSION ANALYSIS AND
DEVELOPMENT OF THE EXTERNAL SPONSORSHIP CONGRUENCE SCALE

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Janice Evans, whose support has never wavered throughout my entire academic journey. Your constant encouragement through good and bad times has come to be my motivation to finish this doctorate program. You are my ear, my shoulder, and my backbone, and I am not the person I am today without you. Thank you for always keeping things in perspective. I am extremely proud to be your daughter. I love you.

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ABSTRACT

The biggest problem interfering with effective sport sponsorships is marketing clutter and the negative impact it has on sponsorship recall accuracy (Cornwell & Relyea, 2000; Rumpf, 2012; Seguin & O'Reilly, 2008). Previous research shows that external sponsorship congruence plays an important role in how consumers remember and recall sport sponsors (Cornwell et al., 2005; Fleck et al., 2012; Jagre et al., 2001; Olson & Thjømøe, 2011; Solomon, 1996; Stangor & McMillan, 1992), ultimately influencing consumer attitudes and behavior (Close & Lacey, 2013; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Lee & Thorson, 2008; Simmons & Becker-Olson, 2006). Great strides have been made in identifying multiple types of external sponsorship congruence, however congruence constructs are inconsistently conceptualized and measured, leaving a gap in the understanding of congruence theory within a sport sponsorship context. The current study addressed this issue by critically analyzing all elements of external sponsorship congruence from a conceptual and measurement standpoint, and created one concise measurement instrument by following scale development framework outlined by Churchill (1979), Hinkin (1995), and Hinkin, Tracey, and Enz (1997). Results of the External Sponsorship Congruence Scale (ESCS) illustrate four specific external congruence constructs are salient within consumers' minds: geographic, functional, audience, and brand equity. Accordingly, the ESCS provides theoretical groundwork for future sponsorship research measuring how a sponsor and event are (dis)similar. Implications for future research and practical use are discussed.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AVE .... Average Variance Explained

CFA ....Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFI .... Comparative Fit Index

CSR .... Corporate Social Responsibility

EFA .... Exploratory Factor Analysis

ESCS .... External Sponsorship Congruence Scale

KMO .... Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

MLB .... Major League Baseball

NASSM .... North American Society for Sport Management

NBA .... National Basketball Association

NCAA .... National Athletic Collegiate Association

NFL .... National Football League

NHL .... National Hockey League

PR... Public Relations

RMSEA .... Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation

ROI...Return on Investment

ROO ....Return on Objectives

SMA... Sport Marketing Association

SRMR .... Standardized Root Mean Residual

TLI .... Tucker Lewis Index

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Marketing is essential to the success of sport organizations, especially in the current market where properties can easily lapse into marketing myopias (Shank & Lyberger, 2014). Marketing, as defined by the American Marketing Association (2013), refers to "the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large." Sport marketing helps prevent general management shortsightedness, such as the belief that a winning season absolves all other sins, ignorance of competition inside and outside the property, limited focus on quick-return pricing initiatives, and/or ignoring consumers' wants and needs (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2014). Traditionally, the marketing mix is comprised of a property's product, place, price, and promotion which work in concert with one another to create successful marketing initiatives. The communication aspect of the marketing mix, promotion, is extremely important to how properties persuade consumers to think, feel, and act toward a product and/or service (Cornwell et al., 2005; Fortunato, 2013). Promotional communication also has a "mix" consisting of five elements: advertising, public relations (PR), personal selling, sales promotions, and sponsorships (Shank & Lyberger, 2014). Advertising delivers a one-way message through public mediums (e.g. radio, television, print, electronic) that are intended to persuade consumers. PR is focused on building a favorable image of an

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organization and engaging local media via press conferences as a part of the promotional strategy. Personal selling is a two-way communication medium that fosters relationships in order to persuade consumers to think, feel, and/or act toward a specific product or service. Sales promotions consist of incentives (e.g. price reductions) to attract people to a specific product or service with the intent of persuading the consumer to become a loyal purchaser (Fortunato, 2013; Mullin et al., 2014; Shank & Lyberger, 2014). The final medium, sponsorship, is defined as a cash and/or in-kind fee paid to a property (typically in sports, arts, entertainment, or causes) in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with said property (Meenaghan, 1991).

Within a sport context, marketing communication has two facets: marketing of sport products and services directly to consumers of sport, and marketing through sport using sponsorships and promotions within sport properties (Mullin et al., 2014). Similar to the marketing mix, all five aspects of the promotional communications mix must work cohesively to meet property objectives. The sport marketing communications mix, however, is enhanced by specific promotional mediums, such as sponsorships, that can market to both consumers of sport and commercial properties, such as retail stores, medical centers, and office buildings (Cornwell, Weeks, & Roy, 2005; Johar & Pham, 1999; Meenaghan, 1991). The strategic role sponsorship holds in a company's marketing communications mix can be better defined as an established business-to-business relationship with the goal of gaining publicity and awareness with a specific target group, via the support of an activity that is not directly associated with the business (Biscaia et al., 2013).

Unlike other promotional strategies, sponsorship has the potential to reach large, engaged, and diverse audiences at once to obtain direct and indirect sponsorship objectives (Fortunato, 2013). Direct sponsorship objectives are those that can be measured and achieved within a short period of time, and indirect objectives are those that are obtained over a longer period of time. For example, direct objectives may include an increase in sales within the timeframe of the sponsorship. An indirect objective may be communicating a long-term commitment to particular lifestyle, such as sports, arts, entertainment, or causes, with the hope of positively shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors toward the sponsor (Fortuanto, 2013; Gwinner, 1997; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Johar & Pham, 1999). Consumer attitudes and behaviors derive from personal values and beliefs, which are typically deep-rooted and acquired at a young age from close reference groups, such as family and friends (Trail, 2015). Sport sponsorships, which account for 70% of the North American sponsorship market (IEG, 2018), are attractive because of the moderating role identification plays in reaching sponsor objectives. Identification with a particular sport event, team, and/or league refers to the "part of an individual's self-concept which derives from membership into a community (event, team and/or league), based on the emotional value attached to that membership" (Heere, 2015, p. 216). This emotional attachment is what drives positive attitudes and repeat behaviors toward the sport community, and it is the sponsor's indirect objective to transfer the positive affect from the sport team to the sponsor's product or service.

Sponsorships are also an effective way to increase brand equity, or the commercial value of a brand that stems from consumer perceptions (Cornwell, Roy, & Steinard, 2001). Cornwell et al. (2001) state that sponsorship objectives overlap with

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commonly agreed upon elements of brand equity, such as brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand differentiation, and brand personality. However, only 35% of marketers consistently measure set objectives, impact, and effectiveness of their sponsorship activities (IEG, 2018). Measuring and evaluating sponsorship objectives is a vital step in the sponsorship process (Cornwell et al., 2005). Sponsorship assessment can identify causal links between sponsorships and financial returns, provide value in the negotiation and renegotiation process, and prioritize the sponsorship as it relates to other marketing initiatives. There are numerous ways to measure a sponsorship's return on investment (ROI) and/or return on objectives (ROO). Two popular methods, for example, are measuring digital metrics associated with clicks or social media, or actual behavioral data collected from sponsorship engagement activities.

First, however, sport consumers must be able to accurately recognize and recall a sponsor before obtaining any of the previously mentioned objectives (Bennett,1999; Koronios et al., 2016). Some researchers state that an effective sponsorship should be measured via a change in the sponsors' sales, television/press exposure, and a change in consumer attitudes toward a sponsor (Bennett, 1999). It is reasoned, however, that these attitudes/behaviors simply cannot be achieved without first recognizing the association between a sponsor and an event (Koronios et al., 2016). Therefore, sponsorship recall/recognition is perhaps the most important measure of an effective sponsorship (Koronios et al., 2016).

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

One of the biggest challenges measuring sponsorship recall is the marketing clutter present within the sponsorship realm (Cornwell & Relyea, 2000). For example,

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Breuer and Rumpf (2012) found a significant negative effect on recall for each additional brand participants were exposed to during television broadcasts. Similarly, Cornwell and Relyea (2000) found an increase in perceived clutter negatively affected the number of sponsors both recognized and recalled. As more companies incorporate sponsorship into their marketing communications mix there is an increase in sponsorship clutter (e.g. multiple billboards at sporting events, numerous company logos on the back of promotional t-shirts, multiple print-ads in a program). Sponsorship clutter can overstimulate and confuse consumers, which leads to a lack of attention given to sponsors. Clutter interferes with recall accuracy which limits the effectiveness of any sponsorship (Cornwell & Relyea, 2000; Rumpf, 2012, Seguin & O'Reilly, 2008).

Consumer psychology research suggests individuals cognitively remember and recall information that is congruent rather than incongruent (Cornwell et al., 2005; Erdem & Swait, 1998). Sport sponsorship congruence developed in the late 1990's when sponsoring sporting events started to become a popular marketing tool to cut through advertising clutter (Meenaghan, 1999). Congruence theory evolved from the notion that people value harmony among their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and are motivated to maintain uniformity among these elements (Jagre, Watson, & Watson, 2001). Before the term congruence theory was coined, many researchers referred to the concept as the matching process (Cornwell, 1995; Johar & Pham, 1999; McDaniel, 1999; Meenaghan, 1991; Rifon et al., 2004; Speed & Thompson, 2000). Within marketing and sponsorship literature, the matching process refers to a suggested fit between an endorser and an endorsed product generating a more effective endorsement (Cornwell et al, 2005; Kahle & Homer, 1985). Hereafter this concept will be referred to as congruence, or congruence

theory. Cornwell et al. (2005) looked at congruence as the similarity or relatedness between certain images which affects storage in memory and retrieval of information. In the sport sponsorship realm, for example, consumers would likely view a tennis tournament sponsored by a tennis equipment company as having high congruence. Consumer psychology research also suggests high congruence can provoke favorable affective and behavioral responses to a sponsorship, thus building brand equity (Becker-Olsen & Simmons, 2002).

More recent literature, however, shows that incongruence can actually increase sponsorship recall accuracy because of the focused cognitive effort needed to eradicate any inconsistencies (Close & Lacey, 2013). But, there is no direct link that shows recall accuracy influences attitudes (Close & Lacey, 2013; Jagre et al., 2001). Incongruence can actually reduce the favorability of attitudes towards a sponsorship, subsequently reducing the perceived value of the brand (Erdem & Swait, 1998). Incongruence creates uncertainty of a sponsor's positioning and messaging, leaving consumers uncertain of what they can expect from the sponsor (e.g. product quality) (Erdem & Swait, 1998). Therefore, the more congruent a sponsorship, the more likely consumers will recall and indirectly develop favorable attitudes toward the sponsor. Congruence has been found to influence attitudes directly (Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006; Speed & Thompson, 2000); however methods of congruence measurement in these studies is vague, leading to questions regarding the reliability and validity of the findings.

Recently two facets of congruence have emerged: self-congruence and congruence between the sponsor and property (Prendergast et al., 2010). Derived from self-concept literature, self-congruence in a sponsorship context refers to the amount of

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overlap between one's ideal self and the event's personality (Aaker, 1997). For example, an event like a Color Run 5K may be seen as outgoing, youthful, and active, and a potential consumer may consider themselves to possess, or ideally want to possess, the same qualities. Self-congruence with an event influences brand loyalty toward the event and its associated sponsors (Fortunato, 2013). For example, Maxwell and Lough (2009) found that the higher one's self-congruence with a sport team, the more they correctly identified sponsors.

The second stream of congruence research, congruence between a sponsor and property, hereinafter referred to as external congruence, consists of multiple sub-dimensions and is continuing to evolve. External congruence is defined as the similarity between a sponsor and property before the sponsorship activation process (Fortunato, 2013; Simmons & Becker-Olson, 2006). Sponsorship activation is defined as the sponsor's responsibility to promote and advertise the marketing rights derived from the sponsorship (Cornwell et al., 2005). As sponsorship research continues to evolve, the external sponsorship congruence concept becomes increasingly more complex with multiple dimensions of congruence emerging that may, or may not, influence sponsorship recall, attitudes, and behaviors.

Furthermore, the congruence concept has been inconsistently conceptualized. For example, Gwinner and Eaton (1999) suggest image congruence, defined as the similarity between an event and sponsor's brand associations (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999), is of the upmost importance for an effective sponsorship; yet, Olson and Thjømøe (2011) found no statistical support for image congruence contributing to perceptions of overall sponsorship fit. In order to better understand how sponsorship congruence influences

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recall, attitudes and behaviors, it must be accurately conceptualized and measured. Theoretically, researchers have made great progress in identifying congruence-related explanations between a sponsor and event. However, some congruence dimensions do not go beyond conceptualization. For example, there is currently no instrument to measure the posited cosponsor and purchase congruence dimensions (Fortunato, 2013). Additionally, some of the current measurement instruments are vaguely worded and/or do not align with scale development literature and need to be empirically tested to determine reliability and validity. In order to advance sport sponsorship congruence literature, there is a direct need to analyze all current elements of external congruence from a conceptual and measurement standpoint to create one reliable, comprehensive measurement instrument.

1.2 PURPOSE OF STUDY

While sponsorship researchers have previously measured external congruence (e.g. Lee & Cho, 2012, Olson & Thjømøe, 2011), there lacks one complete, multidimensional measure within the literature. Guided by congruence theory (Cornwell et al., 2005; Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955) and following scale development framework by Churchill (1979), Hinkin (1995), and Hinkin, Tracey, and Enz (1997), this study created a comprehensive scale to measure external sponsorship congruence. The scale development process consisted of four parts: (1) a thorough literature review to identify all possible external sponsorship congruence dimensions, (2) a qualitative investigation of congruence sub-concepts that are outdated or have yet to be measured, (3) a generation of a comprehensive list of items based on deductive and qualitative research, and (4) a statistical test of the initial reliability and validity of the scale. This study extends

previous research on congruence theory within a sponsorship context and contributes to methodological advances of measuring external sport sponsorship congruence.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY

This study significantly contributes to the practical understanding of sport sponsorship congruence. Sport managers can greatly benefit from the creation of an external sponsorship congruence measure. Congruence is one part of sponsorship management that can be measured before a sponsorship agreement is formed, evaluating potential risks before contractual obligations are set. Practitioners can then highlight the areas of congruence that the sponsorship naturally lacks during the sponsorship activation process, thus improving effectiveness and sponsorship recall accuracy.

The theoretical contributions of the current study are three-fold. This study is the first to take a deductive approach in analyzing all theoretical elements of external sponsorship congruence. An in-depth literature review from psychology, marketing, and sponsorship research identified significant dimensions of external congruence which were incorporated into the scale development process. Second, this study is the first to define and measure inconsistently conceptualized dimensions, such as holistic, image, product-attribute, personality, purchase, and cosponsor congruence. A qualitative inquiry provided valuable information regarding how consumers conceptualize these specific congruence dimensions, and the relevance of each dimensions. Third, the current study furthers methodological advances in measuring the external congruence concept by adjusting current scales and utilizing two scale development approaches (inductive and deductive) to achieve one reliable, comprehensive measure.

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In summary, the current study not only extends the literature on known congruence theory, but it also adds significant value in the form of a critical analysis, scale development, and practical information to guide sponsorship selection.

1.4 DELIMITATIONS

It is acknowledged that sponsorship congruence includes two streams of research: self-congruence and external congruence (Prendergast et al., 2010). A delimitation of the current study is the focus on developing and measuring external congruence rather than self-congruence. Self-congruence has typically been viewed as a moderator on behavioral outcomes in the sponsor-event relationship (Mazodier & Merunka, 2012; Sirgy et al., 2008). It is the author's choice to delimit the scale development process to only include external sponsorship congruence dimensions. Developing and accurately measuring external congruence is a critical first step in moving congruence theory forward and informing future research on the self-congruence concept.

A second delimitation is analyzing only those external congruence dimensions that are discussed in the literature to date. Taking a deductive approach to exploring external congruence dimensions is intended to more accurately define and measure known posited congruence dimensions. There may be unexplored external congruence dimensions that exist, and it is suggested future researchers should include a qualitative inquiry into uncovering any possible dimensions that fall outside the scope of the current study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter summarizes pertinent sponsorship evaluation literature; the evolution and importance of congruence theory within social psychology, marketing, consumer behavior, and sponsorship research; and reviews how external sponsorship congruence has been conceptualized, measured, and operationalized in the literature thus far.

2.1 THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO SPONSORSHIP RESEARCH

Sport sponsorships have been researched from different academic standpoints since they became a popular promotional tool in the early 1990's (Meenaghan, 1991). There are several theories that are used to explain how sponsorship stimuli is processed by consumers. These theoretical explanations include the mere exposure effect (Zajonc, 1968), matching and congruence (Cornwell et al., 2005), articulation (Cornwell et al., 2003), balance theory (Heider, 1958), meaning transfer (Gwinner and Eaton, 1999), identification (Tajfel & Turner, 1985; Wann & Branscombe, 1993), classical conditioning (Speed & Thompson, 2000), and attribution theory (Rifon et al., 2004).

The mere exposure effect suggests that repeated exposure to a sponsorship will create an effective response (Cornwell et al., 2005; Zajonc, 1968). Bennett (1999) found mere exposure effects in a field study of U.K. soccer supporters who had just viewed a soccer match where sponsor stimuli was present. Unfortunately, Bennett (1999) did not

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control for how many times the supporters previously attended a similar event where the sponsor was present or how many times they came in contact with sponsor stimuli during the event. Olson and Thjømøe (2003) also studied the mere exposure effect within a controlled setting. They examined sponsorship-like conditions with low involvement and limited processing, and contrasted mere-exposure (brand-name only) conditions to low-level processing conditions (brand plus some brand information). Findings support the mere exposure effect in that participants appeared to form favorable evaluations simply as a result of exposure to brands. Cornwell et al. (2005) posits that while the mere exposure effect is relevant to particular sponsorship situations, it is perhaps low-level processing and the reactivation of previously held sponsor brand associations that have the broadest application in sponsorship communication process. When examining sponsorship through a mere exposure theory lens, these studies suggest that organizations can use sponsorship as a way to stay relevant and remind consumers of the sponsor's brand.

Matching and congruence is one of the most frequently investigated theoretical concepts related to processing sponsorships (Cornwell et al., 2005). Congruence, or similarity, suggests that memories are more easily retrieved when they are influenced by relatedness (Cornwell et al., 2005; Speed & Thompson, 2000). Congruence supports schema theory, or how people best remember information that is congruent with prior expectations (Jagre et al., 2001). There are some potentially negative consequences of congruence for smaller brands. For example, a market prominence bias may operate against a congruent sponsor when a competitor with a large market share is more readily recalled and thought to be the sponsor (Johar & Pham, 1999; Weeks et al., 2018).

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However, given the weight of evidence supporting the value of perceived congruence between a sponsor and event and memory retrieval for the sponsor-event relationship (Cornwell et al., 2005; Fortunato, 2013; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Olson & Thjømøe, 2011; Speed & Thompson, 2000), advantages decidedly outweigh disadvantages.

Articulation within sponsorship research goes beyond the simple pairing of sponsors and events and considers relational context and meaning (Cornwell et al., 2003; Cornwell et al., 2005). Simmons & Becker-Olson (2006) examined how a sponsorship might "create fit" when a natural congruence may lack between sponsor and event. Findings show that articulation can mitigate the negative effects of low sponsorship fit. Cornwell et al. (2003) found similar results where articulation of sponsorship fit under conditions of an incongruent sponsorship improved recall for said sponsorship. It is suggested that articulation of sponsorship relationships may work to improve recall accuracy while at the same time signaling to the targeted community the role and value of the sponsorship. Cornwell et al. (2005) note that sponsorship articulation, if continued to be supported through empirical studies, can be a valuable tool for sponsor products that lack natural congruence within sport, art, entertainment, and/or causes.

In addition to the mere exposure effect, congruence, and the role of articulation in sponsorships, balance theory and meaning transfer are other theoretical foundations explaining attitude changes toward event sponsors. Heider's (1958) balance theory argues that individuals strive for consistency and avoid perceived inconsistency in behavior and attitude. Within image transfer, balance theory suggests that "meaning" moves from the event to the sponsor's product when the two are paired together (Gwinner, 1997; McCracken, 1989). For example, sponsors, such as Taco Bell and Mountain Dew, seek

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out sponsorships with the X-Games because of the youthful image transfer effects toward their products and/or services.

Sponsorships have also been researched from a social identity theory standpoint. When an individual identifies with an event, (s)he becomes vested in its successes, failures, associations, members, and memorabilia (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). In a sport sponsorship context, social identity theory has been used to explain team identification and its positive social and self-concept consequences (Heere & James, 2007). Madrigal (2000) found that higher team identification levels lead to positive purchase intentions of sport team products. Additionally, higher levels of identification influence key sponsorship outcomes, such as sponsor recognition, attitudes toward sponsors, and sponsor patronage (Fortunato, 2013; Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). Identification as an explanatory construct has received support across several areas of sponsorship research and it is suggested that identification should be of interest in any study of sponsorship effects (Cornwell et al., 2005).

Numerous other theoretical building blocks, such as classical conditioning and attribution theory, have also been used to examine sponsorships. Classical conditioning is defined as the learning process when two stimuli are repeatedly paired and a response elicited by the second stimulus is eventually provoked by the first stimulus alone (Till, Stanley, & Priluck, 2008). Speed and Thompson (2000) used classical conditioning within a sponsorship context but failed to examine the classical conditioning effects per se. Attribution theory is defined as how consumers assign feelings, beliefs, and intentions to arrive at causal explanations for events (Cornwell et al., 2005; Weiner, 2008). Rifon et al. (2004) suggest that attribution theory may be more important for cause sponsorships,

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or sponsoring an event to receive public recognition of the cause contribution, whereas the role of prominence may be more important for large-scale sport sponsorships.

Theoretical explanations are plentiful in sponsorship research. To better understand which theoretical foundation best contributes to successful sponsorships, it is important to understand the benefits both sponsors and events receive. Understanding sponsorship benefits can assist in determining sponsor objectives and measurement of those objectives. The following sections outline the important sponsorship benefits and what theoretical building blocks contribute to sponsorship effectiveness.

2.2 SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS

Sponsoring, or being associated with, an event has numerous benefits to the sponsor, including creating brand awareness, promoting brand image through image transference, increasing sales, targeting a mass audience, and differentiating the brand from competitors (Fortunato, 2013; Gwinner, 1997; Johar & Pham, 1999). There are also benefits for the event being sponsored, including a substantial revenue stream and access to sponsor products (Cornwell et al., 2005; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008). Sponsorships, often one component of a larger marketing campaign, are considered an indirect form of communication, meaning when the audience's attention is on the event, sponsors are indirectly marketing through billboards, promotions, announcements, etc. This indirect communication process is what differentiates sponsorships from traditional advertising. Advertising (e.g. TV commercial, billboards, magazine ads) is more direct in marketing tactics and is considered to be a one-way communication process, where sponsorships consist of a three way relationship between the sponsor, event, and consumer(s) (Fortunato, 2013) Ultimately it is the consumer that determines the success and/or

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effectiveness of the sponsorship. Does the consumer think of the sponsor when thinking of the event? Does the consumer purchase the sponsor's product(s)?

Other than brand awareness, image transference, increasing sales, and differentiation, sponsors also support events to increase perceptions of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Becker-Olson & Simmons, 2002). Corporate support of social causes, philanthropy, and other charitable events has emerged as a popular promotional tool. Research shows that consumers view a firm more favorably if it supports social causes (Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006). However, the success of a CSR sponsorship depends on perceived sincerity and credibly of the sponsor's intention (Becker-Olson & Simmons, 2002; Olson, 2010; Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006). Sponsor sincerity (also referred to as altruism) has been found to have a positive relationship with sponsorship effects (Olson, 2010; Rifon et al., 2004; Speed & Thompson, 2000). For example, Olson (2010) found that higher levels of sincerity were shown to have positive effects on sponsorship attitude. Pre-attitudes and sponsorship congruence were also found to be significant predictors of sincerity. Sponsorship congruence has also been found to increase sponsor credibility, or the quality of being trusted (Rifon et al., 2004).

2.3 SPONSORSHIP CONGRUENCE

Sponsorship congruence, no matter the objective (e.g. CSR, brand awareness), is the origin of perceived sponsor sincerity and credibility, which subsequently leads to consumer attitudes and evaluation of the sponsor (Olson, 2010). This consumer evaluation may determine whether the sponsor will continue a relationship with the event in the future (Fortunato, 2013; Rifon et al., 2004). While research indicates sponsorship congruence is important, sponsorship decision making continues to be somewhat of an

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"ad hoc", opportunistic process that involves little or no pre-selection research to evaluate congruence (Johnson, 2010). It is important to evaluate congruence before entering contract negotiations, however it is unclear exactly what congruence entails. A majority of research measures sponsorship congruence from a holistic standpoint asking if the sponsorship "makes sense", yet it has been posited that the congruence concept, especially in a sport sponsorship context, is complex and is comprised of multiple dimensions (Cornwell et al., 2005; Fortunato, 2013; Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). A thorough investigation of congruence theory, especially in a sponsorship context, is needed in order to determine which dimensions significantly influence consumer perceptions of congruence.

2.4 CONGRUENCE THEORY

Congruence theory refers to the state of similarity between a source and object (e.g. sponsor and event) (Cornwell et al., 2005) and has been used in general marketing literature to explain category fit with products/services, celebrity endorsements, and sponsorships. Before reviewing congruence dimensions, it is important to understand the evolution and foundation of congruence theory, and how the concept influences memory, attitudes, and behaviors. The following sections outline the evolution of congruence theory within social psychology, marketing and consumer behavior, and sponsorship literature.

2.4.1 CONGRUENCE THEORY: SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

The origin of congruence theory lies within psychology and social psychology research. Congruence was first evaluated as a moderating role in what has become known as the Stroop Effect Trials (MacLeod, 1991). In 1935, J.R. Stroop published an article

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depicting a series of experiments to explain attention interference. Stroop performed a series of studies revolving around color naming versus word reading, and posited the idea of a compound stimulus where the word was incongruent with the ink color (MacLeod, 1991). His two major inquiries were: a) what effect each dimension of the compound stimulus would have on trying to name the other dimension, and b) what effect practice would have on the observed interference. Ultimately, Stroop found words evoked a single reading response where colors evoked multiple responses thereby making naming colors slower than reading words (MacLeod, 1991). It is an important distinction to note that Stroop is not credited with the congruence condition (color words congruent with color ink), rather Dalrymple-Alford and Budayr (1966) were the first to use color-word (in)congruence in their altered versions of the Stroop trials. What Dalrymple-Alford and Budayr (1996) found, as well as other Stroop Effect researchers, was that congruence facilitates the response from the irrelevant word and the to-be-named ink color. Duncan-Johnson and Kopell (1980; 1981) also found a strong attention interference within incongruent conditions.

Social psychologists extend this congruence facilitation process as a way to explain memory recall and attitude formation (Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955). According the principle of cognitive consistency, people value coherence among their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and they are motivated to maintain consistency among these elements (Solomon, 1996). For example, if a regular smoker quits smoking after a lecture on the health risks of smoking, it is predicted the reason he quit was to maintain consistency among his thoughts and feelings about smoking being unhealthy and his behavior. According to congruence theory psychologists, the congruence model consists

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of three variables: 1) an existing attitude toward the source of a message, 2) an existing attitude toward the concept presented by the source, and 3) the nature of the evaluation which relates the source and concept in the message (Jagre et al., 2001; Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955; Shaver, 1987; Solomon, 1996).

This three-part congruence model is analogous to sponsorship such that consumers have an existing attitude toward an event, an existing attitude toward the sponsor, and the evaluation of the sponsorship in general. Shaver (1987) claims statements that sources make about objects are associative when the statement implies a positive congruence, and dissociative when the statement implies incongruence. In other words, when there is congruence present between a source and object (e.g. sponsor and event), consumers are more likely to associate these two things in memory whereas incongruence is not as easily remembered. It is these associations of congruence that influence schema-based memories, which are then stored in long-term memory (Stangor & McMillan, 1992). Schemas can be thought of as mental structures of preconceived ideas or representations of experiences that guide action, perception, and thought (Jagre et al., 2001). People are more likely to accept things (e.g. information, objects, advertisements) that fit into their existing schemas and re-interpret any contradictions to make them a better fit (Jagre et al., 2001; Solomon, 1996; Stangor & McMillan, 1992). New information that is congruent with one's schema does not require complex thought and is automatically categorized within an existing schema. Information that is incongruent requires more thought and attention to reconcile inconsistencies within an existing schema (Jagre et al., 2001; Solomon, 1996; Stangor & McMillan, 1992). Some research shows that incongruent information is better remembered than congruent

information because of the cognitive awareness one must put forth to settle the incongruence, whereas congruent information is automatically accepted (Hwang et al., 2017; Jagre et al., 2001).

It should be noted, however, that memory recall of incongruent information does not necessarily lead to positive affect and attitudes (Close & Lacey, 2013). This raises the question of how congruent a source and object should be to influence both recall and positive attitudes. Jagre et al. (2001) proposed a model of possible outcomes of congruity and incongruity in terms of values and affective intensity. Jagre et al. (2001) suggested that congruence, and the proper accommodation when incongruence is present (e.g. message articulation), leads to positive affect. If the incongruence is slight, positive affect is still attainable through articulation of congruent aspects and can be cognitively resolved and "forced" to fit within one's schema. If the incongruence is severe with unsuccessful accommodation, negative affect occurs. Support for Jagre et al.'s (2001) model derived from experiments that showed schema congruity and moderate schema incongruity lead to favorable evaluations of soft drink advertisements (Meyers-Levy & Tybout, 1989). When presented with extremely incongruent information, the amount of effort required to resolve the incongruence resulted in unfavorable attitudes toward the soft drink brand. (Meyers-Levy & Tybout, 1989). It is the magnitude of (in)congruence that can lead to positive affect, however, if there is no recall there is no attitude formation.

2.4.2 CONGRUENCE THEORY: MARKETING AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Marketing and consumer behavior research build upon the theoretical understanding congruence plays in the process of creating memories and how those

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memories influence attitudes and behavioral intentions (Jagre et al., 2001). When applied to advertisements, research has shown that attitudes are affected when a person (source), such as a celebrity, is linked to a brand (object) (Fleck et al., 2012). This celebrity-streamed research shows that celebrities are often a good choice to cut through advertising clutter due to their social status (Fleck et al., 2012). A celebrity's social status can hold consumer attention and influence recall of an endorsed product. Two elements have shown to be important within celebrity endorsements, congruence between the celebrity and object, and likability of the celebrity (Fleck et al., 2012). An example of congruence between celebrity and object may be an athlete endorsing an energy bar whereas incongruence would be an athlete endorsing a candy bar. This congruence gives the endorsement message credibility, which is an important factor influencing consumer trust of the endorsed product (Fleck et al., 2012). Lee and Thorson (2008) examined the level of (in)congruence between a celerity endorser and product and found that celebrity endorsements were evaluated more favorably in terms of purchase intention when there was a moderate incongruence present. Extreme congruence between celebrity and product still elicited favorable behavioral intentions, but not as much as the moderate incongruence condition. Extreme incongruence between celebrity and product did not elicit any behavioral intentions. Lee and Thorson (2008) concluded it is more favorable to have endorser-product congruence than rely on the characteristics of celebrities. Celebrity characteristics, however, have found to be an important asset when trying to position or reposition a product (Simmons & Becker-Olson, 2006). In some cases, it is the sponsor's objective to transfer the celebrity's likability to the product being endorsed (Fortunato, 2013). This transfer of a celebrity's likability is also referred to as image transfer where

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the celebrity's personality traits are transferred, or projected upon, the sponsor's product (Gwinner 1997; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). Positive image transfer is considered a favorable outcome of endorsements and sponsorship (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Fortunato, 2013).

Within the current marketing research landscape, congruence continues to play an important part of recall accuracy (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Fleck et al., 2012; Fortunato, 2013; Prendergast et al., 2010). Marketing research that attributes successful congruence between a source and object note that congruence can be broken down into two dimensions: relevancy and expectancy (Fleck et al., 2012). Relevancy is defined as the extent to which the information contained in the stimulus contributes to, or prevents, a clear identification of the main theme or message being communicated (Fleck et al., 2012). This relevancy concept derives from Social Adaptation Theory (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990; Knoll & Matthes, 2017) which assumes people adopt information from sources (e.g. celebrities, athletes, musicians) as long as they facilitate adaptation to their current environment. If a match exists between a spokesperson and product on some relevant attribute, the spokesperson becomes an information source of adaptation. For example, a NASCAR driver endorsing a car brand can be considered relevant because the endorsement induces a clear message of the expertise the NASCAR driver has within the brand category. Expectancy refers to the degree to which an item or piece of information fits into a predetermined schema evoked by the theme (Fleck et al., 2012). Expectancy derives from Schema Theory that posits attributes of sources can be integrated more easily with existing product schemas if the source schema matches the product schema (Knoll & Matthes, 2017; Lynch & Schuler, 1994). For example, models endorsing

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cosmetics would be expected to provide an accurate testimony on the quality of beauty products because they are familiar with, and use cosmetics in their professional careers. It is interesting to note, however, that these two congruence dimensions are independent of each other. Celebrities endorsing an airplane brand may be relevant as they travel on a consistent basis, however a celebrity may not be expected to endorse the airplane brand if they rarely appear in any advertisements. In a study examining congruence and likability of celebrity endorsed products, Fleck et al. (2012) found that individuals follow a more cognitive route when evaluating celebrity endorsements, estimating, above all, how congruent the celebrity is with the brand they endorse. Additionally, when examining the respective effects of relevancy and expectancy on congruence, the standardized effect of expectancy was five times higher than the effect of relevancy. Therefore, the level of congruence that individuals perceive about an endorsement is almost entirely driven by expectancy (Fleck et al., 2012).

In a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements, Knoll and Matthes (2017) examined how moderators, such as the endorser's sex, type of endorsement, and congruence between the celebrity and product endorsed influenced cognitive, affective, and behavioral intentions. In regards to congruence, results showed celebrities who were congruent with the product they endorsed (e.g. athlete presenting a protein bar) produce significantly greater effect sizes compared to incongruent ones (e.g. athlete trying to sell a guitar). Interestingly, results were only significant in regards to attitude and behavioral intention toward the product being endorsed and not toward the advertisement itself.

Psychology and marketing literature show that congruence is an extremely important concept regarding consumer recall of advertisements and long-term memory effects. Evaluation and acceptance of congruence between a source and object is primarily driven by the level of expectancy, or congruence, within a schema. Effective advertisements and endorsements that contain congruence, or a form of moderate (in)congruence, can lead to positive affect (Fleck et al., 2012; Jagre et al., 2001). Extremely incongruent advertisements may provoke recall accuracy, however the effort required to solve the incongruence is viewed negatively which leads to dissonance (Jagre et al., 2001). Therefore, it is clear that any form of marketing, advertisement, or endorsement should contain some form of congruence between a source and an object to provoke recall accuracy and have a positive effect on attitudes and behavior.

2.4.3 CONGRUENCE THEORY: SPONSORSHIP LITERATURE

Within the sponsorship context, researchers built upon this knowledge of congruence theory to better understand how to execute an effective sponsorship of an event. Meenaghan (1991) first introduced the importance of sponsorship congruence stating the sponsorship must match a defined target audience. This matching process (congruence) was thought to be achieved through demographics, geographics, or the lifestyle of the target audience (Meenaghan, 1991). Geographic congruence, which is still used in sponsorship research, refers to the general region in which the sponsor and sponsored event share (Fortunato, 2013). Demographics and lifestyle congruence cover a multitude of dimensions. For example, demographics may refer to different age groups, household incomes, or education levels. Lifestyle may encompass a person's diet, shopping habits, recreational activities, or religion. These examples can be independent

of one another (e.g. age and education level or diet and religion) and simply cannot be placed into specific categories. Subsequent research examined different aspects of congruence to better define the overall congruence concept. Early sponsorship researchers found image congruence, or the consistency between an event image and brand image (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999), and functional congruence, or the overall fit enhanced by the participants of the event using the sponsor's products, positively contribute to sponsorship recall accuracy (Gwinner & Bennett; 2008; Prendergast et al., 2010).

In 2010, Prendergast et al. stated that sponsorship congruence can be categorized into two distinct research streams: self-congruence and external congruence. Prendergast et al. (2010) claim the second stream of congruence, congruity between the sponsor and sponsored event, encompasses everything not considered self-congruence. Researchers, such as Olson and Thjømøe (2011), Lee and Cho (2012), and Fortunato (2013) all note that sponsorships contain multiple dimensions of congruence. It is this second stream of research on congruence theory that continues to evolve within a sponsorship landscape.

2.5 DIMENSIONS AND MEASUREMENT OF SPONSORSHIP CONGRUENCE

Congruence between a sponsor and an event is an important concept to understand in order to increase recall accuracy and develop positive attitudes and behaviors toward those sponsors (Jagre et al., 2001). The following section is an in-depth analysis of significant congruence dimensions and measures of those dimensions used in marketing and sponsorship literature within the last 20 years. There are a variety of studies that have attempted to conceptualize and measure external congruence dimensions, and, while there are many potential constructs that come from these studies,

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there is a lack of consistency among related elements and measures. Each section will a)

address how the external congruence concept has been conceptualized and

operationalized in empirical studies, b) critically analyze the measurement of said

concept, and c) conclude if the measurement is acceptable, needs revisited, or lacks a

proper measurement tool.

2.5.1 HOLISTIC CONGRUENCE

A majority of research conceptualizes congruence from a holistic standpoint

measuring how a sponsorship "logically fits" or "makes sense". This unidimensional

approach assumes all consumers make analytical decisions regarding sponsorship

congruence based on the same cognitive process (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). Psychology

research consistently proves cognitive processing is unique and occurs at an individual

level (Jagre et al., 2001) making the holistic congruence assumption unsuitable for

research. While this approach may have been appropriate within early development of

sponsorship research, more recent research outlines the multi-dimensionality of external

sponsorship congruence (Fortunato, 2013; Lee & Cho, 2012; Olson & Thjømøe, 2011;

Prendergast et al., 2010). Developing a scale would provide a better understanding of the

dimensions that make up sponsorship congruence while identifying the manner by which

the different external congruence dimensions may relate to each other (Heere & James,

2007). Oversimplifying the concept of external sponsorship congruence with the

measurement of dichotomous questions (e.g., "Is this sponsorship congruent?" or "Does

this sponsorship make sense?") or a Likert-based scale asking similar questions of "how

likely does this sponsorship make sense" raises the question of *how* the sponsorship

makes sense. Even when the conceptualization of sponsorship congruence was

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introduced, researchers such as Gwinner and Eaton (1999) explored image and functional congruence introducing two separate explanations for congruence. Therefore, any measure of holistic congruence is inapt if there are significant measures to explain how the sponsorship "makes sense".

2.5.2 BRAND-IMAGE CONGRUENCE

Brand image refers to the "perceptions about a brand as reflected by brand associations held in memory" (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999, p. 3). An example of brand-image congruence would be The Master's golf tournament sponsored by Cadillac Automobiles as their brands are similar in terms of possessing a prestigious image (Gwinner, 1997; Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). Gwinner (1997) defines event image as the cumulative interpretation of meanings or associations attributed to events. Developed from schema theory and popularized via celebrity endorsement literature, brand-image congruence between an event and sponsor was found to positively influence image transfer, a desired sponsorship objective, from an event to an associated sponsor (Becker-Olsen & Simmons, 2006; Gwinner & Eaton, 1999; Roy & Cornwell, 2003). Additionally, Prendergast, Paliwal, and Mazodier (2016) suggest image transfer is bilateral and should happen more readily when both the event image and sponsor image are congruent. Therefore, it is in the best interest of both parties (sponsor and event) to consider brand-image congruence when evaluating a potential sponsorship.

While the conceptualization of image congruence seems to be empirically supported, measurement of the concept has been debated in literature. Traditionally, image congruence has either been determined before data collection by the researchers themselves, such as Prendergast et al.'s (2010) study linking sponsorship congruence

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with communication outcomes, or a Likert-based scale is administered to determine if there is image congruence. Table 2.1 summarizes the significant image congruence measures used in previous literature. What lacks is one generally agreed upon scale relating to sponsorship image congruence. A majority of the brand-image congruence scales involve personality adjectives and measurement protocols outlined from Aaker's (1997) study of brand personality dimensions. The issue using personality to describe brand-image congruence is the omittance of other aspects and associations that make up a brand image.

Keller's (1993) seminal work suggests six generic types of associations that formulate a brand's image. These brand image associations include a) product attribute, b) user imagery, c) brand personality, d) functional benefits, e) experiential benefits, and f) symbolic benefits. Product attributes refer to products that are used in the same context, such as Shell gas stations sponsoring NASCAR. User imagery refers to the same type of person who uses both the event brand and the sponsors' brand. An example may be Chobani yogurt sponsoring Minor League Baseball because of the congruence between Chobani's customer base (women and young children) and Minor League Baseball's (families with young children). Brand personality refers to brands possessing similar traits (e.g. "youthful" or "exciting") such as Red Bull's sponsorship of the X-games. Functional benefits refer to brands providing similar benefits in use, such as a health insurance company sponsoring a marathon with both brands offering health benefits to participants. Experiential benefits refer to brands that have a similar level of emotional attachment or sensory pleasure. For example, a man may link the Coca-Cola sponsorship of Major League Baseball in his mind because of the great memories he holds of sharing

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the experience with his father as a young boy. Lastly, symbolic benefits refer to both sponsor and event brands appealing to a consumer's self-concept in terms of status, prestige, and exclusivity, among others. The last two brand associations (experiential benefit and symbolic benefit) refer to Prendergast et al.'s (2010) self-congruence concept and are outside the scope of the current study.

Current measurement instruments used for the image congruence concept are similar to holistic congruence measures. This can be seen in studies such as Speed and Thompson's (2000) five-item measure of image congruence: a) there is a logical connection between event and sponsor, b) the image of the event and image of the sponsor are similar, c) the sponsor and event fit well together, d) the company and event stand for similar things, and e) it makes sense that this company sponsors this event. Speed and Thompson's (2000) measurement of sponsorship image congruence has been cited over 1,000 times, yet this measurement tool is unclear as to how the sponsor and event are congruent. The term "image" is clearly referenced in item two, except it is unclear if image refers to congruence between product attributes, user imagery, brand personalities, or functional benefits.

The sponsorship image congruence concept and measurement as it stands in the literature is incomplete in that it neglects other image-based associations that make up a brand image. Similar to how the holistic congruence concept is ineffective within a sponsorship context, the brand-image congruence concept is equally ineffective. There are dimensions of congruence that have been empirically studied in a sponsorship context that overlap with Keller's (1993) original brand image associations such as user imagery, brand personality, and functional benefits. It is suggested that brand-image congruence be

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reevaluated to reflect the one aspect of brand image associations that has yet to be empirically measured in a sponsorship context: product attributes. Within the scale development process, product attribute congruence between a sponsor and event will be developed using an inductive approach via focus groups that will shape the product attribute congruence concept and proposed measurement instrument.

2.5.3 AUDIENCE CONGRUENCE

One of Keller's (1993) associations of brand-image, user imagery, is similar to what Olson and Thjømøe (2011) refer to as audience similarity. For consistency purposes, user imagery and audience similarity will be referred to as audience congruence hereinafter. Olson and Thjømøe (2011) define audience congruence as the similarity between the event's audience and the sponsor's target segment. Previous literature has shown that audience congruence is an important aspect of sponsorship effectiveness improving recall accuracy and image transfer (Cornwell et al., 2005; Dickenson & Souchon, 2018; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Keller, 1993; Meenaghan, 1999; Olson & Thjømøe, 2011; Speed & Thompson, 2000). When audiences are congruent, it is predicted the target segment (event audience) is more accepting of the sponsor and categorizes the sponsor's product within their existing schema (Jagre et al., 2001).

While still relatively new, the origin of audience congruence stems from social psychology research regarding perceptions of group entitativity (Carrillat, Solomon, & d'Astous, 2015; Lickel et al., 2000). Entity theorists believe the degree to which a collection of persons are perceived as being bonded together in a coherent group is referred to as the group's entitativity (Lickel et al., 2000). Groups are perceived as more entitative when members share properties such as similarity, organization,

interdependence, common movement, and common goals (Lickel et al., 2000). Smith, Faro, and Burson (2013) note that perceived entitativity is highest for intimacy groups or groups that are relatively impermeable, important to their members, and share common goals between members. Examples of intimacy groups include families, professional sport teams, and rock bands (Licket et al., 2000; Smith et al., 2013). Dickerson and Souchon (2018) suggest that both event and sponsors should encourage audience congruence as this will lead to an increased following and greater purchase intention of sponsor products. Olson and Thjømøe (2011) found similar results in that audience congruence was one of the top two predictors of overall perceived sponsorship congruence and attitudes toward the sponsor.

Audience congruence is an important congruence dimension that should be determined before entering into a sponsorship, especially if the sponsor's goal is to penetrate a new target market or use the event's likeness as a way to change the sponsor's image (Becker-Olson & Simmons, 2002). Understanding how congruent the sponsor's current audience and the event's audience are has tremendous benefits in how a sponsor activates and communicates their message. If audiences are extremely similar, literature posits this natural congruence will lead to increased recall accuracy and positive attitudes. If audiences are dissimilar, sponsors can use this to their advantage in how they activate and articulate the sponsorship. In order to shape a message around how similar or dissimilar the audiences are, audience congruence must first be measured. Previously, audience congruence between an event and sponsor has only been measured with a single Likert-based item: "How likely are customers of [sponsor] to be in the audience of [object]" (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). Statistical researchers recommend there should be at

least three items measuring a single construct for the measure to be reliable (Churchill, 1979; Hinkin, Tracey, & Enz, 1997; Kline, 2016). According to scale development researchers, the current audience congruence measurement is restricted, and results should be interpreted with caution. In a similar context, Dickenson and Souchon (2018) measured one group's entitativity with a series of five items (See Table 2.1). It is suggested that these measures can be slightly altered to capture congruence between two audiences (sponsor's and event's) to create a reliable and valid measurement of audience congruence. Before adjustments can be made to the audience congruence items, it must first be qualitatively tested to ensure consistency between consumer perception and theory. A qualitative inquiry via an expert panel review will enhance wording of audience congruence items, and better inform the scale development process.

2.5.4 BRAND PERSONALITY CONGRUENCE

Brand perceptions go beyond image and audience congruence and include perceptions that relate to demographic categories, such as age, gender, and social class (Aaker, 1997; Lee & Cho, 2009; Lee & Cho, 2012). Assigning human-like traits, such as gender and age, to describe a brand is called a brand's personality. Keller (1993) notes that brand personality is a determinant of a brand's image. Brand personality is considered a useful means of communication and can increase consumer preferences by differentiating a brand from competitors (Aaker, 1997; Keller, 2003, Lee & Cho, 2009). For example, Coca-Cola is typically perceived as "All-American" and "cool" while their competitor, Pepsi, is viewed as "unique" and "fun" (Aaker, 1997, p. 348).

These personality associations are the result of marketers' attempts to position and manipulate consumer perception of the brand (Heere, 2010). Marketing managers

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control a majority of consumer perceptions through public relations and advertising efforts. Even when there are minimal marketing efforts, a consumer may still develop brand perceptions through the information given about the brand. For example, a brand name may say a lot about the brand itself without having to utilize any other communication efforts. Therefore, it can be assumed that every company possesses a brand personality that includes at least one or more human-like characteristic. These characteristics may be a result of marketers' manipulation of product positioning or the result of a natural assumption made by the population.

Marketing researchers typically refer to Aaker's (1997) "Big Five" when defining and measuring brand personalities. Results from a factor analysis study relying on 180 participants, 20 brands in 10 product categories, and 42 personality traits provided statistical and generalizable support for the "Big Five" personality traits on which brands can be measured: a) sincerity, b) excitement, c) competence, d) sophistication, and e) ruggedness. It has been argued, however, that events, especially sporting sport events that make up 70% of the sponsorship market (IEG, 2018) take on personalities of their own (Lee & Cho, 2012). This is of interest to sponsors supporting events who are interested in image transfer (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008). For example, Red Bull's brand personality has borrowed traits such as "bold" and "fearless" by sponsoring numerous extreme sporting events, including X Games, mountain biking, and BMX competitions. As congruence theory states, the more congruent personalities are between a sponsor and event, the more likely one is able to recall and develop positive attitudes toward a sponsor (Becker-Olsen & Simmons, 2002; Jagre et al., 2001; Knoll & Matthes, 2017).

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Lee and Cho (2012) developed a scale measuring sport event personality across different types of sports (e.g. basketball), sport leagues (e.g. NBA), and single sport events (e.g. NBA All-Star Game). Factor analysis of personality traits describing 31 different sports, 18 different sport leagues, and 35 different single sport events provided statistical support for five distinct traits: a) diligence, b) uninhibitedness, c) fit, d) tradition, and e) amusement. More specifically, diligence encompasses traits such as skilled, well-trained, focused, talented, coordinated, determined, experienced, dedicated, and devoted. These traits describe the personality of sport events such as the Olympic Games, the Super Bowl, figure skating, and US Open tennis. The uninhibited dimension is daring, fearless, thrill-seeking, brave, bold, dynamic, and extroverted. Uninhibitedness is represented by X Games and snowboarding. The fit dimension contains traits such as physical, athletic, muscular, built-in-shape, and strong. It should be noted that fit refers to physical abilities and not congruence in Lee and Cho's (2012) study. The fit dimension describes events such as the Super Bowl, NFL, and Tour de France. The traditional dimension encompasses traits such as traditional, classic, and timeless. This dimension is represented by the Olympic Games and British Open. The last dimension, amusement, is related to entertaining, interesting, and fun. Amusement describes the Super Bowl, NBA Playoffs, and NCAA Football Championship.

Kang, Bennett, and Peachey (2016) took a different approach to identify brand personality traits in sports. Using a lexical approach as a theoretical basis and the HEXACO model for identifying brand personality, five identified factors of brand personality traits emerged: a) agreeableness, b) extraversion/emotionality, c) openness, d) conscientiousness, and e) honesty. The HEXACO model is a six-dimension model of

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human personality that was created by Ashton et al. (2004). The six factors include Honesty-Humility (H), Emotionality (E), Extraversion (X), Agreeableness (A), Conscientiousness (C), and Openness to Experience (O). There is some overlap between Lee and Cho's (2012) scale and Kang et al.'s (2016) scale, however the biggest difference is that Lee and Cho's (2012) scale seems more generalizable since the instrument was tested across leagues, teams, and single events, whereas Kang et al.'s (2016) scale was only tested within the NFL.

Even within these two brand personality studies (Kang et al., 2016; Lee & Cho, 2012), there seems to be differences that cannot go unnoticed. The biggest differences being the setting in which brand personality is being measured and the amount of influence marketing managers have toward the creation and positioning of each brand's personality. Both studies are conducted within sport settings, however very different personality traits emerged. In line with Lee and Cho's (2012) argument that sport events take on personalities of their own, it is posited that any given sport event's personality can change at any given moment due to the unpredictable nature of the event itself (Mullin et al., 2014; Shank & Lyberger, 2015). For example, if a fight breaks out between two teams, perhaps the personality of that game changes from family-friendly to rough and rowdy. This can make the idea of sponsorship congruence based on brand personality difficult to generalize.

It can be argued that sponsorships, like a sponsor and sport event, can take on their own personalities through activation and articulation of marketing managers. As Heere (2010) points out, "the anthropomorphic associations consumers have of a brand are caused by marketing strategies of the organization" (p. 18). For example, Nike can be

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regarded as innovative and inspirational because the organization has spent billions of dollars over time creating that image through select marketing strategies (Heere, 2010; Widen, 1992). Experimental studies support this notion that consumers' perception of brand personality changes after exposure to new brand information (Johar et al., 2005; Swaminathan et al., 2009). In sport, new brand information may consist of team record, athlete personality, off-field initiatives, or sponsorships. Additionally, sponsorships may be positioned in a way that an event's personality is transferred to the sponsor via activation efforts. With this sponsorship objective in mind, it seems measuring personality congruence between a sponsor and event may be moot if articulation and activation of said sponsorship can take on a personality of its own.

It can also be argued that variables such as team identification, community culture, and social norms may interfere with the ability to conclude brand personality interpretations are generalizable within a sport sponsorship context. Identification, for example, is the emotional attachment one forms with their favorite team, athlete, community, etc. (Carlson & Donavan, 2013; Heere & James, 2007). It is established that identification influences attitudes and behaviors, such that the higher one identifies with a sport team, the more they seek out information on the team, attend games, and watch related content via media mediums (Heere & James, 2007). It is also established that the higher ones identification, said person is more likely to find positive explanations for their team's associations (e.g. sponsors, athletes) (Carlson & Donavan, 2013). For example, a fanatic may see a sponsor's personality congruent with a sport event only because they favor the sport event or team. The same can be said for cultural and social norms interfering with the notion that brand personality, and personality congruence, is

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generalizable. With these variables present in most all sport events, personality congruence may be unique to each event.

Based on evidence from Heere (2010), Carlson and Donavan (2013), Johar et al. (2005), and Swaminathan et al. (2009), it is suggested that brand personality congruence between a sponsor and sport event not be considered external congruence based on the argument that personalities are managed and influenced by marketers, can change at any given sport event, and cannot be generalizable due to influential variables such as identification, culture, and social norms. It is suggested that researchers looking to determine brand personality congruence between a sponsor and sport event follow Heere's (2010) methodology, which can be personalized based on the event. A qualitative inquiry via focus groups and an expert panel review was conducted to confirm if brand personality congruence should be excluded from an external congruence measure.

2.5.5 FUNCTIONAL CONGRUENCE

Functional congruence refers to the overall fit enhanced by the use of sponsor's product(s) during the event either directly or indirectly (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). One of the most notable examples of direct functional congruence in sports is Gatorade's sponsorship of the NFL. Gatorade is consumed by NFL athletes during games and there are numerous Gatorade coolers, towels, cups, etc., that reinforce the sponsorship. An example of indirect functional congruence would be spectators drinking a sponsor's beer at a baseball game. While not used directly by the athletes, the sponsor's product is still consumed during the event. Often, researchers study image and functional congruence simultaneously citing the impact both have on sponsorship outcomes. However, there is a misconception if functional congruence is a determinant of image congruence (Keller,

1993) or a separate congruence concept that should receive individual attention (Fortunato, 2013; Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). There are several studies that note a distinction between brand-image congruence and functional congruence. The current study adopts this distinction and defines functional congruence as its own construct. There are two distinct types of functional congruence: direct and indirect. Direct functional congruence would encompass participants of the event (e.g. athletes) using the sponsors product (e.g. wearing athletic apparel sponsor jerseys), and indirect functional congruence would encompass spectators of the event using the sponsors product (e.g. drinking the beer sponsor's products).

A number of studies note that functional congruence plays an important part in the sponsor-event relationship (Close & Lacey, 2013; Cornwell et al., 2005; Fortunato, 2013; Gwinner & Eaton, 1997; Olson & Thjømøe, 2011; Prendergast et al., 2010). Fortunato (2013) states that "for the brands that have an advantageous characteristic of functional congruence and their products being actually used during the event, consumers have a greater brand recall, can more easily make the brand association, and may eventually purchase the brand after seeing a star athlete use the product" (p. 83). Prendergast et al. (2010) found that for a cognitive/thinking kind of service (e.g. purchasing an airline ticket), functionality creates more favorable communication outcomes in terms of attitude toward a brand, but has little impact on purchase intention. In a business-to-business sponsorship, such as UPS's partnership with the NCAA Corporate Champion and Corporate Partner Program, functional congruence can also play an important role (Fortunato, 2016). For example, UPS created a commercial for the NCAA Men's March Madness Tournament where UPS drivers completed the final

portion of the court delivery to the venue, highlighting the business-to-business functional congruence between UPS and the NCAA Men's March Madness Tournament. Within the UPS example, however, activation plays a large role in making the functional congruence more prevalent to consumers.

Conceptualizing functional congruence as an external construct, the focus should be on natural rather than articulated congruence. Natural congruence is the extent to which the event is perceived as congruent with the sponsor independent of marketers' efforts to create a perceived congruity (Close & Lacey, 2013; Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006). Gwinner and Eaton (1997) measured functional congruence between sponsors and the Indianapolis 500 Auto Race with a slew of adjectives such as "fast", "masculine", and "strategic." The problem with this approach is the confusion between personality congruence and functional congruence. Measuring functional congruence with personality adjectives does not accurately capture whether the use of the sponsor's product is consumed during the event. In another study, Olson and Thjømøe (2011) measured functional congruence with two Likert-based questions: a) "How likely is it that the products from [sponsor] are used by the participants in [event]?" and b) "When watching [event] on television, how likely are audience members to be using [sponsor] products?" As suggested by Kline (2016), it is important constructs be measured by at least three items in order to establish construct reliability and validity. It is proposed that at least one more item be added to Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) measurement to expand upon the indirect use of sponsor(s) products. The addition of a third item would provide a more inclusive view of direct and indirect use of a sponsor's product. A qualitative

inquiry via an expert panel review will confirm if a third question would be sufficient to capture the functional congruence construct.

2.5.6 COSPONSOR CONGRUENCE

A relatively new congruence concept, cosponsor congruence, stems from brand alliance research and the notion of image transfer. Brand alliance is a marketing strategy designed to transfer the positive brand equity of two or more partner brands to a newly created joint brand (Washburn, Till, & Priluck, 2004). Cosponsor congruence, therefore, is defined as the relatedness a sponsor shares with other cosponsors as well as the sponsored event with high (low) relatedness implying converging (diverging) associations (Kelly et al., 2016). Cosponsor congruence can be extremely important for sponsors deciding which event to sponsor. Applications of congruity theory within a cosponsor context suggests that when two brands with similar images come together to sponsor a property, the congruity of their images forces consumers to develop an assimilated attitude toward both sponsoring brands (Gross & Wiedmann, 2015).

There are some risks, however, when deciding to cosponsor an event with a sponsor who has a distinct brand image (Kelly et al. 2016). For example, sponsoring an event that has a long withstanding partnership with an alcohol company may incite associations of an unhealthy relationship with alcohol. When another brand shares linkages with that same event it may prompt negative inferences in relation to the innocent partner (Funk & Pritchard, 2006; Roehm & Tybout, 2006; Kelly et al., 2016). Negative spillover toward innocent partners can occur, especially when partner actions cannot be controlled, such as a cosponsor's scandal or negative message (Kelly et al., 2016).

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There are few studies that examine the impact of cosponsor congruence. Gross and Wiedmann (2015) proposed a research model that advocates the idea that a sponsor can gain from brand attitude and personality traits innately tied to an event's cosponsor. They found a reciprocal effect where two brands concurrently sponsoring the same event added an extra effect to the image gain a company seeks to garner from the property. Gross and Wiedmann (2015) were the first to demonstrate brand image transfer among sponsors constituting sponsorship alliance in its most parsimonious form. Kelly et al. (2016) also examined the impact of sponsorship alliance on sport and concurrent sponsors' images. They found there was a significant decline in attitude when positive sponsors were paired with negative sponsors.

To prevent negative spillover, it is important to determine and measure the cosponsor congruence of an event's sponsorship roster. Gross and Wiedmann (2015) and Kelly et al. (2016) measured and compared attitudes toward sponsors before and after exposure to a press release with a positive (negative) sponsor association. Neither of these two studies, however, measured the perceived congruence between two or more sponsors, only the attitudes toward the sponsorships. To date, there is no cosponsor measure to accurately capture how an event's current sponsorship roster is congruent with a potential sponsor. Knowing the importance and impact cosponsors have on another's brand image, it is suggested that an inductive approach via focus groups and an expert panel review will be able to better understand the cosponsor concept, and, if appropriate, develop a measurement construct that reflects consumer perceptions of cosponsor congruence.

2.5.7 GEOGRAPHIC CONGRUENCE

When looking at a community, such as a sport team, social identity theory states that a sponsor is more accepted as an in-group member if they are perceived as credible and sincere (Olson, 2010; Speed & Thompson, 2000; Woisetschläger et al., 2010). Social identity is a person's sense of who they are based on the groups to which they belong (Tajfel, 1982). Using the sport team example, this in-group community membership may encompass larger groups/communities such as the city and/or state in which the team resides (Katz & Heere, 2016). Therefore, geographic congruence between a sponsor and event is defined as the perception of the sponsoring company's connection to the region where the event is located (Woisetschläger et al., 2010). If a sponsor supports a local event, the likelihood of being accepted as an in-group member increases, subsequently increasing attitudes and behaviors toward that sponsor (Olson, 2010; Woisetschläger et al., 2010). For example, Coors Brewing Company, located just outside Denver, Colorado, sponsors the MLB Colorado Rockies with the naming rights of Coors Field (located in Denver, Colorado). Since the Coors Brewing company is headquartered in Colorado, the geographic congruence between the Colorado Rockies and Coors Brewing Company is considered high, which increases the likelihood of Coors Brewing Company being accepted as a "Rocky" (social group) and increasing recall accuracy.

Meenaghan (1991) states that it is critical a proposed sponsorship cover a geographically defined market. Geographic congruence is, more often than not, reinforced at a grassroots level, especially with venue naming rights (Fortunato, 2013). Not all sponsors, however, are considered local to an event. For example, corporate brands, like Pepsi and Adidas, sponsor numerous events across the nation. For a national

and international company (e.g. Pepsi, Adidas), the ability to cover various markets is important whereas a domestic or regionally-focused company concentrates event sponsorships within their local communities.

Local versus national versus international geographic congruence falls on a continuum. For example, AutoZone sponsors the NCAA Liberty Bowl in Memphis, Tennessee where AutoZone's headquarters are located. This is an example of regional/local geographic congruence, however, AutoZone also sponsors nationwide events, such as the title sponsor for The Bassmasters TV show and the Salvation Army (AutoZone, 2018). Depending on the event location, the geographic congruence could fall anywhere on a local to international level. Therefore, it is important to measure perceived geographic congruence before entering into a sponsorship to determine exactly where the sponsor and event stands.

Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) study is the only one to measure geographic congruence in a sponsorship context. They found geographic congruence positively contributes to perceptions of overall sponsorship fit. Using absolute differences, they found high geographic congruence between a sponsor and event significantly differed than those with low geographic congruence. The absolute differences asks respondents identical questions about both the sponsor and the event, with the degree of congruence determined by the absolute difference between the event and sponsor (i.e., if the event mean score was seven and sponsor score was five, the fit score on that construct would be two). Perfect congruence on the construct would be a score of zero, while the worst possible congruence would be a score of six. It is suggested that Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) measurement of geographic congruence (See Table 2.1) is an appropriate measure

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and, with slight item alteration and response structure, can be adapted to fit any event/scenario. A qualitative inquiry via an expert panel review will assist in determining if the slight discourse and response structure change will appropriately capture the geographic congruence construct.

2.5.8 PERCEIVED BRAND EQUITY CONGRUENCE

Increasing brand equity can be an important objective for a company sponsoring an event (Becker-Olsen & Simmons, 2002; Cornwell et al., 2005; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Olson, 2010). Brand equity is the commercial value that derives from consumer perceptions of a brand that represents a product and/or service (Becker-Olsen & Simmons, 2002; Cornwell et al., 2001; Erdem & Swait, 1998). Factors that make up brand equity include brand awareness and brand image (Keller, 1993). As previously stated, brand image includes six dimensions including product attribute, user imagery, brand personality, functional benefits, experiential benefits, and symbolic benefits (Keller, 1993). It is reasoned that all brands, from laundry detergent to professional sport organizations, contain a brand image, some level of brand awareness, and in turn, brand equity. Therefore, when joining two brands together, it is important to understand the equity, or commercial value both the sponsor and event contribute toward the potential sponsorship.

Roy and Cornwell's (2003) framework for examining the influence of brand equity in shaping consumers' perceptions of sponsor-event congruence note three distinct aspects of consumer-based brand equity: a) the brand must be differentiated from competitors, b) brand knowledge creates this differentiation and is influenced by the brand's marketing activities, and c) the consumer response results in (dis)associations for

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a given brand. In their study, Roy and Cornwell (2003) predetermined what brands were considered high and low equity and a manipulation check revealed statistically significant differences between the high and low equity brands. They found that sponsors with high brand equity were perceived as more congruent than sponsors with low brand equity, even though the events sponsored were identical. Roy and Cornwell (2003) only found support for two of the three product categories in terms of high equity explaining sponsor-event fit. While the high-equity beer and automobile category sponsors explained perceived congruence, the computer category did not show any influence on sponsor-event congruence. Roy and Cornwell (2003) believe these results suggest judgements of congruence may be made at the product category level in some cases, supporting the need for a product-attribute congruence scale. This also supports the notion that congruence is complex and contains more factors than just brand equity.

When examining perceptions of sponsorship fit, Olson and Thjømøe (2011) first employed a qualitative approach to uncover seven dimensions of fit including size similarity (i.e., the object and brand are both prominent). After testing the seven dimensions, Olson and Thjømøe (2011) measured size similarity with two items: a) organization size, and b) organization prominence, because of the suggestion that prominence might be based on more than just organizational size (Johar & Pham, 1999). Organizational prominence, or reputation, is a concept that is entirely dependent on consumer perception. It is reasoned that organizational reputation is similar to Roy and Cornwell's (2003) consumer-based brand equity concept. Where Roy and Cornwell (2003) found support of brand equity influencing overall sponsor-event fit, Olson and Thjømøe (2011) did not find any statistical evidence to confirm brand equity congruence

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influences overall fit. It should be noted that one of Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) other sponsorship dimension, attitude similarity, is extremely similar to brand equity and brand prominence in how it's measured but not how it's defined. Attitude similarity is defined as equal liking of both the sponsor and event (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). However, the measurement items do not reflect the definition. Using absolute differences, Olson and Thjømøe (2011) measured attitude similarity with two Likert-based questions: a) [sponsor/event] has a very bad reputation $\leftrightarrow$ has a very good reputation, and b) [sponsor/event] has a negative image $\leftrightarrow$ has a positive image. These two measurement items more accurately reflect brand prominence and a consumer's perception of brand equity according to Keller (1993) and Roy and Cornwell (2003). Olson and Thjømøe (2011) did find attitude similarity to have significant influence on perceptions of overall congruence whereas size similarity did not yield the same results.

An event's brand equity is an important component of a sponsorship that influences image transfer (Gwinner & Bennett, 2008). Contradictory research suggests that brand equity is a construct that needs more attention in the sponsorship context and should be evaluated to determine if there is an appropriate measure that accurately captures the brand equity congruence between a sponsor and event. A qualitative inquiry via an expert panel review will confirm if brand equity congruence between a sponsor and event should be included in an external sponsorship congruence measurement instrument.

2.5.9 PURCHASE CONGRUENCE

Fortunato (2013) introduces a new type of sponsorship congruence, purchase congruence, defined as the ability for consumers to purchase the sponsor's product at the

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event location. When elaborated on, Fortunato (2013) relates purchase congruence to sponsorship exclusivity within a specific product category. For example, Pepsi sponsors the NFL where those attending games can only purchase Pepsi products at concession stands. Exclusivity, however, is not an external congruence dimension. Rather, purchase congruence, as defined in the literature, is a decision made during the sponsorship negotiation process and enforced whether the consumers want to purchase the sponsor's product or not. Additionally, the ability for consumers to purchase the sponsor's product on-site also refers to the definition of functional congruence (i.e. consuming the sponsor's product indirectly). Therefore, it seems the purchase congruence concept is not necessarily a perception of similarity between a sponsor and event, rather it refers to exclusivity within a product category. However, it is suggested a qualitative inquiry via focus groups will better inform consumer conceptualization of purchase congruence, and, if appropriate, guide how it should be measured.

2.6 SUMMARY

Previous research highlights the important role sponsorships hold in a marketing communications mix and how sponsorships can assist in obtaining direct and indirect objectives, such increasing sales or changing consumer attitudes and behavior. Before a sponsorship can effectively achieve any objectives, however, consumers must associate the sponsor with the event and accurately recall said sponsor. One of the biggest drivers of sponsorship recall accuracy is congruence, or how well a sponsor and event fit together. While congruence has been conceptualized in marketing and sponsorship literature, confusion still surrounds the conceptualization and measurement of external congruence constructs. After a thorough literature review, it is concluded that external

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congruence constructs listed in Table 2.1 are either considered appropriate but in need of slight wording change and response structure alterations, or incomplete and need a qualitative approach to resolve restrictions. There are also congruence concepts, such as cosponsor and purchase congruence, that have yet to go beyond conceptualization and require a qualitative inquiry to determine if the concept is appropriate and requires a measurement tool. The following chapter discusses the methods, data collection, and scale development of one reliable, comprehensive scale to measure external sponsorship congruence between a sponsor and event.

Table 2.1 Congruence Research in a Sponsorship Context

Congruence Construct	Contributing Authors	Measures	Recommendation
Holistic Congruence	Gwinner & Eaton (1999)	My image of the (object) is consistent with my image of the (brand)	Remove holistic congruence from further scale development process
	Speed & Thompson (2000)	1. There is logical connection between event and sponsor 2. The image of the event and image of the sponsor are similar 3. The sponsor and event fit well together 4. The company and event stand for similar things 5. It makes sense that this company sponsors this event	
	Rifon et al. (2004)	1. not compatible ← → compatible 2. not a good fit ← → good fit 3. not congruent ← → congruent	
	Simmons & Becker-Olsen (2006)	1. dissimilar ← → similar 2. inconsistent ← → consistent 3. atypical ← → typical 4. low fit ← → high fit 5. does not make sense ← → makes sense	
	Fleck & Quester (2007)	1. I am not surprised that this company sponsors this event 2. One could expect this company to sponsor this event 3. It was predictable that this company would sponsor this event 4. That this company sponsors this event tells me something about it 5. With this sponsorship, I discover a new aspect of this company	
	Gwinner & Eaton (1999)	Measures from Speed & Thompson (2000)	
	Olson (2010)	Measures from Speed & Thompson (2000)	
	Close, Lacey, & Cornwell (2015)	1. There is a logical connection between the event and this sponsor 2. The image of the event and the image of the sponsor are similar 3. The sponsor and event fit well together	

Congruence Construct	Contributing Authors	Measures	Recommendation
		4. The company and the event stand for similar things 5. It makes sense to me that this company sponsors the event	
Brand Image Congruence	Gwinner & Eaton (1999)	Rate congruence of image-based personality adjectives: (1) calm (2) mature (3) leisurely (4) clean (5) formal (6) civilized (7) accurate (8) pressure (9) orderly (10) slow	Focus on product-attribute congruence rather than brand image congruence
	Speed & Thompson (2000)	See above; same measure as holistic congruence	
	Xing & Chalip (2006)	Rate Image based on: 1. Valuable - worthless 2. Unsatisfying - satisfying 3. Inspiring - uninspiring 4. Unenjoyable - enjoyable 5. Pleasant - unpleasant 6. Busy - quiet 7. Fast - slow 8. Leisurely - active 9. Calm - exciting	
	Prendergast, Poon, & West (2010)	There was no measurement items, image congruence was determined by authors	
Personality Congruence	Olson & Thjømøe (2011)	1. exciting ← → unexciting 2. honest ← → dishonest 3. friendly ← → unfriendly 4. unique ← → ordinary 5. modern ← → old-fashioned 6. successful ← → unsuccessful 7. attractive ← → unattractive 8. strong ← → weak	Further qualitative testing needed to determine appropriateness of construct
	Lee & Cho (2012)	Participants indicated the degree to which they perceived 357 personality traits described by various sports or sporting evnts on a seven-point Likert scale	
Functional Congruence	Gwinner & Eaton (1999)	Rate congruence of functional-based personality adjectives: (1) fast (2) dangerous (3) exciting (4) aggressive (5)masculine (6) wild (7) historic (8) tactical (9) strategic (10) monotonous	Additional items should be added to Olson & Thjømøe's (2011)
	Prendergast, Poon, &	There was no measurement items, functional congruence was	

Congruence Construct	Contributing Authors	Measures	Recommendation
	West (2010)	determined by authors	measure
	Olson & Thjømøe (2011)	1. How likely is it that the products from [sponsor] are used by the participants in [object] 2. When watching [object] on television, how likely are audience members to be using [sponsor] products?	
Geographic Congruence	Olson & Thjømøe (2011)	1. What is your opinion of [sponsor]/[object]: Norwegian ← → Global 2. What is your opinion of [sponsor]/[object]: Local ← → international	Appropriate measure but needs response structure changes
Brand Equity Congruence	Roy & Cornwell (2003)	1. negative ← → positive 2. unfavorable ← → favorable 3. bad ← → good 4. inconsistent ← → consistent 5. not complementary ← → complementary 6. inappropriate ← → appropriate 7. illogical ← → logical 8. poorly matched ← → well matched 9. poorly suited ← → well suited	Slight discourse and response structure changes needed to Olson & Thjømøe (2011) and Dickenson & Souchon's (2018) measure
	Olson & Thjørneøe (2011)	Construct was titled "Prominence" 1. I think that [sponsor]/[object] is: a small [organization]/[event] ← → a large [organization]/[event] 2. I think that [sponsor]/[object] is: nor important ← → important	
	Olson & Thjørneøe (2011)	Construct was titled "Attitude Similarity" 1. Have a very bad reputation ← → have a very good reputation 2. Have a negative image ← → have a positive image	
Audience Congruence	Olson & Thjørneøe (2011)	How likely are customers of [sponsor] to be in the audience of [object]	
	Dickenson &	This group of event sponsors...	

Congruence Construct	Contributing Authors	Measures	Recommendation
	Souchon (2018)	1. is like a unified whole 2. is a "tightly knit" group 3. is as "one" 4. represents a group more than it does a collection of individual sponsors 5. qualifies as a group more than it does a collection of individual sponsors	

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Chapter three discusses the process in which the External Sponsorship
Congruence Scale (ESCS) was developed; the data collection method, including
participants, procedure, and sample size; and the criteria for which the data was analyzed
to determine scale reliability and validity.

3.1 SCALE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The general scale development process addresses reliability and validity issues,
and provides a way for researchers, especially marketers who are interested in
psychological relationships, to accurately measure unobservable constructs, such as
sponsorship congruence. Development of the ESCS consisted of six stages based on the
works of Churchill (1979), Hinkin (1995) and Hinkin et al., (1997). In the first stage,
domains of the study were set using both deductive (theoretical) and inductive
(qualitative) approaches that assisted in generating scale items in the second stage. With
the goal to produce a comprehensive scale, the item generation stage also ensured
response options are consistent throughout the ESCS by using a 7-point Likert scale for
all items (Zikmund et al., 2013). In the third stage, face and content validity were
assessed by a panel of experts comprised of marketing academics and industry
professionals. Based on feedback in stages one through three, construct items (See Table
3.1) were either retained or edited appropriately.

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Table 3.1 Proposed Congruence Construct Items Based on Previous Literature

Congruence Construct	Proposed Items
Audience Congruence	1 How likely are customers of [sponsor] to be in the audience of [event] 2. [Sponsor]'s audience and [event]'s audience are like a unified whole 3. [Sponsor]'s audience and [event]'s audience is a "tightly knit" group 4. [Sponsor]'s audience and [event]'s audience are as "one" 5. [Sponsor]'s audience and [event]'s audience represents one group rather than it does two separate groups 6. [Sponsor]'s audience and [event]'s audience qualifies as one group rather than it does two separate groups
Functional Congruence	1. How likely is it that the products from [sponsor] are used by the participants in [event]? 2. When watching [event] on television, how likely are the audience members to be using [sponsor] products? 3. When watching [event] in person, how likely are the audience members to be sing [sponsor] products?
Geographic Congruence	1. I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be local to [event city] 2. I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be local to [event state] 3. I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be regional to the eastern United States 4. I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be regional to the western United States 5. I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be national 6. I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be international
Brand Equity Congruence	1. I think that [sponsor]/[event] is: not important <-> important 2. [Sponsor}/[event] has a very good reputation <-> has a very bad reputation 3. [Sponsor]/[event] has a negative image <-> has a positive image

In stage four, retained items were tested via an online survey for the first data collection. To evaluate the first round of data, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on all items due to slight alterations and/or newly generated items. EFA is considered to be an unrestricted method and explores how all items relate to all possible factors as opposed to restricted methods where item correlations are computed for specific posited factors (Kline, 2016). The fifth stage involved a second round of data collection similar to the first (online platform) but with a different sample. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted on all ESCS items to address factor analysis and item reliability. The objective of CFA is to test whether a construct (factor) is consistent with the theoretical understanding of that factor, and if the data fits the hypothesized model outlined in phase one (specifying the domain) (Kline, 2016). In the sixth stage, reliability and validity assessment, data was analyzed to provide a basic standard that can be used for testing multiple types of validity of the ESCS to further develop sponsorship research.

3.2 STAGE 1: DEFINING SCALE DOMAIN

The first step in developing accurate measurement instruments is specifying the constructs being studied. Constructs are helpful in operationalizing a concept as concepts are an abstraction of reality that is the basic unit for theory development (Zikmund et al., 2013). Researchers should have sound reason in proposing new constructs as existing constructs may already be sufficient (Churchill, 1979). For example, if an existing scale is outdated and/or inadequate, or a new concept has yet to be discovered, a reason for proposing a new construct exists. A thorough investigation of the literature should reveal

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why there is a sufficient need to begin the scale development process. Once a valid reason is established, the next stage of the process is to conceptualize new constructs.

It is during this construct development stage where one of two approaches, deductive or inductive (Hinkin, 1995), decides the direction and scope of scale development. Hinkin (1995) refers to the deductive approach as a "logical partitioning" (p. 969) that is based on theory and previous research. An exhaustive literature review of the phenomena is needed to support and develop constructs through classification schema. Classification schema is organizing phenomena into classes to better understand the holistic concept (Hinkin, 1995). It is important that the review of literature cover multiple academic fields to refine and define constructs to establish a theoretical domain (Dwyer et al., 2015).

An inductive approach on the other hand, uses little theory to support the development of constructs and subsequent items. The inductive approach largely depends on the general method of grounded theory research (Hinkin, 1995). Grounded theory researchers maintain that "good science" (p. 4) should be preserved, but redefined in order to fit the realities of a complex social phenomenon (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). The inductive method takes a bottom up rather than top down approach where researchers are open to new possibilities and do not assume answers to questions prior to research (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Hinkin, 1995). Constructs may develop from the inductive approach via focus groups, interviews, and/or other qualitative research methods (Zikmund et al., 2013). A qualitative approach allows respondents to answer open ended questions freely and from their own frame of reference. Researchers then code this

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information to define concepts using respondents' own words. This information may be reinforced by previous literature for stronger support of the proposed construct.

3.2.1 DEDUCTIVE APPROACH

After a thorough literature review on congruence theory and sport sponsorship congruence conceptualization and operationalization, the following domains have previously been measured and were in need of minor revisions to appropriately capture the construct: functional, geographic, and brand equity congruence. One of the biggest issues using scales from previous studies to create the ESCS is the need for consistency in how participants respond to questions. Some studies use a semantic differentiated approach where others use Likert-based scales or mean comparisons to measure concepts. It is important to note the current study employed a deductive approach as a starting point for item generation, and used an inductive approach to confirm any wording changes or the addition of items from other scales. Different measurement styles were needed for sponsorship congruence domains, and a qualitative inquiry further examined how constructs were measured.

Audience congruence in a sport context has only been measured by Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) one item instrument. The recommended minimum number of items per construct is three because "factors [that] have only two indicators are more prone to technical problems, such as failure of iterative estimation" (Kline, 2016, p. 195). While two items is adequate, Kline (2016) suggests that a better practical minimum is three to five items per construct. To meet Kline's (2016) suggested construct requirements, more items were needed to accurately capture the audience congruence construct. It is suggested to reword Dickenson and Souchon's (2018) entitativity scale to reflect

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audience congruence between a sponsor and event (See Table 3.1). With the addition of another scale and a slight change of items to reflect consistency among response options, audience congruence was assessed through a qualitative inquiry via an expert panel review to assure validity of the construct. If the expert panel unanimously agreed that a proposed item did not contribute to capturing the functional congruence construct, it was removed. If there was some acceptance among the proposed items, they were retained through the item generation phase.

Functional congruence is defined as the overall fit enhanced by the use of the sponsor's product(s) during the event either directly or indirectly (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). Olson and Thjømøe (2011) measured functional congruence through two Likert-based questions based on one direct functionality item (participants using sponsor's product) and one indirect functionality item (spectators using sponsor's product while watching television). To abide by Kline's (2016) reliability suggestion of using three items measuring one construct to assure reliability, it is proposed to add more items (See Table 3.1) that reflect indirect functionality of spectators using sponsor's product while attending or viewing an event via a mediated experience. A qualitative inquiry through an expert panel review was conducted to confirm if the addition of items appropriately captures the functional congruence construct. If the expert panel unanimously agreed that a proposed item did not contribute to capturing the functional congruence construct, it was removed. If there was some acceptance with the proposed items, they were retained through the item generation phase.

Geographic congruence is defined as the perception of the sponsoring company's connection to the region where the event is located (Woisetschläger et al., 2010). After a

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thorough literature review, Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) measurement of geographic congruence is an acceptable starting point for item generation. The construct is measured with two items using absolute differences, and at least one more item is needed to meet Kline's (2016) suggested construct reliability and validity requirements. Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) two item measurement is also set up for responses to fall on a continuum rather than a Likert-based scale. With the goal of creating a comprehensive measurement, the ECSC will turn Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) two item scale into a series of items meant to be answered on a 7-point Likert scale with anchors being Strongly Disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (7). Measuring geographic congruence using absolute differences will be retained throughout the scale development process, as one score reflecting the construct will be easier to interpret. A qualitative inquiry via an expert panel review was conducted to determine if the addition more items (See Table 3.1) appropriately captured the geographic congruence construct. If the expert panel unanimously agreed that a proposed item did not contribute to capturing the functional congruence construct, it was removed. If there was some acceptance with the proposed items, they were retained through the item generation phase.

Brand equity congruence is the similarity between a sponsor and event's commercial value that derives from consumer perceptions of a product and/or service (Becker-Olsen & Simmons, 2002; Cornwell et al., 2001; Erdem & Swait, 1998). There are multiple studies that measure brand equity, but none specifically examine brand equity congruence. Roy and Cornwell (2003) created a sponsorship congruence measurement based on celebrity endorsement, brand alliance, and brand extension research. The result was a nine item scale with anchors including negative/positive,

favorable/unfavorable, bad/good, consistent/inconsistent, complementary/uncomplimentary, inappropriate/appropriate, illogical/logical, well matched/poorly matched, and well suited/poorly suited. The exact items measured are not printed in the study, which leads to uncertainty regarding the reliability and validity of the measurement. Additionally, the anchors used within Roy and Cornwell's (2003) study better reflect the definition of holistic congruence rather than brand equity congruence.

Upon closer examination of Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) study, prominence and attitude similarity are measured similarly to how Roy and Cornwell (2003) define consumer-based brand equity. Olson and Thjømøe (2011) measured prominence with two items: organization size and organization importance. The latter, organization importance, is what most represents consumer-based brand equity. It is proposed to combine Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) measure of organization importance and attitude similarity to measure brand-equity congruence between a sponsor and event (See Table 3.1). The brand equity construct is measured using absolute differences. A qualitative inquiry via an expert panel review was conducted to determine if the alteration of items will appropriately capture the brand equity congruence construct. If the expert panel unanimously agreed that a proposed item did not contribute to capturing the functional congruence construct, it was removed. If there was some acceptance with the proposed items, they were retained through the item generation phase.

Previous research shows that absolute differences are best to determine congruence scores for product attribute, geographic, and brand equity congruence. For example, if an event's congruence construct mean score is 7 (on a 7-point Likert scale) and 5 for the sponsor, the congruence score on that dimension would be 2. Perfect

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congruence between event and sponsor on any one dimension would be a score of 0, while the worst possible congruence would be a score of 6. It was expected construct mean scores are sufficient for functional, audience, personality, cosponsor, and purchase congruence. The type of construct measurement was finalized after a thorough qualitative inquiry.

3.2.2 INDUCTIVE APPROACH

Product-attribute and personality constructs needed an inductive approach due to significant item revisions. Additionally, new constructs not previously measured (cosponsor and purchase congruence) also required an inductive approach to generate items. A qualitative inquiry was conducted via focus groups followed by an expert panel review.

Although image congruence between a sponsor and event has substantial implications, it is unclear which image dimension contributes to perceived congruence. While three of the four image dimensions outlined by Keller (1993) (user imagery, brand personality, functional benefits) are included as separate external sponsorship congruence dimensions, product attribute congruence has not been conceptualized or measured within the sponsorship congruence context. Therefore, responses collected during focus groups were analyzed to define and generate items to measure product attribute congruence.

Brand personality congruence also underwent a qualitative inquiry to confirm if the construct should be included within the ESCS. It was argued that brand personalities are managed and influenced by marketers, can change at any given sport event, and cannot be generalizable due to influential variables such as identification, culture, and

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social norms. However, Lee and Cho (2012) found significant sponsorship-related results from their brand personality congruence instrument across multiple teams, leagues, and events. It is this discrepancy that required a reexamination via focus groups to determine if the five personality factors Lee and Cho (2012) are in fact generalizable and apply to all events.

3.2.2.1 FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

Focus groups are an effective means of confirming whether notions that underlie constructs of interest are acceptable or understandable to participants (DeVellis, 2012). Focus groups are also a useful resource when using an exploratory approach to understand a phenomenon. As a result, focus groups are particularly useful early in an inductive research project (DeVellis, 2012).

A focus group is a special type of group in terms of purpose, size, composition, and procedures (Zikmund et al., 2013). Focus groups typically have five characteristics: 1) people who 2) possess certain characteristics, 3) provide qualitative data 4) in a focused discussion 5) to help understand the topic of interest (Kruger & Casey, 2009). The purpose of conducting focus groups for ESCS development was to listen and gather information pertaining to product attribute, personality, cosponsor, and purchase congruence. ESCS focus groups contained a mix of demographics that best represent an average sport fan, as the ESCS scale is intended to measure anyone familiar with sport sponsorships. (see Table 3.2 for focus group demographics).

Table 3.2 Focus Group Demographics

	Age					Gender		Total Participants
	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56+	Male	Female	
Focus Group 1	3	2	2	0	0	5	2	7
Focus Group 2	1	2	1	0	1	2	3	5
Focus Group 3	0	2	2	0	2	3	3	6
Totals	4	6	5	0	3	10	8	18

It was important for participants to be familiar with a specific National Football League (NFL) team on the east coast of the United States, as sponsorship congruence questions revolved around a national banking institution's sponsorship of this NFL team. Since focus groups are used to explore a congruence construct, familiarity with the team is an appropriate way to determine constructs (Zikmund et al., 2013). Therefore, focus groups were delimited to participants familiar with the NFL team in question.

Recruitment for focus group participants was conducted through established listservs and personal recruitment via social media. Individuals who were interested in participating were screened to determine their familiarity with the NFL team. Researchers recommend focus groups contain no more than 5-12 people each and last no more than 60 minutes (Krueger & Casey, 2009). All focus groups met this requirement with the first focus group comprised of seven people while lasting approximately 30 minutes. The second focus group was comprised of five people and lasted approximately 25 minutes. Finally, the third focus group was comprised of six people while lasting 40 minutes (See Table 3.2).

Krueger and Casey (2009) suggested a focus group moderator respect participants, understand the purpose of the study, communicate clearly, be open and non-

defensive, and be one who can get the most useful information. There were concerns for potential moderator bias including current author positionality, research background, and expansive knowledge of external sponsorship congruence. Therefore, ESCS focus groups were led by a moderating team: a moderator and an assistant moderator. The current author took on the role as lead moderator and was primarily concerned with directing the discussion and keeping the conversation flowing (Krueger & Casey, 2009). The assistant moderator's main focus was handling unexpected interruptions and taking extensive notes. He possessed a qualitative background and was not on the expert panel reviewing ESCS material, and has a research interest outside of sport marketing that limited potential bias concerns. Focus groups were also audio recorded to assist in transcribing conversations for coding analysis.

Focus group questions revolved around the current partnership between a banking institution, hereinafter referred to as XBank, and the NFL team. All participants were familiar with XBank's products and services, and therefore qualified to answer questions pertaining to product attribute, personality, cosponsor, and purchase congruence. See Appendix A and Appendix B for focus group protocols, and a full list of focus group questions.

The number of focus groups conducted continued until data saturation was met. Scholars define data saturation as "the point where you have heard the range of ideas and are not getting new information" (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 21). It is an acceptable rule to plan three or four focus groups with each type or category of individual (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Multiple focus groups are recommended so patterns and themes can be analyzed across groups (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Focus group data were transcribed and

analyzed within three days of focus group data collection to assess discourse and identify emerging patterns. Following Krueger and Casey's (2009) guidelines, the focus group moderation team deemed three focus groups were enough to reach data saturation.

3.3 STAGE 2: FOCUS GROUP ANALYSIS AND ITEM GENERATION

All focus groups were transcribed using Rev, an online transcription service. Transcriptions were cleaned and checked for any discrepancies, such as mumbling, that could not be picked up by the audio recording. All focus group discussions went through two rounds of coding analysis. Coding assigns meaning to data that represents a concept rather than an object or observable behavior (Saldaña, 2016). Coding is especially important for qualitative studies focused on theory and theory development, studies with multiple participants, and studies, such as the current examination, that take a grounded theory approach to suggested concepts. Open coding, appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies (Saldaña, 2016), was used for the first round of coding. Open coding uses words or short phrases from participants' own language as codes. It is important during this stage of the process to strictly use participants' language when coding and not bias the analysis by interpreting the data. The goal of the second round of coding was to reorganize and reanalyze the data organized through the first cycle of coding (Saldaña, 2016). Thematic, or concept coding was used to reorganize open codes. "A concept is a word or short phrase that symbolically represents a suggested meaning broader than a single item or action" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 119). Thematic coding assigns macro levels of meaning to data and is appropriate for studies focused on theory development (Saldaña, 2016).

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As suggested by Saldaña (2016), it is important for coding analysis to be peer-reviewed to reduce researcher bias and misinterpretation. An outside source who is familiar with qualitative data and coding analysis was consulted to look over themes. To ensure there was as little bias as possible, this person's main research interest was not within the marketing sector. All coding disagreements were discussed and resolved before moving onto the item generation phase.

The primary concern within item generation is that content validity be addressed and thoroughly reported (Hinkin, 1995). Content validity is defined as the degree to which a measure covers the breadth of the phenomena of interest (Zikmund et al., 2013). Content validity ensures items sufficiently capture the specific domain of interest yet contain no extraneous content (Hinkin, 1995). Keeping a measure short is an effective means of minimizing response bias but too few items may lack construct validity and internal consistency (Hinkin, 1995). It is most important to capture the construct with items that have a slightly different meaning because the original list of construct items will be refined throughout the measurement creation process to produce the final measure (Churchill, 1979; Hinkin, 1995). By including slightly different items within the item pool, the researcher provides a better foundation for a validity and reliability.

Item generation for the product attribute, brand personality, cosponsor, and purchase congruence factors were determined after focus group transcriptions were coded and peer-reviewed by an external source. All items generated for audience, functional, geographic, and brand equity congruence were guided from previous literature (see Table 3.1). All ESCS items were then sent to an expert panel to examine content validity. All items followed Hinkin et al.'s (1997) guidelines and contained only one meaning with

consistent discourse and response options. Additionally, all proposed items were constructed to be answered using a 7-point Likert-based scale to better evaluate reliability using coefficient alphas (Hinkin, 1995; Zikmund et al., 2013).

3.4 STAGE 3: CONTENT ADEQUACY ASSESSMENT

Stage 3 of the scale development process assessed face and content validity of generated items from Stages 1 and 2. Construct validity is the accuracy of a measure to which a score truthfully represents a construct (Zikmund et al., 2013). There are four types of construct validity, including face, content, convergent, and discriminant validity. Face validity refers to the subjective agreement among professionals that a scale logically reflects the concept being measured (Zikmund et al., 2013). Content validity refers to the degree that a measure covers the breadth of the domain of interest (Zikmund et al., 2013). Face and content validity are typically assessed through an expert panel review comprised of academics and industry professionals (Zikmund et al., 2013). Any discrepancies between proposed items and expert panel feedback should be addressed and resolved before the first round of data collection. The remaining two types of validity (convergent and discriminant) were assessed and discussed in Stage 6 of the scale development process.

3.4.1 EXPERT PANEL

A panel of experts is defined as a variety of specialists within a particular field of expertise that discuss various courses of action and make recommendations when an evaluation is required (Zikmund et al., 2013). Similar to an expert witness in court, a person sitting on an expert panel is knowledgeable about the subject, actively participates in and/or researches within the field of study, and is typically affiliated with accredited

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organization(s) familiar with the subject at hand (Chi et al., 2014). It was important to select an expert panel from both the academic and professional industries as the goal of the ESCS is to be used in both settings. Suggested by Chi et al. (2014), a search of licensing directories and board members of licensed academic and professional organizations assisted in developing an expert panel. The academic organizations that share a similar interest in sport sponsorship and marketing are the Sports Marketing Association (SMA) and the North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM). Board and executive members that oversee each organization were contacted requesting their voluntary participation with the scale development expert panel.

It was also important to include experts on the panel that are actively involved in academic sport sponsorship and marketing research that may not currently be a board member at the time of the current study. Requirements of these experts included published articles in referred journals about sport sponsorships, with a majority of these articles published within a relative timeframe. While there is not a set criteria to define how many articles one must publish to be considered an expert, the current study considered researchers who published at least 10 journal articles on marketing, sponsorship, and/or sport sponsorship, with at least one study published within the last five years (2013 through 2018) as an expert. With the sponsorship realm constantly changing, articles published within the last five years were considered relevant because they typically focus on pertinent issues within sponsorship and consumer behavior.

To include industry professionals on the expert panel, senior sponsorship managers were recommended through personal contacts of the author. These two senior sponsorship managers are members of a professional licensed organization called the

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National Sports Forum (NSF) which shares a similar interest (sport sponsorship and marketing) with SMA and NASSM.

In total, 14 experts were contacted via email requesting their voluntary input regarding the face and content adequacy of proposed ESCS items generated from the inductive and deductive stages. Ten experts participated (71% response rate) in an online expert panel survey created using Qualtrics (See Appendix C). To make the process easier, the online survey asked specific questions about construct definitions and item wording. Experts were also prompted to provide general feedback on the scale development process.

Mean scores were analyzed for each item scored on a 7-point Likert based scale. If any mean scores were close to or fell below a 4.0, the item was reviewed by the author for any discourse discrepancies. All items were retained in a conservative effort to ensure item deletion was appropriate with statistical support. Feedback was also reviewed for any construct definition and/or item discourse discrepancies.

3.5 STAGE 4: FIRST DATA COLLECTION AND ITEM ANALYSIS

The objective of the first data collection was to examine how well items represent the constructs of the ESCS and to reduce initial items to a smaller and more parsimonious set of variables. The first data collection took place in early April 2019.

3.5.1 PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLE SIZE

An online survey was created using Qualtrics and distributed through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), an online marketplace that recruits participants for experimental and observational research (Cheung et al., 2017). Horton et al. (2011) found that experiments conducted on MTurk were as valid (both internally and externally) as

other kinds of experiments while reducing researcher time, costs, and inconvenience. Individuals were recruited with a monetary incentive of \$0.30 for full completion of the ESCS instrument. To prevent participants from taking the survey multiple times, a ballot stuffing restriction was put in place based on the individual's IP address.

Some researchers question participant motives who are recruited from MTurk because they are willing to complete tasks for small amounts of pay (Paolacci & Chandler, 2014). Researchers also criticize the representativeness of an MTurk sample since individuals are self-selecting to participate in surveys (Cheung et al., 2017). However, like most convenience sampling methods, MTurk is a sufficient method to purify the ESCS as the goal is to test content validity and internal consistency of the measure, not necessarily addressing research questions relating to the phenomena that will be studied in the future (Hinkin, 1995; Zikmund et al., 2013).

For exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), Kline (2016) suggested either a sample size of at least 200, or an item-to-response ratio of 5:1 as sufficient to produce statistical results. The current study followed Kline's (2016) suggested 5:1 data collection requirement.

3.5.2 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

As the goal of the first data collection was to test content validity and the internal consistency of the external sponsorship congruence constructs, it was important that the focal point of the first survey revolve around an event that is familiar to participants. Familiarity ensures participants are able to accurately answer sponsorship congruence questions without guessing information about the focal event reducing their respondent bias (Zikmund et al., 2013). In examining the potential external sponsorship congruence

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constructs, there is a geographic element that the participants must be familiar with. In addition, the focal object of the survey was a sport team since research states 70% of sponsorship dollars spent in North America is in sport (IEG, 2018). The most recognized professional sport leagues in America are the National Football League (NFL), National Basketball Association (NBA), Major League Baseball (MLB), and the National Hockey League (NHL). The NFL was chosen for this study because the league sells the most sport sponsorships (~$870 million) followed by the MLB (~$548 million) (IEG, 2018; Shank & Lyberger, 2015).

The same NFL team used within the focus group discussions was used for the first round of data collection. To ensure participants were familiar with this particular NFL team, the following preliminary questions were asked prior to the ESCS:

1. What sport does [the NFL team] play?
2. What league does [the NFL team] play in?

If a participant answered either question incorrectly, they were excluded from taking the ESCS survey.

A concern in choosing a specific NFL team may be the influence of one's identification with the team. For example, one who is highly identified with an NFL team may be more inclined to choose answers that best put the team in a positive light. The opposite may occur with those who are less identified or favor the team's rival. To decrease identification bias, a restriction was placed within the MTurk survey so that recruited participants only lived in the state, and surrounding states, in which the NFL team currently resides.

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Attention check questions were included to ensure participants were answering questions cognitively. The NFL team familiarity questions were timed, and two separate questions in the survey directed participants to choose "Strongly Disagree" as their response to that particular question(s). Listwise deletion was used for participants who failed attention check questions or failed to complete the survey in its entirety as suggested by Jackson et al. (2009).

3.5.3 DATA ANALYSIS

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to analyze the first round of data collection for the ESCS instrument. EFA does not require a priori specification of the number of factors and theoretically extracts all possible factors from an item pool (Kline, 2016). EFA is considered an unrestricted method and explores how all items relate to all possible factors as opposed to restricted methods (e.g. CFA) where item correlations are computed for specific posited factors (Kline, 2016). Literature states that EFA may be used when taking an inductive approach to scale development as it is primarily data driven in discovering underlying factors within the data set (Crowley & Fan, 1997). Therefore, since all external congruence concepts involved some qualitative inquiry, all congruence concepts were analyzed on the following guidelines as outlined by Kline (2016). Since data was normally distributed based on skewness and kurtosis values, and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity confirmed the data was suitable for factor extraction, maximum likelihood was used because it allows for a wide range of goodness of fit indexes. Data is considered appropriate for factor extraction when KMO is higher than 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant ($p < 0.01$) (Bartlett, 1954). To determine how many factors to retain, those

with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and those above the "breaking point" of a scree test were retained. Eigenvalues illustrate the amount of variance in the items that a particular factor explains (Kline, 2016). The scree test is a graphical representation of eigenvalues and examines the natural bend, or break point, in the data where the curve flattens out (Costello & Osborne, 2005). Ideally, an EFA will determine if there are factors to extract and which items load within those factors. A rotation analysis was used to explain as much variance as possible without overlapping factors. Factors that loaded above 0.50 suggest the construct is captured by the item and was retained for the next stage in the scale development process (Kline, 2016).

3.6 STAGE 5: SECOND DATA COLLECTION AND ITEM ANALYSIS

The objective of the second data collection was to refine items and test for scale consistency among different populations (Churchill, 1979; Hinkin, 1995; Kline, 2016). The second data collection took place in late April 2019. An online survey was created using Qualtrics and distributed through Amazon's MTurk. Participants were recruited through MTurk with a monetary incentive of $0.30 for full completion of the ESCS.

3.6.1 PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLE SIZE

To create a more generalizable sample, the second sample needed to contain different demographics, including geographic location. It would be inappropriate to create a scale based strictly on a geographic restriction sample that would only apply to that specific population (Kline, 2016) Therefore, the sampling framework for the second data collection included adults (ages 18+) across the United States who are familiar with NFL football teams. By widening the sample, the ESCS will be more reliable and

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generalizable. As in Section 3.5.1, sample size was based on Kline's (2016) suggested item-to-response ratio of 5:1 to produce statistical results.

3.6.2 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

A different NFL team was used as the focal point for the second data collection. The survey was open to all United States citizens through MTurk, and selection of the NFL team must ensure familiarity nationwide. Since the NFL Super Bowl was the most watched sporting event from 2013-2018 (Statista, 2019), the researcher chose one of the teams that participated in one of the past five Super Bowls. To measure familiarity with the team, each respondent was asked the following questions:

1. What sport does the [NFL team] play?

2. What league does the [NFL team] play in?

If a participant answered either question incorrectly, they were excluded from taking the ESCS.

It was also important that the sponsor chosen for the second data collection was one people were familiar with and possesses a geographical relationship with the NFL team. Venue naming rights are one-way sponsors can enhance their geographical tie to a region (Fortunato, 2013). For example, Minute Maid, headquartered in Sugarland, Texas, just a short drive from Houston, TX, has the exclusive naming rights of Minute Maid Park, home of the Houston Astros. This sponsorship enhances the geographical tie with the Astros, thus increasing the amount of sponsorship congruence between Minute Maid and the Astros. Following this philosophy, the current study chose the venue naming rights sponsor of the NFL team as the subject of sponsor related questions. This sponsor

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was vetted to make sure their headquarters were in fact in or around the area of the NFL team's stadium.

To ensure familiarity with the sponsor, the following questions were asked:

1. Do you currently own [sponsor's product]?

2. How likely are you to use [sponsor's product]?

3. How likely are you to recommend [sponsor's product] to friends and family?

Each question had a 15 second timer that only the researcher could see. If a respondent took longer than 15 seconds to answer one of these questions, their responses for the remainder of the survey were scrutinized for biased responses.

Attention check questions were included in the ESCS to ensure participants were answering questions cognitively. Two separate questions in the survey directed participants to choose "Strongly Disagree" as their response to that particular question(s). Listwise deletion was used for participants who failed attention check questions or failed to complete the survey in its entirety as suggested by Jackson et al. (2009).

3.6.3 DATA ANALYSIS

A CFA was used to analyze all constructs during this stage of the scale development process. The objective of CFA is to test whether a construct (factor) is consistent with the theoretical understanding of that factor, and if the data fits the hypothesized model outlined in phase one (specifying the domain) (Kline, 2016). CFA is often the analytic tool for scale development and refining measurement instruments, assessing construct validity, identifying method effects, and evaluating factor invariance across time and groups (Jackson et al., 2009). There are two kinds of CFA model fit, global and local, and both must be addressed when using CFA for scale development.

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Global fit was addressed by administering a chi-square test, which is the most frequently quoted global fit statistic. The chi-square test is an accept-support test where the null hypothesis states the CFA model is correct where failure to reject is acceptance of the model (Kline, 2016). The chi-square is rejected, and the model is accepted with $p > .05$. The more parsimonious model is one with a low chi-square statistic (Kline, 2016). Other global fit indices that were consulted include the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) with a recommended model fit statistic of 0.95 or higher, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) ($> .90$), Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA) ($< .08$), and Standardized Root Mean Residual (SRMR) ($< .08$) (Kline, 2016). A TLI of .90 implies the current model improves model fit by 90% compared to the null model (Kline, 2016). CFI is a revised TLI statistic that is not sensitive to sample size (Kline, 2016). RMSEA tests the average of residuals between the sample and the fitted model matrices, and SRMR tests the difference between the square-rooted residuals of the sample covariance and the fitted model (Kline, 2016). See Table 3.3 for global fit indices and cut-off points used in ESCS assessment.

Table 3.3 Global Fit Indices used in CFA analysis

Measure	Description	Cut off for acceptable fit
Chi-Square	Compares the discrepancy between sample covariance and the fitted covariance matrices	$P > 0.05$
TLI	TLI implies the model improves the fit compared to the null model	$TLI > 0.95$
CFI	Revised TLI that is not sensitive to sample size	$CFI > 0.90$
RMSEA	The average of residuals between the sample and the fitted model matrices	$RMSEA < 0.08$
SRMR	The difference between the square-rooted residuals of the sample covariance and the fitted model	$SRMR < 0.08$

Local fit was simultaneously examined while analyzing global fit. The most popular local fit index method is analyzing parameter estimates which describe how much common variance is shared between item and factor (Kline, 2016). Parameter estimates are reflective of how the question is worded and if the factor is considered to be positive or negative (Kline, 2016). If the parameter estimate is negative but the question is worded positively, the item should be inspected to see if it is an appropriate item to include within the measurement instrument. Parameter estimates were reported as standardized so the estimates will have the same unit variance (1.0) (Kline, 2016). Another local fit index used was R-squared values analyzing how much construct variance can be explained by an item (Kline, 2016). R-squared values fall between 0 and 1, with the goal of an item producing a high R-squared statistic. The higher the R-square score, the higher the amount of common variance shared between an item and factor (Finney & DiStefano, 2006). While there is no set cut-off point for R-squared values, Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2013) recommend 0.75 as substantial, 0.50 as moderate, and 0.25 as weak. Other local fit criteria included ensuring the standard errors of parameter estimates and residuals were normal.

3.7 STAGE 6: RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY ASSESSMENT

Churchill (1979) states that a measure is reliable when independent items are comparable measures of the same construct and largely depends on how much variation among measured items is attributed to random error. In other words, an instrument is said to be reliable if it consistently produces similar results under similar conditions. Cronbach's alpha is the basic statistic for determining reliability of a scale based on internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha is the expected correlation of two tests that

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measure the same construct (Kline, 2016). Generally speaking, scales reporting alpha levels between 0.80 and 0.95 are considered to have acceptable reliability, values between 0.70 to 0.80 are considered moderate reliability, and values between 0.60 and 0.70 indicate weak reliability (Zikmund et eal., 2013). The current study followed suggested guidelines and a congruence construct was considered reliable with Cronbach alpha levels above .70.

Face and content validity have already been established at this point in the scale development process. The last two validity factors, convergent and discriminant, were addressed to ensure the measure is consistent and accurate. Convergent validity refers to theoretical concepts that should be related to one another are in fact related (Zikmund et al., 2013). Discriminant validity represents the uniqueness or distinctiveness of a measure; a scale should not correlate too highly with a measure of a different construct (Zikmund et al., 2013). Convergent validity will be established through average variance extracted (AVE) scores. AVE measures the amount of variance that is captured by a construct in relation to the amount of variance due to measurement error (Kline, 2016). It is a general rule of thumb that convergent validity is achieved when scores are above 0.50 (Fornell & Larker, 1981; Kline, 2016). Discriminant validity was determined by squaring the correlations among the dimensions of the scale. A squared correlation that was lower than the AVE score indicated the dimension(s) possessed discriminant validity (Fornell & Larker, 1981; Kline, 2016).

3.8 SUMMARY

Methodology procedures for the ESCS followed both a deductive and inductive approach. The congruence constructs that fall under the inductive approach included

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personality, cosponsor, purchase, and product attribute congruence. Due to a lack of measurement instrument, these constructs were tested via focus groups. Once the focus groups were transcribed and coded using open and thematic coding, an expert panel made up of academic and industry professionals were consulted to examine face and content validity of items generated through the deductive and inductive approaches. Current measurement scales for audience, functional, geographic, and brand equity congruence, as they stand in the literature, are acceptable or are in need of minor revisions. These four congruence constructs were examined via an expert panel review.

Two rounds of data collection for the ESCS was reviewed to determine internal consistency and scale validity. The first round of data collection focused on testing construct validity and item reliability. An exploratory factor analysis revealed which items correlate with which construct. The scale was revised appropriately based on EFA factor loadings. The second round of data collection focused on external validity. CFA determined which items appropriately captured each congruence construct. Reliability and validity were then tested using Cronbach alpha loadings, AVE scores, and squared item correlations.

The methodology of the ESCS was an intense process that required flexibility in terms of timing and data collection. During the first EFA analysis, it became clear that some items, and one construct, were inappropriate for the measure. A second EFA was analyzed with a different sample to reveal important information regarding the makeup of each construct before moving into CFA.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Chapter four discusses the results of three focus group inquires, an expert panel review, exploratory factor analyses (EFA), confirmatory factor analyses (CFA), and scale reliability and validity analyses. The in-depth results provide statistical support for the ESCS creation, revision, and completion.

4.1 STAGE 1: INDUCTIVE DOMAINS OF ESCS

The primary purpose of conducting focus groups was to gain insight regarding how a group of individuals conceptualizes four specific constructs of interest: personality, cosponsor, purchase, and product attribute congruence (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Three focus groups were conducted to address how these theorized sponsorship congruence domains are perceived between a sponsor and event. Product attribute, cosponsor, and purchase congruence domains had yet to go beyond the initial theoretical stage to determine if a scale can measure the abstract concepts. Brand personality congruence measures are frequent within marketing and sponsorship literature, however there is debate regarding whether brand personality should be included in the ESCS as personality is typically created and managed by marketing managers. If personality was relevant for the scale development process, it was important to identify which specific personality traits are typically shared between a sponsor and event. All focus group transcripts underwent two rounds of coding (open and thematic) and no new sponsorship congruence themes emerged.

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Overall, the focus group findings highlight the complexity of sponsorship congruence, as constructs already established through a deductive approach were often referenced during focus groups. For example, participants often referred to brand equity congruence when discussing product attribute fit. Respondents also referenced functional congruence when asked questions about purchase congruence, citing one can purchase items "that you can hold onto, take home with you, and consume" (P15). In addition, participants often referred to customer service provided by the sponsor and event rather than tangible attributes of the product(s). In terms of personality, respondents each had a different idea of what personality traits XBank and the NFL team shared. An in-depth discussion of each construct and suggested action regarding scale development follows. See Table 4.1 for an overview of coding analysis.

4.1.1 PRODUCT ATTRIBUTE CONGRUENCE

Product attributes are characteristics that define and differentiate a particular product from its competitors, which can effect a consumer's purchase decision (Fortunato, 2013). Product attribute sponsorship congruence is defined in the current study as a sponsor's product/service being similar to the product/service the event provides. Product attributes make up what is referred to as a brand's image (Keller, 1993). It is proposed that image congruence is too vague of a domain to be included in the ESCS, and the specific dimensions (product attribute, user imagery, brand personality, and functionality) should be used instead. Product attribute is a new domain within the sponsorship literature and an inductive approach was taken to determine if the domain is salient within a consumer's mind.

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Table 4.1 Summary of Focus Group Coding Analysis

Proposed Construct	Open Coding	Thematic Coding
Product Attribute Congruence	"The customer service thing could tie in, but I don't know, I still think of them as separate" (P2)	Customer Service Product Attribute
	"I don't think their business models necessarily align" (P1)	Business/Customer Service
	"I've never had a good experience with that bank, ever. And I have a background with [NFL team]s as well" (P10)	Customer Service
	"I think the NFL being the billion dollar industry that they are" (P9) "Oh they definitely have the same methodology" (P10)	Brand Equity
	"...being such a national brand. I think that it is a really good fit" (P9)	Brand Equity Geographic
	"When I think XBank, I think NFL" (P9)	Longevity of Partnership
	"As much as XBank would like to be fan-friendly...I wouldn't think that they are as good at customer service as what the [NFL team]s would try to be" (P8)	Customer Service Brand Equity
	"You're paying for the experience" (P10)	Product attribute Customer Service Brand Equity
	"I see that their passion can connect the fans...XBank's openness can relate here to the [NFL team]s, the customer service, or their connection to the fans" (P12)	Customer Service
	"To me, one's entertainment purposes. One's financial purposes, so no for me" (P17)	Product Attribute
	"The only liaison I see is maybe business functions at games with high level execs...I see business people in suites...but other than that, banking and sports, there's not much in common" (P16)	Product Attribute
	"I think it makes a lot more sense to kind of combine with a team if you're looking at the same consumer base, at least at a high net worth level" (P13)	Audience
Cosponsor	"I would say no...they typically grab for one big company from a different	Brand Equity

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Proposed Construct	Open Coding	Thematic Coding
Congruence	area...so in terms of like what type of business...they're obviously the only one that's sponsoring from that realm but, they're major corporations from different sectors" (P5)	
	"...because obviously [state] Health Care System, XBank and [cosponsor] are all like either headquartered or founded in [state]" (P3)	Geographic
	"It's hard to say they fit, because there's such a variety, I mean somebody's regional...some are national, some international" (P7)	Geographic
	"I think some of them have overlap...because it's an entertainment venue and that's what you're trying to sell your product there. So reach, yeah" (P3)	Audience
	"So it has a national spin, but also kind of like a local tie" (P11)	Geographic
	"These are respectable brands too. There's not anyone in there that I think is super questionable" (P9)	Brand Equity
	"You got a big variety" (P14)	Cosponsor
	"...it would make more sense if they were all from North or [state]" (P17)	Geographic
Purchase Congruence	"...like the use of ATMs and stuff on site" (P7)	Functional
	"...if anything they're using their money that is at XBank at the stadium" (P4)	Functional
	"...they might have a booth there at the stadium saying, like if you sign up you'll get these benefits at the stadium in the future" (P3)	Purchase
	"...you're able to watch the game, see what the players are wearing, and then go right downstairs and purchase the same attire" (P5)	Purchase Functional
	"I would say food and beverage as well...showcase the local food through local vendors" (P7)	Purchase Functional Geographic
	"Especially if there's...some type of financial gain for you personally" (P11)	Functional
	"I think vehicles have shown that they can be successful targeting that market base, increasing their brand awareness at sporting events" (P9)	Audience
	"Only because, XBank, I assume puts an ATM there" (P 13)	Functional

Proposed Construct	Open Coding	Thematic Coding
	"...it's providing a service" (P14)	Customer Service
	"Beer. Food" (P17)	Functional
	"Clothing items...but with things that you can hold onto, and take home with you, and consumer" (P15)	Functional
	"When you buy something, it's hand in hand when you walk off" (P14)	Purchase Functional
Personality Congruence	"Strong" (P3)	Fit
	"Experienced" (P4)	Diligence
	"Bold" (P3) (P9)	Uninhibitedness
	"Powerful...yeah, BOA is everywhere" (P5)	Brand Equity
	"Dedicated" (P4) (P11) (P15)	Diligence
	"Coordinated" (P10)	Diligence
	"Renowned" (P11) (P18)	Brand Equity

To determine the domain of product attribute congruence between a sponsor and event, focus group participants were asked to think of a specific sponsorship between a banking institution, herein referred to as XBank, and an eastern NFL team. Then participants were asked "Do you think the product and/or service XBank provides is similar to the product and/or service the [NFL team] provides?" The initial response from all three focus groups was that XBank's and the NFL team's product(s) are dissimilar. For example, P17 said, "To me, one's entertainment purposes. One's financial purposes, so no for me." There were no responses in any of the three focus groups indicating product attribute congruence in this scenario.

Five responses (P2, P8, P10, P12, P14), however, did mention that both XBank and the NFL team provide a service, specifically customer service, that overlaps with one another. Whether the previous experience was good or bad, participants connected XBank and the NFL team through previous customer service experiences. P10, for example, had bad customer service experiences stating, "I've never had a good experience with that bank, ever. And I have a background with the NFL team as well." The latter of P10's comments eluding to the NFL team's failing to put its customers first. Other participants, such as P9, pointed out when experiencing both XBank and the NFL team "you're paying for the experience." P12 added that "I see that their passion can connect the fans...XBank's openness can relate here to the [NFL team], the customer service, or their connection to the fans."

Focus group three's discussion of product attribute congruence also mentioned "high level execs" (P16) being able to afford expensive luxury suites. P13 elaborated by saying, "I think it makes a lot of sense to kind of combine with a team if you're looking

at the same consumer base, at least at a high net worth level." P13 and P16 associated the usually high price tag of luxury suites as an attribute of the NFL team's product, and those who typically bank with XBank as earning a high income as an attribute of XBank's product. This sentiment, however, is more reflective of audience congruence than product attribute congruence. Audience congruence refers to the similarity between the event's audience and the sponsor's target segment (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). Therefore, this comment thread was thematically coded as audience congruence rather than product attribute congruence.

All three focus groups provided valuable information in terms of what constitutes product attribute sponsorship congruence. As White et al. (2012) stated, customer service is intricately linked with how consumers evaluate product(s). All three focus groups discussed XBank and the NFL team's customer service, and how the sponsorship would naturally make sense because of this similarity. For example, P2 suggested that "the customer service thing could tie in," and P9 mentioned that "...both being such a national brand. I think that it is a really good fit."

4.1.2 PERSONALITY CONGRUENCE

Brand personality congruence is defined as the extent to which the sponsor and sport team share personality traits. The current study referred to Lee and Cho's (2012) personality dimensions when assessing brand personality congruence, which include diligence, uninhibitedness, fit, tradition, and amusement. To analyze if the brand personality concept is truly considered an external sponsorship congruence construct, focus group participants were given a list of personality traits that were used in Lee and Cho's (2012) brand personality study (See Appendix B). They were then instructed to

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discuss the personality traits they felt XBank shares with the selected NFL team. The two personality factors mentioned throughout all three focus groups were diligence and uninhibitedness. Experience, dedication, and coordination were traits identified by P4, P11, P15, and P10 reflected diligence. Bold was referred to by P3 and P9 reflecting uninhibitedness.

Other traits frequently mentioned from Lee and Cho's (2012) original list of personality characteristics included strong (P3), powerful (P5), renowned (P11, P18), and American (P6, P12, P18). These four personality traits were not included in the final five personality factors outlined by Lee and Cho (2012). However, these four characteristics speak more to XBank and the NFL team's brand equity than diligence, uninhibitedness, fit, tradition, or amusement. A brand's reputation and notoriety are two important facets that make up brand equity, or a brand's perceived commercial value (Roy & Cornwell, 2003). Strong, powerful, renowned, and American are personality traits that were reflective of, and described the brand's reputation within the brand personality congruence focus group discussions. Therefore, this conversation thread was coded as brand equity rather than any of Lee and Cho's (2012) five personality dimensions.

Comments were also made throughout all three focus group discussions that spoke to the idea that personality congruence was perceived on an individual level. For example, P7 tried "not to let [her] stereotypes" influence her answers. P18 said "none of these words make me think of the NFL team. Not really." The most prevalent response speaking to personality being interpreted on an individual level was P9 discussing his personal interests in why he chose the word bold to describe both Xbank's and the NFL team's personality. P9 said:

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I kind of like the last one, bold, because I know the [NFL team] is trying to move as well to kind of from outside the city, kind of more near [another geographic location]. And XBank, I thought the stock market too, and they're kind of changing their entire business plan. So I'm also kind of interested...bold and different, outgoing.

In summary, the personality congruence focus group discussions revealed that only a few of Lee and Cho's (2012) suggested personality traits are actually shared between XBank and the NFL Team. Additionally, personality traits mentioned that were not in Lee and Cho's (2012) final five personality characteristics were more closely related to the definition of brand equity congruence than personality congruence. Finally, focus group participants viewed personality congruence on an individual level supporting their opinions with previous encounters with XBank and/or the NFL team. Personality sponsorship congruence was tagged for potential removal at this time, but kept in the expert panel review because items already existed.

4.1.3 COSPONSOR CONGRUENCE

Cosponsor congruence is defined as the relatedness a sponsor shares with other cosponsors, as well as the sponsored event, with high (low) relatedness implying converging (diverging) associations (Kelly et al., 2016). To better understand the domain of cosponsor congruence, and if there was a need to develop a measurement instrument to capture the construct, focus group participants were provided a roster of sponsors of the NFL team and asked to answer the following question: "Do you think XBank fits in well with the other sponsors? Why or why not?" Three thematic codes arose during cosponsor congruence discussions reflecting geographic, audience, and brand equity congruence.

None, however, reflected the definition of cosponsor congruence as outlined by Fortunato (2013).

A majority of the sponsors listed for the NFL team possessed a natural geographic tie-in that participants noticed right away. P11 said sponsors "have a national spin, but also kind of like a local tie." P7 noted "It's hard to say they fit, because there's such a variety, I mean somebody's regional...some are national, some international." Eight of the 11 sponsors that were presented to participants had a regional tie with either a headquarters within the area the NFL team currently resides, or the business was known within the southeastern United States region. It would be logical to conclude why the geographic tie was mentioned, however, a team and/or event with a majority of their sponsors having a local tie is not consistent throughout all sport events. There are numerous other events that do not share this highlighted geographic congruence with sponsors and should therefore not be considered part of cosponsor congruence.

Participants also pointed out that there is an "overlap [between sponsors] because it's an entertainment venue and that's where you're trying to sell your product" (P3). This particular comment by P3 speaks to reasons why an organization may want to sponsor an event, such as exposure and awareness, rather than defining the cosponsor construct. P3's comment also reflects what is referred to as audience congruence, eluding to the idea that sponsors are only targeting consumers at the NFL team's games. Again, this line of thinking reflects another external sponsorship congruence domain (audience) and should not be considered part of cosponsor congruence.

The last thematic code to evolve from the cosponsor sponsorship congruence discussions was brand equity. The second focus group focused on how well known and

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reputable all the brands were by pointing out: "These are respectable brands too. There's not anyone in there that I think is super questionable" (P9). Also coded as brand equity, P5 said in response to the cosponsor congruence question, "I would say no...they're major corporations from different sectors." Both comments speak to the notoriety each sponsor holds within their respective sponsor categories. Coding these responses as brand equity shows that cosponsor congruence is not a relevant external sponsorship congruence domain in the mind of consumers.

4.1.4 PURCHASE CONGRUENCE

Purchase congruence is defined as the enhancement of overall sponsorship fit due to the ability to purchase the sponsor's product at the event location (Fortunato, 2013). Since XBank's main product is in reality a service, the opening question for all focus groups was "Can you envision fans at [the NFL team's] games purchasing XBank's product/service at/during a [NFL team] game? Under what conditions would this potentially happen?" Two thematic codes arose while analyzing participant responses: purchase and functional congruence. P7 and P13 had similar responses referring to the use of ATMs on-site at the stadium, while P3 said "they might have a booth there at the stadium saying like, if you sign up you'll get these benefits at the stadium in the future." This type of response, discussed throughout all three groups, most closely represents the literature definition of purchase congruence. However, while some sponsorships do allow organizations to solicit business during games via booths/tables on the concourse, this is not a consistent benefit across all sponsorships. These examples of purchase congruence take effect after a contract is signed, enhancing the congruence. The intended goal of the ECSC is to predict congruence between any one sponsor and a sport event before

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contractual negotiations. This particular thematic purchase congruence thread includes benefits that are negotiated between sponsor and sport event and were not included within the ESCS scale development process.

A more prevalent thematic code that arose during purchase congruence discussions was functional congruence, which is defined as the overall fit enhanced by the use of sponsor's product(s) during the event either directly or indirectly (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). P4's response is an example of functional congruence: "if anything [consumers] are using their money that is at XBank at the stadium." The use of XBank's services (e.g. checking account, credit cards) at a [NFL team] game was seen as enhancing the sponsorship. Participants were also asked a follow-up question regarding purchase congruence: "Do you think there are sponsors out there that would be able to sell their product/service at/during a [NFL team] game? What are those sponsors and why?" The intention of this question was to assist in further understanding if purchase congruence was category specific rather than product/service specific. Beer, food, and clothing items were the popular categories mentioned throughout all three focus groups. P5 mentioned that "you're able to watch the game, see what the players are wearing, and then go right down stairs and purchase the same attire." P15 reiterated this sentiment stating, "Clothing items...things you can hold onto, and take home with you and consume." These three specific categories are examples of consumers purchasing the sponsor's product at the game and using them indirectly (wearing clothing items purchased at stadium).

4.2 STAGE 1: DEDUCTIVE DOMAINS OF ESCS

To continue identifying the remaining sponsorship congruence domains, a deductive approach assessed remaining sponsorship congruence domains. Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) study performed a qualitative investigation of sponsorship congruence domains, including audience, functional, geographic, and brand equity congruence. In addition, Roy and Cornwell (2003) provided an in-depth review of the brand equity sponsorship congruence domain. These two studies provided the foundation for identifying domains for the remaining sponsorship congruence constructs.

4.2.1 AUDIENCE CONGRUENCE

Audience congruence is the similarity between an event's audience and the sponsor's target segment (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). Within a sponsorship context, Olson and Thjømøe (2011) were the only researchers to measure the audience congruence construct with their one item measurement. Measured on a Likert-based scale, Olson and Thjømøe (2011) asked participants "How likely are customers of [sponsor] to be in audience of [event]." A construct measured with only one item is prone to technical problems, such as failure of iterative estimation (Kline, 2016). While the audience congruence measure shows significant results in Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) study, more items should be added to achieve internal reliability.

4.2.2 FUNCTIONAL CONGRUENCE

Functional congruence is a sponsorship construct that has been supported by numerous researchers (Close & Lacey, 2013; Cornwell et al., 2005; Fortunato, 2013; Olson & Thjømøe, 2011; Prendergast et al., 2010). Functional congruence is the overall fit enhanced by the use of sponsor's product(s) during the event either directly or

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indirectly (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). While there's theoretical support for the functional congruence construct, early researchers used personality traits like "fast", "masculine", or "strategic" to measure the construct. The most recent study to appropriately measure functional congruence is Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) two item instrument asking questions about participant use of sponsor products, and audience member use of sponsor products while watching an event on television. This two item measurement is more reflective of the definition, yet it fails to meet Kline's (2016) three-item requirement.

4.2.3 GEOGRAPHIC CONGRUENCE

Geographic congruence in a sponsorship context, or the perception of the sponsoring company's connection to the region where the event is located (Woisetschläger et al., 2010), was measured only by Olson and Thjømøe (2011). Olson and Thjømøe (2011) used absolute differences in measuring the geographic construct. Each question was asked twice, once about the sponsor and once about the event in question. The first question, "What is your opinion of [sponsor]/[event]" was measured on a Likert-based scale with "Norwegian" and "Global" as anchors. The second item, "What is your opinion of [sponsor]/[event]" was measured on a Likert-based scale with "Local" and "International" as anchors. While both items are a good foundation for the ESCS, the biggest issue is consistency with participant item response. For example, other ESCS sponsorship congruence construct questions are asked on a 7-point Likert-based scale with the anchors of "Strongly disagree" and "Strongly agree," and Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) current geographic measurement is inconsistent with the rest of the ESCS. In addition, two items to measure a construct does not meet Kline's (2016) three item minimum.

4.2.4 BRAND EQUITY CONGRUENCE

Brand equity congruence is defined as the similarity between the sponsor's commercial value and the event's commercial value (Becker-Olsen & Simmons, 2002; Cornwell et al., 2005; Roy & Cornwell, 2003). In a sponsorship context, Roy and Cornwell (2003) measured brand equity congruence using nine items with many different anchors. The actual items used in the study were never released, however Roy and Cornwell (2003) found significant evidence to support the brand equity construct. While Olson and Thjømøe (2011) did not explicitly measure brand equity congruence, two items that were used in their study to measure "attitude similarity" are questions that best reflect the theoretical definition of brand equity. Olson and Thjømøe (2011) found significance for attitude similarity supporting the concept. Similar to geographic congruence, attitude similarity congruence was measured using absolute differences in Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) study. Respondents were asked their opinion of the sponsor and event separately and asked to rate their response via a Likert-based scale with the anchors of "Have a very bad reputation"/"Have a very good reputation", and "Have a negative image"/"Have a positive image." While both items are a good foundation for the ESCS, the biggest issue is consistency with participant item response.

4.3 STAGE 2: ITEM GENERATION

Items for congruence constructs were generated from both an inductive and deductive approach. The researcher took a macroscopic point of view for creating items instead of creating an exhaustive list of all possible components. The overall structure of items was determined based on the way participants, and previous literature, reflected construct definitions of the ESCS. The current study adopts this methodology within

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ESCS development. It should be noted that absolute differences between the event and sponsor are used to measure product attribute, geographic, and brand equity (i.e., if the event mean score was seven and sponsor score was five, the fit score on that construct would be two). Perfect congruence on the construct would be a score of zero, while the worst possible congruence would be a score of six. This also means that these three constructs are actually considered to be six constructs in total; a) product attribute for the sponsor, b) product attribute for the event, c) geographic sponsor, d) geographic event, e) brand equity sponsor, and f) brand equity event. Construct mean scores are used to determine the level of sponsor-event congruence between the remaining constructs: audience, personality, functional, cosponsor and purchase congruence. Olson and Thjømøe (2011) used a similar approach in measuring constructs with both absolute differences and construct mean scores, and provides theoretical support for ESCS measurement development.

Focus groups provided valuable insight into the conceptualization of product attribute and purchase congruence, and confirmed the deletion of personality and cosponsor congruence from the ESCS instrument. Only two of Lee and Cho's (2012) five personality dimensions explaining fit between a sponsor and event were mentioned during focus groups. It is important to note that not all traits measuring these two personality dimensions were mentioned. For example, the diligence dimension is comprised of skillful, well-trained, focused, talented, coordinated, determined, experience, dedicated, and devoted. Of these nine traits, only determined and dedicated were mentioned during focus group discussions. It was made clear that personality was also assessed on an individual basis given the wide variety of responses. With a lack of

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qualitative support, it is concluded personality congruence should not be included within the ESCS. To reduce researcher and interpretation bias, personality was included within the content adequacy stage to determine the appropriateness of removing personality congruence from the ESCS.

The only direct quote to mirror the cosponsor sponsorship congruence concept was: "You got a big variety" (P14). Echoed throughout all three focus groups, the variability among brands reflects the notion that each brand is differentiated by their image, or the perception of a brand reflected by consumer associations (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). As previously stated, brand image is a vague term that is comprised of six separate associations as outlined by Keller (1993). If focus group participants are differentiating sponsors at the brand image level, there may be even more distinct qualities that give each organization its reputation, such as product attributes, user imagery, brand personality, or functional benefits. Therefore, it would be moot to include cosponsor congruence as a construct within the ESCS, especially if brand-image congruence is not included because of its indistinctiveness. It was recommended that cosponsor congruence not go beyond theoretical conceptualization and should not be included within the ESCS scale development process.

Focus group participants revealed that product attribute congruence is salient within sponsorship congruence and items should be created to reflect not only tangible product attributes, but also intangible attributes, such as customer service. Based on discourse from focus groups, five items were created to reflect the product attribute construct. The absolute differences methodology was used to determine a product attribute congruence score. See Table 4.2 for initial 10 product attribute sponsorship

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congruence items; five items reflecting sponsor product attribute congruence and five reflecting event product attribute congruence.

Functionality and use of sponsor products was the main focus of the purchase congruence discussion. Focus group participants conceptualized purchase congruence as buying a sponsor's product/service on-site (such as food) and either consuming the product on-site or it is "hand in hand when you walk off" (P14). Therefore, dialogue reflecting the discussion on purchase congruence was included as potential items measuring functional sponsorship congruence rather than creating a separate purchase congruence construct. See Table 4.2 for initial four functional congruence items.

The focus groups also provided valuable insights into the conceptualization of geographic and brand equity constructs. Geographic and brand equity items were generated from previous literature (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011; Roy & Cornwell, 2003), however both of these constructs were referenced multiple times throughout all three focus groups. Geographic congruence as measured by Olson and Thjømøe (2011) is inconsistent with the overall response structure of the ESCS. Potential geographic congruence items were reworded using Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) original anchors ("Norwegian", "Global", "Local", and "International") in order to be consistent with the ESCS 7 point Likert-based scale response anchored by "Strongly Disagree" and "Strongly Agree." Throughout all three focus groups, geographic location, specifically the city, state, and region (southeastern United States), were mentioned as a major point of similarity between XBank and the NFL team.

Table 4.2 Proposed Items Based on Deductive and Inductive Results

Construct	Items	Code
Sponsor Product Attribute Congruence	[Sponsor]'s product/service offers good benefits to customers	PA1_SPONSOR
	[Sponsor]'s customer service is good	PA2_SPONSOR
	[Sponsor]'s product/service positively reflects who they are	PA3_SPONSOR
	[Sponsor]'s product/service is of high quality	PA4_SPONSOR
	[Sponsor]'s customer service is of high quality	PA5_SPONSOR
Event Product Attribute Congruence	[Event]'s product/service offers good benefits to customers	PA1_EVENT
	[Event]'s customer service is good	PA2_EVENT
	[Event]'s product/service positively reflects who they are	PA3_EVENT
	[Event]'s product/service is of high quality	PA4_EVENT
	[Event]'s customer service is of high quality	PA5_EVENT
Audience Congruence	[Sponsor] customers are usually in the audience of [event]	A1
	[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience represent one group rather than it does two separate groups	A2
	[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience qualifies as one group	A3
	[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience are like a unified whole	A4
	[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience are as "one"	A5
	[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience are a tightly knit group	A6
Functional Congruence	[Sponsor]'s products are used by [event] participants during [event]	FUN1
	When watching a [event] on TV, the audience members use [sponsor]'s products	FUN2
	Audience members use [sponsor]'s product at [event]	FUN3
	Audience members consume [sponsor]'s products at [event]	FUN4
Sponsor Geographic Congruence	I consider [sponsor] to be local to [city]	G1_SPONSOR
	I consider [sponsor] to be local to [state]	G2_SPONSOR
	I consider [sponsor] to be regional to the eastern United States	G3_SPONSOR

Construct	Items	Code
	I consider [sponsor] to be regional to the western United States	G4_SPONSOR
	I consider [sponsor] to be national	G5_SPONSOR
	I consider [sponsor] to be international	G6_SPONSOR
Event Geographic Congruence	I consider [event] to be local to [city]	G1_EVENT
	I consider [event] to be local to [state]	G2_EVENT
	I consider [event] to be regional to the eastern United States	G3_EVENT
	I consider [event] to be regional to the western United States	G4_EVENT
	I consider [event] to be national	G5_EVENT
	I consider [event] to be international	G6_EVENT
Sponsor Brand Equity Congruence	[Sponsor] is important	BE1_SPONSOR
	[Sponsor] has a very good reputation	BE2_SPONSOR
	[Sponsor] is a respectable brand	BE3_SPONSOR
	[Sponsor] has a positive image	BE4_SPONSOR
	[Sponsor] is well known	BE5_SPONSOR
	[Sponsor] is renowned	BE6_SPONSOR
	[Sponsor] provides good customer service to its patrons	BE7_SPONSOR
Event Brand Equity Congruence	[Event] is important	BE1_EVENT
	[Event] has a very good reputation	BE2_EVENT
	[Event] is a respectable brand	BE3_EVENT
	[Event] has a positive image	BE4_EVENT
	[Event] is well known	BE5_EVENT
	[Event] is renowned	BE6_EVENT
	[Event] provides good customer service to its patrons	BE7_EVENT

Therefore, items reflecting city, state, and United States region were also added to the geographic construct. See Table 4.2 for initial 12 geographic congruence items; six items reflecting sponsor geographic congruence and six reflecting event geographic congruence. Absolute differences will then determine the geographic congruence construct score.

Focus groups also provided terminology that was thematically coded as reflecting the definition of brand equity. For example, the terms "renowned", "respectable", and "well known" were mentioned during all three focus groups, speaking to the brand's prominence and notoriety. The final item added to the brand equity construct comes from focus group discussions of customer service. Customer service is intricately linked with how participants evaluate a brand (White et al., 2012), especially with brands, like XBank, that provide a service (banking). Focus group participants made comments like "I've never had a good experience with XBank" (P10) or that the [NFL team] has great customer service (P12). Therefore, the item, "[sponsor]/[event] provides good customer service to its patrons," was included within the brand equity construct with caution. See Table 4.2 for initial 14 brand equity congruence items; seven items reflecting sponsor brand equity and seven reflecting event brand equity. An expert panel review provided more insight into the face validity of this item, and a further statistical analysis should support if the item is reliable and valid.

Items for the final two sponsorship congruence constructs, audience and functional congruence, were derived from previous literature and scale development studies. Olson and Thjømøe (2011) measured audience congruence with one item, which does not meet Kline's (2016) suggested three-item requirement to satisfy scale reliability.

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Therefore, it is important to add more items to make sure the construct is being measured appropriately. Since audience congruence is a reflection of entitativity theory, it is proposed to include slightly reworded items from Dickenson and Souchon's (2018) study that measured similarities between two separate audiences. See Table 4.2 for initial six audience congruence items.

Functional sponsorship congruence items were derived from Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) two measurement instrument. Since Olson and Thjømøe (2011) did not meet Kline's (2016) item to factor requirement, it is proposed to include two more items reflecting the indirect use of a sponsor's product during an event. The first item is worded as "Audience members use [sponsor]'s product at [event]." This captures the indirect use of the product, similar to Olson and Thjømøe (2011), but rewording to reflect the use of a product while attending a live event. Additionally, some sponsor categories include items that an individual may not necessarily "use" but "consume", such as food and beverage. Therefore, the fourth item proposed to measure functional congruence is worded as "Audience members consume [sponsor] products at [event]."

See Table 4.2 for initial ESCS items. An additional analysis of items were reviewed by an expert panel to discuss item clarity, comprehensiveness, and if the items appropriately capture the construct. The next section discusses expert panel reviews and item revision suggestions.

4.4 STAGE 3: CONTENT ADEQUACY ASSESSMENT

Once the initial ESCS scale was developed, the next stage was to evaluate the content adequacy (face validity) of the items. See Appendix C for the full expert panel review survey. Content validity was assessed by 10 sport marketing and sponsorship

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experts. The review consisted of three distinct sections. First, experts were asked to rank clarity, comprehensiveness, and face validity of each congruence construct definition on a 7-point Likert based scale. If any mean score was close to, or fell below a 4.0, the definition was reviewed by the researcher. The product attribute mean scores were the lowest in definition clarity (4.30), comprehensiveness (4.60), and capturing the construct (4.60). However, all construct definition mean scores were above 4.0, supporting face validity of construct definitions. See Table 4.3 for expert panel mean scores and Table 4.4 for a summary of expert panel feedback.

The second and third stages of the expert panel review was to assess face validity of construct items and provide feedback of said items. On a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree), experts were directed to indicate the extent each item reflected the construct definition. Product attribute item mean scores all fell above 4.0. The lowest item (PA5) with a mean score of 4.10 ("[Sponsor]/[event]'s customer service is of high quality") is one of the items generated directly from focus group discussions. E10's biggest concern regarding PA5 was "customer service might work for the event, but maybe not for the sponsor. I've never had any reason to interact with customer service for a brand like [soft drink company] some might, yes, but it might not make sense." E6 also stated, "How is this different from the brand equity factor?" Since all item mean scores were above 4.0, all items were retained for the next scale development process stage. If statistical analysis provided support for expert panel opinions, that item was later removed.

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Table 4.3 Expert Panel Review Item Mean Scores

Construct Definition and Items	*M*	Construct Definition and Items	*M*
Product Attribute Congruence		**Geographic Congruence**	
Definition is clear	4.30	Definition is clear	6.20
Definition is comprehensive	4.60	Definition is comprehensive	6.20
Definition captures the construct	4.60	Definition captures the construct	6.40
PA1	4.20	G1	4.10
PA2	4.10	G2	3.70
PA3	4.30	G3	4.10
PA4	4.30	G4	4.10
PA5	4.10	G5	4.80
Audience Congruence		G6	4.60
Definition is clear	5.10	**Brand Equity**	
Definition is comprehensive	5.30	Definition is clear	4.70
Definition captures the construct	5.10	Definition is comprehensive	5.00
A1	5.90	Definition captures the construct	5.00
A2	4.60	BE1	4.10
A3	4.80	BE2	5.00
A4	3.30	BE3	5.20
A5	3.20	BE4	5.00
A6	3.80	BE5	4.90
Functional Congruence		BE6	5.00
Definition is clear	5.20	BE7	3.30
Definition is comprehensive	5.40		
Definition captures the construct	5.60		
FUN1	6.10		
FUN2	4.90		
FUN3	5.00		
FUN4	4.90		

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Table 4.4 Summary of Expert Panel Review Feedback

Construct	Feedback
Product Attribute Congruence	"The items are fine. They are very similar to service quality items." (E5)
	"I don't really understand this factor and its value to congruence. How is this different from the Brand Equity factor." (E6)
	"When I think of product attributes, I think of more than what you've listed. Cost, design, usefulness, etc. Have you considered trying to add more general attributes?...Customer service might work for the event, but maybe not for the sponsor. I've never had any reason to interact with customer service for a brand like Coke or Pepsi - some might, yes, but it might not make sense. Will there be display logic for such sponsors where this might be the case? I just think it could cause confusion on how to answer if they've never interacted with customer service." (E10)
Audience Congruence	"Depending on the population a given study is aiming to represent this factor may not be very applicable as the average fan may have no idea who the sponsors' target segment contains... Furthermore, the terms "tightly knit group" and "are as one" are poorly worded and likely mean different things to different people." (E6)
	"Unified and tightly knit represent value statements. 'are as one' sounds weird" (E7)
	"I'm not sure about the 'unified whole' or 'one'. It seems you are asking about fit - this doesn't necessarily mean they will be the yin to the other's yang - which is what I think of when I see unified whole or one." (E10)
Functional Congruence	"I would argue that there could be another dimension to Functional Sponsorship Congruence to include goods/services the organization would use in the creation/execution of the event." (E6)
Geographic Congruence	"I think you are going about this one in the wrong way. You are trying to specify the 'levels' of locality, instead of measuring the congruence with the geographical identification point of the people. I would try to find a more generic term for region "the place I live' - 'our area' - 'our region' - instead of specifying all the different levels of geography." (E1)
	"The attributes used to describe "local", "regional", "international" have oftentimes 'value' connotations (e.g., even if I am based in Oregon and someone asks me about Nike, I would say global, despite my understanding of the regional connection). Therefore, why not use the definition and turn it into items? E.g., "The sponsor has a strong connection to the region where the event is located." (E7)
Brand Equity Congruence	"Not sure the customer service item fits here. Brand, reputation, image are all overarching constructs that represent the consumer's entire perception of the company. Customer service is one component of what

Construct	Feedback
	company's do. I can have one image of [national chain restaurant] in terms of their overall brand (and it be positive because I love their wings) but also firmly believe they have truly [bad] service." (E9)
	"I think most of these items capture the essence of this definition." (E10)
Personality Congruence	The items are phrased well, but I am unclear about the traits chosen. Is that from a established scale? Is it a one-dimensional scale? You might put yourself in a world of hurt if that is not the case. You might have read my article, so I struggle with choosing preconceived personality traits." (E1)
	"Some of the items don't seem to clearly be dimensions of personality." (E2)
	"A major problem with this concept is that there is way a priori to determine what trait or traits to address. You end up with what you have, a laundry list of traits that may or may not apply to the sponsor or the property." (E3)
	"Previous research has shown that it may not be best practice to use predefined brand personality items for sport organizations." (E6)

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Audience congruence item mean scores ranged from 3.20 to 5.90. The three items with the lowest mean scores (A5 = 3.20, A4 = 3.30, A6 = 3.80) were referred to by experts as awkward (E3) and repetitive (E9). Some discourse used in Dickenson and Souchon's (2018) scale, such as "unified whole" or "one", did not sit well with the expert panel. E10 said, "I'm not sure about the 'unified whole' or 'one'. It seems you are asking about fit - this doesn't necessarily mean they will be the yin to the other's yang - which is what I think of when I see unified whole or one." With only one previous scale measuring audience congruence (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011), the researcher kept all of Dickenson and Souchon's (2018) modified items in an effort to stay conservative in the scale development process. If statistical analysis provided support for expert panel opinions, items were later removed.

Expert panel feedback regarding personality congruence confirmed the concept should be removed from the ESCS scale development process. While all item mean scores were above 4.0, experts agreed that "some of the items don't seem to clearly be dimensions of personality" (E2). Additionally, many researchers pushed back on the personality traits chosen saying "...some [traits] are more universal than others..." (E5), and "previous research has shown that it may not be best practice to use predefined brand personality items for sport organizations" (E6). Echoing Heere (2010), the current study takes the position, with qualitative support, that personality is created and interpreted on an individual basis. Brand personality congruence was removed from further ESCS scale development.

Functional congruence item mean scores ranged from 4.80 to 6.10, supporting face validity for the functional congruence construct items. E7's concern was:

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"the items distinguish attendance vs. spectatorship. I would frame them in a way that applies to both settings, otherwise the factor loading won't work. Maybe even use something like this 'consumers of the event (i.e., attendees or media audience)...'"

Since item discourse was directly reflective of Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) study, no edits were made to item wording at this time.

Geographic congruence item mean scores ranged from 3.70 to 5.70. The lowest mean score (G2 = 3.70) referred to the item "I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be [state]." All other item mean scores fell above 4.0, supporting face validity. E7 provided valuable insight stating:

"the attributes used to describe 'local', 'regional', 'international' have oftentimes value connotations. Therefore, why not use the definition and turn it into items? E.g. 'the sponsor has a strong connection to the region where the event is located.'"

Geographic items, especially the new items regarding event city and state, were reworded to better reflect E7's sentiment of items accurately capturing the construct definition. See Table 4.2 for revised geographic congruence items.

Brand equity congruence item mean scores ranged from 3.80 to 5.00. The only item to fall below a mean score of 4.0 was BE7, "The [sponsor]/[event] provides good customer service to its patrons." Similar to product attribute feedback, experts echoed E9's response:

"Not sure the customer service item fits here. Brand, reputation, image are all overarching constructs that represent the consumer's entire perception of the

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company. Customer service is one component of what company's do. I can have one image of [national restaurant chain] in terms of their overall brand (and it be positive because I love their wings), but also firmly believe they have truly [bad] service."

In an effort to stay conservative in the scale development process, all items were retained for the next scale development process stage. If statistical analysis provided support for expert panel opinions, that item was then removed from the scale development process.

At this point in the scale development process, 46 items reflecting eight external sponsorship congruence constructs were retained from an in-depth literature review, qualitative inquiry via focus groups, and expert panel review (see Table 4.2 for initial 46 items). Product attribute, geographic, and brand equity congruence constructs are intended to be measured for both the sponsor and event. Absolute differences provide a congruence score for each of these constructs. Audience and functional congruence are intended to be measured using construct mean scores. The retained items from the content adequacy check were tested with confidence for further data collection and analyses.

4.5 STAGE 4: FIRST DATA COLLECTION AND ITEM ANALYSIS

Two online companies, MTurk and Qualtrics, were used to collect the first round of ESCS data. Qualtrics was used to design the survey which was distributed using MTurk, a crowdsourcing marketplace that makes it easier for individuals and businesses to outsource jobs. Listwise deletion was used for anyone who failed attention check questions or did not complete the survey in its entirety. A total of 260 responses were used for EFA and item analysis. EFA is the next step in the scale development process to

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determine how many latent factors exist within the data set. All data was examined using

SPSS and R-Studio statistical analysis packages. Before factor extraction can be

conducted, the normality of the data must be tested through item skewness and kurtosis.

Multivariate normality assumes each item is normally distributed for each value (Kline,

2016). If an item's skew or kurtosis score falls below -3.0 (or above 3.0), this indicates

that the item's score is below (or above) the mean and there is a severe issue with that

item (Kline, 2016) (See Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 First EFA Data Collection Descriptive Statistics

Item	*N*	*M*	*SD*	**Skewness**	**Kurtosis**
PA1_SPONSOR	260	5.01	1.24	-0.696	0.667
PA2_SPONSOR	260	4.68	1.43	-0.657	0.139
PA3_SPONSOR	260	5.00	1.26	-0.580	0.611
PA4_SPONSOR	260	4.71	1.41	-0.511	0.061
PA5_SPONSOR	260	4.79	1.39	-0.703	0.351
PA1_EVENT	260	5.09	1.15	-0.487	0.497
PA2_EVENT	260	4.87	1.13	-0.203	0.422
PA3_EVENT	260	5.20	1.10	-0.594	0.973
PA4_EVENT	260	4.85	1.23	-0.401	0.753
PA5_EVENT	260	5.05	1.13	-0.449	0.707
A1	260	4.77	1.21	-0.293	-0.015
A2	260	3.85	1.77	-0.061	-1.021
A3	260	3.91	1.81	-0.051	-1.031
A4	260	3.95	1.69	-0.068	-0.799
A5	260	3.85	1.78	-0.046	-1.032
A6	260	4.13	1.55	-0.220	-0.626
FUN1	260	3.96	1.72	-0.332	-0.861
FUN2	260	4.39	1.45	-0.300	-0.168
FUN3	260	4.31	1.57	-0.303	-0.388
FUN4	260	4.15	1.61	-0.246	-0.606
G1_SPONSOR	260	3.90	1.91	-0.089	-1.161
G2_SPONSOR	260	3.87	1.89	-0.150	-1.206
G3_SPONSOR	260	4.21	1.84	-0.379	-0.958
G4_SPONSOR	260	3.58	1.77	0.062	-1.040
G5_SPONSOR	260	5.91	0.99	-1.122	2.444
G6_SPONSOR	260	4.27	1.81	-0.170	-1.064
G1_EVENT	260	5.51	1.37	-0.987	0.905
G2_EVENT	260	5.83	1.30	-1.443	2.542

Item	*N*	*M*	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
G3_EVENT	260	5.13	1.42	-0.867	0.650
G4_EVENT	260	3.30	2.19	0.320	-1.428
G5_EVENT	260	4.81	1.57	-0.733	-0.010
G6_EVENT	260	3.60	2.00	-0.176	-1.292
BE1_SPONSOR	260	4.99	1.31	-0.596	0.307
BE2_SPONSOR	260	4.89	1.40	-0.798	0.374
BE3_SPONSOR	260	5.20	1.37	-1.146	1.561
BE4_SPONSOR	260	4.84	1.44	-0.812	0.342
BE5_SPONSOR	260	6.14	1.00	-1.557	3.688
BE6_SPONSOR	260	4.94	1.28	-0.796	0.853
BE7_SPONSOR	260	4.74	1.42	-0.677	0.332
BE1_EVENT	260	4.83	1.32	-0.332	0.269
BE2_EVENT	260	5.19	1.14	-0.600	0.528
BE3_EVENT	260	5.41	1.05	-0.545	0.599
BE4_EVENT	260	5.35	1.01	-0.172	-0.551
BE5_EVENT	260	5.77	1.12	-1.335	2.445
BE6_EVENT	260	4.99	1.28	-0.493	0.098
BE7_EVENT	260	4.97	1.16	-0.339	0.409

Table 4.5 demonstrates that all items do not exceed Kline's (2016) suggested cut-off points for normality. Since data are normal, it is appropriate to use maximum likelihood (ML) as the factor extraction method. ML is the most popular estimation technique because it allows for a wide range of model fit indices, and permits statistical significance testing of factor loadings and correlations among factors (Costello & Osborne, 2005). A rotation was also used to identify and interpret the best possible structure for the ESCS. Oblique rotations allow for item correlations whereas orthogonal rotation does not. Due to the nature of the ESCS, an oblique rotation, oblimin, was chosen to simplify the data into latent factors. Oblimin rotation allows for the latent factors to not be orthogonal (Kline, 2016). It is important to note that choosing an oblique rotation method does not "force" the factors to covary, rather they are "allowed" to if it suits data (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Kline, 2016).

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Barlett's Test of Sphericity, two additional preliminary tests, were also conducted in SPSS to ensure the appropriateness of the data. The KMO statistic value was 0.929 which was above the commonly recommended cut-off point of 0.60 (Kaiser & Rice, 1974). The Barlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant (X^2 (1035) = 10015.693, p = 0.00). Both additional preliminary multivariate normality tests ensure there was an adequate number of significant correlations among items (Hair et al., 2010).

4.5.1 DETERMINING NUMBER OF FACTORS

The next step in the scale development process was to determine how many factors to retain. Costello and Osbourne (2005), DeVellis (2012), Kaiser (1960), and Kline (2016) all suggest retaining factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Eigenvalues refer to the amount of explained variance within the items of a particular factor (Kline, 2016). Table 4.6 shows factor eigenvalues and the percentage of variance explained by the factor. Results show the first six factors had eigenvalues greater than 1 (Factor 1 = 16.521; Factor 2 = 5.144; Factor 3 = 4.619; Factor 4 = 1.981; Factor 5 = 1.479; Factor 6 = 1.376). Factor 7 also had a high eigenvalue of 0.992.

Table 4.6 Factor Eigenvalues and Variance Explained

Factor	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	**16.521**	35.915	35.915
2	**5.144**	11.182	47.097
3	**4.619**	10.042	57.139
4	**1.981**	4.307	61.446
5	**1.479**	3.216	64.662
6	**1.376**	2.990	67.652
7	0.992	2.156	69.809
8	0.947	2.058	71.867
9	0.826	1.796	73.663
10	0.785	1.706	75.369
11	0.716	1.557	76.926

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Factor	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %
12	0.697	1.514	78.440
13	0.661	1.436	79.876
14	0.615	1.338	81.213
15	0.582	1.266	82.480

Additionally, a scree plot and Velicer's minimum average partial (MAP) criteria, additional factor retention analyses, were conducted in R-Studio to support the eigenvalue criterion results (Kline, 2016; Velicer & Jackson, 1990). The scree test is a graphical representation of eigenvalues and examines the natural bend, or break point, in the data where the curve flattens out (Costello & Osborne, 2005). The scree plot (See Figure 4.1) shows a breaking point around the fifth or sixth factor and all factors following create a relatively straight line. Velicer's MAP criteria examines a series of matrices of partial correlations to determine the appropriate number of factors to retain (Velicer & Jackson, 1990). The results of Velicer's MAP test suggests a minimum of six factors and maximum of eight factors. The eigenvalue, scree, and Velicer's MAP test results suggest the retention of either five, six, or seven factors.
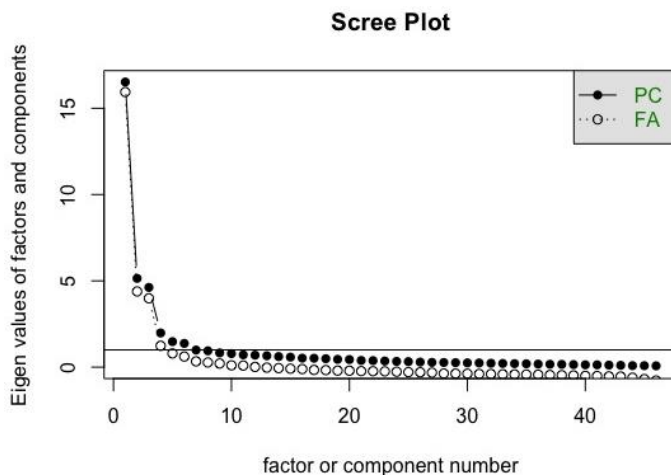
Figure 4.1 First Data Collection EFA Scree Plot

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Prior scale development studies recommend examining multiple factor analyses until the most parsimonious solution is consistent with theoretical support (Kline, 2016). Therefore, five, six, and seven factor solutions were examined to determine the best possible solution that consisted of item-to-factor loadings above 0.50, at least two items loading per factor, and no cross-loadings (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Kline, 2016). The five factor solution was vague and did not have enough theoretical support to justify factors. The seven factor solution had two factors with only one item per factor, questioning the reliability of the factor. The six factor solution was considered optimal demonstrating the most parsimonious structure. The following section discusses results of the six-factor EFA using a ML extraction method with an oblimin rotation.

4.5.2 RESULTS AND REVISIONS FOR THE SIX-FACTOR SOLUTION

Results of the six-factor EFA indicate the solution's total variance explained equals 47.272% and the per factor variance explained for Factor 1 is 12.945%; Factor 2 is 4.014%; Factor 3 is 11.158%; Factor 4 is 4.280%; Factor 5 is 9.357%; and Factor 6 is 5.518%.

Item to factor loadings represent the level of correlation between the item and its relevant factor, and it is suggested to retain items loading above 0.50 (Kline, 2016). Each of the six factors retained through the EFA process was defined by at least two items and at most eleven items. In addition, eight items loaded below 0.50, suggesting these might be unsuitable to retain within the ESCS. Standardized loading values are reported in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Six Factor EFA Standardized Item Loadings for 46 Items

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
BE4_SPONSOR	**0.89**	-0.08	0.04	0.06	-0.06	-0.04
BE2_SPONSOR	**0.86**	-0.07	-0.02	0.12	0.00	0.06
PA5_SPONSOR	**0.86**	0.00	0.07	-0.03	0.00	0.02
PA2_SPONSOR	**0.85**	0.11	-0.05	0.00	-0.04	0.00
BE7_SPONSOR	**0.85**	0.05	0.06	-0.01	-0.03	-0.06
BE3_SPONSOR	**0.83**	0.03	-0.03	0.04	-0.03	-0.11
PA1_SPONSOR	**0.82**	-0.02	0.00	-0.03	0.09	0.05
PA4_SPONSOR	**0.76**	0.12	0.00	-0.03	0.03	0.07
PA3_SPONSOR	**0.66**	0.09	0.08	-0.08	0.07	-0.07
BE1_SPONSOR	**0.61**	0.07	0.11	0.01	0.05	0.12
BE6_SPONSOR	**0.56**	-0.01	-0.02	0.09	0.37	0.12
FUN4	0.08	**0.83**	0.02	-0.06	0.07	-0.01
A4	0.01	**0.83**	0.05	0.04	-0.05	0.06
FUN3	0.04	**0.83**	0.03	-0.07	0.09	-0.07
A6	0.08	**0.79**	0.01	0.02	-0.04	0.02
A3	-0.02	**0.79**	0.03	0.08	-0.10	0.02
FUN2	0.07	**0.79**	-0.02	0.02	0.11	-0.09
A5	0.03	**0.76**	0.02	0.11	-0.12	0.02
A2	0.01	**0.76**	0.04	0.09	-0.09	-0.03
FUN1	0.01	**0.65**	0.06	0.12	-0.05	0.05
G6_SPONSOR	0.03	0.38	-0.05	0.23	0.10	0.29
A1	0.14	0.32	0.11	0.05	0.30	0.08
PA5_EVENT	0.08	0.02	**0.86**	-0.10	-0.03	0.06
BE3_EVENT	0.04	0.05	**0.83**	-0.09	-0.07	-0.15
BE4_EVENT	0.08	-0.12	**0.79**	0.14	-0.08	-0.11
PA3_EVENT	0.00	-0.01	**0.73**	-0.09	0.08	0.06
BE7_EVENT	0.03	0.11	**0.69**	0.02	0.00	-0.03
BE2_EVENT	0.07	-0.01	**0.68**	0.11	0.07	-0.02
PA2_EVENT	-0.04	0.26	**0.61**	-0.02	0.06	0.10
PA4_EVENT	-0.08	0.26	**0.55**	0.07	0.05	0.09
PA1_EVENT	0.10	-0.02	**0.53**	0.11	0.10	0.06
BE6_EVENT	-0.13	0.21	0.49	0.06	0.31	0.14
BE1_EVENT	0.01	0.27	0.37	0.16	0.13	0.18
G3_SPONSOR	0.12	0.05	-0.02	**0.80**	-0.03	-0.07
G1_SPONSOR	0.08	0.17	0.02	**0.72**	-0.06	0.01
G2_SPONSOR	0.12	0.12	0.03	**0.70**	-0.18	-0.04
G4_SPONSOR	0.09	0.31	-0.13	**0.54**	-0.05	0.09
G3_EVENT	-0.06	-0.01	0.21	0.42	0.13	-0.25
G4_EVENT	0.02	0.32	0.10	0.32	-0.15	0.28
BE5_SPONSOR	0.06	-0.16	-0.02	-0.07	**0.77**	-0.09
G5_SPONSOR	0.09	0.04	-0.06	-0.24	**0.75**	-0.08
BE5_EVENT	-0.03	-0.03	0.23	0.09	**0.66**	-0.01

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	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
G1_EVENT	-0.05	0.03	0.09	0.33	0.28	**-0.55**
G2_EVENT	-0.09	0.00	0.22	0.19	0.27	**-0.55**
G5_EVENT	0.00	-0.11	0.25	0.31	0.26	0.44
G6_EVENT	0.02	0.29	0.17	0.32	-0.11	0.35

Brand equity and product attribute items loaded on the same factor for both the sponsor and event. The highest brand equity sponsor item-to-factor being 0.89 (BE4_SPONSOR) and the lowest being 0.56 (BE6_SPONSOR). For the event dimension, the highest item-to-factor loading was 0.86 (PA5_EVENT) and the lowest was 0.53 (PA1_EVENT). This supports E6's testimony of the similarity between the two constructs. There is also theoretical support that product attributes contribute to a brand's commercial value, or brand equity (Roy & Cornwell, 2003). Therefore, with theoretical and qualitative support, the researcher folded the two concepts (product attribute and brand equity) into one brand equity construct. It should also be noted that there is a brand equity construct for the sponsor and the event, resulting in two separate brand equity factors.

Upon further examination of the brand equity item-to-factor loadings, Factor 1 (sponsor brand equity), and Factor 3 (event brand equity) should theoretically contain the same items. However, 11 items loaded on the sponsor brand equity factor and only nine items loaded on the event brand equity factor. The extra two items, BE1 and BE6, were then analyzed for suitability of retention. BE1_SPONSOR's loading value was 0.61 while BE1_EVENT's loading factor was 0.37, falling well below the recommended cut-off point of 0.50. BE1 was removed from the ESCS based on these results. BE6_SPONSOR's loading factor was 0.56 and BE6_EVENT's loading factor was 0.49. According to Kline (2016), BE6_EVENT falls just below the recommended item-to-

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factor cut-off point. However, there are researchers that say the recommended cut off point can fall to 0.40 (Costello & Osborne, 2005) and still be statistically significant. Ultimately, it is up to the researcher to determine the appropriateness of the item (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Kline, 2016). In an effort to stay conservative and allow the scale development process to parse out inappropriate items, BE6 was retained even though BE6_EVENT's item loading score was 0.01 below the recommended cut-off point. In summary, both the sponsor brand equity congruence and event brand equity congruence consisted of 10 matching items.

Examining the geographic item-to-factor loadings, Factor 4 (sponsor geographic congruence) and Factor 6 (event geographic congruence) should theoretically contain the same items. However, four items loaded on sponsor geographic congruence and two loaded on event geographic congruence. The extra two items, G4 and G3, were then analyzed for suitability of retention. While both G4_SPONSOR (0.54) and G3_SPONSOR's (0.80) loading values are above 0.50, G4_EVENT (0.32) and G3_EVENT's (0.42) loading values were below the cutoff point. Both items were created from focus group discussions and do not have theoretical support to retain the items. Therefore, both items were deleted from the ESCS scale development process.

Factor 5, containing three items, also proposed an additional analysis due to BE5_SPONSOR and BE5_EVENT loading on the same factor (rather than two separate factors), with the addition of G5_SPONSOR. Even though the loading factors for BE5_SPONSOR (0.77) and BE5_EVENT (0.66) are above the recommended cut-off point, there is no theoretical support as to why the items would load on the same factor. Both items refer to a brand's reputation, or equity, as outlined by Roy and Cornwell

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(2003). BE5_SPONSOR's item to factor loading for the sponsor brand equity was 0.06 and BE5_EVENT's item-to-factor loading for the event brand equity factor was 0.23. In addition, since the brand equity constructs already consist of 10 items, the researcher chose to delete BE5 rather than add BE5_SPONSOR and BE5_EVENT back into their respective factors. G5_SPONSOR's (0.75) counter-item, G5_EVENT, loads below the 0.50 cut-off point at 0.31. Therefore, G5 was removed from the ESCS scale development process. After careful consideration of EFA results, the geographic congruence construct consisted of four items at this point in the scale development process; two items measuring sponsor geographic congruence and two items measuring event geographic congruence.

According to Kline (2016), revision or removal of an item may be required if a factor has too few items, an item has no significant loadings, or an item is cross-loading on multiple factors. Problematic items loading below 0.50 were removed from the scale development process. The remaining item loading below 0.50 not yet discussed, A1 (0.32) was also removed from the ESCS scale development process due to low item-to-factor loading score.

Finally, Factor 2, showed audience and functional congruence items loading on the same factor with the highest loading value being 0.83 (FUN4) and the lowest being 0.65 (FUN1). There is no theoretical support to justify why these two constructs would produce the same latent factor. Functional congruence, the use of a sponsor's product either directly or indirectly (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011), does not equate to audience congruence, or the similarity between the event's audience and the sponsor's target segment (Lickel et al., 2000; Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). Additionally, all items were

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derived from previous literature (Dickenson & Souchon, 2018; Olson & Thjømøe, 2011) with slight discourse modification to better reflect sport sponsors and events. Therefore, item wording was reanalyzed to determine why these two separate constructs were loading on the same factor. Upon further examination, all functional and audience congruence items contained the term "audience" which may cause confusion among participants. The functional congruence construct refers to either event participants and/or event customers using the sponsor's product. The term "audience" may be confusing as the use of sponsor products is on an individual level, not a holistic level like "audience" may suggest. The researcher made the decision to replace the term "audience" with "people" within functional congruence construct items to better reflect the individual use of a sponsor's product. For example, FUN4 was reworded from "Audience members consume [sponsor]'s products at [event]" to "People consume [sponsor]'s products at [event]."

An additional EFA was needed at this point in the scale development process to determine if the deletion of items and the slight rewording of the functional congruence items was appropriate.

4.5.3 SECOND EFA DATA COLLECTION AND ITEM ANALYSIS

Two online survey companies, MTurk and Qualtrics, were used to collect the second round of EFA data. Qualtrics was used to design the survey which was distributed using MTurk. The same NFL team and XBank that were used in the first EFA data collection were used in the second round of EFA data collection. Listwise deletion was used for anyone who failed attention check questions or did not complete the survey in its entirety. A total of 165 responses were used for EFA and item analysis, satisfying Kline's

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(2016) 5:1 item-to-factor ratio requirement. Item skewness and kurtosis show the data is normal (See Table 4.8). The KMO statistic value was 0.914 which was above the commonly recommended cut-off point of 0.60 (Kaiser & Rice, 1974). The Barlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant (X^2 (528) = 5451.107, p = 0.00). Both additional preliminary multivariate normality tests ensure there was an adequate number of significant correlations among items (Heir et al., 2010). Therefore, it was appropriate to use ML extraction method with oblimin rotation for the second EFA data analysis.

Table 4.8 Second EFA Data Collection Descriptive Statistics

Item	*N*	*M*	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
PA1_SPONSOR	165	5.03	1.41	-0.828	0.651
PA2_SPONSOR	165	4.73	1.60	-0.695	0.120
PA3_SPONSOR	165	4.99	1.44	-0.810	0.607
PA4_SPONSOR	165	4.65	1.58	-0.684	0.139
PA5_SPONSOR	165	4.83	1.62	-0.772	0.263
PA1_EVENT	165	5.05	1.21	-0.135	-0.310
PA2_EVENT	165	4.99	1.20	-0.010	-0.225
PA3_EVENT	165	5.28	1.08	-0.267	-0.198
PA4_EVENT	165	4.92	1.23	0.011	-0.056
PA5_EVENT	165	5.08	1.25	-0.207	-0.065
A2	165	3.41	1.77	0.152	-1.088
A3	165	3.89	1.57	-0.101	-0.580
A4	165	3.57	1.73	0.049	-1.068
A5	165	3.41	1.83	0.085	-1.262
A6	165	3.57	1.81	0.142	-1.073
FUN1	165	3.96	1.62	-0.305	-0.653
FUN2	165	3.96	1.70	-0.315	-0.775
FUN3	165	4.44	1.63	-0.512	-0.447
FUN4	165	3.62	1.90	-0.058	-1.317
G1_SPONSOR	165	3.79	1.98	-0.071	-1.255
G2_SPONSOR	165	3.68	2.04	-0.021	-1.340
G1_EVENT	165	5.57	1.30	-0.950	0.929
G2_EVENT	165	5.92	1.19	-1.520	3.240
BE2_SPONSOR	165	4.78	1.63	-0.711	0.014
BE3_SPONSOR	165	5.13	1.57	-1.034	0.709
BE4_SPONSOR	165	4.87	1.62	-0.925	0.362
BE6_SPONSOR	165	4.98	1.46	-0.702	0.350
BE7_SPONSOR	165	4.76	1.62	-0.594	-0.050

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Item	N	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
BE2_EVENT	165	5.32	1.17	-0.429	0.185
BE3_EVENT	165	5.44	1.17	-0.599	0.091
BE4_EVENT	165	5.45	1.08	-0.215	-0.776
BE6_EVENT	165	4.99	1.32	-0.629	0.598
BE7_EVENT	165	5.06	1.11	0.124	-0.594

Eigenvalue scores, listed in Table 4.9, suggest that five factors should be retained. The Velicer's MAP and scree test (See Figure 4.2) also show that five factors should be retained. Therefore, a five and six factor analysis was run to determine the most parsimonious model. After careful examination, the five factor model was deemed the most appropriate model with no less than two items loading per factor, and no more than 10 items loading per factor.

Table 4.9 Factor Eigenvalues and Variance Explained: 2nd EFA Data Collection

Factor	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	**12.955**	39.258	39.258
2	**4.876**	14.776	54.034
3	**4.041**	12.245	66.279
4	**1.613**	4.887	71.166
5	**1.164**	3.528	74.693
6	0.956	2.897	77.591
7	0.863	2.614	80.205
8	0.691	2.093	82.297
9	0.552	1.672	83.969
10	0.527	1.598	85.567
11	0.474	1.438	87.005
12	0.425	1.288	88.293
13	0.359	1.087	89.380
14	0.337	1.022	90.403
15	0.333	1.008	91.411

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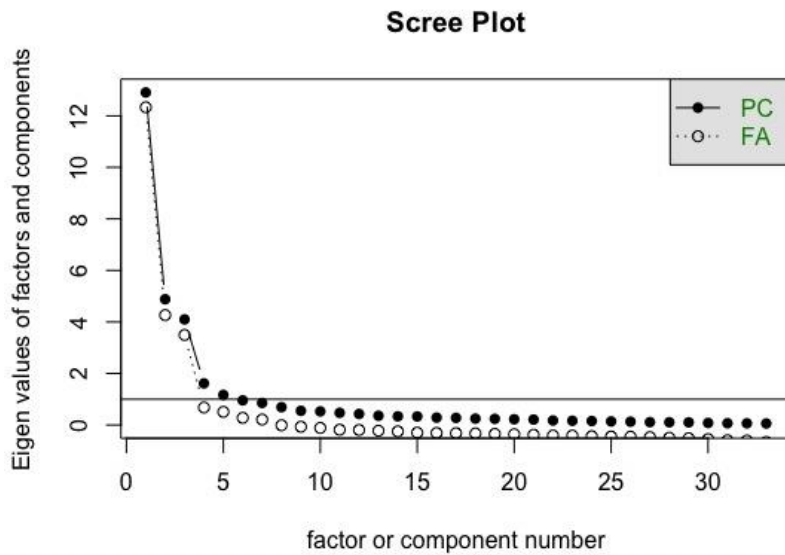
Scree Plot

Figure 4.2 Second Data Collection EFA Scree Plot

4.5.3.1 RESULTS OF FIVE-FACTOR SOLUTION

Results of the five-factor EFA indicate the solution's total variance explained

equals 33.55% and the per factor variance explained for Factor 1 is 9.885%; Factor 2 is

8.432%; Factor 3 is 7.939%; Factor 4 is 1.824%; and Factor 5 is 5.470%.

Standardized item-to-factor loadings are reported in Table 4.10. All items loaded

above the 0.50 cut-off point onto one of the five factors. Initial Cronbach alpha (α)

reliability tests were also conducted for each factor during the second EFA data analysis.

Table 4.10 Five Factor EFA Standardized Item Loadings for 33 Items

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
PA5_SPONSOR	**0.96**	-0.04	0.04	-0.07	-0.04
BE4_SPONSOR	**0.93**	-0.02	-0.01	-0.04	0.00
BE3_SPONSOR	**0.91**	-0.01	-0.04	0.08	0.05
BE2_SPONSOR	**0.90**	-0.02	0.01	0.00	0.04
PA2_SPONSOR	**0.90**	0.04	0.05	-0.07	-0.06
BE7_SPONSOR	**0.90**	0.04	-0.02	0.01	0.03
PA4_SPONSOR	**0.89**	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.00
PA3_SPONSOR	**0.75**	0.05	-0.04	0.12	-0.03
PA1_SPONSOR	**0.73**	-0.01	0.05	0.15	0.07

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	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
BE6_SPONSOR	**0.68**	0.06	-0.07	-0.07	-0.03
PA5_EVENT	0.06	**0.86**	0.00	0.01	0.03
BE2_EVENT	0.01	**0.85**	-0.01	-0.04	0.00
BE3_EVENT	0.03	**0.84**	-0.16	0.08	0.02
PA2_EVENT	-0.05	**0.82**	0.12	-0.08	-0.03
BE7_EVENT	-0.04	**0.81**	0.16	-0.06	-0.06
PA3_EVENT	-0.01	**0.80**	-0.14	0.12	0.08
BE4_EVENT	0.12	**0.79**	-0.04	-0.07	0.04
PA4_EVENT	-0.05	**0.74**	0.14	0.05	-0.01
PA1_EVENT	-0.03	**0.71**	0.04	0.09	0.02
BE6_EVENT	0.11	**0.60**	0.07	-0.08	-0.08
G2_SPONSOR	0.03	-0.11	**0.90**	-0.15	0.14
A6	-0.01	0.04	**0.86**	0.10	0.02
A4	-0.03	0.09	**0.81**	0.13	-0.07
A2	0.04	0.06	**0.78**	0.14	-0.04
G1_SPONSOR	0.04	0.04	**0.76**	-0.12	0.11
A5	0.05	0.07	**0.71**	0.16	-0.12
A3	0.10	0.08	**0.69**	0.12	-0.11
FUN4	0.05	-0.02	**0.53**	0.30	-0.13
FUN2	0.02	0.01	0.17	**0.77**	-0.01
FUN3	0.04	0.09	0.05	**0.70**	0.05
FUN1	0.20	0.00	0.23	**0.53**	0.07
G1_EVENT	0.09	-0.02	0.05	0.06	**0.82**
G2_EVENT	-0.11	0.10	-0.01	-0.03	**0.72**

Factor 1 ($\alpha = 0.930$) represents sponsor brand equity congruence with the highest item loading (PA5_SPONSOR) at 0.96 and the lowest (BE6_SPONSOR) at 0.68. Factor 2 ($\alpha = 0.941$) represents event brand equity congruence with the highest item loading (PA5_EVENT) at 0.86 and the lowest (BE6_EVENT) at 0.60. Factor 4 ($\alpha = 0.710$) represents functional congruence with the highest item loading (FUN2) at 0.79 and the lowest (FUN1) at 0.53. Factor 5 ($\alpha = 0.746$) represents event geographic congruence with the highest item loading (G1_EVENT) at 0.82 and the lowest (G2_EVENT) at 0.72.

Results of the second round of EFA data collection show that Factor 3 ($\alpha = 0.916$) contains all audience congruence items, as well as G2_SPONSOR (0.90) and

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G1_SPONSOR (0.76). Theoretically, there is no support for geographic and audience congruence items to load on the same factor. However, the second round of EFA results shows improvement from the first round that included six audience and four functional congruence items loading on the same factor. While G1_SPONSOR and G2_SPONSOR loaded on Factor 3, they are not loading on the event geographic factor (Factor 5) suggesting that they are indeed separate factors. Therefore, the researcher made the decision to keep G1 and G2 within the ESCS scale development process.

There was enough empirical evidence from the second EFA data collection to continue onto the next stage in the scale development process. In the next stage, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) examined model fit indices and parsed out items that should be revised or removed.

4.6 STAGE 5: SECOND DATA COLLECTION AND ITEM ANALYSIS

Stage 4 of the scale development process revealed the number of latent factors of the ESCS presenting evidence of a six-factor solution. A CFA was then performed in R-Studio for a more rigorous test of the 33 ESCS items. Again, it is important to note that brand equity and geographic congruence items will each present as two separate factors in the scale development process. The 33 items are comprised of 10 sponsor brand equity items, 10 event brand equity items, two sponsor geographic items, two event geographic items, five audience items, and four functional congruence items.

4.6.1 DETERMINATION OF MODEL ESTIMATOR

Two online survey companies, MTurk and Qualtrics, were used for the second data collection stage of ESCS scale development. Qualtrics was used to design the survey which was distributed using MTurk. Listwise deletion was used for anyone who failed

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attention check questions or did not complete the survey in its entirety. A total of 302

responses were used for CFA and item analysis. Multivariate normality was assessed by

examining item skewness and kurtosis (See Table 4.11). The data was normal falling

within Kline's (2016) skewness and kurtosis cut-off points (below -3 or above 3).

Therefore, it was appropriate to use the ML estimator to conduct a CFA. Other CFA

assumptions, such as a priori model specification and a random sampling were assessed

and taken care during the EFA (priori of five factors) and methodology stages.

Table 4.11 CFA Descriptive Statistics

Item	*N*	*M*	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
PA1_SPONSOR	302	5.41	1.32	-0.946	1.167
PA2_SPONSOR	302	4.92	1.22	-0.241	0.351
PA3_SPONSOR	302	5.30	1.38	-0.946	0.941
PA4_SPONSOR	302	5.51	1.33	-1.224	1.715
PA5_SPONSOR	302	4.88	1.28	-0.390	0.338
PA1_EVENT	302	5.06	1.32	-0.486	0.211
PA2_EVENT	302	4.80	1.28	-0.189	0.465
PA3_EVENT	302	5.10	1.35	-0.627	0.147
PA4_EVENT	302	5.19	1.41	-0.663	0.185
PA5_EVENT	302	4.65	1.20	-0.152	0.730
A2	302	3.59	1.86	0.121	-1.091
A3	302	3.50	1.85	0.095	-1.206
A4	302	3.72	1.76	-0.048	-1.065
A5	302	3.46	1.87	0.188	-1.168
A6	302	3.64	1.79	0.049	-1.173
FUN1	302	3.60	1.88	0.063	-1.159
FUN2	302	3.22	1.85	0.273	-1.202
FUN3	302	3.27	1.90	0.291	-1.173
FUN4	302	3.27	2.01	0.327	-1.242
G1_SPONSOR	302	4.41	1.36	-0.219	0.530
G2_SPONSOR	302	4.50	1.38	-0.194	0.446
G1_EVENT	302	5.34	1.51	-0.731	-0.139
G2_EVENT	302	5.49	1.45	-0.889	0.404
BE2_SPONSOR	302	5.44	1.34	-1.109	1.466
BE3_SPONSOR	302	5.55	1.32	-1.465	2.757
BE4_SPONSOR	302	5.48	1.35	-1.307	1.999
BE6_SPONSOR	302	5.30	1.33	-1.056	1.503
BE7_SPONSOR	302	4.97	1.25	-0.390	0.394

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Item	N	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
BE2_EVENT	302	4.96	1.61	-0.705	-0.226
BE3_EVENT	302	5.01	1.52	-0.698	-0.098
BE4_EVENT	302	4.91	1.62	-0.594	-0.523
BE6_EVENT	302	5.56	1.35	-1.014	0.865
BE7_EVENT	302	4.74	1.33	-0.183	-0.150

4.6.2 RESULTS OF SIX FACTOR MODEL: GLOBAL FIT INDICIES

The objective of a CFA is to test whether a construct is consistent with the theoretical understanding of that construct, and if the data fits the hypothesized model outlined in stage one (Kline, 2016). CFAs are often used to refine measurement instruments, assess construct validity, identify method effects, and evaluate factor invariance across time and groups (Jackson et al., 2009). To assess model fit, the chi-square, TLI, CLI, RMSEA, and SRMR statistics were evaluated. Table 4.12 illustrates the results of the model fit.

Table 4.12 Global Fit Indices of Five Factor Model from Second Data Collection

Index	Value	Indication of Fit
Chi-Square	1527.652 (df = 480; p = 0.000)	Weak
TLI	0.866	Moderate
CFI	0.878	Moderate
RMSEA	0.85 (90% CI: 0.08; 0.09)	Weak
SRMR	0.091	Weak

The accept-support chi-square test was rejected showing the model does not hold. Some researchers argue that the chi-square test can be too stringent and should not be included in scale development at all (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Others believe an insignificant chi-square value does not necessarily mean poor fit, but that the model could be considered acceptable if the chi-square statistic is lower than three times the degrees of freedom (Schermellah-Engel et al., 2003). The ESCS CFA chi-square value (1527.652) is

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not lower than three times the degrees of freedom statistic (df = 480) and the model fit is weak. The chi-square test is only one method of global fit and it does not conclude that the model is rejected entirely. TLI and CLI were also inspected for model fit, however both fall below the acceptable cut-off points outlined by Kline (2016). The RMSEA value also indicates poor fit with a significant value of 0.085 and a confidence interval of 0.08 to 0.09. The last global fit statistic, SRMR, also indicates poor fit (0.91).

4.6.3 REVISIONS OF SIX FACTOR MODEL

Global indices must be addressed before evaluating a measurement instrument at the local fit level. Since the ESCS showed poor fit, items were revaluated for removal. SPSS output regarding construct reliability was used to assess item-to-factor loadings (See Table 4.13). Scale development researchers suggest item-to-factor loadings that fall below 0.50 are unacceptable and should be removed, those that fall between 0.50 and 0.70 are considered acceptable, and those above 0.70 are considered ideal. Therefore, in an effort to be statistically conservative, item-to-factor loadings that fell below 0.70 were removed from the ESCS including PA2, PA5, BE6, and BE7. SPSS results revealed both sponsor and event BE6 fell below 0.70 (0.592 and 0.436 respectively). Both PA2_SPONSOR and PA5_SPONSOR fell below 0.70 (0.673 and 0.632 respectively) therefore their counterparts (PA2_EVENT and PA5_EVENT) were also removed. BE7_SPONSOR (0.652) and BE7_EVENT (0.658) both failed to meet cut-off requirements and were removed from the scale development process. The removal of these items also supports expert panel feedback regarding customer service: "customer service might work for the event, but maybe not for the sponsor. I've never had any reason to interact with customer service for a brand like [soft drink company] some

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might, yes, but it might not make sense" (E10). With the removal of these items, sponsor brand equity congruence is measured by six items and event brand equity congruence is measured by six items.

A2 (0.911) and A3 (0.924) were also removed from the scale development process at this time due to expert panel feedback regarding wording. These two specific items were commented on by multiple experts (E6, E7, E8, E10) stating wording was "awkward" and "weird." With the removal of these items, audience congruence is measured by three items.

4.6.4 RESULTS OF SECOND SIX FACTOR MODEL: GLOBAL FIT INDICIES

Table 4.14 illustrates the new global fit indices of the ESCS with the removal of four brand equity and two audience congruence items. The chi-square test shows acceptable fit with the degrees of freedom being three times the chi-square statistic. TLI and CFI also show acceptable fit with values at or above 0.95 and 0.90 respectively. The RMSEA value is significant at 0.63 with a confidence interval of 0.054 to 0.071. The final global fit index, SRMR, is under 0.05 indicating good model fit. All global fit indices are inside accepted cut-off points, and no index indicates a poor fit of the model providing support for the ESCS six factor model.

4.6.5 RESULTS OF SIX FACTOR MODEL: LOCAL FIT INDICIES

Parameter estimates and R-squared values were analyzed to evaluate local model fit of the ESCS. Parameter estimate evaluation criteria was developed from Finney and DiStefano (2006) guidelines that state loadings should be statistically significant, standardized item loadings are at least 0.50, and most of the standard errors are low.

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Table 4.13 Second Data Collection Item to Factor Loadings for 33 items

	Brand Equity (Sponsor)	Brand Equity (Event)	Geographic (Sponsor)	Geographic (Event)	Functional	Audience
PA1_SPONSOR	0.804					
PA2_SPONSOR	0.673					
PA3_SPONSOR	0.782					
PA4_SPONSOR	0.835					
PA5_SPONSOR	0.632					
BE2_SPONSOR	0.817					
BE3_SPONSOR	0.871					
BE4_SPONSOR	0.867					
BE6_SPONSOR	0.592					
BE7_SPONSOR	0.652					
PA1_EVENT		0.803				
PA2_EVENT		0.783				
PA3_EVENT		0.750				
PA4_EVENT		0.735				
PA5_EVENT		0.728				
BE2_EVENT		0.804				
BE3_EVENT		0.768				
BE4_EVENT		0.736				
BE6_EVENT		0.436				
BE7_EVENT		0.658				
G1_SPONSOR			0.899			
G2_SPONSOR			0.762			
G1_EVENT				0.781		
G2_EVENT				0.728		
FUN1					0.859	

	Brand Equity (Sponsor)	Brand Equity (Event)	Geographic (Sponsor)	Geographic (Event)	Functional	Audience
FUN2					0.917	
FUN3					0.949	
FUN4					0.907	
A2						0.911
A3						0.924
A4						0.865
A5						0.925
A6						0.915

Table 4.14 Second CFA Data Collection Global Fit Indices

Index	Value	Indication of Fit
Chi-Square	421.104 (*df* = 193; *p* = 0.000	Acceptable
TLI	0.949	Acceptable
CFI	0.957	Acceptable
RMSEA	0.063 (90% CI: 0.054; 0.071)	Acceptable
SRMR	0.047	Acceptable

R-squared values were also evaluated to explain the amount of variance the item shares with the factor. R-squared values should be reasonably high (Finney & DiStefano, 2006).

Table 4.15 illustrates parameter estimates with loading values above 0.70 and possess significant, low standard errors. Table 4.16 illustrates the R-squared values, or the amount of variance shared between item and factor. While there is no absolute cut-off to determine the appropriate value, Finney and DiStefano (2006) recommend an acceptable R-square value of 0.75 being substantial, 0.50 being moderate, and 0.25 being weak. The lowest r-squared value of PA3_EVENT is 0.511 and the highest R-squared value of FUN3 is 0.904. Therefore all 23 ESCS items possess acceptable local model fit.

4.7 STAGE 6: RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY ASSESSMENT

An instrument is said to be reliable if it consistently produces similar results under similar conditions. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine scale reliability. Face and content validity were already established at this point from a thorough literature review and the first four stages in the scale development process. The last two validity factors, convergent and discriminant, were then examined to ensure the measure is consistent and accurate.

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Table 4.15 Second Data Collection Item to Factor Loadings for 23 items

	Brand Equity (Sponsor)	Brand Equity (Event)	Geographic (Sponsor)	Geographic (Event)	Functional	Audience
PA1_SPONSOR	0.817					
PA3_SPONSOR	0.814					
PA4_SPONSOR	0.859					
BE2_SPONSOR	0.852					
BE3_SPONSOR	0.857					
BE4_SPONSOR	0.879					
PA1_EVENT		0.724				
PA3_EVENT		0.695				
PA4_EVENT		0.715				
BE2_EVENT		0.839				
BE3_EVENT		0.868				
BE4_EVENT		0.878				
G1_SPONSOR			0.892			
G2_SPONSOR			0.781			
G1_EVENT				0.716		
G2_EVENT				0.805		
FUN1					0.863	
FUN2					0.922	
FUN3					0.954	
FUN4					0.894	
A4						0.875
A5						0.925
A6						0.917

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Table 4.16 R-squared Values of 23 Items for Six Factor Model

Item	R-Square
PA1_SPONSOR	0.653
PA3_SPONSOR	0.615
PA4_SPONSOR	0.716
BE2_SPONSOR	0.662
BE3_SPONSOR	0.783
BE4_SPONSOR	0.758
PA1_EVENT	0.557
PA3_EVENT	0.511
PA4_EVENT	0.689
BE2_EVENT	0.534
BE3_EVENT	0.660
BE4_EVENT	0.663
G1_SPONSOR	0.824
G2_SPONSOR	0.568
G1_EVENT	0.528
G2_EVENT	0.612
FUN1	0.737
FUN2	0.841
FUN3	0.904
FUN4	0.821
A4	0.768
A5	0.862
A6	0.846

Convergent validity was established through AVE scores, or the amount of variance captured by a construct in relation to the amount of variance due to measurement error (Kline, 2016). Discriminant validity was determined by the composite reliability score, or squaring the correlations among the dimensions of the scale. A squared correlation that was lower than the AVE score indicated the dimension(s) possessed discriminant validity (Fornell & Larker, 1981; Kline, 2016).

Table 4.17 show the ESCS Cronbach alpha, AVE, and composite reliability scores for each construct. The functional congruence construct had the highest Cronbach alpha score (0.949) and the geographic event congruence construct had the lowest

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Cronbach alpha score (0.731). All constructs are above Kline's (2016) recommended guidelines determining good reliability of a scale. All AVE scores fall above 0.50 illustrating convergent validity was met. Discriminant validity of the ESCS was also met since all squared correlations among construct items fell below the construct's AVE score.

Table 4.17 Reliability and Validity Measures of the Six Factor Model

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Squared Correlations	AVE
Brand Equity (Sponsor)	0.938	0.716	0.717
Brand Equity (Event)	0.908	0.618	0.624
Geographic (Sponsor)	0.821	0.699	0.703
Geographic (Event)	0.731	0.578	0.580
Functional	0.949	0.824	0.826
Audience	0.932	0.820	0.821

4.8 SUMMARY

The scale development process began with 11 sponsorship congruence constructs. Product attribute, geographic, and brand equity congruence are all intended to be measured using absolute differences. The current study adopts this methodology within ESCS development. This format was used by Gwinner and Eaton (1999) and Olson and Thjømøe (2011) in asking respondents identical questions about both the sponsor and the event, with the degree of congruence determined by the absolute difference between the event and sponsor (i.e., if the event mean score was seven and sponsor score was five, the congruence score on that construct would be two). Perfect congruence on the construct would be a score of zero, while the worst possible congruence would be a score of six. This also means that product attribute, geographic, and brand equity constructs are considered to be six constructs in total; a) product attribute for the sponsor, b) product attribute for the event, c) geographic sponsor, d) geographic event, e) brand equity

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sponsor, and f) brand equity event. Construct mean scores are intended to be used to determine the level of sponsor-event congruence between the remaining four constructs: g) audience, h) personality, i) functional, j) cosponsor and k) purchase congruence.

A critical literature analysis and qualitative inquiry via focus groups and expert panel review was conducted to parse out relevant constructs and proposed items. With the removal of personality and cosponsor congruence, and purchase congruence combined with functional congruence items, eight constructs comprised of 46 items remained to be quantitatively tested. After exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses and a series of reliability and validity tests, the final ESCS (See Table 4.18) consists of six external sponsorship congruence constructs comprised of 23 items. The six constructs include: a) brand equity sponsor, b) brand equity event, c) geographic sponsor, d) geographic event, e) functional, and f) audience congruence.

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Table 4.18 Final 23 Items of ESCS Instrument

External Sponsorship Congruence Scale
Brand Equity Congruence (Sponsor)*
[Sponsor]'s product/service offers good benefits to customers
[Sponsor]'s product/service positively reflects who they are
[Sponsor]'s product/service is of high quality
[Sponsor] has a very good reputation
[Sponsor] is a respectable brand
[Sponsor] has a positive image
Brand Equity Congruence (Event)*
[Event]'s product/service offers good benefits to customers
[Event]'s product/service positively reflects who they are
[Event]'s product/service is of high quality
[Event] has a very good reputation
[Event] is a respectable brand
[Event] has a positive image
Geographic Congruence (Sponsor)*
I consider [sponsor] to be local to [city]
I consider [sponsor] to be local to [state]
Geographic Congruence (Event)*
I consider [event] to be local to [city]
I consider [event] to be local to [state]
Functional Congruence**
When watching a [event] on TV, people use [sponsor]'s products
People consume [sponsor]'s products at [event]
People use [sponsor]'s product at [event]
[Sponsor]'s products are used by [event] participants during [event]
Audience Congruence**
[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience are like a unified whole
[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience are as "one"
[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience are a tightly knit group

*Brand Equity and Geographic congruence are measured using absolute differences. The absolute value of seven must then be subtracted from the absolute difference score to determine construct congruence score. Zero is the lowest possible congruence score and 6 is the highest possible congruence score.
**Functional and Audience congruence are measured using mean scores with 1 being the lowest possible congruence score and 7 being the highest possible congruence score.

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Chapter five provides instructions for use of the ESCS and considers the results
and findings of the scale development process. Thoughtful perspective on patterns,
relationships, and theoretical meanings that emerged are discussed as well as academic
and practical contributions of the ESCS. Study limitations and direction for future
research are also included with a brief study summary.

5.1 GENERAL DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The biggest problem concerning effective sport sponsorships is marketing clutter
and the negative impact clutter has on recall accuracy (Cornwell & Relyea, 2000; Rumpf,
2012; Seguin & O'Reilly, 2008). Previous research shows external sponsorship
congruence plays an important role in how consumers remember and recall sport
sponsors (Cornwell et al., 2005; Fleck et al., 2012; Jagre et al., 2001; Olson & Thjømøe,
2011; Solomon, 1996; Stangor & McMillan, 1992), ultimately influencing consumer
attitudes and behavior (Close & Lacey, 2013; Gwinner & Bennett, 2008; Lee & Thorson,
2008; Simmons & Becker-Olson, 2006). External sponsorship refers to the congruence
between a sponsor and property that is not influenced by marketers and/or activation
(Cornwell et al., 2005; Simmons & Becker-Olson, 2006). Previous researchers made
great strides in identifying multiple types of external sponsorship congruence, however
congruence constructs are inconsistently conceptualized and measured, leaving a gap in
the understanding of congruence theory within a sponsorship context. The current study

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addressed this gap by analyzing all elements of external sponsorship congruence from a conceptual and measurement standpoint, and created one concise measurement instrument by following the scale development framework outlined by Churchill (1979), Hinkin (1995), and Hinkin, Tracey, and Enz (1997).

Through a critical deductive analysis, it was clear two congruence concepts were extremely vague, questioning the role they play within sport sponsorship analyses. First, in a majority of studies that use sponsorship congruence as an influential variable, the congruence construct is measured from a holistic standpoint asking if the sponsorship logically "makes sense." This general approach to measuring sponsorship congruence was appropriate when sponsorship congruence was first conceptualized, however, with the theoretical progress made over the last 20 years, the holistic approach fails to capture the essence of how the sponsorship "makes sense." The second concept, brand image congruence, was the first attempt to explain "how" and on what terms a sponsor and event may be similar. Brand image refers to the cumulative interpretation of meanings or associations attributed to a brand (Gwinner, 1997). Similar to measuring holistic congruence, researchers approached image congruence from a logical standpoint asking if the image of the event and the image of the sponsor are similar (Close et al., 2015). Previous research also measured image congruence with personality adjectives such as "mature", "formal", and "active" (Gwinner & Eaton, 1997; Xing & Chalip, 2006). The inconsistency of measuring brand image congruence is apparent throughout sponsorship literature and seems to mirror the same vague approach in which holistic congruence is measured.

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Another concern regarding sponsorship image congruence, as it stands in the literature, is that it neglects other image-based associations that make up brand image. With his seminal work, Keller (1993) suggested brand image is comprised of six different associations, including product attributes, user imagery, brand personality, functional benefits, experiential benefits, and symbolic benefits. The latter two associations, experiential benefits and symbolic benefits, are formed on an individual basis via a consumers' personal interaction with the brand, and do not align with external congruence factors. Three of the remaining four associations (user imagery, brand personality, and functional benefits) are already established external sponsorship congruence constructs that have considerable research supporting the importance and contribution of each facet. Therefore, the current study chose to replace brand image congruence with the remaining external image association not studied in a sport sponsorship context, product attribute congruence.

The current study's critical analysis into holistic and image congruence provides valuable insight and meaning regarding how sponsorship congruence should be conceptualized moving forward. The interpretation and measurement discrepancies suggest that holistic and image congruence are not logical concepts, rather they add more confusion within the already complex sponsorship congruence phenomenon. Oversimplifying the sponsorship congruence concept by using a logical approach, and measuring holistic and/or image congruence with dichotomous questions, lacks depth, and the current study provides a deeper understanding of how exactly a sponsorship "makes sense."

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The current study's critical literature review also revealed pertinent information regarding relevant sponsorship congruence dimensions, and those that had yet to go beyond conceptualization. Audience, personality, functional, geographic, and brand equity sponsorship congruence are established constructs within the sponsorship literature, where cosponsor and purchase congruence were simply concepts without measurement instruments. All of these constructs, however, are conceptualized and measured differently. Some are measured using a Likert-based scale with anchors of "strongly disagree/strongly agree" and others use "very unlikely/very likely" as anchors. This inconsistent wording leads to measurement reliability and validity concerns. In addition, some of the constructs only consist of one item, further questioning the internal consistency of the measurement instrument(s). In addition, external congruence concepts are most likely correlated, yet, because there is no measurement, these correlations are not being considered within sport sponsorship research. There was a direct need for one, reliable external sponsorship congruence measure that is consistent in appropriate number of items, question response, and item discourse.

To fill this need, the current study sought to better understand consumer conceptualization of constructs without a measurement instrument, and those that needed a major revision of item wording. Specifically, three focus groups addressed the product attribute, cosponsor, purchase, and personality sponsorship congruence constructs. An additional expert panel review of all eight construct definitions and proposed items provided valuable information needed for the creation of the External Sponsorship Congruence Scale (ESCS). Qualitative analyses revealed three significant findings: a) personality congruence is a fluid concept that is personalized to each event based on the

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influence of sport marketers and sponsorship activation, b) cosponsor congruence is not an external sponsorship congruence factor, and c) purchase congruence is an extension of functional congruence.

Multiple researchers have attempted to create brand personality instruments with the most popular scale being Aaker's (1997) Big Five. Other researchers point out the limitations and validity issues associated with Aaker's (1997) work arguing that the spectrum of adjectives used were limited and cover only a small portion of the large universe of adjectives (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003; Heere, 2010). In a sport marketing context, there are also numerous attempts at developing sport event personality scales. A majority of these scales follow Aaker's (1997) factor analysis methodology, and each study produced different results. The current study takes a similar position as Heere (2010) arguing that "a brand can only be given traits by people, and mainly originates as a result of the marketing approach of the managers within a company" (p. 18). The brand personality results of the current study can be better explained by the second stream of sponsorship congruence research, self-congruence. Self-congruence is a fit between a consumer's self-concept and an object (e.g. brand) (Aaker, 1999). It is imperative that a consumer's self-concept be involved for an emotional attachment to develop toward a brand (Malär et al., 2011). It has also been suggested that brand personality can be instrumental in helping consumers express their self-concept and provide a sense of comfort to consumers who have found a brand that "fits" their self-concept (Aaker, 1999; Malär et al., 2011; Sirgy 1982). The notion that consumers seek out brands that reflect their self-concept, personality and anthropomorphic associations is a popular marketing strategy employed by brand marketers (Heere, 2010).

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This literature helps explain why personality was interpreted differently among focus group participants, and why experts were hesitant to support the construct being included within the ESCS. Focus group participants gave personal anecdotes as to why they believed the NFL team and XBank shared a certain personality trait(s). These anecdotes were reflections of personal experience and justification for their own (dis)association with the sponsor and NFL team. Participants also disagreed with one another about the personality traits chosen, further supporting the self-congruence concept and exclusion of brand personality congruence within the ESCS.

Cosponsor congruence was another concept that was excluded from the ESCS scale development process based on qualitative findings. Focus group participants all agreed that cosponsors "varied" and it was difficult to definitively say they were similar or dissimilar. It is proposed that the cosponsor concept, similar to personality congruence, is not salient due to the role self-congruence plays when comparing brands from the basic brand image level. These findings negate Gross and Wiedmann (2015) and Kelly et al. (2016) who found there was a significant decline in attitude when positive sponsors were paired with negative sponsors. The biggest difference between the current study and Gross and Wiedmann (2015) and Kelly et al. (2016) is the setting in which the research took place. The current study used real examples and sponsors of the NFL team where the other studies were in a controlled environment and manipulated by information provided by the researchers. By creating as real of an environment as possible, the current study was able to better understand consumer perceptions of cosponsor congruence without the manipulation of other variables.

Surprisingly, focus group participants simply did not care that cosponsors share a similar image. This may be because the focal object, the NFL team, is directly tied to each sponsor, whereas cosponsor relationships are not cognitively thought about or discussed in sport media. Previous literature shows the negative impact a sponsor's scandal can have on the reputation of a sport team and consumer behavior toward said sport team (Chien et al., 2016). However, the literature regarding the impact a sponsor has on cosponsors is limited. Future research in this area would be beneficial in expanding image transfer literature and the ability to practically assess if a sponsor's brand equity is truly affected by others that are only linked to their organization through a sporting event.

Purchase congruence, like cosponsor congruence, had been theoretically conceptualized, but had not been qualitatively examined. Focus group discussions confirmed purchase congruence, or the ability to purchase a sponsor's product at the event (Fortunato, 2013), is conceptualized as functional congruence, or the enhancement of overall congruence by using the sponsor's product either directly or indirectly (Olson & Thjømøe, 2011). The more important finding when analyzing focus group discussions regarding purchase congruence was the distinction between the terms "use" and "consume." For example, participants suggested that consumers use XBank's services (e.g. XBank credit cards) at [NFL team] games, and consume sponsors' tangible products, such as food and beverage. This finding reiterated the need for discourse consistency in developing the ESCS. Previously, Olson and Thjømøe (2011) had only measured functional congruence with the term "use." Due to the qualitative findings, the current study added an item reflecting "consume" (FUN4) to be reviewed by an expert

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panel and to be quantitatively tested. The FUN4 mean score from expert panel review was 4.90 indicating face validity of the discourse addition.

Quantitative results of the remaining constructs (product attribute, audience, functional, geographic, and brand equity congruence) revealed three important points progressing the scale development process and the conceptualization of congruence theory constructs. First, results indicate that product attribute and brand equity items fall under the same construct. This finding aligns with brand equity paradigm researchers who believe a brand manifests its equity in three distinct markets: customer, product, and financial markets (Davcik et al., 2015; Keller & Lehmann, 2006). It should be noted that while the brand equity paradigm has been a research focus for more than two decades, there is no agreement in the literature about how to measure brand equity (Davcik et al., 2015). The current study offers an initial solution to this problem with the proposal of the brand equity congruence construct that includes product attribute items. It is hypothesized that within the sport sponsorship context, financial congruence is not a relevant construct, rather the focus between a sponsor and sport event is the consumer evaluation of the brand(s) reputation and equity. Three of the final ESCS items that make up the brand equity congruence construct are product/service related questions indicating the important role product attribute reputation contributes to brand equity evaluation.

Second, the quantitative results indicate discourse of geographic congruence items are hyper focused toward the city and state of the event. By definition, geographic congruence refers to the region in which a sport event takes place (Fortunato, 2013). Using Olson and Thjømøe's (2011) geographic measurement as a guide, the current study wanted to exhaust all possible meanings of the term "region" by including overarching

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terms such as "national" and "international" to the more specific "eastern", "western", "state", and "city." The event item worded as "national" loaded onto the same factor with the following proposed brand equity item: "I consider [sponsor/event] to be well known." The "national" geographic congruence item loading with the brand equity items speaks more to a sponsor and/or event's reputation than it does to a specific geographic region. Therefore, the broad geographic discourse items were removed from the scale development process. While the current study did not find support for geographic items relating to the eastern and/or western United States, it is proposed that some sport and/or entertainment events, such as the NHL Winter Classic or Coachella, are portrayed as northern, southern, eastern, and/or western. It is suggested to include these geographic items in future ESCS studies that evaluate sponsors and events reaching a broad geographic area. The current study's results highly suggest that city and state of the event should be included in sport sponsorship congruence research.

Lastly, the quantitative results revealed the distinction in discourse between audience and functional congruence items. The first EFA's unexpected finding of audience and functional items loading on the same factor indicated a deeper analysis of item wording was needed. Theoretically, there was no explanation as to why these two constructs would load onto the same factor. After further investigation, both construct items included the term "audience." Both audience and functional items were generated from previous studies with little to no revision of item wording. Worthington and Whittaker (2006) warn that the current study's approach of randomly administering existing measures might contaminate participants' responses on the items for a new scale. The term "audience" logically makes sense for use of audience congruence items. Upon

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further investigation, the functional congruence definition does not refer to the audience as one using a sponsor's product, but rather the individual use of a product/service during an event. Therefore, functional congruence wording was changed to reflect "people" rather than "audience." The second EFA data collection revealed the slight word change did in fact load onto two separate factors supporting congruence literature on the audience and functional congruence constructs.

5.2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF STUDY

Sport sponsorship congruence is a complex concept that has been inconsistently conceptualized and measured in previous literature. It is clear congruence theory is an important concept in sport sponsorship research, yet little has been done to holistically address how sponsorship congruence is theorized, utilized, and measured.

The current study advances the theoretical understanding of sport sponsorship congruence by being the first to parse out what specific constructs are considered external congruence factors, or those constructs that are not influenced by sponsorship activation (Cornwell et al., 2005; Fortunato, 2013; Simmons & Becker-Olson, 2006). The current study also contributes to congruence theory by being the first to qualitatively test the conceptualization of cosponsor and purchase congruence in a sponsorship context as defined by Fortunato (2013). Cosponsor congruence has been examined in other research fields, such as advertising, and was hypothesized to play a role in the sponsorship congruence relationship. The current study finds that this is not the case, and cosponsor congruence is not an external sponsorship congruence construct. An interesting finding, however, is how purchase congruence is conceptualized among consumers. Purchase congruence is the ability to purchase a sponsors product at an event (Fortunato, 2013).

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Rather than the ability to purchase a sponsor's product, focus group participants focused on using the sponsors product after the initial purchase. For example, drinking a sponsor's beer. The focal point is on drinking the beer rather than the transaction of buying the beer. Results indicate purchase congruence is an extension of functional congruence and it is suggested that purchase congruence be thought of as such in future research endeavors.

The current study also contributes to academic understanding of congruence by providing a clear direction of external construct definitions. Specifically, the current study argues that holistic and image congruence are not an appropriate way to conceptualize external congruence. Rather, brand equity, geographic, functional, and audience congruence are four distinct concepts that provide a better understanding of how a sponsor and event are similar. The current study shows discriminant validity with a variety of quantitative analyses to show that each construct is different, yet captures and encompasses the external sport sponsorship congruence concept.

Some of the previous inconsistent findings related to the impact of various dimensions of external congruence could in fact be a measurement issue. For example, Gwinner (1997) and Gwinner and Eaton (2008) have published support that image congruence plays an important role in sponsorship congruence, yet Olson and Thjømøe (2011) found no statistical support for image congruence. Additionally, advertising researchers, Gross and Wiedmann (2015) and Kelly et al. (2016) found support for the impact of cosponsor congruence, yet the current study found no qualitative support for the cosponsor congruence dimension. Theoretical progress is not possible without adequate measurement (Hinkin, 1995; Schwab, 1980). With a critical literature analysis,

the current study also points out the theoretical measurement inconsistencies of external sponsorship congruence constructs. The biggest issues being varying discourse, inconsistent anchors used in response structure, and separate, difficult to use instruments. The current study addresses these issues with the ESCS and provides one concise, easy to use scale to measure external congruence. The ESCS can assist future researchers by identifying how a sponsor and event are similar, and what role external congruence plays within other sponsorship related research.

Another theoretical and practical contribution of the ESCS is an updated instrument reflecting current sport sponsorship trends. A limitation within sport marketing research is the time it takes to collect, analyze, and publish important data, usually with outdated results at the time of publication. The sport marketing landscape is constantly changing (Shank & Lyberger, 2015; Mullin et al., 2014) and academic research struggles to keep up with current trends. The current study points out the outdated measurement instruments that are currently being used to analyze sponsorship congruence, questioning the reliability of previous results. The ESCS can assist in keeping sport sponsorship research up to date and subsequently progress congruence theory. Congruence theory within other areas of research, such as marketing, psychology, and consumer behavior, have little current research (within the last five years) that gives an in-depth look into the dimensions of congruence. The current study progresses congruence theory, not only in a sport sponsorship context, but also provides a tool that can assist in developing congruence theory within other academic areas as well. Qualitative and quantitative analyses of the ESCS provides future researchers with a tool

to accurately measure external congruence constructs, and confidently state results as being current with marketing trends.

Practitioners can also benefit from the ESCS in three ways. First, teams, events, and leagues can better understand their market position before entering into sponsorship contractual negotiations. This can assist in assigning value to sponsorship negotiation tactics. For example, if a sponsor is congruent with an event based on a geographical standpoint, the event may assign a higher price tag to the sponsorship deal as this has shown to be an important part in recall accuracy. If the sponsor is congruent with the event in more than one aspect, this may also change the value of the sponsorship and negotiation strategies.

Second, understanding how a sponsor is congruent with an event can also provide information to better inform sponsorship activation strategies. Once the sponsorship agreement has been signed, the way the sponsor and/or event positions that relationship to the public can be vital in determining success. Knowing what congruence constructs the sponsorship contains may determine the focal point of messaging. For example, if a sponsor and event score high on brand equity and functional congruence before the sponsorship is activated, the sponsor/event can focus on increasing the geographic congruence and building a relationship with the local community to enhance overall congruence, ultimately contributing to an effective sponsorship.

Lastly, sport marketing managers can use the ESCS as an assessment of return on investment (ROI). With pressure from Chief Financial Offers (CFO) on marketers to show ROI, it can be difficult to quantify how consumer attitudes have changed. The ESCS can be dispensed before and after a specific time period to measure how consumers

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perceive the level of external congruence between a sponsor and event. If the goal was to increase congruence through activation, the ESCS can measure and provide an analysis to senior level managers of success. It is suggested a research study using this strategy would be beneficial to the theoretical and practical understanding role sponsorship congruence plays within a marketing context.

5.3 HOW TO USE THE EXTERNAL SPONSORSHIP CONGRUENCE SCALE

All external congruence construct items are measured on a 7-point Likert based scale with 1 being Strongly Disagree (the lowest score) and 7 being Strongly Agree (the best possible score). Audience and functional congruence are analyzed using mean scores where little to no congruence corresponds to a low mean score and high congruence corresponds to a high mean score. Brand equity and geographic congruence are analyzed using absolute differences. Absolute differences asks respondents identical questions about both the sponsor and the event, with the degree of congruence determined by the absolute difference between the event and sponsor (i.e., if the event mean score was 7 and sponsor score was 5, the fit score on that construct would be 2). Perfect congruence on the construct would be a score of 0, while the worst possible congruence would be a score of 6. To ensure measurement consistency among constructs, the absolute value of the absolute difference score minus 7 then produces the congruence score for brand equity and geographic congruence. For example, if the absolute difference congruence score for brand equity is 5, the researcher must then take the absolute value of 5 minus 7, which would equal 2. This score then aligns with how audience and functional congruence are analyzed (mean scores) where 1 is the lowest possible congruence score and 7 is the highest possible congruence score.

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Overall external sponsorship congruence score is the sum of audience, functional, brand equity, and geographic congruence scores. The ESCS is the combination of separate, independent external congruence constructs that causes the larger latent construct of external sponsorship congruence. Therefore, the overall external sponsorship congruence score can fall anywhere on a continuum anchored by the lowest possible congruence score of 2 and the highest possible congruence score of 26. The anchor of 2 was determined from the lowest possible outcomes of audience and functional congruence, which is 1, and the lowest possible outcomes of brand equity and geographic congruence, which is 0. The anchor of 26 was determined from the highest possible outcomes of audience and functional congruence, which is 7, and the highest possible outcomes of brand equity and geographic congruence, which is 6.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The scale development process is not just a one-time report, rather multiple investigations of a proposed scale are needed to further establish construct validity and generalizability (Churchill, 1979). The current study is an initial step toward future research that is required to refine items and complete psychometric properties of the ESCS. The following are future research suggestions to develop and purify the ESCS.

The current study examines four specific points of validity, including face, content, convergent, and discriminant. Criterion validity, however, was not assed within the current study. Criterion validity is oftentimes referred to as pragmatic validity and addresses the question, "how well does my measure work in practice?" (Zikmund et al., 2013). Criterion validity is determined by either concurrent or predictive validity, depending on the timeframe of the intended scale's use. Concurrent validity measures

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outcomes at a specific point in time where predictive validity forecasts outcomes of future events (Zikmund et al., 2013). It was outside the scope of the current study to examine criterion validity as the purpose was to create an external sponsorship congruence scale, not test desired outcomes. Future research should continue to test reliability and validity of the ESCS to complete psychometric properties outlined in the current study.

It is important to note that the overall external sponsorship congruence score is designed to be interpreted by the researcher based on desired outcomes. It is acknowledged that the current study establishes a way to measure external sponsorship congruence, not argue if high congruence can be interpreted as "good" congruence. For example, if an event and sponsor both score low on the brand equity construct they are considered to have high congruence on that particular construct. While there is high brand equity congruence, the congruence is considered to be at the low end of the spectrum. This can be deceiving if one associates "good" congruence with a high score and vice versa. Future researchers should fully understand the intended measurement scores produced by the ESCS and examine how the type of external sponsorship congruence influences desired outcomes.

As sport sponsorship theory continues to evolve, it is predicted more external congruence factors will emerge. The current study sought to refine current external factors, not propose new ones. However, it is recognized that other external sponsorship congruence constructs may exist and should be included in future studies to test the theoretical relatedness and construct validity of the ESCS. In addition, it is also suggested to include geographic items that reflect region-relatedness when measuring geographic

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congruence. A limitation of the current study was using NFL teams as the focal point of data collection limiting the way in which geographic congruence is conceptualized. Expanding beyond a specific team to measure sponsorship congruence at the league level may produce different results when examining geographic congruence. Therefore, to continue to refine the ESCS, it is recommended to include regional terms, such as "northern", "southern", "eastern", "western", "national", and "international" when using a focal point that covers a large regional area.

Second, future research should also consider the relative impact the ESCS may have across diverse contexts. The researcher's goal is to expand the ESCS to encompass many events, such as entertainment, arts, youth, and recreation events to name a few. The current study shows reliability and validity of the scale within a sport context, but the moderating effect of type of event and/or venue may influence how the ESCS is utilized. Future research in this area could greatly benefit how sponsorships are negotiated, activated, and measured.

Lastly, future research should examine how the second stream of sponsorship research, self-congruence, plays a role in, and contributes to, congruence theory. There is currently no instrument to measure self-congruence in a sponsorship context, and it is clear from research on sponsorship personality and consumer experience that there is a need to include the self-concept in sponsorship measurement. It is suggested to also examine how self-congruence contributes to consumer perceptions of external congruence. Not only would this stream of research benefit congruence theory, but it would also benefit the refinement of the ESCS.

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5.5 CONCLUSION

Sport sponsorships make up 70% of sponsorship dollars spent in the United States (IEG, 2018). The popularity and growth of reaching a large, engaged audience through sport has become a staple in most marketing strategies. Clutter, however, is an issue that has risen to the surface as events take on more and more sponsors. Congruence theory researchers provide ample support that sponsor-event similarities can cut through this clutter and enhance sponsorship recall accuracy (Cornwell et al., 2005). There is a gap, however, in the way congruence constructs are conceptualized and measured.

The current study provides valuable theoretical and practical information on sport sponsorship congruence constructs. There was a need to develop one, concise measurement instrument that captures how a sponsorship is congruent with an event rather than relying on a consumer's logical interpretation of "does this sponsorship make sense?" The current study critically analyzed external sponsorship congruence constructs, conducted qualitative and quantitative analyses on said constructs, and developed the External Sponsorship Congruence Scale.

Results indicate that four specific external congruence constructs, brand equity, geographic, functional, and audience congruence, are salient within consumers' minds. Through factor analyses, a 23 item instrument emerged that will assist in future sport sponsorship research, as well as assist sport marking professionals in sponsorship negotiation, formation of marketing strategies, and measuring sponsorship success. Implications for future research include the continuance of refining the ESCS constructs as new ones emerge, better understanding sport marketing relationships that involve external sponsorship congruence, and the creation and inclusion of self-congruence in

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measuring sport sponsorship congruence. The ESCS scale development process gives an in-depth look at how current literature conceptualizes sponsorship congruence and provides a clear direction for future research that examines the influence of external sport sponsorship congruence on desired outcomes, such as changes in consumer attitudes and behavior.

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APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

The room will be set up so chairs are in a circle and refreshments are located in the back of the room. Each individual will have a nametag in front of them to help the researchers, and others participating in the group, to remember names.

Welcome

Hello everyone, and welcome! Thank you for taking the time to join today's discussion of sport sponsorships. My name is Kelly Evans and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of South Carolina. Assisting me today is [Moderator 2], another doctoral student from the University of South Carolina.

Overview of the Topic

Today's discussion will assist in writing my dissertation which involves creating a scale to measure how well a sport team may or may not fit with a (potential) sponsor. My goal is to better understand this term "fit" and go beyond the logical question of "does this sponsorship make sense?" Please keep this in mind as we make our way through questions regarding sponsorships. If you have additional questions about the topic we can discuss things individually at the end of today's focus group.

You were invited to today's discussion because of your familiarity with sport events and sport sponsorships. I am defining familiarity here as having attended at least one sporting event in your life, and understanding the role sponsorships play within a sport organization. I hope to tap into your experiences and opinions about sponsorships.

Ground Rules

There are no right or wrong answers. [Moderator 2] and I expect that you will have differing points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said.

We are recording today's session because we don't want to miss any of your comments. No names or personal identifiers will be included in any reports. Your comments are confidential.

We have name tags here in front of us tonight. Don't feel like you have to respond to me all the time. If you want to follow up on something that someone has said, you want to agree, or disagree, or give an example, feel free to do that. Feel free to have a

conversation with one another about these questions. I am here to ask questions, listen, and make sure everyone has a chance to share. We're interested in hearing from each of you. So if you find yourself talking a lot, please make sure to give others a chance. We just want to make sure all of you have a chance to share your ideas.

If you have a cell phone please put it on silent or vibrate, and if you need to answer, please step out to do so. Feel free to get up and get more refreshments if you would like. Are there any questions before we begin?

Opening Question

Let's go around the room and introduce ourselves. If you could please tell us your name and your favorite NFL team. If you can name one sponsor associated with your favorite team, please do so!

Questioning Outline

1. Now I want you to think about the [NFL team]s and their sponsor, XBank when answering the next few questions in regards to sponsorship. Do you think XBank and the [NFL team]s fit? How so?
2. Do you think the product/service XBank provides is similar to the produce and/or services the [NFL team]s provide? How so?
3. Can you envision fans at [NFL team]s games purchasing XBank's product/service at/during a [NFL team]'s game? Under what conditions would this potentially happen?
4. Do you think there are sponsors out there that would be able to sell their product/service at/during a [NFL team]'s game? What are those sponsors and why?
5. Looking at the roster of current sponsors ([Moderator 2] will pass out paper with other sponsors), do you think XBank fits in well with the other sponsors? Why or why not?
6. In evaluating brands, we tend to assign human-like personality traits in order to associate and categorize brands in our minds. Typically, sporting events and their sponsors share some personality traits. Looking at both XBank and [NFL team]s, which traits do you believe they both share?

To conclude the focus group, [Moderator 2] and I are going to briefly summarize the main points we discussed today. Please let us know if you agree or disagree that the summary reflects what we talked about.

Thank you all again for your time.

APPENDIX B: LEE AND CHO'S (2012) PERSONALITY TRAITS

SPORTING EVENT PERSONALITY TRAITS

ENTHUSIASTIC	UNPREDICTABLE	RUGGED	HEALTHY
CLASSIC	APPEALING	BUILT/IN-SHAPE	DETERMINED
CONFIDENT	UPBEAT	CULTURAL	OUTGOING
ROWDY	POSITIVE	SHOW-OFF	PERSISTENT
INTENSE	VIGOROUS	PHYSICAL	POWERFUL
TOUGH	ENERGETIC	MOTIVATED	EXPERIENCED
DIVERSE	COMMITTED	INTIMIDATING	BIG
HARDWORKING	MUSCULAR	MASCULINE	FOCUSED
LOUD	RELENTLESS	AMBITIOUS	RENOWNED
ENCOURAGING	QUICK-MINDED	TIMELESS	FEARLESS
TRADITIONAL	COORDINATED	SUCCESSFUL	DYNAMIC
STRONG	FIERCE	FAVOURABLE	EXTROVERTED
DEDICATED	ACTIVE	PROUD	POPULAR
BRAVE	WELL-TRAINED	ATHLETIC	DRAMATIC
THRIVING	INTERESTING	COMPETITIVE	COMPELLING
ENTERTAINING	AMERICAN	TENSE	DISCIPLINED
ASSERTIVE	DOMINANT	COLLEGIATE	LEGENDARY
TALENTED	EXCITING	FUN	AWESOME
AGGRESSIVE	SKILLFUL	DARING	OUTDOORSY
LIVELY	PASSIONATE	DEVOTED	BOLD
THRILL-SEEKING			

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Q2 **Functional Sponsorship Congruence** is the overall fit enhanced by the use of a sponsor's product(s) during the event either directly or indirectly.

This definition is:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Clear							
Comprehensive							
Captures the Construct							

Q3 **Functional Sponsorship Congruence** is the overall fit enhanced by the use of a sponsor's product(s) during the event either directly or indirectly. The following questions will be measured on a 7-point Likert scale from Very Unlikely (1) to Very Likely (7).

On a scale from 1-7 please indicate the extent each item reflects the construct definition

	Not at all reflects the definition (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very much reflects the definition (7)
How likely is it that product(s) and/or service(s) from [sponsor] are used by the participants in the event?							
When watching [event] on television, how likely are audience members to be using [sponsor] product(s) and/or service(s)?							

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Q4 **Functional Sponsorship Congruence** is the overall fit enhanced by the use of a

When watching [event] in person, how likely are the audience members
to be using [sponsor] product(s) and/or service(s)?

When attending [event], how likely are attendees to use [sponsor]
product(s) and/or service(s)?

When attending [event], how likely are attendees to consume the
[sponsor] product(s) and/or service(s)?

sponsor's product(s) during the event either directly or indirectly.

**In the space below, please provide any comments/feedback you feel necessary
regarding functional sponsorship congruence.**

_____

_____

Q5 **Geographic Sponsorship Congruence** is the perception of the sponsoring company's
connection to the region where the event is located.
This definition is:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Clear							
Comprehensive							
Captures the Construct							

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Q6 **Geographic Sponsorship Congruence** is the perception of the sponsoring company's connection to the region where the event is located.

The following statements are written so that the respondent answers the question for the sponsor and event separately on a 7-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7). Absolute differences then determine the level of congruence.
On a scale from 1-7 please indicate the extent each item reflects the construct definition.

	Not at all reflects the definition (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very much reflects the definition (7)
I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be local							
I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be regional							
I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be American							
I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be international							
I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be Global							
I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be [city]							
I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be [state]							
I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be [northern/southern]							
I consider [sponsor]/[event] to be [eastern/western]							

Q7 Geographic Sponsorship Congruence is the perception of the sponsoring company's connection to the region where the event is located.

In the space below, please provide any comments/feedback you feel necessary regarding geographic sponsorship congruence.

_____

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Q8 **Audience Sponsorship Congruence** is the similarity between the event's audience and the sponsor's target segment.

This definition is:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Clear							
Comprehensive							
Captures the Construct							

Q9 **Audience Sponsorship Congruence** is the similarity between the event's audience and the sponsor's target segment.

The following questions will be measured on a 7-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7).

On a scale from 1-7 please indicate the extent to which each item reflects the construct definition

	Not at all reflects the definition (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very much reflects the definition (7)
[Sponsor] customers are usually in the audience of [event]	○						○
[Sponsor's] customers and [event] audience are like a unified whole	○						○
[Sponsor's] customers and [event] audience is a "tightly knit" group	○						○
[Sponsor's] customers and [event] audience are as "one"	○						○

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[Sponsor's] customers and [event] audience represent one group rather than it does two separate groups	○	○
[Sponsor's] customers and [event] audience qualifies as one group	○	○

Q10 **Audience Sponsorship Congruence** is the similarity between the event's audience and the sponsor's target segment.

In the space below, please provide any comments/feedback you feel necessary regarding sponsor-event audience sponsorship congruence.

_____

_____

Q11 **Brand Equity Sponsorship Congruence** is the enhancement of overall fit due to the same amount of commercial value that each brand (sponsor and event) bring to the table.

This definition is:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Clear							
Comprehensive							
Captures the Construct							

Q12 **Brand Equity Sponsorship Congruence** is the enhancement of overall fit due to the same amount of commercial value that each brand (sponsor and event) bring to the table.

The following statements are written so that the respondent answers the question for the sponsor and event separately on a 7-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7). Absolute differences then determine the level of congruence.

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On a scale from 1-7 please indicate the extent each item reflects the construct definition.

	Not at all reflects the definition (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very much reflects the definition (7)
I think that the [sponsor]/[event] is important							
[Sponsor]/[event] has a very good reputation							
[Sponsor]/[event] has a positive image							
[Sponsor]/[event] is a respectable brand							
[Sponsor]/[event] is known to be diligent							
[Sponsor]/[event] is well known							
[Sponsor]/[event] is renowned							
The [sponsor]/[event] provides good customer service to its patrons							

Q13 **Brand Equity Sponsorship Congruence** is the enhancement of overall fit due to the same amount of commercial value that each brand (sponsor and event) bring to the table.

In the space below, please provide any comments/feedback you feel necessary regarding brand equity sponsorship congruence.

_____

_____

Q16 **Product Attribute Sponsorship Congruence** is the enhancement of overall fit due to the similarity between the sponsor's product and the event's product.

This definition is:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Clear							
Comprehensive							
Captures the Construct							

Q17 **Product Attribute Sponsorship Congruence** is the enhancement of overall fit due to the similarity between the sponsor's product quality and the event's product quality.

The following statements are written so that the respondent answers the question for the sponsor and event separately on a 7-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7). Absolute differences then determine the level of congruence.

On a scale from 1-7 please indicate the extent each item reflects the construct definition.

	Not at all reflects the definition (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very much reflects the definition (7)
[Sponsor]/[event]'s product/service offers good benefits to consumers							
[Sponsor]/[event]'s customer service is good							
[Sponsor]/[event]'s product/service positively reflects who they are							
[Sponsor]/[event]'s product/service is of high quality							
[Sponsor]/[event]'s customer service is of high quality							

Q18 **Product Attribute Sponsorship Congruence** is the enhancement of overall fit due to the similarity between the sponsor's product and the event's product.

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In the space below, please provide any comments/feedback you feel necessary regarding product attribute sponsorship congruence.

_____

_____

Q19 **Brand Personality Sponsorship Congruence** is the similarity between a consumer's perception of a sponsor's brand personality traits and an event's brand personality traits.

The definition is:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Clear							
Comprehensive							
Captures the Construct							

Q21 **Brand Personality Sponsorship Congruence** is the similarity between a consumer's perception of a sponsor's brand personality traits and an event's brand personality traits.

In the space below, please provide any comments/feedback you feel necessary regarding brand personality sponsorship congruence.

_____

_____

External Sponsorship Congruence Scale
Brand Equity Congruence (Sponsor)
[Sponsor]'s product/service offers good benefits to customers
[Sponsor]'s product/service positively reflects who they are
[Sponsor]'s product/service is of high quality
[Sponsor] has a very good reputation
[Sponsor] is a respectable brand
[Sponsor] has a positive image
Brand Equity Congruence (Event)
[Event]'s product/service offers good benefits to customers
[Event]'s product/service positively reflects who they are
[Event]'s product/service is of high quality
[Event] has a very good reputation
[Event] is a respectable brand
[Event] has a positive image
Geographic Congruence (Sponsor)
I consider [sponsor] to be local to [city]
I consider [sponsor] to be local to [state]
Geographic Congruence (Event)
I consider [event] to be local to [city]
I consider [event] to be local to [state]
Functional Congruence
When watching a [event] on TV, people use [sponsor]'s products
People consume [sponsor]'s products at [event]
People use [sponsor]'s product at [event]
[Sponsor]'s products are used by [event] participants during [event]
Audience Congruence
[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience are like a unified whole
[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience are as "one"
[Sponsor] customers and [event] audience are a tightly knit group